



## Cory Wilson

President Trump nominated Cory Wilson to serve on the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Mississippi on August 28, 2019. Wilson is anti-choice.

### Career<sup>1</sup>

- Bachelor of Business Administration, University of Mississippi, 1992
- Juris Doctorate, Yale Law School, 1995
- Clerk, Judge Emmett Ripley Cox, U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eleventh Circuit, 1995-1996
- Associate, Watkins Ludlam Winter & Stennis, 1996-2001
- Adjunct Professor (Legal Writing), Mississippi College of Law, 1998
- Associate, Bradley Arant Rose & White LLP, 2001-2003
- Partner, Bradley Arant Rose & White LLP, 2003-2005, 2006-2008
- White House Fellow/Special Assistant to Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld, U.S. Department of Defense, 2005-2006
- Deputy Secretary of State/Chief of Staff, Mississippi Secretary of State's Office, 2008-2011
- Attorney, Cory T. Wilson PLLC, 2011
- Of Counsel, Heidelberg Steinberger Colmer & Burrow PA, 2011-2016
- Adjunct Professor (Pretrial Practice), Mississippi College of Law, 2013
- Senior Advisor & Counsel, Mississippi State Treasurer's Office, 2014-2015
- Representative, Mississippi House of Representatives, 2016-2019
- Of Counsel, Jernigan Copeland Attorneys PLLC, 2016-2019
- Judge, Mississippi Court of Appeals, 2019-present

### Record on Reproductive Freedom

#### Court Cases

- As a Mississippi state representative, Wilson signed on to an amicus brief in support of Texas's clinic shutdown law.<sup>2</sup> The brief that Wilson signed on to was drafted by attorneys for the anti-choice activist groups Americans United for Life and the Bioethics Defense Fund.<sup>3</sup> Specifically, the brief argued that state laws targeting abortion providers are enforceable even if they do not "actually serve the government's interest in promoting health."<sup>4</sup> The Supreme Court ultimately found the Texas law to be unconstitutional in *Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt*.<sup>5</sup>

## Notable Information

- Wilson took many anti-choice votes during his time in the Mississippi House of Representatives, including:
  - Wilson voted in favor of a bill that would have banned abortion before most women know they are pregnant.<sup>6</sup>
  - Wilson voted in favor of a bill that banned abortion after 15-weeks of pregnancy.<sup>7</sup> In an e-mail to supporters about this bill, Wilson stated: “I supported this bill because, as someone who is strongly pro-life, I believe it is important to protect both the lives of unborn children and their mothers.”<sup>8</sup>
  - Wilson voted in favor of a bill that banned certain abortion procedures and sought to criminalize abortion providers.<sup>9</sup> In an e-mail to supporters, Wilson referred to this vote as a “stand for life.”<sup>10</sup>
  - Wilson voted in favor of a bill that defunded Planned Parenthood by excluding any entity that performs abortion from the Mississippi Medicaid program.<sup>11</sup> In an e-mail to supporters, Wilson referred to this vote as a “stand for life.”<sup>12</sup>
- As a candidate for Mississippi’s state legislature, Wilson filled out a questionnaire from Mississippi Right to Life’s State Political Action Committee.<sup>13</sup> In his responses, he indicated that he would support “complete and immediate reversal of the *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton* decisions,” would vote to “prevent the use of tax funds for abortion other than to prevent the death of the mother,” and would oppose “any attempts to weaken” Mississippi’s existing law requiring parental consent for minors seeking an abortion.<sup>14</sup>
- As a Mississippi state representative, Wilson had a 71% lifetime rating from the American Conservative Union.<sup>15</sup> The American Conservative Union scores state legislative votes to “determine a member’s adherence to conservative principles,” including bills that focus on “social and cultural issues” like the “2nd amendment, religion, life, welfare, and education.”<sup>16</sup> Scored votes in 2018 included Mississippi H.B. 1510, which banned abortion after 15-weeks of pregnancy.<sup>17</sup>
- Wilson has been a member of the conservative, anti-choice Federalist Society.<sup>18</sup> The Federalist Society is led by Leonard Leo, the anti-choice activist who is heavily involved in selecting Trump’s Supreme Court and lower court nominees. Leo has been outspoken in his anti-choice views, calling abortion “an act of force” and “a threat to human life,”<sup>19</sup> and serves as co-chairman of Students for Life,<sup>20</sup> a group whose mission is to “abolish abortion.”<sup>21</sup>
- Wilson has donated to numerous anti-choice politicians, including Ed Gillespie, Mitt Romney, Sam Brownback, and Charles “Chip” Pickering Jr.<sup>22</sup>

