

How Jeb Bush Remade Florida Government and Politics: A Legacy of Reform



Conservative Hurricane: How Jeb Bush Remade Florida (Florida Government and Politics) by Matthew T. Corrigan

★★★★☆ 4 out of 5

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Jeb Bush's governorship in Florida from 1999 to 2007 was a period of significant change and reform. Bush, the eldest son of former U.S. President George H.W. Bush, came to office with a mandate for change and quickly set about implementing a range of policies that reshaped the state's government and political landscape.

Education Reform

One of Bush's top priorities was education reform. He believed that the state's public schools were failing to adequately prepare students for college and the workforce. In response, he implemented a number of changes, including:

- Raising academic standards

- Expanding school choice through charter schools and vouchers
- Improving teacher quality and accountability

Bush's education reforms were controversial, but they had a significant impact. Test scores improved, graduation rates increased, and more students were going on to college. However, the reforms also led to increased inequality, as wealthier families were able to take advantage of school choice options that were not available to poorer families.

Tax Reform

Bush was also a strong advocate for tax reform. He believed that the state's tax code was too complex and burdensome. In 2006, he signed into law a major tax reform package that:

- Reduced the number of tax brackets
- Lowered the top marginal tax rate
- Eliminated a number of exemptions and deductions

Bush's tax reforms were popular with businesses and taxpayers. They also helped to improve the state's economy. However, the reforms also led to a decrease in revenue for the state, which made it more difficult to fund essential services.

Welfare Reform

Bush was also a strong supporter of welfare reform. He believed that the welfare system was too generous and that it discouraged people from working. In 1996, he signed into law a welfare reform bill that:

- Imposed a lifetime limit on welfare benefits
- Required welfare recipients to work
- Increased funding for child care and job training

Bush's welfare reforms were controversial, but they had a significant impact. The number of people on welfare decreased by more than half, and many former welfare recipients were able to find employment. However, the reforms also led to increased poverty and homelessness.

Criminal Justice Reform

Bush was also a strong supporter of criminal justice reform. He believed that the state's criminal justice system was too lenient and that it was not ng enough to protect the public from crime. In 2001, he signed into law a criminal justice reform bill that:

- Increased penalties for violent crimes
- Expanded the use of the death penalty
- Created a new "three strikes" law

Bush's criminal justice reforms were controversial, but they had a significant impact. Crime rates decreased, and the number of people in prison increased. However, the reforms also led to increased racial disparities in the criminal justice system.

Legacy

Jeb Bush's governorship in Florida was a period of significant change and reform. He implemented a wide range of policies that reshaped the state's

government and political landscape. His reforms were controversial, but they had a significant impact on the state. Bush's legacy is complex and contested, but there is no doubt that he was one of the most consequential governors in Florida history.

Some of Bush's reforms were more successful than others. His education reforms led to improved test scores and graduation rates, but they also increased inequality. His tax reforms helped to improve the state's economy, but they also led to a decrease in revenue for the state. His welfare reforms led to a decrease in the number of people on welfare, but they also led to increased poverty and homelessness. His criminal justice reforms led to a decrease in crime rates, but they also led to increased racial disparities in the criminal justice system.

Despite the controversies, Bush's reforms had a significant impact on Florida. He remade the state's government and political landscape, and his legacy will continue to be debated for years to come.



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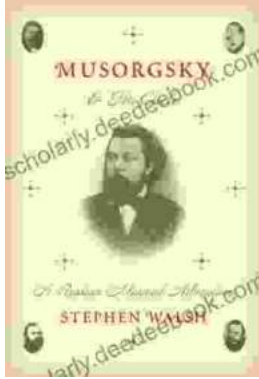
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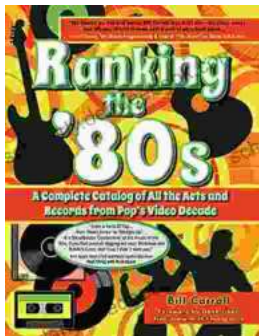
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