

Biography Resource Center

Christopher Samuel Bond

Also known as: Kit Bond, Christopher S. Bond, Christopher Kit S. Bond

Birth: March 6, 1939 in St. Louis, Missouri, United States

Nationality: American

Occupation: senator, lawyer, governor

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BIOGRAPHICAL ESSAY

Republican Christopher "Kit" Bond represented Missouri in a number of political capacities, most recently as a U.S. senator. He had previously been governor and assistant attorney general for the state. As head of the Senate's Small Business Committee since 1995, issues of small businesses have become Bond's definitive political concern.

Bond was born on March 6, 1939, in St. Louis, Missouri. He was raised in Mexico, Missouri, which remained his home when he lived in the state as an adult. Law and public service were focal points of Bond's education. In 1960, he graduated cum laude from the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs of Princeton University. Bond then entered the law school at the University of Virginia where he was valedictorian of his class in 1963. (Some sources say he earned his J.D., while others claim it was an LL.B.)

Pursued Legal Career

After graduating from law school, Bond spent a year as a clerk for the chief judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. Bond then practiced law in Washington, D.C., from 1964 to 1967. In 1967, he returned to Missouri and became actively involved in Missouri politics.

Sought Elective Offices

In 1968, Bond made his first run for an office, a seat in the United States House of Representatives, but he did not win. However, the following year, he was named assistant attorney general of Missouri. Bond was in charge of consumer protection. His stint in this capacity was short-lived. In 1970, Bond was elected to his first office. He was elected to be Missouri's state auditor, a position he held until 1973 when he was elected to a higher

office.

Elected Governor

Bond decided to run for Missouri's governorship in 1972, though he would only be 32 if he took office. He defeated Democrat Edward L. Dowd and became the youngest governor in the history of the state. Bond lost his re-election bid in 1976 to Democrat Joseph Teasdale by a narrow margin, but in 1980 was re-elected to the office by defeating Teasdale.

Made Run for Senate

Bond did not seek a third term in 1984. Instead, he decided to run for a seat in the United States Senate the following year. The seat was being vacated by a retiring Democrat, Thomas F. Eagleton. Bond won 53 percent of the vote, defeating Harriett Woods, who was the lieutenant governor of Missouri at the time. Bond won again in 1992, defeating Geri Rothman-Serot, who was a member of the St. Louis City Council, with 52 percent of the vote. Bond won a third term in 1998, defeating Missouri's attorney general Jay Nixon with 53 percent of the vote.

Over the course of his tenure, Bond compiled a primarily conservative voting record on all issues. Early in his career, much of Bond's political energy was focused on his home state, including farm policy and obtaining money for roads and highways in Missouri. In 1993, Bond played a significant role in drafting legislation to provide relief from the effects of a major Midwestern flood. He obtained money for rebuilding breached levees that the Democrats did not plan on repairing.

Bond also had national concerns. He worked on overhauling federal housing and promoted policy changes such as requiring child safety seats on airline flights. Bond supported federal financing for an early childhood development program.

Though Bond was a loyal Republican, he occasionally worked with Democrats on issues he felt strongly about. In 1990, he played a major role in finding a compromise with Democrats on the acid rain issue of the Clean Air Act. He also worked with them to create a compromise that would allow workers to be granted a 12-week leave of absence from their jobs in the event of family emergencies. Bond broke ranks with Republicans in 1993 to become a sponsor of the Family and Medical Leave Act.

But Bond was primarily loyal to his party. In 1990, he voted against a civil rights bill that the Democrats proposed and against a constitutional amendment to ban the desecration of the flag. The same year, he voted against the Americans with Disabilities Act because of the regulatory burden.

By the late 1990s and early twenty first century, Bond had earned key Senate committee assignments that reflected his senior stature. He had been a member of the Appropriations Committee since 1991, and became the ranking Republican. He used this post to protect the interests of Missouri where McDonnell Douglas Corp. was based. He also served on the Budget and Environment and Public Works committees as well as the Senate Special Committee To Investigate Whitewater Development Corporation and Related Matters.

Advocate of Small Businesses

Bond's most important committee work was on Small Business, where he was the ranking Republican and chairman since 1995. He used his position to advocate for small business interests and worked to ensure the committee looked at any proposed legislation that directly related to small business. Bond supported giving states and localities more regulatory authority over small businesses and increasing federal loan guarantees for them.

Bond worked on a number of related laws and programs. In the mid-1990s, he promoted two laws that would reduce paperwork and ease the regulatory burden for small businesses. In 1997, Bond proposed the

Home-Based Business Fairness Act that would have made taxes fairer for home-based businesses. In 1998, he proposed an act that would give small businesses loans to prepare for Y2K. In 2001, Bond introduced the Small Business Works Act of 2001. It provided tax relief for self-employed and smaller businesses-health insurance deductibility, simplification of tax laws related to them. Bond also created a program that supported the location of small businesses in poverty-stricken areas. As Julie Rose wrote in *Fortune*, "A classic mover and shaker, he's now one of small business' most powerful allies."

UPDATES

November 2, 2004: Bond was re-elected U.S. Senator from Missouri, defeating Democrat Nancy Farmer.
Source: CNN.com, www.cnn.com, November 26, 2004.

AWARDS

Secretary of Commerce Medal, 1985.

FURTHER READINGS

Further Readings

Periodicals

- *Business America*, June 24, 1985, p. 17.
- *Congressional Quarterly Weekly Report*, November 12, 1994, p. 3289.
- *Defense Daily*, May 31, 2001.
- *Entrepreneur*, November 1998, p. 23.
- *Fortune*, October 16, 2000, p. 312B.
- *Insight on the News*, May 12, 1997, p. 38; February 26, 2001, p. 34.
- *Nation's Business*, February 1995, p. 42; February 1997, p. 8.

Online

- <http://bond.senate.gov/biography/history.cfm> (July 27, 2001).
- <http://mosi.sos.state.mo.us/ofman/senb.html> (July 27, 2001).
- <http://www.visi.com/juan/congress/cgi-bin/bio.cgi?member=MOSR> (July 27, 2001).

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