

Pam Bondi

Pamela Jo Bondi (born November 17, 1965) is an American attorney and politician of the Republican Party serving as the 37th and current Attorney General of Florida since 2011.

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Early life and education

Bondi's hometown is Temple Terrace, Florida. Her father, Joseph Bondi, was a city council member and then Mayor of Temple Terrace. She is a graduate of C. Leon King High School in Tampa. Bondi graduated from the University of Florida in 1987 with a degree in Criminal Justice and was a member of Delta Delta Delta sorority at Florida.^[1] She then graduated from Stetson Law School with a JD in 1990 and was admitted to the Florida Bar on June 24, 1991.^[2]

Career

She is a former prosecutor and spokeswoman in Hillsborough County, Florida, where she worked as an Assistant State Attorney. Bondi resigned this position to seek the office of Attorney General of Florida. She has made guest appearances on Scarborough Country with Joe Scarborough and various other cable news programming on MSNBC and worked for Fox News as a guest host.^[3]

Bondi prosecuted former Major League Baseball player Dwight Gooden in 2006 for violating the terms of his probation and for substance abuse.^{[4][5]} In 2007, Bondi also prosecuted the defendants in Martin Anderson's death^[6]

Attorney General

In 2010, Bondi defeated Democratic State Senator Dan Gelber by a 55% to 41% margin to become the first woman Attorney General of the State of Florida.^[7]

| Pam Bondi | |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <div>Pam Bondi</div> | |
| 37th Attorney General of Florida | |
| Incumbent | |
| Assumed office | January 4, 2011 |
| Governor | Rick Scott |
| Preceded by | Bill McCollum |
| Succeeded by | Ashley Moody (elect) |
| Personal details | |
| Born | Pamela Jo Bondi <div>November 17, 1965</div> <div>Tampa, Florida, U.S.</div> |
| Political party | Republican |
| Spouse(s) | <div>Garret Barnes <div> (1990–1992)</div> Scott Fitzgerald <div> (1996–2002)</div></div> |
| Education | University of Florida (BA) <div>Stetson University (JD)</div> |

Bondi was the lead attorney general in an unsuccessful lawsuit seeking to overturn the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (ACA, or "Obamacare") in Florida et al v. United States Department of Health and Human Services. In the lawsuit the State of Florida and 26 other states argued that the individual mandate provision of the ACA violates the United States Constitution.^[8] In 2018, Bondi joined with 19 other Republican-led states in a lawsuit to overturn key aspects of the Affordable Care Act.^[9]

In 2013, Bondi persuaded Governor Rick Scott to postpone a scheduled execution because it conflicted with her reelection kickoff/fundraising event.^[10] After questions were raised in the media, Bondi apologized for moving the execution date.^{[11][12]}

Bondi was re-elected in November 2014, receiving 55% of the vote. Her challenger, George Sheldon, received 42%.^[13]

Bondi has opposed same-sex marriage and other LGBT issues on behalf of the state. Following the Orlando nightclub shooting in June 2016, Bondi was interviewed by CNN reporter Anderson Cooper, who questioned her about her sudden change in attitude towards the LGBT community in Florida. Bondi claimed to not only support the gay community, but had posted as such on her website. Bondi in a radio interview stated that the CNN interview had not been aired in its entirety and most of it was left on the cutting room floor, omitting the portion about potential scamming of survivors' families. While the entire interview had been aired live, only the portion involving Bondi's position on LGBT issues was originally uploaded to the CNN website. The website featured the interview in its entirety following this comment.^{[14][15][16]}

In August 2018, while still serving as Attorney General, Bondi co-hosted Fox News' The Five three days in a row while also appearing on Sean Hannity's Fox News show.^[17] Fox News claimed that the Florida Commission on Ethics had approved Bondi's appearance on the program; however the commission's spokeswoman told The Tampa Bay Times the opposite: that "no opinion was rendered" and that the commission's general counsel "did not express a view as to whether [Bondi's proposed hosting of the Fox shows] would or would not violate the Code of Ethics." The Times described it as "unprecedented" for a sitting elected official to host a TV show.^[17]

