



## **Brian Wilson**

Brian Wilson served on Capitol Hill for five years as a senior legislative assistant to U.S. Senator Trent Lott. He was responsible for an array of appropriations and policy issues, including the National Park Service and historic preservation, natural resources, infrastructure, and the environment. Each year Brian managed approximately \$200 million in funding for projects throughout Mississippi.

Since returning to Mississippi, Brian developed an extensive background in cultural heritage tourism, historic preservation, and economic development projects around the state. He successfully spearheaded efforts for Congressional creation of Mississippi's three National Heritage Areas, Mississippi Gulf Coast in 2005 and Mississippi Hills and Mississippi Delta in 2009. Brian has also served on the Board of Directors of the Mississippi Hills National Heritage Area.

In 2008, the Mississippi Development Authority and Mississippi Economic Development Council presented Brian with the Community Economic Development Award as founding executive director of the Noxubee Alliance, an innovative public-private partnership promoting cultural heritage tourism, economic development, and community development in a rural and distressed area. That year Noxubee County landed the largest economic development project in its history while also securing State Scenic Stream status for the Noxubee River and inclusion on the Mississippi Blues Trail. Mississippi's tourism agency filmed the marker ceremony as a model for other communities.

Brian has chaired the LQC Lamar House Advisory Board and is the author of several entries in the *Mississippi Encyclopedia* to be published by the University Press of Mississippi. He is currently writing a new biography of L.Q.C Lamar, the first in more than 40 years.

Brian received his M.A. in Southern Studies from the Center for the Study of Southern Culture at the University of Mississippi in 2012, where he earned his B.A. in History and Political Science in 1998.