

The  
Governor  
of Texas  
**Rodney  
Ellis**

April 8, 2000



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# The First Lady of Texas

First Lady Licia Green-Ellis was born in Cincinnati, Ohio. Early on, her family instilled in her the importance of serving the community and holding out a helping hand to those in need.

Those early lessons have guided Licia throughout her life. First during the Civil Rights

Movement, where she participated in sit-ins and rallies and then through Howard University in Washington, DC. where she became active in national politics. Following college, Licia gained respect for her work as a high level campaign aide on several congressional and presidential races, including the 1988 presidential campaign for Reverend Jesse L. Jackson, Sr.



Licia also worked as District Administrator for the late Congressman Mickey Leland and as chief of staff to Congressman Craig A. Washington and Congressman Jesse L. Jackson, Jr. Licia currently serves as president of Apex Advisors, a government relations, communications and strategic planning consulting firm.

A devoted wife, mother and businesswoman, Licia has balanced her active role in the Houston community with the demands of her family. Licia is a recognized leader on children's issues in Houston, serving on the Board of Directors for the San Jacinto Girl Scouts Council, Greater Houston Women's Foundation, Child Advocates and the Inner-City Games.

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# Governor's Message

Dear Friends:

Welcome to Austin. I am delighted that you have come to share this wonderful day with Licia and I.

It is a tremendous honor and my deepest privilege to serve as your voice in the Texas Senate and to today assume the duties and responsibilities of the Governor of Texas. Growing up in Southeast Houston, I never dreamed that I would one day have the opportunity to serve the people and community I love so dearly in such an important role. I thank you for your support and trust and for giving me the opportunity to represent you in Austin. For that privilege, I am genuinely humbled and eternally grateful.

Together, over the past decade, we have accomplished much to help the people of Houston and our great state. As we tackle the challenges of the New Century, it is our duty to honor the struggles and sacrifices of those who came



before. Their efforts helped build the Texas we cherish today and it is in their memory that we will leave an even better Texas of tomorrow.

I hope you will enjoy this day at our state Capitol. Licia, Nicole, Maria, Leland and I deeply appreciate your support and are honored to share this special moment with you.

# Governor Rodney Ellis

**I**n over two decades of public service and throughout his life, one word seems to be associated most with Rodney Ellis...energy.

Whether growing up in Houston, in college, or as an elected official and businessman, Rodney Ellis has always been on the move – and always a success.

In the Texas Senate, Rodney Ellis has earned a reputation as someone who can get things done. He has been the lead author of 298 bills which have become law, including landmark legislation to cut sales and business taxes, create an innovative new college scholarship, enact judicial campaign reform and increase access to health care for needy families.

At every stop, Rodney Ellis has been close to his colleagues and even closer to his constituents. As Governor, he remembers all the helping hands and the open hearts that have guided — and occasionally chided — him on his journey.

Growing up in Houston's Southeast Houston district, Governor Ellis learned early on the value of hard work. Parents Eligha and Oliver Teresa each worked two jobs to make ends meet for Rodney, brother Elijah and sister Melody. Rodney learned the importance of self-discipline and fiscal responsibility while working with his father, while his mother gave

him important lessons on the need to work with people and the value of education. He has carried those values wherever he has gone.

A graduate of Worthing High School in Houston, Rodney Ellis enrolled at Xavier University in Louisiana before returning to Texas and studying at Texas Southern University. It was in undergraduate school that he caught the attention of his professors, who saw his potential and encouraged him to make an impact. Rodney went on to excel at the Lyndon B. Johnson School of Public Affairs and the University of Texas Law School.

While in Austin, Governor Ellis got hands-on experience in Texas government, working as an aide to Lieutenant Governor Bill Hobby and as Law Clerk to Justice John C. Phillips on the Third Court of Appeals.

Governor Ellis served as legal counsel to Texas Railroad Commissioner Buddy Temple before becoming Chief of Staff to U.S. Representative Mickey Leland.

It was through Congressman Leland that Governor Ellis first met his future wife Licia. They were married in 1997. Their family includes three children, Nicole, Maria and Leland.

In 1983, at age 29, Rodney Ellis was elected to the Houston City Council, where he served three terms and earned high marks for his efforts to spur economic development in Houston. After three successful terms on the council, Governor Ellis set his sights for the Texas Senate.

Currently serving his fifth term, Governor Ellis was first elected to represent Senate District 13 in the Texas Senate in 1990 to fill the term of Craig



Washington. Washington had been elected to Congress to succeed Ellis' mentor, Congressman Leland, following Leland's tragic death in a plane crash in Africa. During his decade in the Senate, Rodney has been a leader on education, civil rights, economic development, tax cuts and workforce development issues. His accomplishments have had a major impact on Texas families.

In the Senate, Governor Ellis led the effort to cut sales and business taxes by \$506 million. The legislation eliminated sales taxes on over-the-counter medicines, slashed taxes on small businesses and research and development costs, cut Internet access taxes, and created a sales tax holiday each August to help families



with back-to-school expenses.

Governor Ellis passed legislation requiring nonprofit hospitals – which receive significant tax breaks – to provide health care to uninsured patients. As a result of Ellis' efforts, the amount of charity care provided by Texas' 146 non-profit hospitals increased 72% between 1992 and 1996. He has also launched initiatives to expand access to child care, increase school safety and encourage our blossoming high tech industries.

