



Attorney General Henry McMaster South Carolina

Henry McMaster was elected Attorney General for the State of South Carolina on November 5, 2002.

As Attorney General, McMaster has led the fight to protect our children from Internet predators who target children for assault or abduction. Using a new law he pushed through the General Assembly in 2004, McMaster launched a statewide Internet Predator Task Force made up of forty local, state and federal law enforcement authorities to run undercover stings targeting predators over the Internet.



Since 2004, the task force has arrested 189 predators.

Calling it “the state’s number one crime problem,” McMaster launched a tough new campaign against domestic violence by recruiting and deputizing volunteer attorneys to prosecute domestic violence cases in magistrate courts around the state where no prosecutor was available to handle the cases.

McMaster has also asked the General Assembly to appropriate \$2.2 million dollars to the sixteen state solicitors for the purpose of hiring of 46 dedicated domestic violence prosecutors, one for each of the

state’s forty-six counties.

McMaster launched a massive State Grand Jury investigation and prosecution of the Carolina Investors – Home Gold Inc. collapse, calling it the “largest white collar criminal case in state history.” Over 8,000 South Carolina investors lost over \$275 million dollars when the companies collapsed in 2003. To date five company executives have been indicted. Four executives have been convicted or have pled guilty. The fifth is awaiting trial.

In 2004 McMaster launched a statewide task force aimed at combating illegal dog fighting, putting some of the nations highest level dog fighters and breeders behind bars. For his leadership, the Humane Society of the United States named McMaster the 2005 National Law Enforcement Official of the Year.



In the area of drugs and illegal narcotics, McMaster has led the way in attacking the methamphetamine problem in the state, calling it the “kudzu of drugs.” In cooperation with retailers around the state, the South Carolina Meth Watch program was launched in an effort to educate retailers on the dangers of meth and how to enact loss prevention tactics to curb the theft of meth ingredients from their stores.

The Republican Attorney General has also earned praise as the Sierra Club's 2004 Public Servant of the Year for his efforts to protect our state's shared natural history. In 2005, McMaster won a hard fought battle in the General Assembly to grant the State Grand Jury authority to investigate and prosecute white-collar environmental crimes. McMaster also took on the ACLU when the group sued the town of Great Falls on behalf of a Wiccan high priestess in order to prevent any reference to Jesus Christ being used in town council prayers.

McMaster was born in Columbia, South Carolina to John Gregg and Ida Dargan McMaster. He has five brothers, all living in Columbia.



He received his Bachelor's Degree in History from the University of South Carolina in 1969. As an undergraduate, he was a member of Blue Key (national honor fraternity), KSK (service fraternity), Kappa Alpha Order and the State Student Legislature. After graduation, Henry served in the United States Army Reserves, receiving his honorable discharge in 1975.

In 1973, Henry graduated from the University of South Carolina School of Law where he served on the Editorial Board of the South Carolina Law Review. Later that year, he was admitted to the South Carolina Bar and the Richland County Bar Association. In 1974, he completed training at the National Institute for Trial Advocacy.

Upon graduating from law school, Henry worked as a Legislative Assistant to U.S. Senator Strom Thurmond in Washington, D.C. until 1974. He then joined the firm of Tompkins and McMaster, which was established over a century ago in 1898. He was admitted to practice before the U.S. Court of Claims in 1974, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit in 1975 and upon motion of Senator Thurmond, the Supreme Court of the United States in 1978.



Prior to his election in 2003, McMaster practiced law, both as a federal prosecutor and in private practice, for almost 29 years. He represented clients throughout our court system on the state, federal, trial and appellate levels.

Upon the recommendation of Senator Strom Thurmond, Henry was nominated by President Ronald Reagan as the United States Attorney for the District of South Carolina in 1981. He was the first U.S. Attorney in the nation to be appointed by President Reagan.

While United States Attorney, Henry instituted several innovative and extremely successful investigations. Under his direction, "OPERATION JACKPOT" was the first investigation into international drug smuggling operations within the United States to use the financial team approach. Over 100 drug kingpins were convicted of importing almost one billion dollars worth of drugs, and over one million dollars of the assets seized were channeled to SLED and the Crimestoppers organizations in South Carolina.





In 1985, Henry first proposed a statewide Grand Jury system for South Carolina. The statewide Grand Jury plan later received the support of the General Assembly and was adopted into law by the people of South Carolina in 1988. McMaster headed the South Carolina Law Enforcement Coordinating Committee from 1981 through 1985 and he completed his four-year term as U.S. Attorney in 1985.

In 1986, Henry was the Republican Party's nominee for the United States Senate and in 1990 was the Republican nominee for Lieutenant Governor.

In 1991, Henry was appointed by Governor Carroll Campbell and confirmed by the S.C. Senate to serve on the Commission on Higher Education. He served on the Board of Directors of the South Carolina Police Council from 1991 through 2003, serving as board chairman from 1992 until 1993.



In 1993, Henry was elected Chairman of the South Carolina Republican Party and was re-elected by the State Republican Convention in 1996, 1998 and 2000. He also served as a member of the Republican National Committee from 1993 until 2002.

As party chairman, Henry worked tirelessly, helping elect hundreds of Republicans to federal, state and local office. Henry's leadership was instrumental in electing Republican majorities to the state House in 1994 and state Senate in 2000.

Henry is a member of the Columbia Rotary Club, the St. Andrew's Society and received the Order of the Palmetto from Governor David Beasley in 1996.

Henry is married to Peggy Jean McAbee of Spartanburg and they have two children, Henry, Jr. and Mary Rogers. They are members of First Presbyterian Church of Columbia.