Fundraising controversies

Bondi has been criticized for some of her election fundraising activities, including questions raised about contributions from Donald Trump and his associates.^[18] The Florida Attorney General's office received at least 22 fraud complaints about Trump University. In 2013 a spokesperson for Bondi announced that her office was considering joining a lawsuit initiated by New York's Attorney General against Trump regarding tax fraud.^{[19][20]} Four days later 'And Justice for All', a political action committee (PAC) established by Bondi to support her re-election campaign, received a \$25,000 donation from the Donald J. Trump Foundation, after which Bondi declined to join the lawsuit against Trump University. In June of 2016, as Bondi was facing renewed criticism over the Trump donation and its aftermath, her spokesman said that Bondi personally solicited the donation from Trump several weeks before her office announced it was considering joining the lawsuit against him.^{[20][21][22]} That claim called into question what the Trump Foundation had asserted about the nature of the donation three months earlier, in March 2016. After Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW) filed a complaint with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) about the potentially illegal donation, the Trump Foundation stated that the donation had been made in error, and that the Foundation had intended for it to go not to Bondi's PAC but instead to an unrelated Kansas non-profit called Justice for All.^{[23][24]} When the controversy first arose in 2013, both the Bondi PAC and Donald Trump had defended the propriety of the political donation.^{[25][26]} On March 14, 2016, Bondi endorsed Trump in the Florida presidential primary, saying she has been friends with Trump "for many years."^{[27][28]} In June 2016, a spokesperson for Governor Rick Scott stated that the state's ethics commission is looking into the matter.^[29] In September 2016, the



Pam Bondi, Florida Governor Rick Scott, and other state officials

IRS concluded that the donation to Bondi's PAC violated laws against political contributions from nonprofit organizations, and ordered Donald Trump to pay a fine for the illegal contribution. Trump also reimbursed the foundation the sum that had been donated to Bondi.^[30] Neither Bondi nor her PAC were fined or criminally charged for soliciting and accepting an illegal donation.

Bondi's association with Scientology and the multiple fundraisers that wealthy Scientologists have organized for Bondi's political campaigns over the years have also provoked controversy. Bondi has justified those contacts and her speeches before leading Scientologists by arguing that the group wishes to help her crack down on human trafficking. However her public association with Scientology began in 2010, when it was already being investigated by the FBI for involvement in human trafficking and abusing its workers.^{[31][32][33]}

Personal life

Bondi married Garret Barnes in 1990. The couple divorced after 22 months. In 1996, Bondi then married Scott Fitzgerald. Their marriage ended after 6 years.^[34]

Electoral history

| Florida Attorney General Republican primary election, 2010 | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|---------|------|
| Party | Candidate | Votes | % |
| Republican | Pam Bondi | 459,022 | 37.9 |
| Republican | Jeff Kottkamp | 397,781 | 32.8 |
| Republican | Holly Benson | 354,573 | 29.3 |

| Florida Attorney General election, 2010 | | | |
|-----------------------------------------|------------------|-----------|------|
| Party | Candidate | Votes | % |
| Republican | Pam Bondi | 2,882,868 | 54.8 |
| Democratic | Dan Gelber | 2,181,377 | 41.4 |
| Independent | Jim Lewis | 199,147 | 3.8 |

| Florida Attorney General election, 2014 | | | |
|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------|------|
| Party | Candidate | Votes | % |
| Republican | Pam Bondi (incumbent) | 3,222,524 | 55.1 |
| Democratic | George Sheldon | 2,457,317 | 42.0 |
| Libertarian | Bill Wohlsifer | 169,394 | 2.9 |

See also

- List of female state attorneys-general in the United States



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External links

-  Media related to [Pam Bondi](#) at Wikimedia Commons
- [Official website](#) 
- [Pam Bondi for Attorney General](#)(Campaign website)
- [Appearances on C-SPAN](#)

| Legal offices | | |
|--------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Preceded by <u>Bill McCollum</u> | <u>Attorney General of Florida</u> 2011–present | Succeeded by <u>Ashley Moody Elect</u> |

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