

REPUBLICAN ROCKSTARS

The Most Popular Conservatives of the past 40 Years



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Ronald Reagan

Ronald Wilson Reagan (/ˈreɪɡən/ *RAY-gən*; February 6, 1911 – June 5, 2004) was an American politician who served as the 40th president of the United States from 1981 to 1989 and became a highly influential voice of modern conservatism. Prior to his presidency, he was a Hollywood movie actor and union leader before serving as the 33rd governor of California from 1967 to 1975.

Raised in a low-income family in small towns of northern Illinois, Reagan graduated from Eureka College in 1932 and worked as a radio sports commentator. After moving to California in 1937, he found work as an actor and starred in a few major productions. As president of the Screen Actors Guild, Reagan worked to root out alleged communist influence. In the 1950s, he moved into television and was a motivational speaker at General Electric factories. In 1964, his speech "A Time for Choosing" earned him national attention as a new conservative spokesman. Building a network of supporters, Reagan was elected governor of California in 1966. As governor, he raised taxes, turned a state budget deficit to a surplus, challenged the protesters at UC Berkeley, and ordered in National Guard troops during a period of protest movements.

In 1980, Reagan won the Republican presidential nomination and defeated the incumbent president, Jimmy Carter. At 69 years, 349 days of age at the time of his first inauguration, Reagan was the oldest person to assume the U.S. presidency, a distinction he held until 2017, when Donald Trump was inaugurated at age 70 years, 220 days. Reagan faced former vice president Walter Mondale when he ran for re-election in 1984 and defeated him, winning the most electoral votes of any U.S. president, 525, or 97.6% of the 538 votes in the Electoral College. It was the second-most lopsided presidential election in modern U.S. history after Franklin D. Roosevelt's 1936 victory over Alfred M. Landon, in which he won 98.5%, or 523, of the (then-total) 531 electoral votes.^[5]

Soon after taking office as president, Reagan began implementing sweeping new political and economic initiatives. His supply-side economic policies, dubbed "Reaganomics", advocated tax rate reduction to spur economic growth, economic deregulation, and reduction in government spending. In his first term, he survived an assassination attempt, spurred the War on Drugs, invaded Grenada, and fought public sector labor unions. Over his two terms, the economy saw a reduction of inflation from 12.5% to 4.4% and an average real GDP annual growth of 3.6%. Reagan enacted cuts in domestic discretionary spending, cut taxes, and

Ronald Reagan



Official portrait, 1981

40th President of the United States

In office

January 20, 1981 – January 20, 1989

Vice President George H. W. Bush

Preceded by Jimmy Carter

Succeeded by George H. W. Bush

33rd Governor of California

In office

January 2, 1967 – January 6, 1975

Lieutenant Robert Finch^[1]

Edwin Reinecke^[2]

John L. Harmer^[3]

Preceded by Pat Brown

Succeeded by Jerry Brown^[4]

9th and 13th President of the Screen Actors Guild

In office

November 16, 1959 – June 12, 1960

Preceded by Howard Keel

Succeeded by George Chandler

In office

November 17, 1947 – November 9, 1952

increased military spending, which contributed to increased federal debt overall. Foreign affairs dominated his second term, including the bombing of Libya, the Iran–Iraq War, the Iran–Contra affair, and the ongoing Cold War. In June 1987, four years after he publicly described the Soviet Union as an "evil empire", Reagan challenged Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev to "tear down this wall!", during a speech at the Brandenburg Gate. He transitioned Cold War policy from détente to rollback by escalating an arms race with the USSR while engaging in talks with Gorbachev. The talks culminated in the INF Treaty, which shrank both countries' nuclear arsenals. Reagan began his presidency during the decline of the Soviet Union, which ultimately collapsed nearly three years after he left office.

When Reagan left office in 1989, he held an approval rating of 68%, matching those of Franklin D. Roosevelt, and later Bill Clinton, as the highest ratings for departing presidents in the modern era.^[6] He was the first president since Dwight D. Eisenhower to serve two full terms, after the five prior presidents did not. Although he had planned an active post-presidency, Reagan disclosed in November 1994 that he had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease earlier that year. Afterward, his informal public appearances became more infrequent as the disease progressed. He died at home on June 5, 2004. His tenure constituted a realignment toward conservative policies in the United States, and he is an icon among conservatives. Evaluations of his presidency among historians and the general public place him among the upper tier of American presidents.

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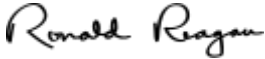

Early political career

Governor of California (1967–1975)

1976 presidential campaign

1978: Opposition to the Briggs Initiative

1980 presidential campaign

Preceded by	<u>Robert Montgomery</u>
Succeeded by	<u>Walter Pidgeon</u>
Personal details	
Born	<u>Ronald Wilson Reagan</u> <div>February 6, 1911</div> <u>Tampico, Illinois, U.S.</u>
Died	June 5, 2004 <div>(aged 93)</div> <u>Los Angeles, California, U.S.</u>
Resting place	<u>Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum</u>
Political party	<u>Republican</u> (from 1962)
Other political affiliations	<u>Democratic</u> (until 1962)
Spouse(s)	<u>Jane Wyman</u> <div>(<u>m.</u> 1940; <u>div.</u> 1949)</div> <u>Nancy Davis</u> (<u>m.</u> 1952)
Children	<u>Maureen</u> · <u>Christine</u> · <u>Michael</u> · <u>Patti</u> · <u>Ron</u>
Parents	<u>Jack Reagan</u> <u>Nelle Wilson</u>
Relatives	<u>Neil Reagan</u> (brother)
Education	<u>Eureka College</u> (BA)
Occupation	Politician · trade unionist · actor · author · broadcaster
Awards	<u>Presidential Medal of Freedom with distinction</u> (1993) <u>Congressional Gold Medal</u> (2000) <u>List of honors and awards</u>
Signature	
Military service	
Service	 <u>United States Army</u> <div>— <u>Army Reserve</u><div>— <u>Air Forces (AAF)</u></div></div>

Presidency (1981–1989)

First term

Prayer in schools and a moment of silence

Assassination attempt

Sandra Day O'Connor

Air traffic controllers' strike

"Reaganomics" and the economy

Civil rights

Escalation of the Cold War

Lebanese Civil War

Invasion of Grenada

1984 presidential campaign

Second term

War on drugs

Response to AIDS epidemic

Addressing apartheid

Libya bombing

Immigration

Iran–Contra affair

Decline of the Soviet Union and thaw in relations

Health

Judiciary

Post-presidency (1989–2004)

Assault

Public speaking

Alzheimer's disease

Announcement and reaction (1994)

Progression (1994–2004)

Death and funeral

Legacy

Cold War

Domestic and political legacy

Cultural and political image

Honors

Gallery

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Primary sources

Historiography

External links

Official sites

Media

Years of service	<u>1937–1942 (reserve)</u> <u>1942–1945 (regular)</u>
Rank	<u>Captain</u>
Unit	<u>322d Cavalry Regiment</u> <u>323d Cavalry Regiment</u> <u>18th AAF Base Unit</u>
Wars	<u>World War II</u> └ <u>American Theater</u>

[News coverage](#)

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Early life



Ronald Reagan's boyhood home in [Dixon, Illinois](#)

Ronald Wilson Reagan was born on February 6, 1911, in an apartment on the second floor of a commercial building in [Tampico, Illinois](#). He was the younger son of [Nelle Clyde \(née Wilson\)](#) and [Jack Reagan](#).^[7] Jack was a salesman and storyteller whose grandparents were [Irish Catholic emigrants from County Tipperary](#),^[8] while Nelle was of English and Scottish descent.^[9] Ronald's older brother, [Neil Reagan](#), became an advertising executive.^[10]

Reagan's father nicknamed his son "Dutch", due to his "fat little Dutchman" appearance and Dutch-boy haircut; the nickname stuck with him throughout his youth.^[11] Reagan's family briefly lived in several towns and cities in Illinois, including [Monmouth](#), [Galesburg](#), and [Chicago](#).^[12] In 1919, they returned to Tampico and lived above

the [H. C. Pitney Variety Store](#) until finally settling in [Dixon, Illinois](#).^[7] After his election as president, Reagan lived in the upstairs White House private quarters, and he would quip that he was "living above the store" again.^[13]

Religion

Ronald Reagan wrote that his mother "always expected to find the best in people and often did".^[14] She attended the [Disciples of Christ](#) church regularly and was active, and very influential, within it; she frequently led Sunday school services and gave the Bible readings to the congregation during the services. A firm believer in the power of [prayer](#), she led prayer meetings at church and was in charge of mid-week prayers when the pastor was out of town.^[15] She was also an adherent of the [Social Gospel movement](#).^[16] Her strong commitment to the church is what induced her son Ronald to become a Protestant Christian rather than a Roman Catholic like his Irish father.^[9] He also stated that she strongly influenced his own beliefs: "I know that she planted that faith very deeply in me."^[17] Reagan identified himself as a born-again Christian.^[18] In Dixon, Reagan was strongly influenced by his pastor Beh Hill Cleaver, an erudite scholar. Cleaver was the father of Reagan's fiancée. Reagan saw him as a second father. Stephen Vaughn says:

At many points the positions taken by the First Christian Church of Reagan's youth coincided with the words, if not the beliefs of the latter-day Reagan. These positions included faith in Providence, association of America's mission with God's will, belief in progress, trust in the work ethic and admiration for those who achieved wealth, an uncomfortableness with literature and art that questioned the family or challenged notions of proper sexual behavior, presumption that poverty is an individual problem best left to charity rather than the state, sensitivity to problems involving alcohol and drugs, and reticence to use government to protect civil rights for minorities.^[19]

According to [Paul Kengor](#), Reagan had a particularly strong faith in the goodness of people; this faith stemmed from the optimistic faith of his mother^[20] and the [Disciples of Christ](#) faith,^[20] into which he was baptized in 1922.^[21] For that period, which was long before the [civil rights movement](#), Reagan's opposition to

racial discrimination was unusual. He recalled the time when his college football team was staying at a local hotel which would not allow two black teammates to stay there, and he invited them to his parents' home 15 miles (24 kilometers) away in Dixon. His mother invited them to stay overnight and have breakfast the next morning.^{[22][23]} His father was strongly opposed to the Ku Klux Klan due to his Catholic heritage, but also due to the Klan's anti-semitism and anti-black racism.^[16] After becoming a prominent actor, Reagan gave speeches in favor of racial equality following World War II.^[24]

During his years at Hollywood, Reagan became a member of the Hollywood-Beverly Christian Church^[18] and attended its services infrequently. Subsequently from 1964 onwards, Reagan began to attend church services at Bel Air Presbyterian Church, where he became acquainted with Donn Moomaw.^[25] Reagan scaled down his church attendance while serving as President, citing the inconvenience that his large Secret Service entourage would bring to other churchgoers and the potential danger (to others) from his presence due to possible terrorism.^{[26][27]} After leaving office, Reagan officially joined Bel Air as its member and regularly attended services there.^[28]

Formal education

Reagan attended Dixon High School, where he developed interests in acting, sports, and storytelling.^[29] His first job involved working as a lifeguard at the Rock River in Lowell Park in 1927. Over six years, Reagan performed 77 rescues.^[30] He attended Eureka College. He was an indifferent student, majored in economics and sociology and graduated with a C average.^[31] He developed a reputation as a "jack of all trades", excelling in campus politics, sports, and theater. He was a member of the football team and captain of the swim team. He was elected student body president and participated in student protests against the college president.^[32]

Entertainment career

Radio and film

After graduating from Eureka in 1932, Reagan took jobs in Iowa as a radio announcer at several stations. He moved to WHO radio in Des Moines as an announcer for Chicago Cubs baseball games. His specialty was creating play-by-play accounts of games using only basic descriptions that the station received by wire as the games were in progress.^[33]

While traveling with the Cubs in California in 1937, Reagan took a screen test that led to a seven-year contract with Warner Bros. studios.^[34] He spent the first few years of his Hollywood career in the "B film" unit, where, Reagan joked, the producers "didn't want them good; they wanted them Thursday".^[35]

He earned his first screen credit with a starring role in the 1937 movie *Love Is on the Air*, and by the end of 1939, he had already appeared in 19 films,^[36] including *Dark Victory* with Bette Davis and Humphrey Bogart. Before the film *Santa Fe Trail* with Errol Flynn in 1940, he played the role of George Gipp in the film *Knute Rockne, All American*; from it, he acquired the lifelong nickname "the Gipper".^[37] In 1941, exhibitors voted him the fifth most popular star from the younger generation in Hollywood.^[38]



The Bad Man (1941)

Reagan played his favorite acting role in 1942's *Kings Row*,^[39] where he plays a double amputee who recites the line "Where's the rest of me?"—later used as the title of his 1965 autobiography. Many film critics considered *Kings Row* to be his best movie,^[40] though the film was condemned by *The New York Times* critic Bosley Crowther.^{[41][42]}

Kings Row made Reagan a star—Warner immediately tripled his salary to \$3,000 a week. Shortly afterwards, he received co-star above-the-title billing with Flynn – who was still a huge star at the time – in *Desperate Journey* (1942). In April 1942, Reagan was ordered to military active duty in San Francisco and never quite became a big first-rank film star despite playing the lead in numerous movies.^[43] After his wartime military service he co-starred in such films as *The Voice of the Turtle*, *John Loves Mary*, *The Hasty Heart*, *Bedtime for Bonzo*, *Cattle Queen of Montana*, *Tennessee's Partner*, *Hellcats of the Navy* (the only film in which he appears with Nancy Reagan), and his one turn at playing a vicious villain, in the 1964 remake *The Killers* (his final film) with Lee Marvin and Angie Dickenson. Throughout his film career, Reagan's mother answered much of his fan mail.^[44]

Military service



Capt. Ronald Reagan at Fort Roach, 1943 or 1944.

