

= Willie Mount =

Willie Landry Mount ( born August 25 , 1949 ) is an American politician from Louisiana who served as a Democratic member of the Louisiana State Senate from 2000 to 2012 . She represented District 27 , which includes parts of Lake Charles and the surrounding cities of Sulphur and Westlake . From 1993 to 1999 , Mount was the first female to have served as the mayor of Lake Charles .

Mount was a candidate in the 2004 U.S. House of Representatives election for Louisiana 's 7th congressional district . She was defeated by Republican Charles Boustany in a contested general election campaign that received national attention .

= = Personal life = =

Born and reared in Lake Charles , Mount in 1974 obtained a Bachelor of Business Administration degree from McNeese State University in Lake Charles . She owned a small business and worked as a real estate agent and pharmaceutical representative for Lederle Laboratories . Mount resides in her hometown with her husband , attorney Benjamin Mount ; they have no children .

= = Career = =

Mount had been active in community work , through organizations such as the Junior League of Lake Charles , and ran for mayor of Lake Charles in 1993 , winning against Paul Savoie , a Democrat and a former mayor . During her tenure she served as president of the Louisiana Conference of Mayors and supported restoration efforts following hurricanes . To this end Mount testified before Congress in support of the Conservation and Reinvestment Act of 1999 . She also co @-@ sponsored the building of an Amtrak station , modeled after an older station that had been destroyed in a fire . In an effort to succeed retiring state senator James J. Cox , Mount announced her senate candidacy on October 19 , 1999 , while addressing the Calcasieu Parish School Board , which she asked to support her . Upon being elected , Mount resigned as mayor and City Council President Rodney Geyen took over the office .

In the senate , Mount served on a variety of committees , chairing the Senate Committees on Coastal Restoration and Flood Control , Revenue and Fiscal Affairs , and also serving as Vice @-@ Chair of the Senate Committee on Education . In 2008 , she became chairwoman of the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare . Mount often sponsors legislation regarding health and public service . This includes bills intended to identify sex offenders and enact term limits for various boards and commissions . She was responsible for passing these term limits as an amendment to the Louisiana Constitution , as SB 232 on November 4 , 2008 . Mount also sponsored legislation to merge New Orleans criminal and civil district courts , create a childhood and family learning center , couple the opening of new hospice care providers with inspections of existing ones , allow police to suspend driver 's licenses of teenagers with problems at school , and create a state @-@ run internet database providing information on the quality of health care providers . Mount was responsible for legislation that made Louisiana water fluoridation mandatory , and , in her capacity as chair of the Senate Health committee , Mount in 2008 declared major Louisiana health care reform unlikely without prior federal reform .

As senator , Mount raised funds for health care facilities ( Mount had herself roared in support of the Southwest Louisiana Center for Health Services ) . Mount is a member of a number of boards and charitable organisations and provides an annual compilation of " Louisiana positives " about Louisiana 's standing in national ratings . Due to term limits , Mount was eligible to serve as senator until 2012 .

= = 2004 Congressional race = =

Mount ran for Congress in 2004 to succeed Chris John , who had announced his retirement from

the U.S. House of Representatives to run for the U.S. Senate . She positioned herself as a conservative Democrat , supportive of balanced budgets and conservative social views , emphasizing job creation , health care and her opposition to offshoring . Her major Democratic opponent in the jungle primary was African American State Senator Don Cravins , Sr. , the father of another lawmaker , Don Cravins , Jr . , of Opelousas . Her major Republican opponent was Charles Boustany , a retired heart surgeon from Lafayette , who ran on a platform of preventing tax increases and passing a new energy bill . The Louisiana Democratic Party was supporting Mount , as Cravins was believed to be a weaker contestant in a run @-@ off . Polls taken in late October had shown Boustany , Cravins and Mount statistically tied and the election was hotly contested .

In the first ballot on November 2 , 2004 , Boustany and Mount garnered the most votes ; Cravins was defeated by less than two thousand votes . As both fell short of a majority , a second ballot was mandated . In the subsequent campaign , Mount criticized Boustany for favouring tax cuts for the rich and being indifferent to health care , while Boustany rejected the attacks as false and stressed his willingness to work with Democrats and Independents . Boustany in turn portrayed Mount as liberal and favoring tax increases . Mount also criticized Boustany for favoring the privatization of social security , an unpopular position in Louisiana , and as removed from the interests of voters . She received endorsements by U.S. Senator John Breaux , who had represented the 7th district for over fourteen years , and governor Kathleen Blanco . Boustany was helped by Vice President Dick Cheney , who campaigned on his behalf in Lake Charles . Mount , however , was not endorsed by Democratic primary opponent Don Cravins , who complained about the state Democratic Party 's endorsement of Mount in a partially party funded mailer that excluded him and which he believed contributed to his narrow loss . Cravins prepared a suit in federal court claiming that the state Democratic Party violated the Voting Rights Act .

In the general election on December 4 , 2004 , Boustany defeated Mount , 55 percent to 45 percent in an election with low voter turnout . Democrats had hoped on a big turnout , as the district is nearly a quarter African American , a reliable Democratic constituency . Analysis of the race suggested that Mount 's defeat was helped by the open primary system that had the Democratic candidates work against each other and led to Cravin 's conflict with the state Democratic Party which in turn led to suppressed voter turnout . The large number of negative advertisements was also cited as a factor that contributed to low turnout . Another detriment for Mount mentioned was the strong support for George W. Bush in the presidential election in the district , which he carried by about 60 percent . Following her defeat , Mount ruled out another campaign for the seat , but not a campaign for another state @-@ wide office .

When Mount left the Senate in 2012 , she was succeeded by a Republican , former State Representative Ronnie Johns of Sulphur , who ran unopposed for the open seat .

= = Campaign for tax assessor = =

In 2011 , Mount announced her candidacy for tax assessor of Calcasieu Parish . She received 13 @, @ 477 votes ( 38 @. @ 3 percent ) in the primary held on October 22 and promptly withdrew from the November 19 general election . Victory hence went to the acting assessor , Wendy Curphy Aguiard , an Independent who led the primary balloting with 17 @, @ 208 votes ( 48 @. @ 9 percent ) . A third candidate , Republican Mike Regan , was also eliminated in the primary , having received the remaining 4 @, @ 538 votes ( 12 @. @ 9 percent ) .

= = Electoral history = =

Mayor , City of Lake Charles , 1993

Threshold > 50 %

First Ballot , April 3 , 1993

Second Ballot , May 1 , 1993

Mount was unopposed for a second term as mayor .

Louisiana State Senator , 27th Senatorial District , 1999

October 23 , 1999

Mount was unopposed on October 4 , 2003 and October 20 , 2007 for her second and third term as state senator .

U.S. Representative , 7th Congressional District , 2004

Threshold > 50 %

First Ballot , November 2 , 2004

Second Ballot , December 4 , 2004