Speaker Tim Ford, Mississippi
Former Chair of the Southern Legislative Conference
1952 - 2015

Former Mississippi Speaker and Southern Legislative Conference Chair Tim Ford passed away Friday, February 27, 2015, after suffering a heart attack at his home in Oxford, Mississippi. He was 63.

Speaker Ford had a long and influential career as a legislator in Mississippi. He was first elected to the Mississippi House of Representatives in 1979, and was elected Speaker of the House in 1988. He continued to serve as Speaker of the House until his retirement from the Legislature in 2004. His 16-year tenure as Speaker made him the second longest-serving Speaker in Mississippi history.

Speaker Ford also was a stalwart for the Southern Legislative Conference. Among his many important contributions to the Conference’s work, in 1984, he served as a delegate to a regional meeting that established a shared presidential primary date in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Tennessee and Texas. The meeting created the March 8, 1988 primary date, Super Tuesday, and set the pace for future presidential primaries in the South. Later, as Speaker, he served on the Conference’s Executive Committee from 1988 to 2004. In 2000, he served as the Conference’s chair, hosting the SLC Annual Meeting in Biloxi, Mississippi.

Speaker Ford is survived by his wife, Kathy; his two sons and daughters; and his five grandchildren. A public visitation will be held at Parkway Funeral Home and Memorial Park on Monday, March 2, 2015 from 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm, and Tuesday, March 3, 2015 from 9:00 am to 11:00 am. Chapel service will be held at Paris-Yates Chapel at the University of Mississippi, Tuesday, March 3, 2015, at 3:00 pm. In lieu of flowers, the family asks donations be made to the Tim Ford Scholarship Fund at his alma mater, The University of Mississippi. Donations may be sent to the Tim Ford Scholarship Fund, The University of Mississippi Foundation, Memory House, P.O. Box 1848, University, MS 38677.