



J.C. Watts

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J.C. Watts is the chairman of the J.C. Watts Companies. As chairman, J.C. provides strategic focus and program leadership to the firm's business engagements, alliances and initiatives. He works with clients to implement business development, communications and public affairs strategies. He currently leads a strategic alliance with Fleishman-Hillard, America's largest public relations firms. He is the chairman of FM Policy Focus, a coalition of leading financial services trade associations. He is working with the Business Roundtable to develop a nationwide effort to increase business opportunities in America's inner cities and poor rural areas. He serves as a corporate director at Burlington Northern Santa Fe, Clear Channel Communications, Dillard's, and Terex Corporation. He is a frequent guest on national and international television news shows and radio shows, including a weekly commentary on NPR's *Travis Smiley Show*, and has been quoted in numerous newspaper articles, both in the United States and around the world. He also writes a monthly column in the *Sporting News*. His book is titled, *What Color Is A Conservative?*

J.C. has continued his public service by leading a United States delegation to Vienna, Austria, at the request of President Bush and Secretary of State Powell, and to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Conference on Racism, Discrimination and Xenophobia. He joined President Bush on his historic trip to Africa, and also co-founded and co-chairs the Coalition for AIDS Relief in Africa and serves on the board of the Corporate Council on Africa. He also serves on the boards of the Boy Scouts of America and the United States Military Academy at West Point, and he is a Distinguished Fellow at the Mercatus Center at George Mason University. He is also the chairman of GOPAC and has created the J.C. Watts Foundation to focus on urban renewal and other charitable initiatives.

J.C. was elected to the United States Congress from the fourth district of Oklahoma in 1994. In 1998, he was elected by his peers to serve as chairman of the Republican Conference, the fourth-ranking leadership position in the majority party in the United States House of Representatives, and a position once held by Dick Cheney, Jack Kemp and Gerald Ford. In this capacity, J.C. provided daily counsel to the Speaker of the House, and participated in bi-weekly meetings with the President of the United States.

As a member of Congress representing the fourth district of Oklahoma, J.C. served for eight years on the House Armed Services Committee. J.C. authored legislation to create, and then he later served on, the House Select Committee on Homeland Security. He also served on the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, as well as the House Banking Committee. J.C. led two congressional trade missions to Africa. Mr. Watts co-authored the American Community Renewal and New Markets Act, which President Clinton signed into law in 2000. He was the author of President Bush's faith based initiative, the Community Solutions Act of 2001. J.C. also developed legislation with Congressman John Lewis to establish a Smithsonian museum of African American history.

J.C. was born on November 18, 1957 in Eufaula, Oklahoma. He graduated from Eufaula High School in 1976 and attended the University of Oklahoma until his graduation in 1981 with a BA in journalism. While at the University of Oklahoma, Watts was quarterback for the Sooners, leading them to two consecutive Big Eight Championships and Orange Bowl victories. He was voted the Most Valuable Player in the 1980 and 1981 Orange Bowls. From 1981 to 1986, he started for Ottawa and Toronto in the Canadian Football League and was voted the Most Valuable Player of the Grey Cup, the CFL's Super Bowl, during his rookie season.

After returning to Oklahoma, Watts served as a youth minister at Sunnyside Baptist Church in Del City, Oklahoma from January 1987 until December 1994, when he then became associate pastor. In 1990 he was elected to the Oklahoma State Corporation Commission and became chairman before running for Congress in 1994.

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