

## **Congressman Bennie G. Thompson's Biography:**

Congressman Bennie G. Thompson was elected to the United States House of Representatives in a special election on April 20, 1993. He represents Mississippi's Second Congressional District and is a proud native of Bolton, Mississippi. Now serving his 17th term, Congressman Thompson is Mississippi's longest-serving African American elected official and the sole Democrat in the state's federal congressional delegation. His leadership in Washington, D.C. reflects the trust placed in him by his constituents and his unwavering commitment to public service.

Over the course of his career, Congressman Thompson has fought for civil rights, quality education, and accessible healthcare. His advocacy work has not been limited to fights for veterans, HBCUs, Social Security, and rural development to say the least. Each effort reflects his commitment to improving the lives of everyday Americans.

His dedication to justice was shaped by early involvement in the civil rights movement. At Tougaloo College, he joined the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and served as a field organizer for Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer's 1964 congressional campaign. In that role he helped lead voter registration drives across Mississippi. These formative experiences laid the foundation for a lifetime of advocacy.

Congressman Thompson's public service began locally as Alderman of Bolton from 1969 to 1972. He went on to serve as Mayor from 1973 to 1980, leading efforts to improve infrastructure and housing. From 1980 to 1993, he served as County Supervisor in Hinds County, paving the way for his congressional bid for the same seat once pursued by Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer's bid in 1964 for Congress.

He has been married to his college sweetheart, London Johnson of Mound Bayou, Mississippi, for 54 years. They have one daughter, one granddaughter, and one grandson. A lifetime member of Asbury United Methodist Church, Thompson earned a B.A. in Political Science from Tougaloo College and an M.S. in Educational Administration from Jackson State University. He is also a proud

member of Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. (Gamma Rho 1967 of Tougaloo College).

Congressman Thompson has advanced policies that improve American lives, supporting veterans, defending Social Security, expanding healthcare access, investing in infrastructure, and securing equitable funding for HBCUs. In 2021, he helped deliver over \$237 million in pandemic relief to Mississippi's HBCUs, strengthening student aid and campus stability. He authored the 2000 legislation that established the National Center for Minority Health and Health Care Disparities, addressing deep-rooted inequities in underserved communities. Through the 2018 Farm Bill, he backed heirs' property reform, allowing families to access USDA programs by submitting alternative documentation to demonstrate control of inherited land, even without a clear title.

His leadership spans key committees, including Agriculture, Budget, and Small Business. Most notably, he served as Chairman of the House Committee on Homeland Security from 2007 to 2011 and again from 2019 to 2023. He now serves as Ranking Member.

On July 1, 2021, Speaker Nancy Pelosi appointed him Chairman of the Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the United States Capitol. Under his leadership, the bipartisan committee conducted a thorough investigation into the events and causes of the attack, drawing from over 1,000 witness interviews and hundreds of thousands of documents. At the conclusion of the investigation, Americans were given a clearer understanding of the events, motivations, the participants and coordinated efforts behind the assault, mobilizing the public to safeguard democracy and demand accountability.

His decades of service have earned national recognition. In 2023, he received the NAACP Chairman's Award for his civil rights advocacy. In 2025, President Joseph R. Biden awarded him the Presidential Citizens Medal, one of the nation's highest civilian honors.

Congressman Thompson's legacy is defined by principled leadership, grassroots activism, and a deep commitment to justice. His work continues to shape policy, protect communities, and inspire future generations. As he serves Mississippi's

Second District, his voice remains a powerful force for equity, dignity, and progress.