

Biography for Bill Cork – Executive Director of the Mississippi Development Authority

Bill Cork is a seasoned government and business executive, currently serving as the Executive Director and Chief Economic Development Officer for the Mississippi Development Authority (MDA). Appointed by Governor Tate Reeves and confirmed by the Mississippi Senate, Cork leads a team of over 190 professionals across divisions including International Trade, Business Recruitment, Tourism, Energy, and Community Development, managing a \$400 million annual budget. Under his leadership since 2020, Mississippi has secured more than \$31 billion in capital investment and over 21,000 new jobs, including the recruitment of the largest projects in state history with firms like Aluminum Dynamics, Amazon Data Services, and Amplify Cell Technologies.

Cork's economic development achievements are complemented by his international engagement, overseeing offices across Europe, Asia, and the Americas, and leading trade missions to India, Japan, Europe, and Mexico. He is a principal coach and mentor for MDA's deal teams, a trusted advisor to Governor Reeves, and a sought-after speaker on economic development strategy. His efforts have delivered record-breaking tourism numbers, maximized state film incentives, and effectively stewarded over \$1 billion in federal disaster relief funds.

Before leading MDA, Cork served as CEO of the Hancock County Port and Harbor Commission in Mississippi, where he managed the Port Bienville Industrial Park, Stennis International Airport, and major federal partnerships at Stennis Space Center. There, he spearheaded a dramatic expansion of industrial land holdings and achieved award-winning business retention and infrastructure initiatives, including the development of aerospace and port assets recognized nationally.

Earlier in his career, Cork led turnarounds as President and CEO of the Texarkana Chamber of Commerce and as Executive Director and CEO of TexAmericas Center, a major Department of Defense redevelopment project in Texas, where he directed a \$60 million property acquisition, utility infrastructure transformation, and won significant industrial investments. His professional background also includes leadership roles at Sempra Energy Solutions and ICF Consulting, where he specialized in energy markets, privatization, and military facilities redevelopment.

Cork began his career as a Community Planner with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, advising on environmental policy and economic redevelopment. A U.S. Marine Corps veteran, he was honorably discharged after distinguished service as a military police NCO, earning multiple meritorious promotions and awards.

He holds a Master of Urban Planning with a concentration in Economic Development from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, where he also earned his Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy. Cork is affiliated with the Mississippi Economic Development Council, Southern Economic Development Council, and the International Economic Development Council. He is a permanently instituted Acolyte in the Catholic Diocese of Jackson and an active member of the Knights of Columbus and the Marine Corps League.

Named one of Mississippi's "Top 50" leaders by *Magnolia Tribune* in 2024 and a "Top CEO" by *Mississippi Business Journal* in 2019, William V. Cork continues to build a career centered on delivering transformational economic outcomes, efficient governance, and strategic leadership in every role he undertakes.

Bill is married to his wife of over forty years, Nina Cork, who is a commercial artist. They have four adult children and six grandchildren.

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