But perhaps his finest legislative achievement could become one of the biggest downpayments on our children's future the state of Texas has ever made. Governor Ellis sponsored legislation creating the TEXAS Grant Program, an innovative college scholarship plan for high-achieving Texas students. Modeled



its on campaign contributions and demanding a more open electoral process.

Governor Ellis has been just as successful in the world of business and international relations as in the legislative arena. He co-founded Apex Securities, Inc., an investment banking firm which recently merged with Rice Financial Products Company, a nationally recognized municipal interest rate swap company. As an attorney for McGlinchey Stafford, he focuses on corporate and environmental law. He was a key player in helping Mexico ratify NAFTA and he

has been a global leader helping the nations of Africa privatize many of their governmental operations. Ellis has also tapped into the Internet, serving a major role in several cutting edge technology companies such as Periscope Inc., E-Court and E-Stamp.

Governor Ellis serves as Chairman of the Senate Jurisprudence Committee. He also serves on the Senate Intergovernmental Relations and Administration Committees, Lieutenant Governor Rick Perry's Advisory Council on the Digital Economy and Comptroller Carol Keeton

Rylander's e-Texas Commission. Additionally, he serves on the U.S. Secretary of Energy Bill Richardson's Advisory Board, the Board of Trustees of the Texas Law School Foundation, the Board of Directors of the Rainbow/PUSH Coalition and the Center for Policy Alternatives.

Governor Ellis was chosen by his colleagues to serve as President Pro Tempore on the last day of the 76th Legislature. President Pro Tempore is an honor awarded to a senior member of the Texas Senate. The primary duty of the President Pro Tempore is to serve as acting Governor when the Governor and Lieutenant Governor are out of Texas. Having served 28 days as acting Governor, Ellis has led Texas more than any acting Governor in recent memory. The Governor for a Day celebration is a tradition to officially swear in the President Pro Tempore as the Governor of Texas.

"When I take the oath of office, I will think of the history of our great state and all the people who have helped me reach this proud moment," said Ellis. "I will think of my family and friends, colleagues and advisors who have all given me so much. But most of all I will think of the men and women of Houston, who have blessed me with their support and trust, and allowed me to be their voice in our state Capitol. You have given me the opportunity to serve, but more importantly, you have become my most valued friends."

after Georgia's HOPE Scholarship program, TEXAS Grants will allow thousands of Texas students to go to college and get the education they need to succeed.

As a successor to the late Barbara Jordan representing Houston, Governor Ellis has championed civil rights and justice reform issues. He passed legislation creating the Hate Crimes Reporting Statute requiring local law enforcement to compile statistics on acts of hate and report to the Department of Public Safety. Governor Ellis has worked tirelessly to strengthen that law to improve prosecution of hate crimes in Texas. Governor Ellis also led the effort to reform the Texas judiciary, requiring lim-



P R O G R A M  
SATURDAY, APRIL 8, 2000

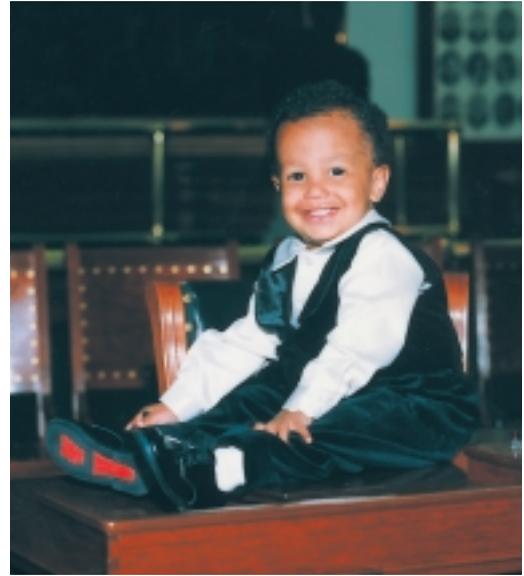
11:15 A.M.	Pre-Inaugural Music	Texas Southern University Band University of Texas Longhorn Band
	Master of Ceremonies	The Honorable Ron Kirk Mayor of Dallas
12:00 P.M.	Honor Guard	The Ross Volunteers Texas A&M University
	Inaugural Procession	
	Invocation	Reverend William Lawson Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church
	Color Guard	Prairie View A&M Panther Color Guard Prairie View, Texas
	Pledge of Allegiance	Nicole Ellis and Maria Hill-Ellis
	National Anthem	University of Texas Longhorn Band
	Black National Anthem	Texas Southern University Band
	Salute to Texas Flag	Jarrett Leland
	Remarks	The Honorable Craig A. Washington The Honorable Eddie Bernice Johnson The Honorable Jack Rains
	Administration of Oath	The Honorable James DeAnda
	Nineteen-Gun Salute	Texas Army National Guard
	Introduction	The Honorable Ann Richards, former Governor of Texas
	Commencement Address	Governor Rodney Ellis
1:15 - 2:30 P.M.	Reception	Governor's Reception Room, Capitol Building
1:15 - 3:00 P.M.	Barbecue Luncheon and Entertainment	Capitol Grounds
1:30 - 4:00 P.M.	Tours of the Governor's Mansion and Capitol	



The Ellis Children:  
Nicole, 12, attends school at Annunciation Orthodox  
School in Houston.

Maria, 6, attends school at Edgar Allen Poe  
Elementary in Houston.

Leland, 18 months, joined the Ellis family in October 1998.



Proud Parents:  
Oliver Teresa Ellis  
and Eligha Sr.  
encouraged Rodney to  
succeed as a child.