## Record on Other Key Issues

- As a state representative, Wilson voted in favor of a bill to allow discrimination against LGBTQ individuals in Mississippi.<sup>23</sup> The bill's stated purpose was to protect the following beliefs: "[m]arriage is or should be recognized as the union of one man and one woman," "[s]exual relations are properly reserved to such a marriage," and "[m]ale (man) or female (woman) refer to an individual's immutable biological sex as objectively determined by anatomy and genetics at time of birth."<sup>24</sup> Among other things, the bill allowed religious organizations to fire LGBTQ employees, to refuse to hire someone because of their sexual orientation or gender identity, to refuse housing to LGBTQ individuals, and to refuse to facilitate adoption or foster care for LGBTQ prospective parents.<sup>25</sup> The bill also allowed health care providers to refuse to provide gender-affirming services to transgender individuals and to refuse to provide fertility services.<sup>26</sup> In addition, the bill allowed government employees to refuse to provide marriage licenses to LGBTQ individuals.<sup>27</sup> In an e-mail to supporters, Wilson stated: "I stand by my vote for the bill, especially given the Obama Administration's public school transgender bathroom edict this past week. Something needs to be done to protect religious freedom and freedom of conscience from the rush to intolerance from the left."

November 19, 2019

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<sup>1</sup> *Questionnaire for Judicial Nominees: Cory Todd Wilson*, UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY.

<sup>2</sup> *Amicus Curiae Brief of More Than 450 Bipartisan and Bicameral State Legislators and Lieutenant Governors in Support of the Respondents and Affirmance of the Fifth Circuit, Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt*, 136 S.Ct. 2292 (2016) (No. 15-274), 2016 WL 491479.

<sup>3</sup> *Id.*

<sup>4</sup> *Id.*

<sup>5</sup> *Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt*, 136 S.Ct. 2292 (2016).

<sup>6</sup> H.B. 732, 2019 Reg. Sess. (Miss. 2019) (roll call available at <http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/2019/pdf/votes/house/0370021.pdf>).

<sup>7</sup> H.B. 1510, 2018 Reg. Sess. (Miss. 2018) (roll call available at <http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/2018/pdf/votes/house/0320008.pdf>).

<sup>8</sup> *Questionnaire for Judicial Nominees: Cory Todd Wilson*, UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY.

<sup>9</sup> H.B. 519, 2016 Reg. Sess. (Miss. 2016) (roll call available at <http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/2016/pdf/votes/house/0520005.pdf>).

<sup>10</sup> *Questionnaire for Judicial Nominees: Cory Todd Wilson*, UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY.

<sup>11</sup> S.B. 2238, 2016 Reg. Sess. (Miss. 2016) (roll call available at <http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/2016/pdf/votes/house/0850008.pdf>).

<sup>12</sup> *Questionnaire for Judicial Nominees: Cory Todd Wilson*, UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY.

<sup>13</sup> *2007 State Candidate Questionnaire*, MISSISSIPPI RIGHT TO LIFE (June 13, 2007), <https://afj.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Wilson-Attachments-p489-493.pdf>.

<sup>14</sup> *Id.*

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<sup>15</sup> 2018 Ratings of Mississippi, THE AMERICAN CONSERVATIVE UNION FOUNDATION, [http://acuratings.conservative.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2018/10/Mississippi\\_2018\\_web-3.pdf](http://acuratings.conservative.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2018/10/Mississippi_2018_web-3.pdf) (last visited Oct. 24, 2019).

<sup>16</sup> *Id.*

<sup>17</sup> *Id.*

<sup>18</sup> *Questionnaire for Judicial Nominees: Cory Todd Wilson*, UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY.

<sup>19</sup> Jeffrey Toobin, *The Conservative Pipeline to the Supreme Court*, THE NEW YORKER (April 17, 2017), <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2017/04/17/the-conservative-pipeline-to-the-supreme-court>.

<sup>20</sup> *Board of Directors*, STUDENTS FOR LIFE, <https://studentsforlife.org/about/boardofdirectors/> (last visited July 25, 2019).

<sup>21</sup> *Mission Statement*, STUDENTS FOR LIFE, <http://studentsforlife.org/about/mission-statement/> (last visited July 25, 2019).

<sup>22</sup> *Donor Lookup: Cory Wilson*, OPEN SECRETS, <https://www.opensecrets.org/donor-lookup/results?name=cory+wilson> (last visited October 24, 2019).

<sup>23</sup> H.B. 1523, 2016 Reg. Sess. (Miss. 2016) (roll call available at <http://billstatus.ls.state.ms.us/2016/pdf/votes/house/0460003.pdf>).

<sup>24</sup> *Id.*

<sup>25</sup> *Id.*

<sup>26</sup> *Id.*

<sup>27</sup> *Questionnaire for Judicial Nominees: Cory Todd Wilson*, UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY.