

# Louisiana CD-05

## Vance McAllister (R)

### BIOGRAPHY



**Biography:** Vance McAllister owes his unlikely special election run-off victory to a potent mix of anti-tea party backlash and an endorsement from a reality TV superstar. A native of Oak Grove in northeastern Louisiana, McAllister enlisted in the Army right out of high school. Later he enrolled at the University of Louisiana at Monroe, but dropped out before graduating. McAllister's first job was with Mustang Engineering, a company that makes

equipment for the oil industry. Within a few years, he was starting up his own business empire, building a diversified portfolio that includes oil and natural gas leasing, pipeline construction, real estate, convenience stores, fast-food restaurants and a business that specializes in promoting wrestling matches.

Driven by twin desires to cut red tape for small businesses and to leave a legacy for the next generation, McAllister became one of 14 candidates vying for the congressional seat vacated by Rep. Rodney Alexander (R-LA), who left to join Gov. Bobby Jindal's administration. McAllister finished a distant second to former state senator Neil Riser in the all-party primary, but with the primary failing to produce a clear winner the top two vote-getters squared off in a

November run-off. Experts had all but coronated Riser at the outset. Having secured endorsements from Jindal, House Majority Leader Eric Cantor and tea party leadership, Riser was the overwhelming favorite going in. While Riser campaigned on his political savvy, McAllister took the opposite approach. He played up his inexperience, taking particular pride in the fact that he had never even visited Washington, D.C. He also staked out ground slightly to his opponent's left. While both men are social and fiscal conservatives, Riser toed the tea party line and called for a repeal of the Affordable Care Act. McAllister said he would support repeal, but added that he was willing to work with Democrats to improve the law as well. That flexibility resonated with voters, as did his friendship with the district's most famous resident, "Duck Dynasty" patriarch Phil Robertson, who called McAllister his "good buddy" in an Internet ad. McAllister cruised to victory with just under 60 percent of the vote.

#### Fast Facts

**Born:** January 7, 1974, Oak Grove, LA

**Residence:** Swartz

**Religion:** Baptist

**Family:** Married, Kelly Duncan; five children

**Education:** Univ. of Louisiana at Monroe (attended)

**Career:** Oilfield technology, oil and gas leasing, pipeline construction, real estate, fast food owner, sports promoter

**Military:** U.S. Army; Louisiana National Guard

**Previous Office:** None

### LOCAL COVERAGE

**From *The [Monroe, LA] News-Star:*** "Republican Vance McAllister, who nobody other than family and friends had heard of three months ago, is headed to Washington, D.C., to represent Louisiana's 5th Congressional District. ... McAllister, a college dropout, former roughneck and astute businessman, stunned the established political landscape with his landslide victory. ... McAllister's affable personality

and unpolished charisma propelled him to a second place finish among 14 candidates in the primary election with 18 percent as he fueled his campaign largely with his own wealth. ... [V]oters apparently connected with McAllister, with his everyman persona. McAllister, a millionaire, touted his background as a veteran and self-made man." (Greg Hilburn, "Mr. McAllister Goes To Washington," *The [Monroe, Louisiana] News-Star*, 11/17/13)

## Political Information

### 2013 ELECTION RESULTS

Election	Party	Candidate	Percent	Votes
2013 Special Election	Rep	Vance M. McAllister	60%	54,450
	Rep	Neil Riser	40%	36,840
2013 Primary Election	Rep	Neil Riser	32%	33,045
	Rep	Vance M. McAllister	18%	18,389
	Dem	James Mayo	15%	15,318

### PREVIOUS ELECTION RESULTS

Election	Party	Candidate	Percent	Votes
2012 General Election	Rep	Rodney Alexander	78%	202,536
	Non	Ron Ceasar	14%	37,486

### PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION RESULTS

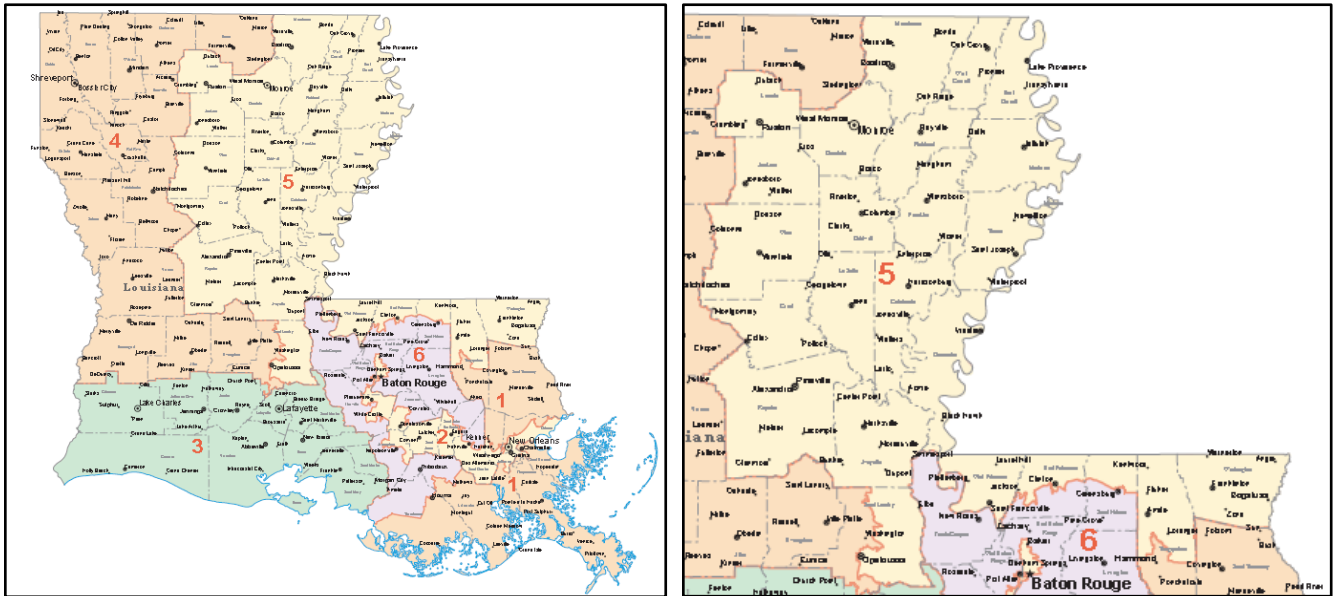
Election	Party	Candidate	Percent	Votes
2012 Presidential Election	Rep	Mitt Romney	61%	201,058
	Dem	Barack Obama	38%	124,054
2008 Presidential Election	Rep	John McCain	62%	203,250
	Dem	Barack Obama	37%	122,577

### DISTRICT DESCRIPTION

**Louisiana Congressional District 5:** Vance McAllister's good buddies, Phil Robertson and his family, brought the national spotlight to the 5<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, a sparsely-populated, largely-rural stretch of Northeast Louisiana where, duck dynasties aside, poverty and unemployment are rampant. This is true Louisiana Bayou country. The 604,000-acre Kistachie National Forest dominates the landscape, and the Red and Mississippi Rivers both wind their way through the district. Monroe and Alexandria are the big urban areas here, but even their populations have yet to reach the 50,000 mark. In

fact, persistently declining populations in the region were to blame for Louisiana losing a district after the last census. Those who remain in 5<sup>th</sup> are largely poor and not well educated. Their unemployment rate is tops in the state. Still, the district is working hard to reinvent itself. Manufacturing and technology-based businesses are thriving in the urban areas. And pulp and paper, agriculture and financial and health services employ the bulk of the population. Although registered Democrats more than double the number of registered Republicans, the District favors Republican candidates at the federal level, and residents tend to identify as conservative.

### STATE AND DISTRICT MAP



**Counties Represented:** Avoyelles, Caldwell, Catahoula, Concordia, East Carroll, East Feliciana (Part), Franklin, Grant, Jackson, Lasalle, Lincoln, Madison, Morehouse, Ouachita, Rapides, Richland, St. Helena (Part), St. Landry (Part), Tangipahoa (Part), Tensas, Washington, West Carroll, West Feliciana, Winn

### DISTRICT DEMOGRAPHICS

Category	Estimate
<b>Total population</b>	<b>758,851</b>
Median age (years)	36.50
18 years and over	569,780
65 years and over	107,717
<b>Race</b>	
White	471,738
Black or African American	269,915
Asian	4,396

Category	Estimate
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	14,911
<b>Employment Status</b>	
Civilian labor force	318,751
Employed	285,372
Unemployed	33,379
Armed Forces	920
Percent Unemployed	10.5%
<b>Occupations</b>	
Management, business, science, and arts occupations	86,132
Service occupations	62,851
Sales and office occupations	63,280
Natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations	39,855
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	33,254
<b>Top Industries</b>	
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	82,422
Retail trade	32,768
Construction	20,539
Public administration	20,532
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	19,879
<b>Economic</b>	
Median household income (dollars)	\$35,421
Mean household income (dollars)	\$50,996
<b>Health Insurance Coverage</b>	
With private health insurance	373,412
With public coverage	279,082
No health insurance coverage	150,654
<b>Education</b>	
Percent high school graduate or higher	79.9%
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	17.0%

## CAMPAIGN FINANCE

Candidate	Party	Receipts (\$):	Indiv. Cont. (\$)	PAC Cont. (\$)	Candidate (\$)	Spent (\$)	Debt (\$)
McAllister, Vance	Rep	472,843	67,774	-	405,000	433,899	170,000
Riser, Neil	Rep	735,364	735,364	-	-	638,015	-

## Policy Information

### PHILOSOPHY OF GOVERNMENT

**Though A Self-Described "Outsider," McAllister Comes To Washington As A Pragmatist Who Wants To Negotiate Compromises Instead Of Digging In His Partisan Heels.** "A businessman with the backing of the popular 'Duck Dynasty' TV family, McAllister largely self-funded his campaign, running as a political outsider and a pragmatist who talked of the need for compromise rather than partisanship in Washington." (Melinda Deslatte, "McAllister Prepares For Washington," [Alexandria, LA] *Daily Town Talk*, 11/19/13)

**McAllister Said Before The Nation Finds A Political Fix To Its Problems, It Needs "A Spiritual Fix," Though He Personally Does Not View Public Office As "A Place To Witness."** "Fifth Congressional District candidate Vance McAllister said though he's personally guided by his Christian faith, he's not trying to get to Washington to preach. 'I believe before we can find a political fix, we need a spiritual fix, but I don't believe political office is a place to witness,' McAllister, R-Swartz, said in a meeting with The News-Star's Editorial Board on Tuesday. McAllister, 39, has emphasized his faith and his family during his campaign commercials. 'If you want to talk to me about my faith, I will. It's who I am; I'm not hiding from it,' the Oak Grove native said." (Greg Hilburn, "McAllister Holds To His Christian Principles And Pragmatic Politics," *The [Monroe, LA] News-Star*, 10/2/13)

**"While He's Critical Of The Atmosphere In Washington, He Doesn't Blame It Exclusively On Obama."** (Melinda Deslatte, "Candidate Bridges Tea Party, Establishment Divide," *The Associated Press*, 11/15/13)

**"[McAllister] Described Himself As A True Conservative And A Republican, But He Added, 'Regardless Of The Party, You Should Treat Everybody As A Person.'"** (Melinda Deslatte, "McAllister Prepares For Washington," [Alexandria, LA] *Daily Town Talk*, 11/19/13)

- **McAllister: "I'm Representing The Whole District. I Got Democrats, I Got Republicans And I Got Independent Votes. ... I Think That's What We Got To Get This Country Back To Is Representing Everybody."** (Melinda Deslatte, "Something Different," [Alexandria, LA] *Daily Town Talk*, 11/18/13)

**McAllister: "[W]e Intend To Work Together For The Common Purpose, And That's To Make Government Work. That's What We Should Be Striving For."** "Rep-elect Vance McAllister, R-Monroe, says his upset win Saturday in Louisiana's special 5th Congressional District race offers a message for the Republican Party on how to win elections. 'I believe there is a message,' McAllister said Monday. 'And it's that we

intend to work together for the common purpose, and that's to make government work.'" (Bruce Alpert, "McAllister's Congressional Win Is 'Special Stuff,'" [New Orleans, LA] *Times-Picayune*, 11/19/13)

**In Congress, McAllister Plans To Maintain A Staffing Status Quo By Keeping Rep. Rodney Alexander's Staff, As Long As They Did Not Endorse His Opponent.** "McAllister said he plans to hire many of Alexander's former employees as long as they didn't endorse his competitor, saying he needs to keep people who know the district and who know Congress, particularly since he's taking over the seat in the middle of a two-year term. He quickly hired Alexander's former chief of staff, Adam Terry, to keep the same job with him." (Melinda Deslatte, "McAllister Prepares For Washington," [Alexandria, LA] *Daily Town Talk*, 11/19/13)

## ON AGRICULTURE

---

**"[McAllister] Said Passing A Five-Year Farm Bill Is Critical To The 5th District, Calling Agriculture 'The Backbone Of The District. We Have To Get A Bill So Farmers Can Plan Their Business.'" (Greg Hilburn, "McAllister, Riser Go Courting," *The [Monroe, LA] News-Star*, 11/5/13)**

**"McAllister Said He Would Support A New Farm Bill, Which He Considers A National Security Issue. But He Prefers The Bill Be Limited To Agriculture Policy And That The Food Stamp Program Be Separate."** (Greg Hilburn, "McAllister Holds To His Christian Principles And Pragmatic Politics," *The [Monroe, LA] News-Star*, 10/2/13)

## ON HEALTH CARE

---

**With Little Chance To Repeal Health Care Reform, McAllister Believes Congress Should Act To Improve The Law.** "McAllister said repeal had no chance with Democrats leading the Senate and White House, so he said Congress should work to improve the law. He also wants Louisiana to expand its Medicaid program to give insurance to the working poor, an expansion that Riser opposes. The positions put McAllister at odds with some tea party supporters but generated support from Democrats who had no candidate of their own in the runoff." (Melinda Deslatte, "McAllister Wins 5th District Congressional Seat," *The Associated Press*, 11/17/13)

**McAllister: "[Obamacare] Is A Nightmare, But It's A Reality, And It's Here. ... So If You Have To Live With It, We Have To Make It Livable. We Have To Make It Work For The People Until One Day We (Have The Votes) To Repeal It."** (Greg Hilburn, "McAllister, Riser Go Courting," *The [Monroe, LA] News-Star*, 11/5/13)

**"McAllister Says Republicans Should Show The President Respect And That The Best Course On Health Care Is To Work On Improving Obama's Signature Law Since He Was Re-Elected And Democrats Still Control The Senate."** (Melinda Deslatte, "Candidate Bridges Tea Party, Establishment Divide," *The Associated Press*, 11/15/13)

- **"In The Campaign, McAllister Differentiated Himself From Riser By Saying He Wants To Modify The Affordable Care Act To Make It Work."** (Bruce Alpert, "McAllister's Congressional Win Is 'Special Stuff,'" [New Orleans, LA] *Times-Picayune*, 11/19/13)

**McAllister Supports Requiring Insurance Companies To Cover Individuals With Pre-Existing Conditions, Saying "How Can We Turn Our Back On People?"** "Joshua Stockley, a professor at the University of Louisiana at Monroe, asked the candidates during the forum whether insurance companies should be required to provide coverage for pre-existing conditions in their policies. ... McAllister said it should

apply to all. 'How can we turn our back on people? The last thing I want to see is a person not get coverage.'" (Mike Hasten, "Health Care Splits Candidates," [Alexandria, LA] *Daily Town Talk*, 11/10/13)

