Bill Phillips (FL-07) Backgrounder

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| **Significant Findings**   * *2004: Ran Unsuccessfully for US Senate in Florida* * *Supported Partial Social Security Privatization* * *Described Self as “Democrat Who Happens to be Gay”* * *PAC Ran Anti-Allen West Ad Which Was Decried as Racist* * *Does Not Live in FL-07 as Currently Drawn* |

**Bill Phillips is a fundraiser and organizer in Florida politics with a background in banking and marketing. Phillips is currently a resident of Orlando, which is not in Florida’s current 7th Congressional district. Phillips began his career working for Merrill Lynch and Morgan Stanley before leaving in 2004 to run for US Senate. Phillips took few policy positions during his Senate race, though he did support partial Social Security privatization. During the campaign, Phillips addressed his sexuality by referring to himself as “a Democrat who happens to be gay.” After gaining little to no traction and polling at 1 percent, Phillips dropped out of the race before the primary and rejoined a bank, this time Citi.**

**Phillips became more involved in Florida politics after leaving Citi, working as the director of the Florida Education Association. In 2010, Phillips left the FEA to start his own political and non-profit consulting business, Defero Advisory Services. Phillips served as executive director of two PACs in 2012, the Florida Watch Ballot Committee and American Sunrise. Florida Watch Ballot Committee was accused of serving as a funnel for out of state money, while American Sunrise was funded by Rep. Patrick Murphy’s father during his campaign against Allen West to run negative ads. American Sunrise’s ad depicting Allen West punching women and a family was decried as racist and was considered one of the most extreme ads of the cycle.**

**Background**

* NAME: William Calvin Phillips, Jr.
* BORN: October 24, 1968
* HOME: Orlando, FL
* FAMILY: Cohabitating with Samuel M. Gallagher
* EDUCATION: Unknown
* PROFESSIONAL: Principal, Defero Advisory Services, 2010-present; Director, Florida Education Association, 2007-2010; Vice President, Citi, 2005-2006; Vice President, Morgan Stanley, 2000-2004; Vice President, Merrill Lynch, 1993-2000
* POLITICAL EXPERIENCE: Candidate, US Senate, 2004
* ORGANIZATIONS: Executive Director, Florida Watch Ballot Committee; Executive Director, American Sunrise

**Supported Partial Social Security Privatization**

In February 2004, Phillips supported partial Social Security privatization for younger workers. [Tampa Tribune, 2/22/04]

**PAC Ran Anti-Allen West Ad Which Was Decried as Racist**

In 2012, a Phillips-run super PAC called American Sunrise ran a controversial ad against Allen West in which a cartoon version of West was punching white women. West accused the ad of being racist, but Phillips celebrated the national news coverage the ad drew.

“The role of the super PAC is to take some of the pressure off the candidate to be so negative. It threw him off his game. He spent his time talking about our ad as opposed to his vision for the district,” said Phillips. [Tampa Bay Times, 7/20/14]

**Led Pro-Amendment Florida Watch Ballot Committee PAC**

In October 2010, Phillips ran a political action committee, Florida Watch Ballot Committee, dedicated to passing two constitutional amendments “intended to prevent lawmakers from gerrymandering legislative and congressional districts.” Phillips’ group donated $500,000 to Fair Districts Florida, another group dedicated to the same cause. [St. Petersburg Times Blog, 10/05/10]

**PAC Criticized for Acting as Funnel for Out of State Money**

In October 2010, Phillips’ group was criticized for serving as a funnel for out of state money into the campaign for the constitutional amendments. His group had only one donor, America Votes, which had given Florida Watch Ballot Committee the $500,000 it later gave to Fair Districts Florida.