After completing 14 home-study Army Extension Courses, Reagan enlisted in the Army Enlisted Reserve and was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Officers' Reserve Corps of the Cavalry on May 25, 1937.^[45]

On April 18, 1942, Reagan was ordered to active duty for the first time. Due to his poor eyesight, he was classified for limited service only, which excluded him from serving overseas.^[46] His first assignment was at the San Francisco Port of Embarkation at Fort Mason, California, as a liaison officer of the Port and Transportation Office.^[47] Upon the approval of the U.S. Army Air Forces (AAF), he applied for a transfer from the cavalry to the AAF on May 15, 1942, and was assigned to AAF Public Relations and subsequently to

the 18th AAF Base Unit (Motion Picture Unit) at Culver City, California.^[47] On January 14, 1943, he was promoted to first lieutenant and was sent to the Provisional Task Force Show Unit of *This Is the Army* at Burbank, California.^[47] He returned to the 18th AAF Base Unit after completing this duty and was promoted to captain on July 22, 1943.^[48]

In January 1944, Reagan was ordered to temporary duty in New York City to participate in the opening of the Sixth War Loan Drive, which campaigned for the purchase of war bonds. He was reassigned to the 18th AAF Base Unit on November 14, 1944, where he remained until the end of World War II.^[48] By the end of the war, his units had produced some 400 training films for the Air Force, including cockpit simulations for B-29 crews scheduled to bomb Japan. He was separated from active duty on December 9, 1945, as an Army captain.^[49] While he was in the service, Reagan obtained a film reel depicting the liberation of the Auschwitz concentration camp; he held on to it, believing that doubts would someday arise as to whether the Holocaust had occurred.^[50]

Screen Actors Guild presidency

Reagan was first elected to the Board of Directors of the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) in 1941, serving as an alternate member. After World War II, he resumed service and became third vice president in 1946.^[51] When the SAG president and six board members resigned in March 1947 due to the union's new bylaws on conflict of interest, Reagan was elected president in a special election. He was subsequently re-elected six times, in

1947, 1948, 1949, 1950, 1951 and 1959. He led the SAG through implementing the 1947 Taft–Hartley Act, various labor-management disputes, and the Hollywood blacklist era.^[51] First instituted in 1947 by Studio executives who agreed that they would not employ anyone believed to be or to have been Communists or sympathetic with radical politics, the blacklist grew steadily larger during the early 1950s as the U.S. Congress continued to investigate domestic political subversion.^[52]

Also during his tenure, Reagan was instrumental in securing residuals for television actors when their episodes were re-run, and later, for motion picture actors when their studio films aired on TV.^[53]

FBI informant

In 1946, Reagan served on the national board of directors for the Independent Citizens Committee of the Arts, Sciences and Professions (ICCASP) and had been a member of its Hollywood chapter (HICCASP). His attendance at a July 10, 1946, meeting of HICCASP brought him to the attention of the FBI, which interviewed him on April 10, 1947, in connection with its investigation into HICCASP.^{[54][55][56]} Four decades later it was revealed that, during the late 1940s, Reagan (under the code name T-10) and his then-wife, Jane Wyman, provided the FBI with the names of actors within the motion picture industry whom they believed to be communist sympathizers. Even so, he was uncomfortable with the way the SAG was being used by the government, asking during one FBI interview, "Do they (ie. the House Un-American Activities Committee) expect us to constitute ourselves as a little FBI of our own and determine just who is a Commie and who isn't?"^{[57][58]}

HUAC's Hollywood hearings

In October 1947 during HUAC's Hollywood hearings, Reagan testified as president of the Screen Actors Guild.^[59]

There has been a small group within the Screen Actors Guild which has consistently opposed the policy of the guild board and officers of the guild... suspected of more or less following the tactics that we associate with the Communist Party... At times they have attempted to be a disruptive influence... I have heard different discussions and some of them tagged as Communists... I found myself misled into being a sponsor on another occasion for a function that was held under the auspices of the Joint Anti-Fascist Refugee Committee.^[59]

Regarding a "jurisdictional strike" going on for seven months at that time, Reagan testified:

The first time that this word "Communist" was ever injected into any of the meetings concerning the strike was at a meeting in Chicago with Mr. William Hutchinson, president of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, who were on strike at the time. He asked the Screen Actors Guild to submit terms to Mr. Walsh, for Walsh to give in the settling of this strike, and he told us to tell Mr. Walsh that if he would give in on these terms he in turn would run this Sorrell and the other Commies out—I am quoting him—and break it up.^[59]

However, Reagan also opposed measures soon to manifest in the Mundt–Nixon Bill in May 1948 by opining:



Guest stars for the premiere of The Dick Powell Show, 1961. Reagan can be seen wearing a ten-gallon hat on the far left.

As a citizen I would hesitate, or not like, to see any political party outlawed on the basis of its political ideology... I detest, I abhor their philosophy, but I detest more than that their tactics, which are those of the fifth column, and are dishonest, but at the same time I never as a citizen want to see our country become urged, by either fear or resentment of this group, that we ever compromise with any of our democratic principles through that fear or resentment.^[59]

Further, when asked whether he was aware of Communist efforts within the Screen Writers Guild, Reagan would not play along, saying, "Sir, like the other gentlemen, I must say that that is hearsay."^[59]

Television

Reagan landed fewer film roles in the late 1950s and moved into television.^[35] He was hired as the host of *General Electric Theater*,^[60] a series of weekly dramas that became very popular.^[35] His contract required him to tour General Electric (GE) plants 16 weeks out of the year, which often demanded that he give 14 talks per day.^[35] He earned approximately \$125,000 (equivalent to \$1.1 million in 2020) in this role. The show ran for ten seasons from 1953 to 1962, which increased Reagan's national profile.^[61] On January 1, 1959, Reagan was the host and announcer for ABC's coverage of the Tournament of Roses Parade.^[62] In his final work as a professional actor, Reagan was a host and performer from 1964 to 1965 on the television series *Death Valley Days*.^[63] Following their marriage in 1952, Ronald and Nancy Reagan, who continued to use the stage name Nancy Davis, acted together in three TV series episodes, including a 1958 installment of *General Electric Theater* titled "A Turkey for the President".^[64]

Marriages and children

In 1938, Reagan co-starred in the film *Brother Rat* with actress Jane Wyman (1917–2007). They announced their engagement at the Chicago Theatre^[65] and married on January 26, 1940, at the Wee Kirk o' the Heather church in Glendale, California.^[66] Together they had two biological daughters, Maureen (1941–2001) and Christine (born prematurely, and died, June 26, 1947); and adopted a son, Michael (b. 1945).^[67] After the couple had arguments about Reagan's political ambitions, Wyman filed for divorce in 1948,^[68] citing a distraction due to her husband's Screen Actors Guild union duties; the divorce was finalized in 1949.^[37] Wyman, who was a registered Republican, also stated that their breakup stemmed from a difference in politics (Reagan was still a Democrat at the time).^[69] When Reagan became president 32 years later, he became the first divorced person to assume the nation's highest office.^[70] Reagan and Wyman continued to be friends until his death; Wyman voted for Reagan in both his runs, and on his death she said, "America has lost a great president and a great, kind, and gentle man."^[71]



Reagan and his first wife Jane Wyman, 1942

Reagan met actress Nancy Davis (1921–2016)^{[72][73]} in 1949 after she contacted him in his capacity as president of the Screen Actors Guild. He helped her with issues regarding her name appearing on a Communist blacklist in Hollywood; she had been mistaken for another Nancy Davis. She described their meeting by saying, "I don't know if it was exactly love at first sight, but it was pretty close."^[74] They were engaged at Chasen's restaurant in Los Angeles and were married on March 4, 1952, at the Little Brown Church in the Valley (North Hollywood, now Studio City) San Fernando Valley.^[75] Actor William Holden served as best man at the ceremony. They had two children: Patti (b. 1952) and Ronald "Ron" (b. 1958).



Wedding of Ronald and Nancy Reagan, 1952. Matron of honor Brenda Marshall (left) and best man William Holden (right) were the sole guests.

The couple's relationship was close, authentic and intimate.^[76] During his presidency, they often displayed affection for each other; one press secretary said, "They never took each other for granted. They never stopped courting."^{[74][77]} He often called her "Mommy", and she called him "Ronnie".^[77] He once wrote to her, "Whatever I treasure and enjoy ... all would be without meaning if I didn't have you."^[78] In 1998, while he was stricken by Alzheimer's, Nancy told *Vanity Fair*, "Our relationship is very special. We were very much in love and still are. When I say my life began with Ronnie, well, it's true. It did. I can't imagine life without him."^[74] Nancy Reagan died on March 6, 2016, at the age of 94.^[79]

Early political career

Reagan began as a Hollywood Democrat, and Franklin D. Roosevelt was "a true hero" to him.^[80] He moved to the right-wing in the 1950s, became a Republican in 1962, and emerged as a leading conservative spokesman in the Goldwater campaign of 1964.^[81]

In his early political career, he joined numerous political committees with a left-wing orientation, such as the American Veterans Committee. He fought against Republican-sponsored right-to-work legislation and supported Helen Gahagan Douglas in 1950 when she was defeated for the Senate by Richard Nixon. It was his belief that Communists were a powerful backstage influence in those groups that led him to rally his friends against them.^[82]

At rallies, Reagan frequently spoke with a strong ideological dimension. In December 1945, he was stopped from leading an anti-nuclear rally in Hollywood by pressure from the Warner Bros. studio. He would later make nuclear weapons a key point of his presidency when he specifically stated his opposition to mutual assured destruction. Reagan also built on previous efforts to limit the spread of nuclear weapons.^[83] In the 1948 presidential election, Reagan strongly supported Harry S. Truman and appeared on stage with him during a campaign speech in Los Angeles.^[84] In the early 1950s, his relationship with actress Nancy Davis grew,^[85] and he shifted to the right when he endorsed the presidential candidacies of Dwight D. Eisenhower (1952 and 1956) and Richard Nixon (1960).^[86]

Reagan was hired by General Electric (GE) in 1954 to host the *General Electric Theater*, a weekly TV drama series. He also traveled across the country to give motivational speeches to over 200,000 GE employees. His many speeches—which he wrote himself—were non-partisan but carried a conservative, pro-business message; he was influenced by Lemuel Boulware, a senior GE executive. Boulware, known for his tough stance against unions and his innovative strategies to win over workers, championed the core tenets of modern American conservatism: free markets, anticommunism, lower taxes, and limited government.^[87] Eager for a larger stage, but not allowed to enter politics by GE, he quit and formally registered as a Republican.^[88] He often said, "I didn't leave the Democratic Party. The party left me."^[89]

When the legislation that would become Medicare was introduced in 1961, he created a recording for the American Medical Association (AMA) warning that such legislation would mean the end of freedom in America. Reagan said that if his listeners did not write letters to prevent it, "we will awake to find that we have socialism. And if you don't do this, and if I don't do it, one of these days, you and I are going to spend our



Nancy and Ronald Reagan aboard a boat in California, 1964

sunset years telling our children, and our children's children, what it once was like in America when men were free."^{[90][91]} Other Democratic initiatives he opposed in the 1960s included the Food Stamp Program, raising the minimum wage, and the establishment of the Peace Corps.^[16] He also joined the National Rifle Association (NRA) and would become a lifetime member.^[92]

Reagan gained national attention in his speeches for conservative presidential contender Barry Goldwater in 1964.^[93] Speaking for Goldwater, Reagan stressed his belief in the importance of smaller government. He consolidated themes that he had developed in his talks for GE to deliver his famous speech, "A Time for Choosing":

The Founding Fathers knew a government can't control the economy without controlling people. And they knew when a government sets out to do that, it must use force and coercion to achieve its purpose. So we have come to a time for choosing ... You and I are told we must choose between a left or right, but I suggest there is no such thing as a left or right. There is only an up or down. Up to man's age-old dream—the maximum of individual freedom consistent with order—or down to the ant heap of totalitarianism.^{[94][95]}

— October 27, 1964

This "A Time for Choosing" speech was not enough to turn around the faltering Goldwater campaign, but it was the crucial event that established Reagan's national political visibility. David Broder of *The Washington Post* called it, "the most successful national political debut since William Jennings Bryan electrified the 1896 Democratic convention with his Cross of Gold speech".^{[96][97][98]}

Governor of California (1967–1975)


California Republicans were impressed with Reagan's political views and charisma after his "Time for Choosing" speech,^[100] and in late 1965 he announced his campaign for governor in the 1966 election.^{[101][102]} He defeated former San Francisco mayor George Christopher in the Republican primary. In Reagan's campaign, he emphasized two main themes: "to send the welfare bums back to work", and, in reference to burgeoning anti-war and anti-establishment student protests at the University of California, Berkeley, "to clean up the mess at Berkeley".^[103] In 1966, Reagan accomplished what both U.S. senator William Knowland in 1958 and former vice president Richard Nixon in 1962 failed to do: he was elected, defeating Pat Brown, the Democratic two-term governor. Reagan was sworn in on January 2, 1967. In his first term, he froze government hiring and approved tax hikes to balance the budget.^[104]