**McAllister Does Want To End The Requirement Under The Affordable Care Act That Requires People Buy Health Coverage For Services They Do Not Need.** "McAllister said he believes one major change in the health law should be to end the requirement that people buy health coverage for services they don't need. As an example, he cited a young single male being required to obtain coverage for maternity care." (Bruce Alpert, "McAllister's Congressional Win Is 'Special Stuff,'" [New Orleans, LA] *Times-Picayune*, 11/19/13)

**"McAllister ... Said He Also Doesn't Believe People Should Be Required To Purchase Health Insurance..."** (Bruce Alpert, "McAllister's Congressional Win Is 'Special Stuff,'" [New Orleans, LA] *Times-Picayune*, 11/19/13)

**During The Campaign, McAllister Said Louisiana Should Accept Federal Funds To Expand Medicare To Cover More Of Its Uninsured Residents.** "[McAllister] also said that he believes Louisiana should accept federal funds under the Affordable Care Act to expand Medicaid to provide coverage for more uninsured residents, including many poor constituents in the Fifth Congressional District." (Bruce Alpert, "McAllister's Congressional Win Is 'Special Stuff,'" [New Orleans, LA] *Times-Picayune*, 11/19/13)

- **McAllister: "We Have To Expand Medicaid. ... One In Five People In Our District Is Uninsured, Which Is Among The Highest Rates In The Nation."** (Richard Sharkey, "5th District Voters To Choose Runoff Winner," [Alexandria, LA] *Daily Town Talk*, 11/15/13)

## ON IMMIGRATION

---

**While McAllister Wants To Begin Immigration Reform By Addressing Border Security, "As A Christian" He Feels There Should Be A "Tough, Hard Path To Citizenship" For Illegal Residents.** "On immigration, McAllister said he backs addressing border security first, in its own separate legislation. Then, 'as a Christian,' he said he would support providing a 'tough, hard path to citizenship' for many of those living in the country illegally." (Jordan Blum, "First-Time Candidate In 5th District Race," *The [Baton Rouge, LA] Advocate*, 11/12/13)

- **"[McAllister] Said Those Eligible Would Have To Learn English, Get An Education, Pay Some Back Taxes And Not Have A Criminal Background."** (Jordan Blum, "First-Time Candidate In 5th District Race," *The [Baton Rouge, LA] Advocate*, 11/12/13)

## ON INFRASTRUCTURE

---

**McAllister Refuses To Commit To Additional Spending On Infrastructure Until Congress Passes A Balance Budget.** "The candidates were asked whether they agree with President Barack Obama that there should be more investment in infrastructure - roads, bridges and ports. 'Until we have a balanced budget, I don't,' said McAllister. 'We should spend money on it when we get our house in order.'" (Mike Hasten, "Health Care Splits Candidates," [Alexandria, LA] *Daily Town Talk*, 11/10/13)

## ON JOBS & THE ECONOMY

---

**Even Though His District Is Among The Poorest In The Nation, McAllister Would Still Support Cutting Federal Assistance Like Food Stamps And Unemployment Benefits.** "McAllister said he would support reducing

federal assistance like food stamps and the length of unemployment benefits despite 5th District residents being among the poorest in the country. 'I would reduce assistance, but only with a plan to help people get better with education or training,' he said." (Greg Hilburn, "McAllister, Riser Go Courting," *The [Monroe, LA] News-Star*, 11/5/13)

## ON TAXES & BUDGET

---

**To McAllister, Balancing The Federal Budget Is A Top Priority, But He Would Support Deficit Spending In Cases Of War Or A Natural Disaster.** "McAllister said balancing the federal budget should be a priority. When asked if he would support deficit spending in cases of natural disaster or war, he said, 'The intent should always be to balance the budget. If something unexpected happens, just like an illness in a family, you have to adjust the budget.'" (Greg Hilburn, "McAllister, Riser Go Courting," *The [Monroe, LA] News-Star*, 11/5/13)

**"McAllister Said ... He Wouldn't Have Supported The Recent Effort To De-Fund It That Resulted In A Temporary Government Shutdown."** (Greg Hilburn, "McAllister, Riser Go Courting," *The [Monroe, LA] News-Star*, 11/5/13)