

SENATOR MICHAEL BENNETT

The Florida Senate, District 21

Strait-talking Florida State Senator doesn't mince words when it comes to his passion for eliminating government interference and stamping out waste. He takes his stewardship of Florida's future seriously through efforts to improve education and pursue sustainable energy.



Even though he's not enamored of politics, Sen. Mike Bennett embraces his role in helping create a positive future for Florida, and the successes he's achieved keep him in the game.

After a notable career in real estate investing and multiple small businesses, Bennett decided to enter politics in 2002. "I saw the government putting up roadblocks to business and felt I could make a difference," he said. "For the past eight years, we've consistently been able to lower the rate for workers compensation and reduce government waste. We've also been able to make significant improvements in education."

Among his many passions is an intense desire to see Florida develop a strong energy policy and encourage development of alternative energy systems to reduce dependence on foreign oil. "One of my biggest disappointments is that we have not done this, but it's not over yet," he says. In recognition of his work, the Council for Sustainable Florida made Bennett the first legislator to receive its Leadership Best Practice Award.

"My wife, Dee, and I didn't have kids, and at the end of the day, I'd like to leave something behind whether that's a better education for our children or a cleaner environment," he says. Bennett credits Dee with setting him on the right path in life and considers their 44-year marriage his greatest accomplishment. Brushing aside his own considerable public service, he praises her work at local food banks and soup kitchens. "When I look at what she does," he says, "everything I do is tiny."