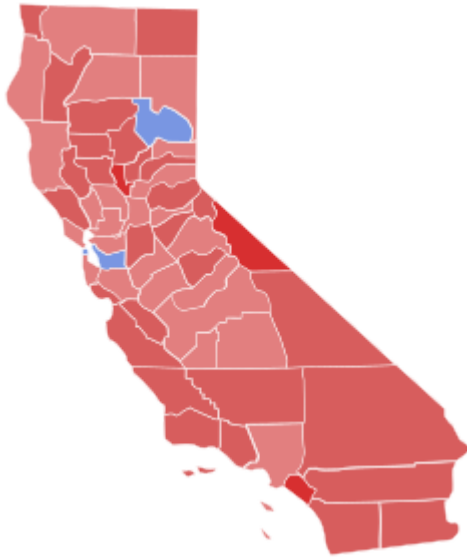
Shortly after assuming office, Reagan tested the 1968 presidential waters as part of a "Stop Nixon" movement, hoping to cut into Nixon's southern support^[106] and become a compromise candidate^[107] if neither Nixon nor second-place candidate Nelson Rockefeller received enough delegates to win on the first ballot at the Republican convention. However, by the time of the convention, Nixon had 692 delegate votes, 25 more than he needed to secure the nomination, followed by Rockefeller with Reagan in third place.^[106]

Reagan was involved in several high-profile conflicts with the protest movements of the era, including his public criticism of university administrators for tolerating student demonstrations at the Berkeley campus. On May 15, 1969, during the People's Park protests at the university's campus (the original purpose of which was to discuss the Arab–Israeli conflict), Reagan sent the California Highway Patrol and other officers to quell the protests. This led to an incident that became known as "Bloody Thursday", resulting in the death of student James Rector and the blinding of carpenter Alan Blanchard.^{[108][109]} In addition, 111 police officers were

External audio

Speech to the National Press Club

 Reagan's speech on June 16, 1966 (<https://www.loc.gov/rr/record/pressclub/reagan.html>) (starts at 06:16; finishes at 39:04)^[99]



In 1966, Reagan was elected governor of California with 57.5 percent of the vote.^[105]

Reagan: ■ 50–59% ■ 60–69% ■ 70–79%

Brown: ■ 50–59%

injured in the conflict, including one who was knifed in the chest. Reagan then called out 2,200 state National Guard troops to occupy the city of Berkeley for two weeks to crack down on the protesters.^[108] The Guard remained in Berkeley for 17 days, camping in People's Park, and demonstrations subsided as the university removed cordoned-off fencing and placed all development plans for People's Park on hold.^{[108][110]} One year after the incident, Reagan responded to questions about campus protest movements saying, "If it takes a bloodbath, let's get it over with. No more appeasement."^[111] When the Symbionese Liberation Army kidnapped Patty Hearst in Berkeley and demanded the distribution of food to the poor, Reagan joked to a group of political aides about a botulism outbreak contaminating the food.^[112]

Early in 1967, the national debate on abortion was starting to gain traction. In the early stages of the debate, Democratic California state senator Anthony Beilenson introduced the Therapeutic Abortion Act in an effort to reduce the number of "back-room abortions" performed in California.^[108] The state legislature sent the bill to Reagan's desk where, after many days of indecision, he reluctantly signed it on June 14, 1967.^[113] About two million abortions would be performed as a result, mostly because of a

provision in the bill allowing abortions for the well-being of the mother.^[113] Reagan had been in office for only four months when he signed the bill and later stated that had he been more experienced as governor, he would not have signed it. After he recognized what he called the "consequences" of the bill, he announced that he was anti-abortion.^[113] He maintained that position later in his political career, writing extensively about abortion.^[114]

In 1967, Reagan signed the Mulford Act, which repealed a law allowing the public carrying of loaded firearms (becoming California Penal Code 12031 and 171(c)). The bill, which was named after Republican assemblyman Don Mulford, garnered national attention after the Black Panthers marched bearing arms upon the California State Capitol to protest it.^{[115][116]}

Despite an unsuccessful attempt to force a recall election on Reagan in 1968,^[117] he was re-elected governor in 1970, defeating Jesse M. Unruh. He chose not to seek a third term in the following election cycle. One of Reagan's greatest frustrations in office was the controversy of capital punishment, which he strongly supported.^[39] His efforts to enforce the state's laws in this area were thwarted when the Supreme Court of California issued its People v. Anderson decision, which invalidated all death sentences issued in California before 1972, though the decision was later overturned by a constitutional amendment. The only execution during Reagan's governorship was on April 12, 1967, when Aaron Mitchell's sentence was carried out by the state in San Quentin's gas chamber.^[118]

In 1969, Reagan signed the Family Law Act, which was an amalgam of two bills that had been written and revised by the California State Legislature over more than two years.^[119] It became the first no-fault divorce legislation in the United States.^[120] Years later, he told his son Michael that signing that law was his "greatest regret" in public life.^{[121][122]}



The Reagans meet with President Richard Nixon and First Lady Pat Nixon, July 1970

Reagan's terms as governor helped to shape the policies he would pursue in his later political career as president. By campaigning on a platform of sending "the welfare bums back to work", he spoke out against the idea of the welfare state. He also strongly advocated the Republican ideal of less government regulation of the economy, including that of undue federal taxation.^[123]

1976 presidential campaign

Reagan's 1976 campaign relied on a strategy crafted by campaign manager John Sears of winning a few primaries early to damage the inevitability of Ford's likely nomination. Reagan won North Carolina, Texas, and California, but the strategy failed, as^[124] he ended up losing New Hampshire, Florida, and his native Illinois.^[125] The Texas campaign lent renewed hope to Reagan when he swept all 96 delegates chosen in the May 1 primary, with four more awaiting at the state convention. Much of the credit for that victory came from the work of three co-chairmen, including Ernest Angelo, the mayor of Midland, and Ray Barnhart of Houston, whom Reagan as president would appoint in 1981 as director of the Federal Highway Administration.^[126]



Reagan and President Ford shake hands on the podium after Reagan narrowly lost the nomination at the 1976 Republican National Convention

However, as the GOP convention neared, Ford appeared close to victory. Acknowledging his party's moderate wing, Reagan chose moderate senator Richard Schweiker of Pennsylvania as his running mate if nominated. Nonetheless, Ford prevailed with 1,187 delegates to Reagan's 1,070.^[125]

Reagan's concession speech emphasized the dangers of nuclear war and the threat posed by the Soviet Union. Though he lost the nomination, he received 307 write-in votes in New Hampshire, 388 votes as an independent on Wyoming's ballot, and a single electoral vote from a faithless elector in the November election from the state of Washington.^[127]

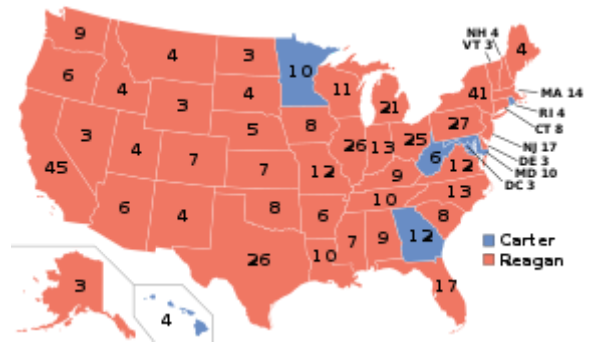
1978: Opposition to the Briggs Initiative

In 1978, conservative state legislator John Briggs, sponsored a ballot initiative for the November 7, 1978 California state election (the Briggs Initiative) that sought to ban gays and lesbians from working in California's public schools.^[128] Officially, California Proposition 6 was a ballot initiative put to referendum on the state ballot.^[129] Early opposition was led by LGBT activists and a few progressive politicians, but to many people's surprise, Reagan moved to publicly oppose the measure. He issued an informal letter of opposition to the initiative, told reporters that he was opposed, and wrote an editorial in the Los Angeles Herald-Examiner opposing it.^{[130][131]}

The timing of Reagan's opposition was significant, and surprised many, because he was then preparing to run for president, a race in which he would need the support of conservatives and those moderates who were uncomfortable with homosexual teachers. At that very moment, he was actively courting leaders from the religious right, including Jerry Falwell, who would go on to form the Moral Majority to fight out such culture war issues the following year.^[132] As Reagan biographer Lou Cannon puts it, Reagan was "well aware that there were those who wanted him to duck the issue" but nevertheless "chose to state his convictions".^[133] Cannon reports that Reagan was "repelled by the aggressive public crusades against homosexual life styles which became a staple of right wing politics in the late 1970s".^[133] Reagan's November 1 editorial stated, in part, "'Whatever else it is, homosexuality is not a contagious disease like the measles. Prevailing scientific opinion is that an individual's sexuality is determined at a very early age and that a child's teachers do not really influence this."^[130]

1980 presidential campaign

The 1980 presidential election featured Reagan against incumbent president Jimmy Carter and was conducted amid a multitude of domestic concerns as well as the ongoing Iran hostage crisis. Reagan's campaign stressed some of his fundamental principles: lower taxes to stimulate the economy,^[134] less government interference in people's lives,^[135] states' rights,^[136] and a strong national defense.^[137]



1980 electoral vote results



Ronald Reagan, moderator Jon Breen, and Bush participate in the Nashua, New Hampshire presidential debate, 1980

Reagan launched his campaign with an indictment of a federal government that he believed had "overspent, overstimulated, and overregulated". After receiving the Republican nomination, Reagan selected one of his opponents from the primaries, George H. W. Bush, to be his running mate. His relaxed and confident appearance during the televised Reagan–Carter debate on October 28 boosted his popularity and helped to widen his lead in the polls.^{[138][139]}

On November 4, Reagan won a decisive victory over Carter, carrying 44 states and receiving 489 electoral votes to Carter's 49 in six states plus D.C. He also won the popular vote, receiving 50.7 percent to Carter's 41.0 percent, with independent John B. Anderson garnering 6.6 percent. Republicans also won a majority of seats in the Senate for the first time since 1952, though Democrats retained a majority in the House of Representatives.^{[139][140][141]}

Presidency (1981–1989)

During his presidency, Reagan pursued policies that reflected his personal belief in individual freedom, brought economic changes, expanded the military and contributed to the end of the Cold War.^[142] Termed the "Reagan Revolution", his presidency would boost American morale,^{[143][144]} reinvigorate the U.S. economy and reduce reliance upon government.^[142] As president, Reagan kept a diary in which he commented on daily occurrences of his presidency and his views on the issues of the day. The diaries were published in May 2007 in the bestselling book The Reagan Diaries.^[145]

First term

Reagan was 69 years, 349 days of age when he was sworn into office for his first term on January 20, 1981, making him the oldest first-term president at the time. He held this distinction until 2017, when Donald Trump was inaugurated at age 70 years, 220 days, though Reagan was older upon being inaugurated for his second term.^[146] In his inaugural address, he addressed the country's economic malaise, arguing: "In this present crisis, government is not the solution to our problems; government is the problem."^[147]

Prayer in schools and a moment of silence

Reagan campaigned vigorously to restore organized prayer to the schools, first as a moment of prayer and later as a moment of silence.^[148] In 1981, Reagan became the first president to propose a constitutional amendment on school prayer.^[149] Reagan's election reflected an opposition^[149] to the 1962 Supreme Court case Engel v. Vitale that had prohibited state officials from composing an official state prayer and requiring that it be recited in the public schools.^[150] Reagan's 1981 proposed amendment stated: "Nothing in this Constitution shall be construed to prohibit individual or group prayer in public schools or other public institutions. No person shall be required by the United States or by any state to participate in prayer." In 1984, Reagan again raised the issue, asking Congress, "why can't [the] freedom to acknowledge God be enjoyed again by children in every schoolroom across this land?"^[151] In 1985, Reagan expressed his disappointment that the Supreme Court ruling still banned a moment of silence for public schools, and said that efforts to reinstitute prayer in public schools were "an uphill battle".^[152] In 1987, Reagan renewed his call for Congress to support voluntary prayer in schools and end "the expulsion of God from America's classrooms".^[153]



President and Mrs. Reagan at the 1981 inauguration parade

Assassination attempt

On March 30, 1981, Reagan, his press secretary James Brady, Washington police officer Thomas Delahanty, and Secret Service agent Tim McCarthy were struck by gunfire from would-be assassin John Hinckley Jr. outside the Washington Hilton hotel. Although "close to death" upon arrival at George Washington University Hospital, Reagan was stabilized in the emergency room, then underwent emergency exploratory surgery.^[154] He recovered and was released from the hospital on April 11, becoming the first serving U.S. president to survive being shot in an assassination attempt.^[155] The attempt had a significant influence on Reagan's popularity; polls indicated his approval rating to be around 73 percent.^[155] Reagan believed that God had spared his life so that he might go on to fulfill a higher purpose.^[156]

Sandra Day O'Connor

On July 7, 1981, Reagan announced that he planned to nominate Sandra Day O'Connor as an associate justice of the Supreme Court of the United States, replacing the retiring Justice Potter Stewart. He had pledged during his 1980 presidential campaign that he would appoint the first woman to the Court.^[157] On September 21, O'Connor was confirmed by the U.S. Senate with a vote of 99–0.^[158]



Supreme Court justice-nominee Sandra Day O'Connor talks with Reagan outside the White House, July 15, 1981.

