

Rodney Ellis

Occupation: Partner - Rice Financial Products Company; Shareholder - The Tagos Group; Of Counsel - Reaud, Morgan, & Quinn

Education: Texas Southern University, B.A.; LBJ School of Public Affairs, M.P.A.; University of Texas Law School, J.D.

Legislative Experience: Senate Member, 1990 - Present

Hometown: Houston

Party: Democrat

Senator Rodney Ellis was elected to the Texas Senate in 1990. During his tenure, he has earned praise as a leader on economic development, education, civil rights, responsible environmental policy, tax cuts for the middle class, criminal justice, and workforce development issues.

Senator Ellis has passed over 500 pieces of legislation. One of his most notable accomplishments includes passage of the TEXAS Grant program, which has disbursed almost \$1.8 billion in tuition and fees to over 207,000 students. The program continues to educate students for the improvement of the Texas workforce.

He also passed a middle class tax relief bill that created a 3-day sales tax holiday and provided businesses with franchise tax relief for job creation, capital investment, and research and development. The bill has saved taxpayers over \$3.6 billion--\$2.7 billion in sales tax savings on several items, including energy efficient appliances, back to school items, and nonprescription medicine--and over \$827 million in franchise tax savings for job credits, research and development credits, and small business credits.

Most recently, Senator Ellis passed an amendment to create a green jobs development and training program to help Texans prepare for employment in the burgeoning green technology industry and to usher the state of Texas into an environmentally responsible and secure future.

Senator Ellis is the proud founder of the Texas Legislative Internship Program (TLIP). Since TLIP's inception, it has become the largest legislative internship program in the state, giving almost 400 young people the opportunity to make a difference in Texas politics and public policy.

Senator Ellis is the current Chairman of the Senate Committee on Government Organization, which looks at measures to improve the efficiency of state government. He also sits on the Senate State Affairs, Criminal Justice, and Transportation and Homeland Security Committees. He also has chaired the Senate Finance, Jurisprudence, and Intergovernmental Relations Committees in previous sessions.

Senator Ellis currently serves on the National Commission on Energy Policy, the University of Texas School of Law Foundation Board, the Council on Foreign Relations, the Rainbow PUSH Coalition Board of Directors, the Alliance for Digital Equality Board of Advisors, chairs the Board of Directors for the Innocence Project, Inc. of New York, and co-chairs the Commission to Engage African Americans on Climate Change.

Before his election to the Texas Senate, Senator Ellis served three terms as a member of the Houston City Council and as chief of staff to the late U.S. Congressman Mickey Leland. He holds a bachelor's degree from Texas Southern University, a master's degree from the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs, and a law degree from the University of Texas School of Law. Ellis also studied at Xavier University of New Orleans and the London School of Economics.

Rodney Ellis is married to Licia Green-Ellis and has four children.

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