

BILL BRADLEY

Bill Bradley was the senior U.S. Senator from New Jersey, elected to his third and final term in 1990. A Democrat, Bradley announced in 1995 that he would not seek re-election but would remain active in public life. He ran against Al Gore in the race for the presidency, which George W. Bush would ultimately win.

During Senator Bradley's distinguished Senate career he followed four guiding principles - restoring economic and personal security for American families, strengthening our civil society in ways that go beyond government, protecting our natural heritage and rethinking America's role in the world. Within this framework, Bradley worked on both big reforms that protect the future and smaller innovations that touch the lives of individuals and communities. Senator Bradley was the third ranking Democrat on the Senate Finance Committee, and also served on the Energy and Natural Resources Committee and the Special Committee on Aging. As a member of the Finance Committee, Bradley fought for fair tax policy, honest budgeting and economic policies that enhanced competitiveness and growth. In 1982, he proposed the Fair Tax, which eventually became the Tax Reform Act of 1986. His tax reforms were based on the principle that people of equal incomes should pay equal taxes. Facing the opposition of special interests, Bradley succeeded in sharply reducing tax rates for all Americans by eliminating most corporate and individual loopholes in the tax codes.

Despite some speculation about a second presidential run, he did not run in 2004 and has shown no interest in returning to political office. In 2002, he reportedly turned down a last-minute offer from New Jersey Democrats to replace Robert Torricelli on the ballot for his old Senate seat (Frank Lautenberg accepted it instead). On January 6, 2004, Bradley endorsed Howard Dean for President in 2004, joining his old rival, Al Gore, in making that move—the endorsement, however, did not have any apparent effect on Dean's unsuccessful campaign.