



## Biography of U.S. Rep. Kendrick B. Meek (FL-17)

Congressman Kendrick B. Meek, who is serving in his third term in the U.S. House of Representatives, was first elected to public office at the age of 27.

Congressman Meek is a member of the powerful House Ways and Means Committee, the committee in Congress that has jurisdiction over virtually every aspect of federal government activity, including:

- Trade, imports, tariffs and customs
- Social Security, Federal Old-Age, Survivors' and Disability Insurance System, and employment taxes
- Medicare and other health care programs
- Social Services programs like Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Security Income (SSI) for the needy aged, blind and disabled
- All federal income taxes, tax free bonds used to finance housing and public works projects, and excise taxes
- Tax exempt foundations and charitable trusts
- Adoption, foster care, child welfare, and child support enforcement
- Unemployment compensation



Mr. Meek is the only Floridian who serves on the Ways and Means Committee. He sits on the Trade Subcommittee, and Income Security and Family Support Subcommittee.

Congressman Meek also serves on the House Armed Services Committee, which oversees the largest agency budget in the federal government and has responsibility for all U.S. land, sea, air, space, and defense programs and operations. He serves on the Air and Land Subcommittee.

In January 2007, Congressman Meek was appointed to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, an inter-parliamentary organization of legislators representing NATO Members and associate countries. He is one of only twelve members of Congress to represent the U.S. on the NATO Parliamentary Assembly.

Congressman Meek was appointed to the Democratic Steering and Policy Committee. Members include Speaker Pelosi, the Democratic leadership and several powerful committee chairmen. The Democratic Steering Committee assigns Democratic House members to committees and sets the overall policy agenda for the House Democratic Caucus.

Recognizing his accomplishments in Congress, The Miami Herald wrote in a September 2006 editorial that, "Mr. Meek has grown in influence and effectiveness in Congress, working across the aisle to promote issues and funding for his district." The Miami

Herald wrote in an October 2006 editorial that Congressman Meek “is tireless, creative and willing to work across party lines.”

The South Florida Sun Sentinel wrote in an August 2006 editorial that, “For the district, Meek has helped obtain federal funding for several projects in the district, including buses in Broward County and Metrorail in Miami-Dade County. Affordable housing, job creation and education remain Meek's top priorities. He also plans to continue working to provide federal support, economic development and aid to Haiti.”

Speaker Nancy Pelosi has described Congressman Meek as “a rising leader in the House who is respected throughout our Caucus and throughout the Congress.” He is the Co-Chair of Speaker Pelosi’s “30-Something” Working Group, which articulates Democratic positions to the public on critical issues before the U.S. Congress.

Congressman Meek has sponsored legislation that provides preferential trade status for Haiti, the poorest country in the Western hemisphere; expands the number of Medicare-supported physician residency training positions in states with a shortage of residents, which includes Florida; requires the Secretary of Homeland Security to develop an emergency telephone alert system in the event of terrorist acts or natural disasters; and restores federal aid for the repair, restoration, and replacement of private nonprofit educational facilities damaged or destroyed by a major disaster.

Meek is the current Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation, a non-partisan, non-profit, public policy, research and educational institute founded by members of the Congressional Black Caucus in 1976.

An experienced legislator who served eight years in the Florida House and Senate, Meek was elected to Congress in 2002 from Florida’s 17th Congressional District, which includes Miami-Dade and Broward Counties.

In 2002, Congressman Meek launched an initiative to reduce class sizes in Florida’s overcrowded public schools. As Chairman of Florida’s Coalition to Reduce Class Size, Congressman Meek spearheaded a petition drive that collected more than 500,000 signatures. He guided the amendment through two opposition efforts in the Florida Supreme Court, as well as a well-funded campaign of scare tactics designed to kill it at the ballot box. In the end, the 2.5 million Florida citizens voted for the measure and it was approved.

Before his service in elected office, Congressman Meek was a captain in the Florida Highway Patrol and earned a Bachelor’s degree in Criminology from Florida A&M University.

Congressman Meek is a native of Miami, Florida. He is married to the former Leslie Dixon of Brooklyn, New York, and they have two children, Lauren and Kendrick Jr. Congressman Meek is the son of former Congresswoman Carrie P. Meek.