

Congressman Sanford Bishop is serving his ninth term in the U.S. House of Representatives, representing Georgia's Second Congressional District, which covers 32 southwest Georgia counties: Baker, Brooks, Calhoun, Chattahoochee, Clay, Crawford, Crisp, Decatur, Dooly, Dougherty, Early, Grady, Lee, Lowndes (in part), Macon, Marion, Miller, Mitchell, Muscogee (in part), Peach, Quitman, Randolph, Seminole, Schley, Stewart, Sumter, Talbot, Taylor, Terrell, Thomas, Webster and Worth.

The middle and southwest Georgia legislator defines his goal in public life as “seeking a higher, better quality of life for all citizens by promoting jobs and a stronger, more diversified economy, a better educated population, safe and secure communities free of crime and drugs, a clean environment, affordable and accessible health care, a safe food supply, energy independence, and a strong national defense -- all within the context of a balanced budget.”

### **Legislative Record**

Congressman Bishop has emerged as a leader among the fiscally responsible Democrats in Congress, while always supporting social programs and policies that empower families and working Americans. He has supported tax relief during times of surplus budgets in order to return unused revenue to the citizens who earned it, and supported targeted tax relief to promote economic growth during times of budget deficits. At the same time, he has always supported measured, responsible levels of tax cuts that would not lead to unmanageable deficits or destructive reductions in spending for defense, education, health care, economic development, veterans' programs, homeland security, and other important federal responsibilities.

Since 2003, Bishop has served on the House Committee on Appropriations, sitting on the Subcommittee for Defense, the Subcommittee on Military Construction-Veterans Affairs, and the Subcommittee on Agriculture. While other committees authorize programs in specific areas of federal government, the appropriations committees in the House and Senate are unique in that they determine exactly how much shall be spent, or not spent, in all areas of government. These areas include defense, agriculture, education, homeland security, transportation and other infrastructure needs, health care, foreign relations, and economic development initiatives.

Bishop has authored a wide range of bills and resolutions including the widely supported Transitional Health Care bill which was enacted into law as a part of the Fiscal Year 2009 Defense Authorization Act. The measure provides 180 days of transitional health care to service members in the United States Military who choose to voluntarily separate from active duty and join the Selected Reserves (SELRES). He also was a leader in implementing the 2008 Farm bill, which authorized \$280 billion in nutrition and farm support programs affecting every American. The bill included a program spearheaded by Bishop and other farm-state legislators which encourages a cleaner, greener method of planting by providing an incentive for farmers to plant their crops in a crop mix rotation. In addition, he is the author of the Healthy Active and Lifelong Energy (HALE) Act designed to target obesity among the nation's youth, particularly those considering military service.

Bishop has advocated for the values and morals of Southwest Georgians - "God, country, work, family, and guns" - through his support for several Constitutional amendments. Bishop has co-sponsored amendments to the U.S. Constitution protecting the U.S. flag against acts of desecration, preserving the institution of marriage as between a man and a woman, ensuring a balanced federal budget, and allowing voluntary, non-denominational prayer in schools and other public localities. He also is a strong supporter of Second Amendment rights, receiving the grade of "A+" from the National Rifle Association.

Bishop has pushed through many initiatives of special concern to the Second District, including legislation to name the new U.S. Courthouse in Albany for civil rights leader C.B. King and legislation to rename the main post office in Albany for Dr. Walter Carl Gordon, Jr. He has supported bills to expand and improve the Andersonville and Jimmy Carter Historic Sites, as well as efforts to sustain and build new structures at the Second District's military installations, including Fort Benning in Columbus and the Marine Corps Logistics Base (MCLB) in Albany. He supported the minting of a commemorative coin honoring the United States Army Infantry, with a portion of the proceeds supporting Columbus' National Infantry Museum and Soldier Center. Additionally, he has secured more than a billion dollars in federal grants and loans for communities throughout the Second District, making the area one of the nation's leaders in qualifying for federal community development funding.

