

Billy Tauzin

Former U.S. Congressman (R-LA); Former President and CEO of PhRMA

Billy Tauzin, a former US Congressman (R-LA) and the former president and CEO of PhRMA, is an experienced political and legislative strategist. He is the only member of Congress to have held leadership positions in both political parties, including key committee chairmanships. In his presentations, he addresses politics, lobbying, healthcare, the pharmaceutical industry, telecommunications, energy, and the environment.

Blue Dog Democrat Turned Republican. A member of the US House of Representatives from 1980 until 2005, Billy Tauzin began his political career in 1972 when he was elected as a Democrat to the Louisiana House of Representatives. There, he was the chairman of the Natural Resources Committee and the chief administration floor leader. He served four years before winning a special election for a seat vacated in the 96th Congress.

For 15 years, Tauzin was one of the most conservative Democrats in the House of Representatives. He rose through the ranks to become assistant majority whip and was a cofounder of the House Blue Dog Coalition, a group of conservative Democrats. When his party lost control of the House after the 1994 elections, Tauzin changed parties, becoming a Republican and the deputy majority whip. This switch made Tauzin the first Congressman to be a part of the leadership of both parties in the House.

Tauzin served as chairman of the Energy and Commerce Committee; the Merchant Marine Subcommittee; and the Subcommittee on Telecommunications, Trade, and Consumer Protection. Additionally, he was vice-chairman of the Finance and Hazardous Materials Subcommittee and a senior member of the subcommittees on Fisheries, Wildlife, and Oceans; and Energy and Mineral Resources. He also ranked second in seniority among Republicans on both the Commerce Committee and the Committee on Resources. He left his mark on issues ranging from natural gas, airline, trucking, and electricity deregulation to environmental policy and telecommunications. Tauzin was also very supportive of legislation relating to technological issues.

In 2003, he was inducted into the Louisiana Political Museum and Hall of Fame and twice chosen as one of Louisiana's "Ten Best Legislators."

Post-Congressional Lobbyist Career. While dealing with a battle against cancer, Tauzin left his seat in Congress to start work at PhRMA, a pharmaceutical lobby group. As head of PhRMA, Tauzin was a key player in 2009 health care reform negotiations that produced pharmaceutical industry support for the White House's legislation.

Tauzin resigned this post in 2010 and is now on the board of directors at Louisiana Healthcare Group. He has recently founded Tauzin Consulting, LLC which will specialize in healthcare, IT, finance, telecommunications, energy, transportation, and other areas of government affairs.