

Biography of
THE HONORABLE MISSY THOMAS IRVIN
ARKANSAS STATE SENATOR



**CHAIR SENATE PUBLIC HEALTH,
WELFARE & LABOR COMMITTEE**
SENATE DISTRICT 24

Senator Missy Thomas Irvin represents Senate District 24, which includes Searcy, Stone and Van Buren Counties and parts of Cleburne, Faulkner and Newton Counties.

Senator Irvin was first elected to the Senate in 2010, as the first Republican to hold the seat since Reconstruction in 1874. She was also the first woman and the first resident of Stone County to hold the seat. At the time, she was the youngest woman ever elected to the Arkansas Senate, at the age of 39.

Senator Irvin is chair of the Senate Public Health, Welfare and Labor Committee, co-chair of the Hospital and Medicaid Subcommittee and vice co-chair of the Administrative Rules Subcommittee. She is a member of the Senate Insurance and Commerce Committee, the Joint Energy Committee, the Senate Efficiency Committee, the Senate Ethics Committee, the Joint Budget Committee, the Arkansas Legislative Council, the Legislative Joint Auditing Committee, the ALC Executive Subcommittee, the Employees Benefits Division Oversight Subcommittee, the Game and Fish / State Police Subcommittee and the Performance Evaluation and Expenditure Review (PEER) Subcommittee and the Review Subcommittee.

In past General Assemblies, she served as chair of the Senate Committee on Education and was a member of the Senate Insurance and Commerce Committee, the Joint Retirement and Social Security Programs Committee and the Senate Rules, Resolutions and Memorials Committee. She served as the Co-Vice Chair for Arkansas Legislative Council and was a member of the Joint Budget Committee and the Legislative Joint Auditing Committee.

Senator Irvin was the State Chair for the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC). Senator Irvin is a founding board member of the Human Rights for Kids Organization.

Senator Irvin's political interest began as a presidential campaign volunteer at the age of nine for Ronald Reagan. She volunteered for Sheffield Nelson's first campaign for Governor, and then worked for Sheffield Nelson's second campaign for Governor in 1994 as Special Events Coordinator and Assistant Finance Director.

In 2000, Irvin served her brother, Bob Thomas, as campaign manager for his Second District U.S. Congressional Campaign.

Raised in Little Rock, Senator Irvin graduated from Mount Saint Mary Academy. After traveling to the Soviet Union and East and West Berlin. Irvin decided to major in political science. She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree with a triple major in Political Science, Communications and Dance with a Minor in Art History from Randolph-Macon Women's College in Lynchburg, Virginia. She also attended the University of Reading and Oxford University in England. Upon graduation, Irvin was selected as a scholarship recipient to the American Dance Festival held at Duke University.

Her professional background includes working as a news editor for KATV-Channel 7 News, as Marketing Director for Tipton & Hurst, Marketing Director and Director of Research & Development for Stone County Ironworks and Calico Rock Ironworks. She was an Adjunct Professor of Dance at Hendrix College and Director of the Department of Dance at Hendrix College her final year at college. She currently works with her husband and is the Marketing Director of Irvin-Dibrell Clinic in Mountain View.

Her extensive volunteer activities include coordinating the first three years of the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life for Stone County, creating and coordinating After Dark in the Park for the Ozark Folk Center and supporting the Music Roots Program. She has served as a parent representative for the school in the implementation of the EAST program.

In 2019, Senator Irvin was appointed to the Arkansas Supreme Court Commission on Children, Youth and Families. She was a founding board member and a past president of the Mountain View Youth Soccer Association, a Vice-President of the Arkansas State Soccer Association and has worked as an AAA registered volunteer soccer coach for the Mountain View High School.

In 2008, Senator Irvin received the Presidential Award for her volunteer work in the community.

In 2017 Senator Irvin was named the Arkansas Rural Advocate of the Year from the Arkansas Rural Economic Development Commission. Also in 2017, Senator Irvin received a national Justice Award from the Campaign for the Fair Sentencing for Minors in Washington, D.C.

Other awards include:

- 2015 Arkansas Cattleman's Association Legislator of the Year
- 2011 & 2013 Advocate of Justice Award, Arkansas Prosecuting Attorneys Association
- 2011 Service Award for supporting persons with mental illness & substance abuse disorders, Health Resources of Arkansas
- 2012 Acting Out Against Hunger Award, Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance
- 2013 Outstanding Leadership Recognition, Arkansas Medical Society
- 2013 Star Award for Juvenile Justice Work, Arkansas Advocates for Children & Families
- 2013 Friend of Freedom Award, Advance Arkansas Institute
- 2013 & 2015 Distinguished Legislator Award, Arkansas Municipal League
- 2013 Recognition for work in Public Health, Arkansas Body Modification Association

In 2010, she was named Coach of the Year by the Arkansas State Soccer Association for her commitment to coaching girls recreational soccer and founding the soccer program at the Mountain View High School. She is a member of the Heber Springs Rotary Club, Farm Bureau, Chapter DK of P.E.O., where she served as a President, and the Stone County Republican Committee.

Senator Irvin and her husband, Dr. John Dawson Irvin, have lived in Mountain View for more than 22 years. They are members of First United Methodist Church of Mountain View.