

SENATOR BILL NELSON

Sen. Bill Nelson is a true son of Florida, his family coming to the Panhandle in 1829, and his grandparents homesteading in the early 20th century on land that today is the Kennedy Space Center.

From a spot near there Nelson would launch into space in 1986 and spend six days orbiting the Earth aboard the Space Shuttle Columbia.

Nearly three decades later he still vividly recalls looking back at our planet from the window of the shuttle and not seeing any political, religious or racial divides.

"From that perspective, you can see how we're all in this together," he says. "If we could just remember that, we'd sure get a lot more done."

It's that kind of perspective that has earned Nelson a reputation as a thoughtful, moderate voice in an increasingly partisan political world.

Nelson's public service career began in 1972, with his election to the Florida Legislature. He then served six terms in the U.S. Congress representing Orlando and the Space Coast, becoming an early champion of the environment.

In 1994, Nelson was elected to the Florida Cabinet as state Treasurer, Insurance Commissioner and Fire Marshal. During his six years in the post, he showed he was a common-sense problem solver and strong consumer advocate.

Nelson was first elected to the U.S. Senate in November 2000. Since then, he's stood up to the insurance companies, Wall Street banks and Big Oil. He's exposed the lies of BP about the Gulf spill. And he's created a blueprint forward for our nation's space agency. Now in his third term, he's continuing to fight for lower taxes, better education, Medicare and Social Security.

He's someone who thinks public service is a noble calling - which is why he's devoted his life to serving his community, his state and his country.