

## **Civil Rights**

### **A States' Rights Lens**

#### **The Honorable William Jackson (Jack) Edwards**

#### **U.S. Representative of Alabama**

Representative Edwards reflects on trying to balance the need for change and states' rights.

*Interview recorded August 23, 2012*

I think that's probably quite true, yeah. But it was built, hopefully, and because I've never looked on myself as a racist, it was built hopefully on the fact that if given the chance in view of all this, the states would in fact rise to the occasion and deal with it. Probably not as fast as the feds wanted, but that we could deal with it, because we knew we had to. Now, was that wishful thinking? I don't know, because I still had to deal with George Wallace {laughter} for most of my career there. And he would just—you know, he was a different man after he got shot, and made his peace with the blacks and so forth, but by and large, he was always George Wallace, and I always had to deal with him in that context.