Air traffic controllers' strike

In August 1981, PATCO, the union of federal air traffic controllers, went on strike, violating a federal law prohibiting government unions from striking.^[159] Declaring the situation an emergency as described in the 1947 Taft–Hartley Act, Reagan stated that if the air traffic controllers "do not report for work within 48 hours, they have forfeited their jobs and will be terminated".^[160] They did not return, and on August 5, Reagan fired 11,345 striking air traffic controllers who had ignored his order and used supervisors and military controllers to handle the nation's commercial air traffic until new controllers could be hired and trained.^[161] A leading reference work on public administration concluded, "The

firing of PATCO employees not only demonstrated a clear resolve by the president to take control of the bureaucracy, but it also sent a clear message to the private sector that unions no longer needed to be feared."^[162]

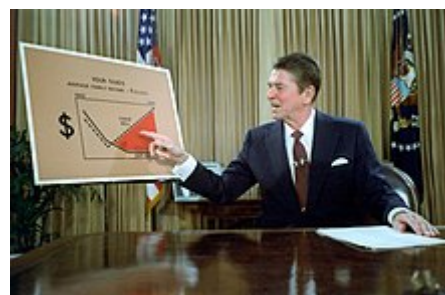
"Reaganomics" and the economy

During Jimmy Carter's last full year in office (1980), inflation averaged 12.5 percent, compared with 4.4 percent during Reagan's last full year in office (1988).^[163] During Reagan's administration, the unemployment rate declined from 7.5 percent to 5.4 percent, with the rate reaching highs of 10.8 percent in 1982 and 10.4 percent in 1983, averaging 7.5 percent over the eight years, and real GDP growth averaged 3.4 percent with a high of 8.6 percent in 1983, while nominal GDP growth averaged 7.4 percent, and peaked at 12.2 percent in 1982.^{[164][165][166]}

Reagan implemented neoliberal policies based on supply-side economics, advocating a *laissez-faire* philosophy and free-market fiscal policy,^[167] seeking to stimulate the economy with large, across-the-board tax cuts.^{[168][169]} He also supported returning the United States to some sort of gold standard and successfully urged Congress to establish the U.S. Gold Commission to study how one could be implemented. Citing the economic theories of Arthur Laffer, Reagan promoted the proposed tax cuts as potentially stimulating the economy enough to expand the tax base, offsetting the revenue loss due to reduced rates of taxation, a theory that entered political discussion as the Laffer curve. Reaganomics was the subject of debate with supporters pointing to improvements in certain key economic indicators as evidence of success, and critics pointing to large increases in federal budget deficits and the national debt.^[170] His policy of "peace through strength" resulted in a record peacetime defense buildup including a 40 percent real increase in defense spending between 1981 and 1985.^[171]

During Reagan's presidency, federal income tax rates were lowered significantly with the signing of the Economic Recovery Tax Act of 1981,^[172] which lowered the top marginal tax bracket from 70 percent to 50 percent over three years (as part of a "5–10–10" plan),^[173] and the lowest bracket from 14 percent to 11 percent. Other tax increases passed by Congress and signed by Reagan ensured, however, that tax revenues over his two terms were 18.2 percent of GDP as compared to 18.1 percent over the 40 years of 1970–2010.^[174] The 1981 tax act also required that exemptions and brackets be indexed for inflation starting in 1985.^[173]

Conversely, Congress passed and Reagan signed into law tax increases of some nature in every year from 1981 to 1987 to continue funding such government programs as Tax Equity and Fiscal Responsibility Act of 1982 (TEFRA), Social Security, and the Deficit Reduction Act of 1984 (DEFRA).^{[175][176]} TEFRA was the "largest peacetime tax increase in American history".^{[176][177][178][179]} Gross domestic product (GDP) growth recovered strongly after the early 1980s recession ended in 1982, and grew during his eight years in office at an annual rate of 7.9 percent per year, with a high of 12.2 percent growth in 1981.^[180] Unemployment peaked at 10.8 percent monthly rate in December 1982—higher than any time since the Great Depression—then dropped during the rest of Reagan's presidency.^[181] Sixteen million new jobs were created, while inflation significantly decreased.^[182] The Tax Reform Act of 1986, another bipartisan effort championed by Reagan, simplified the tax code by reducing the number of tax brackets to four and slashing several tax breaks. The top rate was dropped to 28 percent, but capital gains taxes were increased on those with the highest incomes from 20 percent to 28 percent. The increase of the lowest tax bracket from 11 percent



Reagan outlines his plan for *Tax Reduction Legislation* in a televised address from the Oval Office, July 1981

to 15 percent was more than offset by the expansion of personal exemption, standard deduction, and earned income tax credit. The net result was the removal of six million poor Americans from the income tax roll and a reduction of income tax liability at all income levels.^{[183][184]}

The net effect of all Reagan-era tax bills was a 1 percent decrease in government revenues when compared to Treasury Department revenue estimates from the administration's first post-enactment January budgets.^[185] However, federal income tax receipts increased from 1980 to 1989, rising from \$308.7 billion to \$549 billion^[186] or an average annual rate of 8.2 percent (2.5 percent attributed to higher Social Security receipts), and federal outlays grew at an annual rate of 7.1 percent.^{[187][188]}



Reagan addresses Congress on the *Program for Economic Recovery*, April 28, 1981 (a few weeks after surviving the assassination attempt)

Reagan's policies proposed that economic growth would occur when marginal tax rates were low enough to spur investment, which would then lead to higher employment and wages. Critics labeled this "trickle-down economics"—the belief that tax policies that benefit the wealthy will create a "trickle-down" effect reaching the poor.^[189] Questions arose whether Reagan's policies benefited the wealthy more than those living in poverty,^[190] and many poor and minority citizens viewed Reagan as indifferent to their struggles.^[190] These views were exacerbated by the fact that Reagan's economic regimen included freezing the minimum wage at \$3.35 an hour, slashing federal assistance to local governments by 60 percent, cutting the budget for public housing and Section 8 rent subsidies in half, and eliminating the antipoverty Community Development Block Grant program.^[191] Along with Reagan's 1981 cut in the top regular tax rate on unearned income, he reduced the maximum capital gains rate to 20 percent.^[192] Reagan later set tax rates on capital gains at the same level as the rates on ordinary income like salaries and wages, with both topping out at 28 percent.^[193] Reagan is viewed as an antitax hero despite raising taxes eleven times throughout his presidency, all in the name of fiscal responsibility.^[194] According to Paul Krugman, "Over all, the 1982 tax increase undid about a third of the 1981 cut; as a share of GDP, the increase was substantially larger than Mr. Clinton's 1993 tax increase."^[195] According to historian and domestic policy adviser Bruce Bartlett, Reagan's tax increases throughout his presidency took back

half of the 1981 tax cut.^[196]

Reagan was opposed to government intervention, and he cut the budgets of non-military^[197] programs^[198] including Medicaid, food stamps, federal education programs^[197] and the EPA.^[199] He protected entitlement programs such as Social Security and Medicare,^[200] but his administration attempted to purge many people with disabilities from the Social Security disability rolls.^[201]

The administration's stance toward the savings and loan industry contributed to the savings and loan crisis. A minority of the critics of Reaganomics also suggested that the policies partially influenced the stock market crash of 1987,^[202] but there is no consensus regarding a single source for the crash.^[203] To cover newly spawned federal budget deficits, the United States borrowed heavily both domestically and abroad, raising the national debt from \$997 billion to \$2.85 trillion.^[204] Reagan described the new debt as the "greatest disappointment" of his presidency.^[182]

He reappointed Paul Volcker as Chairman of the Federal Reserve, and in 1987 he appointed monetarist Alan Greenspan to succeed him. Reagan ended the price controls on domestic oil that had contributed to the energy crises of 1973–1974 and the summer of 1979.^{[205][206]} The price of oil subsequently dropped, and there were no fuel shortages like those in the 1970s.^[206] Reagan also fulfilled a 1980 campaign promise to repeal the windfall profits tax in 1988, which had previously increased dependence on foreign oil.^[207] Some economists, such as Nobel Prize winners Milton Friedman and Robert Mundell, argue that Reagan's tax policies

invigorated America's economy and contributed to the economic boom of the 1990s.^[208] Other economists, such as Nobel Prize winner Robert Solow, argue that Reagan's deficits were a major reason his successor, George H. W. Bush, reneged on his campaign promise and resorted to raising taxes.^[208]

During Reagan's presidency, a program was initiated within the United States Intelligence Community to ensure America's economic strength. The program, Project Socrates, developed and demonstrated the means required for the United States to generate and lead the next evolutionary leap in technology acquisition and utilization for a competitive advantage—automated innovation. To ensure that the United States acquired the maximum benefit from automated innovation, Reagan, during his second term, had an executive order drafted to create a new federal agency to implement the Project Socrates results on a nationwide basis. However, Reagan's term came to an end before the executive order could be coordinated and signed, and the incoming Bush administration, labeling Project Socrates as "industrial policy", had it terminated.^{[209][210]}

Civil rights

The Reagan administration was often criticized for inadequately enforcing, if not actively undermining, civil rights legislation.^{[211][212]} In 1982, he signed a bill extending the Voting Rights Act for 25 years after a grass-roots lobbying and legislative campaign forced him to abandon his plan to ease that law's restrictions.^[213] He also signed legislation establishing a federal Martin Luther King holiday, though he did so with reservations.^[214] In March 1988, he vetoed the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, but his veto was overridden by Congress. Reagan had argued that the legislation infringed on states' rights and the rights of churches and business owners.^[215]

Escalation of the Cold War

Reagan escalated the Cold War, accelerating a reversal from the policy of détente that began during the Carter administration, following the Afghan Saur Revolution and subsequent Soviet invasion.^[217] He ordered a massive buildup of the United States Armed Forces^[171] and implemented new policies that were directed towards the Soviet Union; he revived the B-1 Lancer program that had been canceled by the Carter administration, and he produced the MX missile.^[218] In response to Soviet deployment of the SS-20, Reagan oversaw NATO's deployment of the Pershing missile in West Germany.^[219] In 1982 Reagan tried to cut off Moscow's access to hard currency by impeding its proposed gas line to Western Europe. It hurt the Soviet economy, but it also caused ill will among American allies in Europe who counted on that revenue. Reagan retreated on this issue.^{[220][221]}



As the first U.S. president invited to speak before the British Parliament (June 8, 1982), Reagan predicted Marxism–Leninism would end up on the "ash heap of history".^[216]

In 1984, journalist Nicholas Lemann interviewed Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger and summarized the strategy of the Reagan administration to roll back the Soviet Union:

Their society is economically weak, and it lacks the wealth, education, and technology to enter the information age. They have thrown everything into military production, and their society is starting to show terrible stress as a result. They can't sustain military production the way we can. Eventually it will break them, and then there will be just one superpower in a safe world—if, only if, we can keep spending.^[222]

Lemann noted that when he wrote that in 1984, he thought the Reaganites were living in a fantasy world. But by 2016, Lemann stated that the passage represents "a fairly uncontroversial description of what Reagan actually did".^[222]

Reagan and the United Kingdom's prime minister Margaret Thatcher both denounced the Soviet Union in ideological terms.^[223] In a famous address on June 8, 1982, to the Parliament of the United Kingdom in the Royal Gallery of the Palace of Westminster, Reagan said, "the march of freedom and democracy will leave Marxism-Leninism on the ash heap of history."^{[216][224][225]} On March 3, 1983, he predicted that communism would collapse, stating, "Communism is another sad, bizarre chapter in human history whose last pages even now are being written."^[226] In a speech to the National Association of Evangelicals on March 8, 1983, Reagan called the Soviet Union "an evil empire".^[227]



Meeting with leaders of the Afghan Mujahideen in the Oval Office, 1983

After Soviet fighters downed Korean Air Lines Flight 007 near Moneron Island on September 1, 1983, carrying 269 people, including Georgia congressman Larry McDonald, Reagan labeled the act a "massacre" and declared that the Soviets had turned "against the world and the moral precepts which guide human relations among people everywhere".^[228] The Reagan administration responded to the incident by suspending all Soviet passenger air service to the United States and dropped several agreements being negotiated with the Soviets, wounding them financially.^[228] As a result of the shutdown, and the cause of KAL 007's going astray thought to be inadequacies related to its navigational system, Reagan announced on September 16, 1983, that the Global Positioning System would be made available for civilian use, free of charge, once completed in order to avert similar navigational errors in the future.^{[229][230]}

Under a policy that came to be known as the Reagan Doctrine, Reagan and his administration also provided overt and covert aid to anti-communist resistance movements in an effort to "rollback" Soviet-backed communist governments in Africa, Asia, and Latin America.^[231] However, in a break from the Carter administration's policy of arming Taiwan under the Taiwan Relations Act, Reagan also agreed with the communist government in China to reduce the sale of arms to Taiwan.^[232]

Reagan deployed the CIA's Special Activities Division to Afghanistan and Pakistan. They were instrumental in training, equipping and leading Mujahideen forces against the Soviet Army.^{[233][234]} President Reagan's Covert Action program has been given credit for assisting in ending the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan,^[235] though some of the United States funded armaments introduced then would later pose a threat to U.S. troops in the 2001 War in Afghanistan.^[236] The CIA also began sharing information with the Iranian government which it was secretly courting. In one instance, in 1982, this practice enabled the government to identify and purge communists from its ministries and to virtually eliminate the pro-Soviet infrastructure in Iran.^[237]



Reagan with actress Sigourney Weaver and King Fahd of Saudi Arabia in 1985. The U.S. and Saudi Arabia supplied money and arms to the anti-Soviet fighters in Afghanistan.