“We solicit other funding, and we report it as required by the state of Florida,” said Phillips. [Politico, 10/05/10]

**2004: Ran Unsuccessfully for US Senate in Florida**

In 2004, Phillips ran for US Senate. He was “unsuccessful in this endeavor.” [The-Constiuent.com, 6/12/14]

**Withdrew from Senate Race**

In April 2004, Phillips withdrew from the race for the Democratic nomination for a US Senate seat. He had drawn less than 1 percent in a poll the previous week. [Tampa Tribune, 4/22/04]

**Opposed the Farm Bill and Sugar Subsidies**

In June 2013, Phillips opposed the Farm Bill and subsidies for the sugar industry. [Facebook.com, [6/20/13](https://www.facebook.com/will1024/posts/10151742996133745)]



**Described Self as “Democrat Who Happens to be Gay”**

In February 2004, Phillips described himself as “a Democrat who happens to be gay.”

“People are hungry for a change and looking for leadership with a private-sector background,” said Phillips. [Orlando Sentinel, 2/13/04]

**Does Not Live in FL-07 District**

As of July 2014, Phillips’ residence at 415 East Pine St in Orlando was not in the LF-07 district. [Nationalatlas.gov, accessed 7/22/14; Nexis People search, 7/22/14]

In December 2007, Phillips and the Florida Education Association opposed a constitutional ban on gay marriage in Florida.

“Gay marriage is already illegal in Florida, but beyond that, this measure as proposed actually is much broader. It's a direct threat to the benefits and protections that many people already enjoy today,” said Phillips. [Florida Times-Union, 12/14/07]

**Contributed Almost $4,000 to Democratic Candidates and Committees**

As of July 2014, Phillips had donated to the following federal candidates:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Recipient** | **Amount** | **Date** |
| Friends Of Patrick Murphy  (FL/18) | $450 | 3/23/12 |
| Elizabeth for MA | $2,500 | 3/19/12 |
| Friends Of Patrick Murphy  (FL/18) | $450 | 2/23/12 |
| Friends Of Patrick Murphy  (FL/18) | $450 | 1/23/12 |
| Friends Of Patrick Murphy  (FL/18) | $450 | 12/23/11 |
| Democratic Executive Committee Of Florida | $400 | 10/21/11 |
| Joe Garcia For Congress  (FL/25) | $250 | 5/18/10 |
| **TOTAL** | **$4,950** |  |

[CQ Moneyline, accessed 7/22/14]

**Associated with the Following Addresses:**

As of July 2014, Phillips was associated with the following addresses:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Address** | **City** | **State** | **Zip** | **County** |
| 415 East Pine St Apt. 1709 | Orlando | FL | 32801 | Orange |
| 345 Bayshore Blvd Apt. 308 | Tampa | FL | 33606 | Hillsborough |
| 74 Via Verona | Palm Beach Gardens | FL | 33418 | Palm Beach |

[Nexis People Search, accessed 7/22/14]

**No Evidence of Criminal Record**

As of July 2014, Phillips had no evidence of a criminal record. [Nexis Criminal Records search, accessed 7/22/14]

**No Evidence of Judgments or Liens**

As of July 2014, there was no evidence that Phillips had any judgments or liens filed against him. [Nexis Judgments and Liens Record Search, 7/22/14]

**No Evidence of Bankruptcies**

As of July 2014, there was no evidence that Phillips had filed for bankruptcy. [Nexis Bankruptcy Records search, accessed 7/22/14]

**Searches Performed in this Document:**

Nexis Strings: (Bill or will! Pre/2 Phillips and w/50 Nexis Bad Words search); (Bill or will! Pre/2 Phillips and phillips); Bill or will! Pre/2 Phillips and Phillips and senate [1/2004-12/2004]

Google strings: Bill Phillips Senate; Bill Phillips Florida

CQ Money Line Campaign Donations

Nexis Public Records Search

Facebook (http://facebook.com/will1024)

Twitter (@billdefero)

Linkedin

**Further Research Necessary**

In-depth public records search

In-depth news search

In-depth employment history

In-depth analysis of clients of consulting business and other potential political clients

**Important Note on This Document**

Please keep in mind at all times that this is preliminary research, and further research will be necessary on Bill Phillips. It is strongly recommended that you contact the DCCC’s Research Department for more information and in the event that you intend to use material from this report for public communications purposes. Thank you.