

# BRENT BAILEY

FOR PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSIONER

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## Brent Bailey On The Issues

“My primary goal is ensuring transparency in all proceedings at the Mississippi Public Service Commission and encouraging utility customers to get engaged by understanding how decisions made by the Commission impact family budgets,” said Bailey, a Mississippi State University biological engineering graduate and former member of the Bulldog football team.

The Carthage, Mississippi, native plans to keep utility rates low by fostering the expansion of energy efficiency programs. Since 2010, Bailey has been a driving force in the adoption of MPSC rules that require utilities to develop and offer these programs for all customer classes.

“As Commissioner, I will help lower the utility bills that households and businesses actually pay. I will embrace energy diversification that ensures reliability, affordability and safety while recognizing the economic contribution of all energy resources,” Bailey said. “My other passion is using Mississippi’s energy and natural resources wisely. I will continue to support and expand the opportunities for energy efficiency and alternative energy technologies that create jobs, build resilience in infrastructure, and unlock economical solutions that lower customer costs.”

Many issues are currently pending before the MPSC, and many other regulatory challenges and opportunities will present themselves over the next few years. “The utility customers of the 22 central district counties, as well as all Mississippians, deserve committed, rational leadership to help guide the state into a new era of energy production, conservation and use. The utility of the future, whether it’s electricity, natural gas, water, sewer or telecommunications, must be ready to adapt to new challenges while continuing to provide reliable, accessible and affordable services,” said Bailey, who pledges to be a full-time public servant and accessible to all utility customers.

“Furthermore, I intend to create a collaborative environment where all regulatory and non-regulatory utility matters can be thoughtfully examined,” said Bailey, “and build positive relations with utility providers whose rates are not directly regulated by the MPSC.”

**The Kemper County Lignite IGCC Facility** – In March 2010, I wrote a letter to the three sitting Public Service Commissioners stating my reservations regarding the Kemper project and urged them to thoroughly assess whether Kemper is the best solution for generating electricity. Even before the MPSC authorized construction of Kemper, I expressed that this costly, unproven technology was not in the best interest of MS Power’s customers. I stand by those assertions still today

**Consumer Choice through Net Metering** – This policy allows Mississippi electrical utility customers a level of choice that has never existed before in Mississippi. What we believe as conservatives is that competition and free market forces is most always a good thing, and a good thing for your family's and business' bottom line.

**Renewable Energy** – Renewable energy resources – including water, wind, biomass, geothermal, and solar – are abundant and geographically diverse across the United States, and can be used to generate electricity, provide thermal energy, fuel industrial processes, or make transportation fuels. The deployment of renewable energy technologies has grown rapidly in recent years as the nation looks to meet growing demand, diversify its energy supply, spur economic development and reduce emissions. It is important to highlight the benefits of renewable energy because the energy world continues to change rapidly. Utilities must be more dynamic to meet consumer demands and integrate new projects – whether it is residential solar rooftop or utility-scale systems.

**Energy Efficiency Programs** – Energy efficiency program are economically beneficial to ratepayers and the overall economic development of our state. A report out of Georgia Tech found that the implementation of energy efficiency programs and policies could reduce energy costs for Mississippi consumers by a cumulative total of \$1.2 billion by 2030. Delivering these programs also requires a local trained work force. You can't outsource energy efficiency.

**Integrated Resource Planning** – Changing technologies, volatile fuel prices, and shifts in regulatory constructs have reinforced the need for resource planning to ensure utilities can provide reliable, cost-competitive electric service to their customers. By establishing a uniform IRP policy applicable across all regulated electric utilities in Mississippi, this new paradigm in generation needs assessments will unleash energy innovation, increase energy resource options, and give a boost to customer choice in the marketplace.

**Boosting Jobs** – A local workforce trained to standards that are market-valued leads to safer, more cost-effective energy projects, which boosts consumer confidence and supports the expansion of energy resources across the state. Furthermore, providing local utility services with local contractors keep dollars turning over in our local communities.

**Stopping Robocalls and Bolstering No Call** – Phone numbers you don't recognize; Annoying recorded messages selling unwanted services; Call at all hours of the day; Scams, phishing and spoofing. Whether it's the landline or cell phone, Mississippians are getting fed up and want relief. While unscrupulous people try to stay one step ahead, telecommunication companies have the tools and technology to stop many of these unwanted calls. The proper regulatory structure must be put in place to punish abusers and encourage technological solutions.

**Truthfulness in Cellular Service Maps** – Consumers purchase cellular phones and the accompanying plans based on cellular service coverage maps. However, these maps may not accurately reflect the quality of service – especially in rural areas. Companies offering cellular services should put forth accurate coverage information and continue to eliminate gaps in service by investing in infrastructure.

**Expanding Broadband in Rural Areas** – High-speed internet connectivity is a necessity, vital for quality of life and economic opportunity. Many Mississippians are missing out on many of the benefits and opportunities of today's digital age. In rural areas, seniors lack access to modern health care, students are left behind on educational opportunities, and small businesses can't

sell their goods to a global market. Innovative financing and quality services must be part of broadband deployment.

**Safe Drinking Water** – Access to safe, affordable drinking water should not be secondary matter. Rural areas are the most vulnerable to drinking water impacts. But we are also seeing crumbling infrastructure in urban areas. Water system managers need to prioritize actions to ensure safe water resources for their customers.

**Reviewing the Health of the Generation Fleet** – Much of the state’s electric generation fleet is nearing end of useful life and are not as efficient as newer systems. The Commission will have to determine what assets are facing reliability issues, what upgrades and repairs are feasible, and which energy resource should replace aging generation units once retired. These decisions could have significant impacts on rates if not conducted properly.

**Transparency** – An open and transparent government is key to maintaining the trust and support of its citizens. How can ratepayers be assured that their interests are being served if the information used to set rates, establish programs and approve applications is available to only a select few individuals? The Commission must continue to evaluate the criteria of what constitutes confidential, proprietary or a trade secret so that information that should be public is not kept out of the reach of affected parties.