In March 1983, Reagan introduced the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), a defense project^[238] that would have used ground- and space-based systems to protect the United States from attack by strategic nuclear ballistic missiles.^[239] Reagan believed that this defense shield could make nuclear war impossible.^{[238][240]} There was much disbelief surrounding the program's scientific feasibility, leading opponents to dub SDI "Star Wars" and argue that its technological objective was unattainable.^[238] The

Soviets became concerned about the possible effects SDI would have;^[241] leader Yuri Andropov said it would put "the entire world in jeopardy".^[242] For those reasons, David Gergen, a former aide to President Reagan, believes that in retrospect, SDI hastened the end of the Cold War.^[243]

Though supported by leading American conservatives who argued that Reagan's foreign policy strategy was essential to protecting U.S. security interests, critics labeled the administration's foreign policy initiatives as aggressive and imperialistic, and chided them as "warmongering".^[241] The administration was also heavily criticized for backing anti-communist leaders accused of severe human rights violations, such as Hissène Habré of Chad^[244] and Efraín Ríos Montt of Guatemala.^{[245][246]} During the 16 months (1982–1983) Montt was President of Guatemala, the Guatemalan military was accused of genocide for massacres of members of the Ixil people and other indigenous groups. Reagan had said that Montt was getting a "bum rap",^[247] and described him as "a man of great personal integrity".^[248] Previous human rights violations had prompted the United States to cut off aid to the Guatemalan government, but the Reagan administration appealed to Congress to restart military aid. Although unsuccessful with that, the administration was successful in providing nonmilitary assistance such as USAID.^{[247][249]}

Lebanese Civil War

With the approval of Congress, Reagan sent forces to Lebanon in 1983 to reduce the threat of the Lebanese Civil War. The American peacekeeping forces in Beirut, a part of a multinational force during the Lebanese Civil War, were attacked on October 23, 1983. The Beirut barracks bombing killed 241 American servicemen and wounded more than 60 others by a suicide truck bomber.^[250] Reagan sent in the USS *New Jersey* battleship to shell Syrian positions in Lebanon. He then withdrew all the Marines from Lebanon.^[251]



Reagan (far left) and First Lady Nancy Reagan pay their respects to the 17 American victims of the April 18 attack on the U.S. embassy by Hezbollah in Beirut, 1983

Invasion of Grenada

On October 25, 1983, Reagan ordered U.S. forces to invade Grenada (codenamed "Operation Urgent Fury") where a 1979 coup d'état had established an independent non-aligned Marxist–Leninist government.

A formal appeal from the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) led to the intervention of U.S. forces; President Reagan also cited an allegedly regional threat posed by a Soviet-Cuban military build-up in the Caribbean and concern for the safety of several hundred American medical students at St. George's University as adequate reasons to invade. *Operation Urgent Fury* was the first major military operation conducted by U.S. forces since the Vietnam War. Several days of fighting commenced, resulting in a U.S. victory,^[252] with 19 American fatalities and 116 wounded American soldiers.^[253] In mid-December, after a new government was appointed by the governor-general, U.S. forces withdrew.^[252]

1984 presidential campaign

Reagan accepted the Republican nomination in the Republican convention in Dallas, Texas. He proclaimed that it was "morning again in America", regarding the recovering economy and the dominating performance by the American athletes at the 1984 Summer Olympics on home soil, among other things.^[35] He became the first U.S. president to open an Olympic Games.^[254] Previous Olympics taking place in the United States had been opened by either the vice president (three times) or another person in charge (twice).

which they attribute to the Reagan administrations policies:^[266] marijuana use among high-school seniors declined from 33 percent in 1980 to 12 percent in 1991.^[267] First Lady Nancy Reagan made the war on drugs her main priority by founding the "Just Say No" drug awareness campaign, which aimed to discourage children and teenagers from engaging in recreational drug use by offering various ways of saying "no". Nancy Reagan traveled to 65 cities in 33 states, raising awareness about the dangers of drugs, including alcohol.^[268]

Response to AIDS epidemic

According to AIDS activist organizations such as ACT UP and scholars such as Don Francis and Peter S. Arno, the Reagan administration largely ignored the AIDS crisis, which began to unfold in the United States in 1981, the same year Reagan took office.^{[269][270][271][272]} They also claim that AIDS research was chronically underfunded during Reagan's administration, and requests for more funding by doctors at the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) were routinely denied.^{[273][274]}

By the time President Reagan gave his first prepared speech on the epidemic, six years into his presidency, 36,058 Americans had been diagnosed with AIDS, and 20,849 had died of it.^[274] By 1989, the year Reagan left office, more than 100,000 people had been diagnosed with AIDS in the United States, and more than 59,000 of them had died of it.^[275]

Reagan administration officials countered criticisms of neglect by noting that federal funding for AIDS-related programs rose over his presidency, from a few hundred thousand dollars in 1982 to \$2.3 billion in 1989.^[276] In a September 1985 press conference, Reagan said: "this is a top priority with us...there's no question about the seriousness of this and the need to find an answer."^[277] Gary Bauer, Reagan's domestic policy adviser near the end of his second term, argued that Reagan's belief in cabinet government led him to assign the job of speaking out against AIDS to his Surgeon General of the United States and the United States Secretary of Health and Human Services.^[278]

Addressing apartheid

From the late 1960s onward, the American public grew increasingly vocal in its opposition to the apartheid policy of the white-minority government of South Africa, and in its insistence that the U.S. impose economic and diplomatic sanctions on South Africa.^[279] The strength of the anti-apartheid opposition surged during Reagan's first term in office as its component disinvestment from South Africa movement, which had been in existence for quite some years, gained critical mass following in the United States, particularly on college campuses and among mainline Protestant denominations.^{[280][281]} President Reagan was opposed to divestiture because, as he wrote in a letter to Sammy Davis Jr., it "would hurt the very people we are trying to help and would leave us no contact within South Africa to try and bring influence to bear on the government". He also noted the fact that the "American-owned industries there employ more than 80,000 blacks" and that their employment practices were "very different from the normal South African customs".^[282]

As an alternative strategy for opposing apartheid, the Reagan Administration developed a policy of constructive engagement with the South African government as a means of encouraging it to move away from apartheid gradually. It was part of a larger initiative designed to foster peaceful economic development and political change throughout southern Africa.^[279] This policy, however, engendered much public criticism and renewed calls for the imposition of stringent sanctions.^[283] In response, Reagan announced the imposition of new sanctions on the South African government, including an arms embargo in late 1985.^[284] These sanctions were, however, seen as weak by anti-apartheid activists, and as insufficient by the president's opponents in Congress.^[283] In August 1986, Congress approved the Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act, which included tougher sanctions. Reagan vetoed the act, but the veto was overridden by Congress. Afterward, Reagan reiterated that his administration and "all America" opposed apartheid, and said, "the

debate ... was not whether or not to oppose apartheid but, instead, how best to oppose it and how best to bring freedom to that troubled country." Several European countries as well as Japan soon followed the U.S. lead and imposed their sanctions on South Africa.^[285]

Libya bombing

Relations between Libya and the United States under President Reagan were continually contentious, beginning with the Gulf of Sidra incident in 1981; by 1982, Libyan leader Muammar Gaddafi was considered by the CIA to be, along with USSR leader Leonid Brezhnev and Cuban leader Fidel Castro, part of a group known as the "unholy trinity" and was also labeled as "our international public enemy number one" by a CIA official.^[286] These tensions were later revived in early April 1986, when a bomb exploded in a Berlin discothèque, resulting in the injury of 63 American military personnel and death of one serviceman. Stating that there was "irrefutable proof" that Libya had directed the "terrorist bombing", Reagan authorized the use of force against the country. In the late evening of April 15, 1986, the United States launched a series of airstrikes on ground targets in Libya.^{[287][288]}



British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher (here with Reagan in 1986) granted the U.S. use of British airbases to launch the Libya attack.

British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher allowed the U.S. Air Force to use Britain's air bases to launch the attack, on the justification that the UK was supporting America's right to self-defense under Article 51 of the United Nations Charter.^[288] The attack was designed to halt Gaddafi's "ability to export terrorism", offering him "incentives and reasons to alter his criminal behavior".^[287] The president addressed the nation from the Oval Office after the attacks had commenced, stating, "When our citizens are attacked or abused anywhere in the world on the direct orders of hostile regimes, we will respond so long as I'm in this office."^[288] The attack was condemned by many countries. By a vote of 79 in favor to 28 against with 33 abstentions, the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution 41/38 which "condemns the military attack perpetrated against the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya on April 15, 1986, which constitutes a violation of the Charter of the United Nations and of international law".^[289]

Immigration

Reagan signed the Immigration Reform and Control Act in 1986. The act made it illegal to knowingly hire or recruit illegal immigrants, required employers to attest to their employees' immigration status, and granted amnesty to approximately three million illegal immigrants who entered the United States before January 1, 1982, and had lived in the country continuously. Upon signing the act at a ceremony held beside the newly refurbished Statue of Liberty, Reagan said, "The legalization provisions in this act will go far to improve the lives of a class of individuals who now must hide in the shadows, without access to many of the benefits of a free and open society. Very soon, many of these men and women will be able to step into the sunlight and, ultimately, if they choose, they may become Americans."^[290] Reagan also said, "The employer sanctions program is the keystone and major element. It will remove the incentive for illegal immigration by eliminating the job opportunities which draw illegal aliens here."^[290]

Iran–Contra affair

In 1986, the Iran–Contra affair became a problem for the administration stemming from the use of proceeds from covert arms sales to Iran during the Iran–Iraq War to fund the Contra rebels fighting against the government in Nicaragua, which had been specifically outlawed by an act of Congress.^{[291][292]} The affair



Reagan (center) receives the Tower Commission Report regarding the Iran-Contra affair in the Cabinet Room with John Tower (left) and Edmund Muskie (right)

became a political scandal in the United States during the 1980s.^[293] The International Court of Justice, whose jurisdiction to decide the case was disputed by the United States,^[294] ruled that the United States had violated international law and breached treaties in Nicaragua in various ways.^{[295][296]} Reagan later withdrew the agreement between the United States and the International Court of Justice.^[297]

President Reagan professed that he was unaware of the plot's existence. He opened his own investigation and appointed two Republicans and one Democrat, John Tower, Brent Scowcroft and Edmund Muskie, respectively, to investigate the scandal. The commission could not find direct evidence that Reagan had prior knowledge of the program, but criticized him heavily for his disengagement from managing his staff, making the diversion of funds possible.^[298] A separate report by Congress concluded that "If

the president did not know what his national security advisers were doing, he should have."^[298] Reagan's popularity declined from 67 percent to 46 percent in less than a week, the most significant and quickest decline ever for a president.^[299] The scandal resulted in eleven convictions and fourteen indictments within Reagan's staff.^[300]

Many Central Americans criticize Reagan for his support of the Contras, calling him an anti-communist zealot, blinded to human rights abuses, while others say he "saved Central America".^[301] Daniel Ortega, Sandinista and president of Nicaragua, said that he hoped God would forgive Reagan for his "dirty war against Nicaragua".^[301]

In 1988, near the end of the Iran–Iraq War, the U.S. Navy guided-missile cruiser USS Vincennes accidentally shot down Iran Air Flight 655 killing 290 civilian passengers. The incident further worsened already tense Iran–United States relations.^[302]

Decline of the Soviet Union and thaw in relations

Until the early 1980s, the United States had relied on the qualitative superiority of its weapons to essentially frighten the Soviets, but the gap had been narrowed.^[303] Although the Soviet Union did not accelerate military spending after President Reagan's military buildup,^[304] their enormous military expenses, in combination with collectivized agriculture and inefficient planned manufacturing, were a heavy burden for the Soviet economy. At the same time, oil prices in 1985 fell to one third of the previous level; oil was the primary source of Soviet export revenues. These factors contributed to a stagnant Soviet economy during Mikhail Gorbachev's tenure.^[305]



Challenging Gorbachev to "tear down this wall" at the Brandenburg Gate, June 12, 1987

Meanwhile, Reagan escalated the rhetoric. In his famous 1983 speech to religious fundamentalists, he outlined his strategy for victory. First, he labeled the Soviet system an "Evil Empire" and a failure—its demise would be a godsend for the world. Second, Reagan explained his strategy was an arms buildup that would leave the Soviets far behind, with no choice but to negotiate arms reduction. Finally, displaying his characteristic optimism, he praised liberal democracy and promised that such a system eventually would triumph over Soviet communism.^{[306][307]}

Reagan appreciated the revolutionary change in the direction of the Soviet policy with Mikhail Gorbachev, and shifted to diplomacy, intending to encourage the Soviet leader to pursue substantial arms agreements.^[308] He and Gorbachev held four summit conferences between 1985 and 1988: the first in Geneva, Switzerland, the second in Reykjavík, Iceland, the third in Washington, D.C., and the fourth in Moscow.^[309] Reagan believed that if he could persuade the Soviets to allow for more democracy and free speech, this would lead to reform and the end of Communism.^[310] The critical summit was at Reykjavík in October 1986, where they met alone, with translators but with no aides. To the astonishment of the world, and the chagrin of Reagan's most conservative supporters, they agreed to abolish all nuclear weapons. Gorbachev then asked the end of SDI. Reagan said no, claiming that it was defensive only, and that he would share the secrets with the Soviets. No deal was achieved.^[311]



Gorbachev and Reagan sign the INF Treaty at the White House, December 1987

Speaking at the Berlin Wall on June 12, 1987, five years after his first visit to West Berlin as president, Reagan challenged Gorbachev to go further, saying "General Secretary Gorbachev, if you seek peace, if you seek prosperity for the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, if you seek liberalization, come here to this gate! Mr. Gorbachev, open this gate! Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!"^[312] Later, in November 1989, East German authorities began allowing citizens to pass freely through border checkpoints,^{[313][314]} and began dismantling the Wall the following June,^{[315][316]} its demolition was completed in 1992.^{[315][316]}



Reagan (*right*) with Mauno Koivisto, the President of Finland, in Helsinki, 1988

At Gorbachev's visit to Washington in December 1987, he and Reagan signed the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF Treaty) at the White House, which eliminated an entire class of nuclear weapons.^[317] The two leaders laid the framework for the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, or START I; Reagan insisted that the name of the treaty be changed from Strategic Arms Limitation Talks to Strategic Arms Reduction Talks.^[318]

