

## Marco Rubio - Biography

Highly regarded for his principled, energetic and idea-driven leadership, Marco Rubio is a candidate for U.S. Senate in 2010.

In 1971, Marco was born in Miami to Cuban-born parents who came to America following Fidel Castro's takeover. When he was eight years old, Rubio and his family moved to Las Vegas, Nevada where his father worked as a bartender at the Sams Town Hotel and his mother as a housekeeper at the Imperial Palace Hotel. In 1985, the family returned to Miami where his father continued working as a bartender at the Mayfair House Hotel until 1997. Thereafter he worked as a school crossing guard until his retirement in 2005. His mother worked as a Kmart stock clerk until she retired in 1995.

Rubio attended South Miami Senior High School, graduating in 1989. He attended Tarkio College in Missouri for one year on a football scholarship before transferring to Santa Fe Community College and then graduating in 1993 with a bachelor of science from the University of Florida. He continued his studies at the University of Miami where he earned his juris doctor, cum laude, in 1996.

From 2000-2008, Rubio served in the Florida House of Representatives. During this period, he served as Majority Whip, Majority Leader and Speaker of the House, effectively promoting an agenda of lower taxes, better schools, a leaner and more efficient government and free market empowerment. Rubio also helped spearhead Florida's congressional and legislative redistricting effort. He chaired the House Select Committee on Property Rights, which crafted national model legislation to protect private property rights following the U.S. Supreme Court's *Kelo v. City of New London* decision that opened the door for eminent domain abuse.

During the two years prior to assuming the speakership, Rubio traveled around the state hosting "Idearaisers" to solicit Floridians' input on ways to strengthen Florida. The 100 best ideas were compiled into a book entitled "100 Innovative Ideas for Florida's Future" which served as the basis for his term. All 100 ideas were passed by the Florida House. Fifty-seven of these ideas ultimately became law, including measures to crack down on gangs and sexual predators, promote energy efficient buildings, appliances and vehicles, and help small businesses obtain affordable health coverage. Former U.S. House Speaker Newt Gingrich hailed the effort as "a work of genius."

In addition to these ideas, Rubio championed a major overhaul of the Florida tax system that would have eliminated all property taxes on primary residences in favor of a flat consumption tax. The effort garnered national attention, with

Grover Norquist, president of the fiscally conservative Americans for Tax Reform, praising Rubio as "the most pro-taxpayer legislative leader in the country."

During his legislative career, Rubio also promoted efforts to develop a world-class public school curriculum, increase performance-based accountability, enhance school choice and target the socio-economic factors affecting chronic academic under-performance. He is also widely credited for blocking the expansion of gambling in Florida and shepherding the passage of historic energy legislation based on market incentives rather than government-imposed mandates.

Since the end of his tenure as Speaker, Rubio has resumed his law practice as a sole practitioner. He has also served as a visiting professor at Florida International University's Metropolitan Center, worked as Florida Chairman of GOPAC and as a political analyst for Univision during the 2008 election cycle.

He has also continued his community and civic involvement, serving on the boards of the Latin Builders Association and Alafit International, a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting global literacy. He also remains engaged in the West Miami community where he served as a city commissioner prior to being elected to the state house.

Rubio and his wife, Jeanette Dousdebes Rubio, have been married since 1998. They are the parents of four children: Amanda, Daniella, Anthony, and Dominic. They currently live in the working class city of West Miami, just four blocks from the home his parents moved the family to in 1985.