



Mississippi Politics: The Struggle for Power, 1976-2006

Jere Nash

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In 1890, white Democrats consolidated their political power in Mississippi. For more than seventy years, the state was a Democratic stronghold in which Republicans and African Americans had little political clout. The elections of 1976, however, marked the last time Mississippi would cast its presidential electoral votes for a Democrat. That year, the state's Democratic lineup included the governor, both United States senators and three representatives, and all but five seats in the state legislature.

Thirty years later, Republican Haley Barbour is the state governor, four of the seven statewide elected officials are Republicans, both United States Senators are Republicans, and the GOP boasts 69 of the 174 members in the state legislature.

Mississippi Politics: The Struggle for Power, 1976-2006 charts the political shift in Mississippi over the last thirty years, covering political campaigns and the struggle for power within the state legislature. Fierce debates about the tobacco industry, casinos, tort reform, education, and highways are all examined. Authors Jere Nash and Andy Taggart--political activists from different parties--examine forty years of reapportionment litigation and profile many of the personalities who changed the Mississippi political landscape. The book features interviews with more than 140 public officials, candidates, lobbyists, legislators, and others who reveal the public and backroom pressures that shaped history. A sharply detailed account of a major transition with national implications, *Mississippi Politics* describes how the state has evolved politically and where it may possibly be headed.

Jere Nash is a consultant whose positions have included executive director of Mississippi First, deputy state auditor, and director of policy and chief of staff for Governor Ray Mabus. Andy Taggart has his own law firm and has served as executive director of the Mississippi Republican Party, chief of staff for Governor Kirk Fordice, and president/CEO of the Mississippi Technology Alliance. John Grisham is the author of eighteen novels and lives in Virginia and Mississippi.

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