When Reagan visited Moscow for the fourth summit in 1988, he was viewed as a celebrity by the Soviets. A journalist asked the president if he still considered the Soviet Union the evil empire. "No," he replied, "I was talking about another time, another era."^[319] At Gorbachev's request, Reagan gave a speech on free markets at the Moscow State University.^[320]

Health

Early in his presidency, Reagan started wearing a custom-made, technologically advanced hearing aid, first in his right ear^[321] and later in his left ear as well.^[322] His decision to go public in 1983 regarding his wearing the small, audio-amplifying device boosted their sales.^[323]

On July 13, 1985, Reagan underwent surgery at Bethesda Naval Hospital to remove cancerous polyps from his colon. He relinquished presidential power to the vice president for eight hours in a similar procedure as outlined in the 25th Amendment, which he specifically avoided invoking.^[324] The surgery lasted just under three hours and was successful.^[325] Reagan resumed the powers of the presidency later that day.^[326] In August of that year, he underwent an operation to remove skin cancer cells from his nose.^[327] In October, more skin cancer cells were detected on his nose and removed.^[328]

In January 1987, Reagan underwent surgery for an enlarged prostate that caused further worries about his health. No cancerous growths were found, and he was not sedated during the operation.^[329] In July of that year, aged 76, he underwent a third skin cancer operation on his nose.^[330]

On January 7, 1989, Reagan underwent surgery at Walter Reed Army Medical Center to repair a Dupuytren's contracture of the ring finger of his left hand. The surgery lasted for more than three hours and was performed under regional anesthesia.^[331]

Judiciary

During the 1980 presidential campaign, Reagan pledged that he would appoint the first female Supreme Court Justice if given the opportunity.^[332] That opportunity came during his first year in office when Associate Justice Potter Stewart retired; Reagan selected Sandra Day O'Connor, who was confirmed unanimously by the Senate. In his second term, Reagan had three opportunities to fill a Supreme Court vacancy. When Chief Justice Warren E. Burger retired in September 1986, Reagan nominated incumbent Associate Justice William Rehnquist to succeed Burger as Chief Justice (the appointment of an incumbent associate justice as chief justice is subject to a separate confirmation process). Then, following Rehnquist's confirmation, the president named Antonin Scalia to fill the consequent associate justice vacancy.^[333] Reagan's final opportunity to fill a vacancy arose in mid-1987 when Associate Justice Lewis F. Powell Jr. announced his intention to retire. Reagan initially chose Conservative jurist Robert Bork to succeed Powell. Bork's nomination was strongly opposed by civil and women's rights groups, and by Senate Democrats.^[334] That October, after a contentious Senate debate, the nomination was rejected by a roll call vote of 42–58.^[335] Soon afterward, Reagan announced his intention to nominate Douglas Ginsburg to the Court. However, before his name was submitted to the Senate, Ginsburg withdrew himself from consideration.^[336] Anthony Kennedy was subsequently nominated and confirmed as Powell's successor.^[337]

Along with his four Supreme Court appointments, Reagan appointed 83 judges to the United States courts of appeals, and 290 judges to the United States district courts. Early in his presidency, Reagan appointed Clarence M. Pendleton Jr. of San Diego as the first African American to chair the United States Commission on Civil Rights. Pendleton tried to steer the commission into a conservative direction in line with Reagan's views on social and civil rights policy during his tenure from 1981 until his sudden death in 1988. Pendleton soon aroused the ire of many civil rights advocates and feminists when he ridiculed the comparable worth proposal as being "Looney Tunes".^{[338][339][340]}

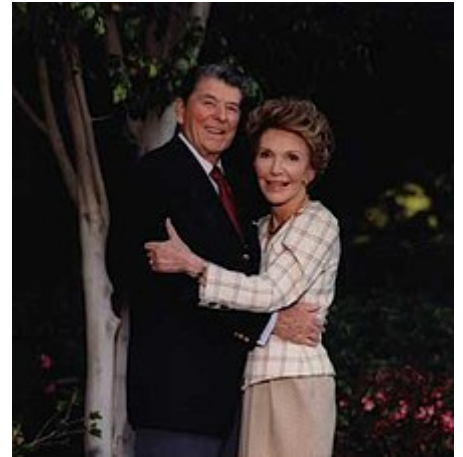
Post-presidency (1989–2004)

Assault

On April 13, 1992, Reagan was assaulted by an anti-nuclear protester during a luncheon speech while accepting an award from the National Association of Broadcasters in Las Vegas.^[341] The protester, Richard Springer, smashed a two-foot-high (61 cm), 30-pound (14 kg) crystal statue of an eagle that the broadcasters had given the former president. Flying shards of glass hit Reagan, but he was not injured. Using media credentials, Springer intended to announce government plans for an underground nuclear weapons test in the Nevada desert the following day.^[342] Springer was the founder of an anti-nuclear group called the *100th Monkey*. Following his arrest on assault charges, a Secret Service spokesman could not explain how Springer got past the federal agents who guarded Reagan's life at all times.^[343] Later, Springer pled guilty to reduced charges and said he had not meant to hurt Reagan through his actions. He pled guilty to a misdemeanor federal charge of interfering with the Secret Service, but other felony charges of assault and resisting officers were dropped.^[344]

Public speaking

After leaving office in 1989, the Reagans purchased a home in Bel Air, Los Angeles, in addition to the Reagan Ranch in Santa Barbara. They regularly attended Bel Air Church^[345] and occasionally made appearances on behalf of the Republican Party; Reagan delivered a well-received speech at the 1992 Republican National Convention.^[346] Previously, on November 4, 1991, the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library was dedicated and opened to the public. Five presidents and six first ladies attended the dedication ceremonies, marking the first time that five presidents were gathered in the same location.^[347] Reagan continued to speak publicly in favor of the Brady Bill,^[348] a constitutional amendment requiring a balanced budget; and the repeal of the 22nd Amendment, which prohibits anyone from serving more than two terms as president.^[349] In 1992 Reagan established the Ronald Reagan Freedom Award with the newly formed Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation.^[350] His final public speech occurred on February 3, 1994, during a tribute to him in Washington, D.C.; his last major public appearance was at the funeral of Richard Nixon on April 27, 1994.



The Reagans in Los Angeles, 1992

Alzheimer's disease

Announcement and reaction (1994)

In August 1994, at the age of 83, Reagan was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease,^[351] an incurable neurodegenerative disease which destroys brain cells and ultimately causes death.^{[351][352]} In November of that year, he informed the nation of the diagnosis through a handwritten letter,^[351] writing in part:

I have recently been told that I am one of the millions of Americans who will be afflicted with Alzheimer's Disease ... At the moment I feel just fine. I intend to live the remainder of the years God gives me on this earth doing the things I have always done ... I now begin the journey that will lead me into the sunset of my life. I know that for America there will always be a bright dawn ahead. Thank you, my friends. May God always bless you.^[353]



The Reagans with a model of USS Ronald Reagan, May 1996

After his diagnosis, letters of support from well-wishers poured into his California home.^[354] However, there was also speculation over how long Reagan had demonstrated symptoms of mental degeneration.^[355] At a June 1981 reception for mayors, not long after the assassination attempt, Reagan greeted his Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Samuel Pierce by saying "How are you, Mr. Mayor? How are things in your city?",^{[356][357]} although he later realized his mistake.^[358] In a 2011 book titled *My Father at 100*, Reagan's son Ron said he had suspected early signs of his father's dementia as early as 1984;^{[359][360]} an allegation that sparked a furious response from his brother, Michael Reagan, who accused him of "selling out his father to sell books".^[361] Ron would later temper his claims, telling *The New York Times* he did not

believe his father was actually inhibited by Alzheimer's while in office, only that "the disease was likely present in him", for years prior to his 1994 diagnoses.^[362] In her book *Reporting Live*, former CBS White House correspondent Lesley Stahl recounted that in her final meeting with the president in 1986, Reagan did not seem to know who she was. Stahl wrote that she came close to reporting that Reagan was senile, but by the end of the meeting, he had regained his alertness.^[363]

Lay observations that Reagan suffered from Alzheimer's while still in office have been widely refuted by medical experts, however, including the many physicians who treated Reagan both during and after his presidency.^{[364][365][366]} Regarding his mental competency while in office, all four of Reagan's White House doctors maintained they never had any concerns "even with the hindsight of" the former president's diagnosis.^[366] Neurosurgeon Daniel Ruge, who served as Physician to the President from 1981 to 1985, said that he never detected signs of the disease while speaking almost every day with Reagan.^[367] John E. Hutton, who served from 1985 to 1989, said the president "absolutely" did not "show any signs of dementia or Alzheimer's".^[366] Though all were familiar with the disease, none of Reagan's White House physicians was an expert in Alzheimer's specifically; an outside specialist who reviewed both Reagan's public and medical records agreed with the conclusion that he displayed no signs of dementia during his presidency.^[364] Reagan's doctors said that he first began exhibiting overt symptoms of the illness in late 1992^[368] or 1993,^[366] several years after he had left office. An example of which may include when Reagan repeated a toast to Margaret Thatcher, with identical words and gestures, at his 82nd-birthday party on February 6, 1993.^[369] Lawrence Altman (M.D.) of *The New York Times*, while noting that "the line between mere forgetfulness and the beginning of Alzheimer's can be fuzzy",^[366] upon reviewing Reagan's medical records and interviewing his doctors agreed that no signs of dementia appear to have been present while he was in office.^[365] Other staff members, former aides, and friends said they saw no indication of Alzheimer's while he was president. Reagan did experience occasional memory lapses, though, especially with names.^[366]

Reagan suffered an episode of head trauma in July 1989, five years before his diagnosis. After being thrown from a horse in Mexico, a subdural hematoma was found and surgically treated later in the year.^{[351][352]} Nancy Reagan, citing what doctors told her, asserted that her husband's 1989 fall hastened the onset of Alzheimer's disease,^[352] although acute brain injury has not been conclusively proven to accelerate Alzheimer's or dementia.^{[370][371]} Ruge said it was possible that the horse accident affected Reagan's memory.^[368]

Progression (1994–2004)

As the years went on, the disease slowly destroyed Reagan's mental capacity.^[366] He was able to recognize only a few people, including his wife, Nancy.^[366] He remained active, however; he took walks through parks near his home and on beaches, played golf regularly, and until 1999 he often went to his office in nearby Century City.^[366]

Reagan suffered a fall at his Bel Air home on January 13, 2001, resulting in a broken hip.^[372] The fracture was repaired the following day,^[373] and the 89-year-old Reagan returned home later that week, although he faced difficult physical therapy at home.^[374] On February 6, 2001, Reagan reached the age of 90, becoming only the third U.S. president after John Adams and Herbert Hoover to do so.^[375] Reagan's public appearances became much less frequent with the progression of the disease, and as a result, his family decided that he would live in quiet semi-isolation with his wife Nancy. She told CNN's Larry King in 2001 that very few visitors were allowed to see her husband because she felt that "Ronnie would want people to remember him as he was."^[376] After her husband's diagnosis and death, Nancy Reagan became a stem-cell research advocate, asserting that it could lead to a cure for Alzheimer's.^[377]

Death and funeral

Reagan died of pneumonia, complicated by Alzheimer's disease,^[378] at his home in the Bel Air district of Los Angeles, California, on the afternoon of June 5, 2004.^[379] A short time after his death, Nancy Reagan released a statement saying, "My family and I would like the world to know that President Ronald Reagan has died after 10 years of Alzheimer's disease at 93 years of age. We appreciate everyone's prayers."^[379] Speaking in Paris, France, President George W. Bush called Reagan's death "a sad hour in the life of America".^[380] He also declared June 11 a national day of mourning.^[381]



Reagan lying in state in the Capitol rotunda

Reagan's body was taken to the Kingsley and Gates Funeral Home in Santa Monica, California, where well-wishers paid tribute by laying flowers and American flags in the grass.^[382] On June 7, his body was transferred to the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library, where a brief family funeral, conducted by Pastor Michael Wenning, was held. Reagan's body lay in repose in the Library lobby until June 9; over 100,000 people viewed the coffin.^[383] On June 9, Reagan's body was flown to Washington, D.C., where he became the tenth U.S. president to lie in state in the Rotunda of the U.S. Capitol.^[384] in thirty-four hours, 104,684 people filed past the coffin.^[385]

On June 11, a state funeral was conducted in the Washington National Cathedral, presided over by President George W. Bush. Eulogies were given by former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher,^[386] former Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, and both former President George H. W. Bush and President George W. Bush. Also in attendance were Mikhail Gorbachev and many world leaders, including British Prime Minister Tony Blair; Prince Charles, representing his mother Queen Elizabeth II; German Chancellor Gerhard Schröder; Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi; and interim presidents Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan and Ghazi al-Yawer of Iraq.^[387]

After the funeral, the Reagan entourage was flown back to the Ronald W. Reagan Presidential Library in Simi Valley, California, where another service was held, and President Reagan was interred.^[388] At the time of his death, Reagan was the longest-lived president in U.S. history, having lived 93 years and 120 days (2 years, 8 months, and 23 days longer than John Adams, whose record he surpassed). He was also the first U.S. president to die in the 21st century. Reagan's burial site is inscribed with the words he delivered at the opening of the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library: "I know in my heart that man is good, that what is right will always eventually triumph and that there is purpose and worth to each and every life."^[389]