Bishop also has introduced legislation to create a new grant program to upgrade forensic laboratories, a proposal which was enacted into law. He has cosponsored bills to strengthen the veterans' health care system and other veterans' programs, to ensure that quality child care remains affordable for low-income families, to crack down on underage tobacco sales and use, to enhance medical research, to promote energy efficiency and independence and to correct regulatory work disincentives for low-income housing occupants.

### **Public Life**

Bishop was first elected to Congress in 1992 after serving in the Georgia House of Representatives from 1977 to 1990 and in the Georgia Senate from 1991-1992.

Bishop holds a number of leadership positions. He is a Senior Whip in the Majority Whip operation for the 111th Congress. Senior Whips are a group of senior Members and Democratic Caucus opinion leaders who play key roles in planning how an issue impacts certain Members or groups and who also help develop strategies to ensure legislative success. He also served as Chairman of a Democratic House Task Force on Homeland Security and the Working Group on Defense of Physical Infrastructure and Natural Resources.

In addition, Congressman Bishop serves as a member of the Blue Dog Coalition of fiscally-conservative House Democrats and is the co-Chairman and co-Founder of the Congressional Military Family Caucus. He was formerly the co-Chairman of the Forestry 2000 Task Force, promoting sound forestry policy, and was the co-Chairman of the Peanut Caucus, promoting sound policy for growers, agri-businesses, and consumers. He also is a member of the Congressional Black Caucus, Rural Health Care Coalition, Rural Caucus, National Guard

and Reserve Components Caucus, Air Power Caucus, Depot Caucus, Children's Working Group, Law Enforcement Caucus, National Security Caucus, Impact Aid Coalition, Vietnam Era Veterans in Congress, Congressional Arts Caucus, Sportsmen's Caucus, Fire Services Caucus, Federal Government Service Caucus, Motorsports Caucus, and the Council on Foreign Relations, a privately-funded research and educational organization. For a complete list of Congressman Bishop's Caucuses, please see the [Committees and Caucuses](#) page.

He has held leadership positions at the community, state and national levels, including serving as Georgia's representative on the Southern Growth Policies Board and on the Governor's Advisory Council on Drug Abuse.

### **Personal Background**

Bishop was born February 4, 1947, in Mobile, Alabama, and is the son of the late Dr. Sanford D. Bishop, Sr., the first president of Bishop State Community College in Mobile, Alabama, and Mrs. Minnie S. Bishop, a librarian. He is married to the Honorable Vivian Creighton Bishop. Mrs. Bishop serves as the elected Clerk of the Municipal Court of Columbus, Georgia (court administrator). They have a daughter, Aaysha J. Reese (husband Stephen) of Lithonia, Georgia, and a granddaughter, Londyn.

Bishop graduated from Morehouse College in 1968 and from Emory University Law School in 1971. He served in the U.S. Army, completed basic training at Fort Benning, Georgia, entered Advanced Reserve Officers Training, and received an Honorable Discharge in 1971. He resided in Columbus, Georgia, from 1972 to 1996, where he was the primary partner in the law firm of Bishop and Buckner, P.C. He is an Eagle Scout, a 33rd Degree Mason (PHA), and a Shriner. He is a resident of Albany, Georgia, where he is a member of the Mount Zion Baptist Church.

Congressman Bishop has received numerous awards including the Distinguished Eagle Scout Award from the Boy Scouts of America, given to Eagle Scouts for distinguished career achievement, the Spirit of Enterprise Award from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the Man of the Year Award from the Men's Progressive Club of Columbus, Georgia, the Friend of the Children Award from the Child Advocacy Coalition, and commendations from the National Federation of Independent Business, Georgia Association of Educators, Georgia Municipal Association, Georgia School Bus Drivers Association, Georgia Council for the Arts, the Fraternal Order of Police, and the American Legion.