

RIPON

Profile

Name: Bill Frist

Hometown: Nashville, TN

Current job: Majority Leader, United States Senate.

Hobbies: Hunting, writing, flying airplanes (commercial, instrument, multiengine pilot), fishing, medical mission work.

Songs on my playlist: “Live Like You Were Dying,” Tim McGraw; “Politically Uncorrect,” Gretchen Wilson with Merle Haggard; “Yesterday,” The Beatles; “Believe,” Brooks and Dunn.

Books that I’d recommend: *The World is Flat: A Brief History of the 21st Century* by Thomas L. Friedman; *Redefining Health Care: Creating Value-Based Competition on Results* by Michael E. Porter and Elizabeth Olmsted Teisberg; *The Sound and The Fury* by William Faulkner.

Political inspiration: I spent the first 20 years of my adult life working with patients, trying to help and heal people. Sen. Howard Baker, more than any other individual, helped me decide to pursue elective office and thereby work to help the entire nation. After a mutual friend introduced us, we had three formal meetings. I learned a lot from him. By the end of our third meeting, probably because of my persistence more than anything else, Sen. Baker implied that I could win a statewide race in Tennessee. He suggested that I shoot for the position that gave me the greatest opportunity nationally and internationally—a seat in the U.S. Senate. I took his advice.

Most important issues facing America: Health care touches American families, businesses, and governments in a way that no other issue does. We have the best doctors, nurses, researchers, and medical laboratories in the world, but our health care system needs a great many improvements. We don’t have a systematic way of storing medical records, over 30 million Americans lack health coverage, and costs continue to rise at an alarming rate. We need to build a patient centered, provider friendly system, that will ensure health, hope, and new opportunities for all Americans.

Why I am a Republican: I’ll quote from a letter my father once wrote to his grandchildren: “I am conservative. I believe the free enterprise system can do a better job at most things than the government can. People should learn to be self-reliant; when they are self-reliant, they will have self-respect.”