Legacy

Since Reagan left office in 1989, substantial debate has occurred among scholars, historians, and the general public surrounding his legacy.^[390] Supporters have pointed to a more efficient and prosperous economy as a result of Reagan's economic policies,^[391] foreign policy triumphs including a peaceful end to the Cold War,^[392] and a restoration of American pride and morale.^[144] Proponents say that he had an unabated and passionate love for the United States which restored faith in the American Dream,^[393] after a decline in American confidence and self-respect under Jimmy Carter's perceived weak leadership, particularly during the Iran hostage crisis, as well as his gloomy, dreary outlook for the future of the United States during the 1980 election.^[394] Critics point out that Reagan's economic policies resulted in rising budget deficits,^[182] a wider gap in wealth, and an increase in homelessness^[191] and that the Iran–Contra affair lowered American credibility.^[395]

Opinions of Reagan's legacy among the country's leading policymakers and journalists differ as well. Edwin Feulner, president of The Heritage Foundation, said that Reagan "helped create a safer, freer world" and said of his economic policies: "He took an America suffering from 'malaise' ... and made its citizens believe again

in their destiny."^[396] However, Mark Weisbrot, co-Director of the Center for Economic and Policy Research, contended that Reagan's "economic policies were mostly a failure"^[397] while Howard Kurtz of The Washington Post opined that Reagan was "a far more controversial figure in his time than the largely gushing obits on television would suggest".^[398]

Despite the continuing debate surrounding his legacy, many conservative and liberal scholars agree that Reagan has been the most influential president since Franklin D. Roosevelt, leaving his imprint on American politics, diplomacy, culture, and economics through his effective communication and pragmatic compromising.^[399] As summarized by British historian M. J. Heale, since Reagan left office, historians have reached a broad consensus that he rehabilitated conservatism, turned the nation to the right, practiced a considerably pragmatic conservatism that balanced ideology and the constraints of politics, revived faith in the presidency and American exceptionalism, and contributed to victory in the Cold War.^{[400][401]}



A bronze statue of Reagan standing in the National Statuary Hall Collection

Cold War

In 2017, a C-SPAN survey of scholars ranked Reagan in terms of leadership in comparison with all 42 presidents. He ranked number nine in international relations.^{[402][403]}

Reagan's major achievement was the end of the Cold War as he left office. Furthermore, the USSR and Soviet-sponsored Communist movements worldwide were falling apart—and collapsed completely three years after he left office. The U.S. thus became the only superpower. His admirers say he won the Cold War.^[404] After 40 years of high tension, the USSR pulled back in the last years of Reagan's second term. In 1989, the Kremlin lost control of all its East European satellites. In 1991, Communism was overthrown in the USSR, and on December 26, 1991, the Soviet Union ceased to exist. The resulting states were no threat to the United States. Reagan's exact role is debated, with many believing that Reagan's defense policies, economic policies, military policies and hard-line rhetoric against the Soviet Union and Communism—together with his summits with General Secretary Gorbachev—played a significant part in ending the Cold War.^{[190][308]}



President Reagan and Soviet General Secretary Gorbachev, 1985

He was the first president to reject containment and détente and to put into practice the concept that the Soviet Union could be defeated rather than simply negotiated with, a post-Détente strategy,^[308] a conviction that was vindicated by Gennadi Gerasimov, the Foreign Ministry spokesman under Gorbachev, who said that the Strategic Defense Initiative was "very successful blackmail. ...The Soviet economy couldn't endure such competition."^[405] Reagan's aggressive rhetoric toward the USSR had mixed effects; Jeffery W. Knopf observes that being labeled "evil" probably made no difference to the Soviets but gave encouragement to the East-European citizens opposed to communism.^[308]

General Secretary Gorbachev said of his former rival's Cold War role: "[He was] a man who was instrumental in bringing about the end of the Cold War",^[406] and deemed him "a great president".^[406] Gorbachev does not acknowledge a win or loss in the war, but rather a peaceful end; he said he was not intimidated by Reagan's harsh rhetoric.^[407] Margaret Thatcher, former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, said of Reagan, "he warned that the Soviet Union had an insatiable drive for military power ... but he also sensed it was being eaten away by systemic failures impossible to reform."^[408] She later said, "Ronald Reagan had a higher claim than any other leader to have won the Cold War for liberty and he did it without a shot being fired."^[409] Said

Brian Mulroney, former Prime Minister of Canada: "He enters history as a strong and dramatic player [in the Cold War]."^[410] Former President Lech Wałęsa of Poland acknowledged, "Reagan was one of the world leaders who made a major contribution to communism's collapse."^[411] Professor Jeffrey Knopf has argued that Reagan's leadership was only one of several causes of the end of the Cold War.^[308] President Harry S. Truman's policy of containment is also regarded as a force behind the fall of the USSR, and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan undermined the Soviet system itself.^[412]

Domestic and political legacy

Reagan reshaped the Republican party, led the modern conservative movement, and altered the political dynamic of the United States.^[413] More men voted Republican under Reagan, and Reagan tapped into religious voters.^[413] The so-called "Reagan Democrats" were a result of his presidency.^[413]

After leaving office, Reagan became an iconic influence within the Republican Party.^[414] His policies and beliefs have been frequently invoked by Republican presidential candidates since 1988.^[35] The 2008 Republican presidential candidates were no exception, for they aimed to liken themselves to him during the primary debates, even imitating his campaign strategies.^[415] Republican nominee John McCain frequently said that he came to office as "a foot soldier in the Reagan Revolution".^[416] Reagan's most famous statement regarding the role of smaller government was that "Government is not a solution to our problem, government is the problem."^[417] Praise for Reagan's accomplishments was part of standard GOP rhetoric a quarter-century after his retirement. *Washington Post* reporter Carlos Lozada noted how the main Republican contenders in the 2016 presidential race adopted "standard GOP Gipper worship".^[418]



Reagan in 1982

The period of American history most dominated by Reagan and his policies that concerned taxes, welfare, defense, the federal judiciary and the Cold War is known today as the Reagan Era. This time period emphasized that the conservative "Reagan Revolution", led by Reagan, had a permanent impact on the United States in domestic and foreign policy. The Bill Clinton administration is often treated as an extension of the Reagan Era, as is the George W. Bush administration.^[419] Historian Eric Foner noted that the Obama candidacy in 2008 "aroused a great deal of wishful thinking among those yearning for a change after nearly thirty years of Reaganism".^[420]

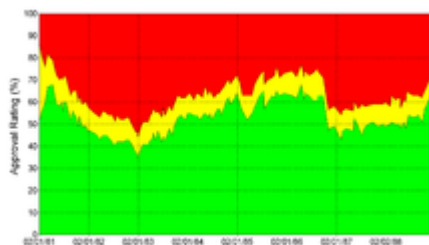
Cultural and political image

President Reagan's approval ratings

Date	Event	Approval (%)	Disapproval (%)
March 30, 1981	Shot by Hinckley	73	19
January 22, 1983	High unemployment	42	54
April 26, 1986	Libya bombing	70	26
February 26, 1987	Iran–Contra affair	44	51
December 27–29, 1988 ^[421]	Near end of presidency	63	29
N/A	Career average	57	39
July 30, 2001	<i>(Retrospective)</i> ^[422]	64	27

According to columnist Chuck Raasch, "Reagan transformed the American presidency in ways that only a few have been able to."^[423] He redefined the political agenda of the times, advocating lower taxes, a conservative economic philosophy, and a stronger military.^[424] His role in the Cold War further enhanced his image as a different kind of leader.^{[425][426]} Reagan's "avuncular style, optimism, and plain-folks demeanor" also helped him turn "government-bashing into an art form".^[191]

Reagan's popularity has increased since 1989. When Reagan left office in 1989, a CBS poll indicated that he held an approval rating of 68 percent. This figure equaled the approval rating of Franklin D. Roosevelt (and was later matched by Bill Clinton), as the highest rating for a departing president in the modern era.^[6] Gallup polls in 2001, 2007 and 2011 ranked him number one or number two when correspondents were asked for the greatest president in history.^[427] Reagan ranked third of post-World War II presidents in a 2007 Rasmussen Reports poll, fifth in a 2000 ABC poll, ninth in another 2007 Rasmussen poll, and eighth in a late-2008 poll by British newspaper The Times.^{[428][429][430]} In a Siena College survey of over 200 historians, however, Reagan ranked sixteenth out of 42.^{[431][432]} While the debate about Reagan's legacy is ongoing, the 2009 Annual C-SPAN Survey of Presidential Leaders ranked Reagan the tenth-greatest president. The survey of leading historians rated Reagan number 11 in 2000.^[433]



Approval ratings for President Reagan (Gallup)

In 2011, the Institute for the Study of the Americas released the first-ever British academic survey to rate U.S. presidents. This poll of British specialists in U.S. history and politics placed Reagan as the eighth-greatest U.S. president.^[434]

Reagan's ability to talk about substantive issues with understandable terms and to focus on mainstream American concerns earned him the laudatory moniker "The Great Communicator".^{[435][436][437]} Of it, Reagan said, "I won the nickname the great communicator. But I never thought it was my style that made a difference—it was the content. I wasn't a great communicator, but I communicated great things."^[438] His age and soft-spoken speech gave him a warm grandfatherly image.^{[439][440][441]}

Reagan also earned the nickname "the Teflon President", in that public perceptions of him were not tarnished by the controversies that arose during his administration.^[442] According to Colorado congresswoman Patricia Schroeder, who coined the phrase, the epithet referred to Reagan's ability to "do almost anything and not get blamed for it".^[443]

Public reaction to Reagan was always mixed. He was the oldest president up to that time and was supported by young voters, who began an alliance that shifted many of them to the Republican Party.^[444] Reagan did not fare well with minority groups in terms of approval, especially African Americans. However, his support of Israel throughout his presidency earned him support from many Jews.^[445] He emphasized family values in his campaigns and during his presidency, although he was the first president to have been divorced.^[446] The combination of Reagan's speaking style, unabashed patriotism, negotiation skills, as well as his savvy use of the media, played an important role in defining the 1980s and his future legacy.^[447]

Reagan was known to joke frequently during his lifetime, displayed humor throughout his presidency,^[448] and was famous for his storytelling.^[449] His numerous jokes and one-liners have been labeled "classic quips" and "legendary".^[450] Among the most notable of his jokes was one regarding the Cold War. As a microphone test in preparation for his weekly radio address in August 1984, Reagan made the following joke: "My fellow Americans, I'm pleased to tell you today that I've signed legislation that will outlaw Russia forever. We begin bombing in five minutes."^[451] Reagan's sense of humor was also observed by hundreds of Americans at Tempelhof U.S. Air Base June 12, 1987. While giving a speech celebrating the 750th anniversary of Berlin, a

balloon popped in the front row. Without missing a beat, Reagan quipped "missed me", a reference to his previous assassination attempt in 1981.^[452] Former aide David Gergen commented, "It was that humor ... that I think endeared people to Reagan."^[243]

He also had the ability to offer comfort and hope to the nation as a whole at times of tragedy. Following the disintegration of the Space Shuttle Challenger on January 28, 1986,^[453] On the evening of the disaster, Reagan addressed the nation saying,

The future doesn't belong to the fainthearted; it belongs to the brave ... We will never forget them, nor the last time we saw them, this morning, as they prepared for their journey and waved goodbye and "slipped the surly bonds of Earth" to "touch the face of God".^[454]

Honors

Reagan received several awards in his pre- and post-presidential years. After his election as president, Reagan received a lifetime gold membership in the Screen Actors Guild, was inducted into the National Speakers Association Speaker Hall of Fame,^[455] and received the United States Military Academy's Sylvanus Thayer Award.^[456]

In 1981, Reagan was inducted as a Laureate of The Lincoln Academy of Illinois and awarded the Order of Lincoln (the state's highest honor) by the governor of Illinois in the area of government.^[457] In 1982 he was given the "Distinguished Service Medal" by the American Legion because his highest priority was the national defense.^[458] In 1983, he received the highest distinction of the Scout Association of Japan, the Golden Pheasant Award.^[459] In 1989, Reagan was made an honorary knight Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath, one of the highest British orders. This entitled him to the use of the post-nominal letters "GCB" but, as a foreign national, not to be known as "Sir Ronald Reagan". Only two U.S. presidents have received this honor since attaining office: Reagan and George H. W. Bush;^[460] Dwight D. Eisenhower received his before becoming president in his capacity as a general after World War II. Reagan was also named an honorary Fellow of Keble College, Oxford. Japan awarded him the Grand Cordon of the Order of the Chrysanthemum in 1989; he was the second U.S. president to receive the order and the first to have it given to him for personal reasons as Eisenhower received it as a commemoration of U.S.–Japanese relations.^[461] In 1990, Reagan was awarded the WPPAC's Top Honor Prize because he signed the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty with H.E. Mikhail Gorbachev (then president of Russia), ending the cold war.^{[462][463]}

On January 18, 1993, Reagan received the Presidential Medal of Freedom (awarded with distinction), the highest honor that the United States can bestow, from President George H. W. Bush, his vice president and successor.^[464] Reagan was also awarded the Republican Senatorial Medal of Freedom, the highest honor bestowed by Republican members of the Senate.^[465]

On Reagan's 87th birthday in 1998, Washington National Airport was renamed Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport by a bill signed into law by President Bill Clinton. That year, the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center was dedicated in Washington, D.C.^[466] He was among 18 included in Gallup's most admired man and woman poll of the 20th century, from a poll conducted in the U.S. in 1999; two years later, USS Ronald Reagan was christened by Nancy Reagan and the United States Navy. It is one of few Navy ships christened in honor of a living person and the first aircraft carrier to be named in honor of a living former president.^[467]



Former President Reagan returns to the White House to receive the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Bush, 1993

In 1998 the U.S. Navy Memorial Foundation awarded Reagan its Naval Heritage award for his support of the U.S. Navy and military in both his film career and while he served as president.^[468]

Congress authorized the creation of the Ronald Reagan Boyhood Home in Dixon, Illinois in 2002, pending federal purchase of the property.^[469] On May 16 of that year, Nancy Reagan accepted the Congressional Gold Medal, the highest civilian honor bestowed by Congress, on behalf of the president and herself.^[470]

After Reagan's death, the United States Postal Service issued a President Ronald Reagan commemorative postage stamp in 2005.^[471] Later in the year, CNN, along with the editors of *Time* magazine, named him the "most fascinating person" of the network's first 25 years;^[472] *Time* listed Reagan one of the 100 Most Important People of the 20th century as well.^[473] The Discovery Channel asked its viewers to vote for The Greatest American in June 2005; Reagan placed in first place, ahead of Abraham Lincoln and Martin Luther King Jr.^[474]

In 2006, Reagan was inducted into the California Hall of Fame, located at The California Museum.^[475] Every year from 2002, California governors Gray Davis and Arnold Schwarzenegger proclaimed February 6 "Ronald Reagan Day" in the state of California in honor of their most famous predecessor.^[476] In 2010, Schwarzenegger signed Senate Bill 944, authored by Senator George Runner, to make every February 6 Ronald Reagan Day in California.^[477]

In 2007, Polish President Lech Kaczyński posthumously conferred on Reagan the highest Polish distinction, the Order of the White Eagle, saying that Reagan had inspired the Polish people to work for change and helped to unseat the repressive communist regime; Kaczyński said it "would not have been possible if it was not for the tough-mindedness, determination, and feeling of mission of President Ronald Reagan".^[478] Reagan backed the nation of Poland throughout his presidency, supporting the anti-communist Solidarity movement, along with Pope John Paul II;^[479] the Ronald Reagan Park, a public facility in Gdańsk, was named in his honor.

On June 3, 2009, Nancy Reagan unveiled a statue of her late husband in the United States Capitol rotunda. The statue represents the state of California in the National Statuary Hall Collection. After Reagan's death, both major American political parties agreed to erect a statue of Reagan in the place of that of Thomas Starr King.^[480] The day before, President Obama signed the Ronald Reagan Centennial Commission Act into law, establishing a commission to plan activities to mark the upcoming centenary of Reagan's birth.^[481]

On Independence Day 2011 a statue to Reagan was unveiled outside the U.S. embassy in London. The unveiling was supposed to be attended by Reagan's wife Nancy, but she did not attend; former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice took her place and read a statement on her behalf. President Reagan's friend and British prime minister during his presidency, Margaret Thatcher, was also unable to attend due to frail health.^[482]

In November 2018, a feature film named *Reagan* received funding from TriStar Global Entertainment with Dennis Quaid portraying Reagan.^{[483][484]} This would be the second time Quaid portrayed a U.S. president.^[485] *Reagan* was scheduled to begin filming in May 2020, but was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.^[486]

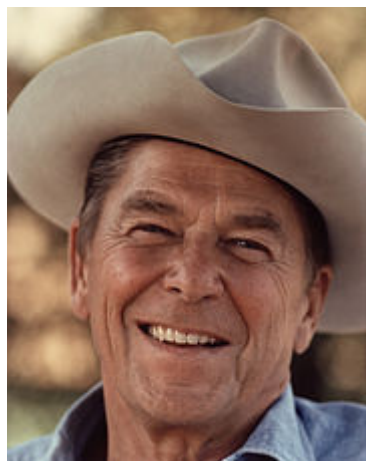
Gallery



c. 1916–17. Pictured from left: Father Jack, older brother Neil, Reagan (with "Dutchboy" haircut), and mother Nelle

1920s. As a teenager, in Dixon, Illinois

c.1960. Hosting General Electric Theater



1976. At his home at Rancho del Cielo



1985. His second presidential portrait

See also

- Cultural depictions of Ronald Reagan
- Electoral history of Ronald Reagan
- Reagan (2011 film)
- Reagan (2022 film)
- Reagan administration scandals

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- Works by Ronald Reagan (<https://librivox.org/author/11305>) at LibriVox (public domain audiobooks) 
- Works by Ronald Reagan (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/author/1671>) at Project Gutenberg
- Ronald Reagan (<https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0001654/>) at IMDb
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Donald Trump

Donald John Trump (born June 14, 1946) is an American media personality and businessman who served as the 45th president of the United States from 2017 to 2021.

Born and raised in Queens, New York City, Trump attended Fordham University and the University of Pennsylvania, graduating with a bachelor's degree in 1968. He became the president of his father Fred Trump's real estate business in 1971 and renamed it The Trump Organization. Trump expanded the company's operations to building and renovating skyscrapers, hotels, casinos, and golf courses. He later started various side ventures, mostly by licensing his name. Trump and his businesses have been involved in more than 4,000 state and federal legal actions, including six bankruptcies. He owned the Miss Universe brand of beauty pageants from 1996 to 2015. From 2003 to 2015 he co-produced and hosted the reality television series *The Apprentice*.

Trump's political positions have been described as populist, protectionist, isolationist, and nationalist. He entered the 2016 presidential race as a Republican and was elected in an upset victory over Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton while losing the popular vote.^[a] He was the first U.S. president without prior military or government service. His election and policies sparked numerous protests. Trump made many false and misleading statements during his campaigns and presidency, to a degree unprecedented in American politics. Many of his comments and actions have been characterized as racially charged or racist.

Trump ordered a travel ban on citizens from several Muslim-majority countries, citing security concerns; after legal challenges, the Supreme Court upheld the policy's third revision. He enacted the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017 which cut taxes for individuals and businesses and rescinded the individual health insurance mandate penalty of the Affordable Care Act. Trump appointed more than 200 federal judges, including three to the Supreme Court: Neil Gorsuch, Brett Kavanaugh and Amy Coney Barrett. In foreign policy, Trump pursued an America First agenda: he renegotiated the North American Free Trade Agreement as the United States–Mexico–Canada Agreement and withdrew the U.S. from the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade negotiations, the Paris Agreement on climate change and the Iran nuclear deal. He imposed import tariffs that triggered a trade war with China. Trump met three times with North Korean leader Kim Jong-un, but made no progress on denuclearization. Trump reacted

Donald Trump



Official portrait, 2017

45th President of the United States

In office

January 20, 2017 – January 20, 2021

Vice President Mike Pence

Preceded by Barack Obama

Succeeded by Joe Biden

Personal details

Born Donald John Trump
June 14, 1946
Queens, New York City,
U.S.

Political party Republican (1987–1999,
2009–2011, 2012–
present)


Other political affiliations Reform (1999–2001)
Democratic (2001–2009)
Independent (2011–2012)

Spouse(s) Ivana Zelníčková
(m. 1977; div. 1992)
Marla Maples
(m. 1993; div. 1999)
Melania Knauss (m. 2005)

slowly to the COVID-19 pandemic, ignored or contradicted many recommendations from health officials in his messaging, and promoted misinformation about unproven treatments and the availability of testing.

Russia interfered in the 2016 election to help Trump's election chances, but the special counsel investigation of that interference led by Robert Mueller did not find sufficient evidence to establish criminal conspiracy or coordination of the Trump campaign with Russia.^[b] Mueller also investigated Trump for obstruction of justice and neither indicted nor exonerated him. After Trump pressured Ukraine to investigate his political rival Joe Biden, the House of Representatives impeached him for abuse of power and obstruction of Congress on December 18, 2019. The Senate acquitted him of both charges on February 5, 2020.

Trump lost the 2020 presidential election to Biden, but refused to concede. Attempting to overturn the results, he falsely claimed electoral fraud, pressured government officials, mounted scores of unsuccessful legal challenges and obstructed the presidential transition. On January 6, 2021, Trump urged his supporters to march to the Capitol, which hundreds stormed, interrupting the electoral vote count. The House impeached Trump for incitement of insurrection on January 13, making him the only federal officeholder in American history to be impeached twice. The Senate acquitted Trump for the second time on February 13.

Children	<u>Donald Jr.</u> · <u>Ivanka</u> · <u>Eric</u> · <u>Tiffany</u> · <u>Barron</u>
Parents	<u>Fred Trump</u> <u>Mary Anne MacLeod</u>
Relatives	<u>Family of Donald Trump</u>
Residence	<u>Mar-a-Lago</u>
Alma mater	<u>Wharton School</u> (BS Econ.)
Occupation	Politician · businessman · television presenter
Awards	<u>List of honors and awards</u>
Signature	
Website	<u>Office of Donald J. Trump</u> (https://www.45office.com/) <u>Presidential Library</u> (https://www.trumplibrary.gov/) <u>White House Archives</u> (https://trumpwhitehouse.archives.gov/)

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Personal life

Early life

Donald John Trump was born on June 14, 1946, at Jamaica Hospital in the borough of Queens in New York City,^{[1][2]} the fourth child of Fred Trump, a Bronx-born real estate developer whose parents were German immigrants, and Mary Anne MacLeod Trump, an immigrant from Scotland. Trump grew up with older siblings Maryanne, Fred Jr., and Elizabeth, and younger brother Robert in the Jamaica Estates neighborhood of Queens and attended the private Kew-Forest School from kindergarten through seventh grade.^{[3][4][5]} At age 13, he was enrolled in the New York Military Academy, a private boarding school,^[6] and in 1964, he enrolled at Fordham University. Two years later he transferred to the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, graduating in May 1968 with a B.S. in economics.^{[7][8]} In 2015, Trump's lawyer Michael Cohen threatened Trump's colleges, high school, and the College Board with legal action if they released

Trump's academic records.^[9] While in college, Trump obtained four student draft deferments.^[10] In 1966, he was deemed fit for military service based upon a medical examination, and in July 1968 a local draft board classified him as eligible to serve.^[11] In October 1968, he was classified 1-Y, a conditional medical deferment,^[12] and in 1972, he was reclassified 4-F due to bone spurs, permanently disqualifying him from service.^{[13][14]}



Trump at the New York Military Academy in 1964

Family

In 1977, Trump married Czech model Ivana Zelníčková.^[15] They have three children, Donald Jr. (born 1977), Ivanka (born 1981), and Eric (born 1984).^[16] Ivana became a naturalized United States citizen in 1988.^[17] The couple divorced in 1992, following Trump's affair with actress Marla Maples.^[18] Maples and Trump married in 1993^[19] and had one daughter, Tiffany (born 1993).^[20] They were divorced in 1999,^[21] and Tiffany was raised by Marla in California.^[22] In 2005, Trump married Slovenian model Melania Knauss.^[23] They have one son, Barron (born 2006).^[24] Melania gained U.S. citizenship in 2006.^[25]

Religious views

Trump went to Sunday school and was confirmed in 1959 at the First Presbyterian Church in Jamaica, Queens.^{[26][27]} In the 1970s, his parents joined the Marble Collegiate Church in Manhattan, which belongs to the Reformed Church.^{[26][28]} The pastor at Marble, Norman Vincent Peale,^[26] ministered to the family until his death in 1993.^[28] Trump has described Peale as a mentor.^[29] In 2015, the church stated Trump "is not an active member".^[27] In 2019, Trump appointed his personal pastor, televangelist Paula White, to the White House Office of Public Liaison.^[30] In 2020, Trump said that he identified as a non-denominational Christian.^[31]

Health

Trump says he has never drunk alcohol, smoked cigarettes, or used drugs.^{[32][33]} He sleeps about four or five hours a night.^{[34][35]} Trump has called golfing his "primary form of exercise" but usually does not walk the course.^[36] He considers exercise a waste of energy, because he believes the body is "like a battery, with a finite amount of energy" which is depleted by exercise.^[37]

In 2015, Harold Bornstein, who had been Trump's personal physician since 1980, wrote that Trump would "be the healthiest individual ever elected to the presidency" in a letter released by the Trump campaign.^[38] In 2018, Bornstein said Trump had dictated the contents of the letter and that three agents of Trump had removed his medical records in February 2017 without authorization.^{[38][39]}



Trump discharged on October 5, 2020, by his team of doctors at Walter Reed

Trump was hospitalized at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center for COVID-19 treatment on October 2, 2020, reportedly with a fever and difficulty breathing. It was revealed in 2021 that his condition had been much more serious. He had extremely low blood oxygen levels, a high fever, and lung infiltrates, indicating a

severe case of the disease.^[40] He was treated with the antiviral drug remdesivir, the steroid dexamethasone, and the unapproved experimental antibody REGN-COV2.^[41] Trump returned to the White House on October 5, still struggling with the disease.^[40]

Wealth

In 1982, Trump was listed on the initial *Forbes* list of wealthy individuals as having a share of his family's estimated \$200 million net worth. His financial losses in the 1980s caused him to be dropped from the list between 1990 and 1995.^[42] In its 2021 billionaires ranking, *Forbes* estimated Trump's net worth at \$2.4 billion (1,299th in the world),^[43] making him one of the richest politicians in American history and the first billionaire American president.^[43] *Forbes* estimated that his net worth declined 31 percent and his ranking fell 138 spots between 2015 and 2018.^[44] After he filed mandatory financial disclosure forms with the Federal Election Commission (FEC) in July 2015, Trump publicly announced a net worth of about \$10 billion while the records released by the FEC showed "at least \$1.4 billion in assets and \$265 million in liabilities".^[45]

Journalist Jonathan Greenberg reported in 2018 that Trump, using the pseudonym "John Barron" and claiming to be a Trump Organization official, called him in 1984 to falsely assert that he owned "in excess of ninety percent" of the Trump family's business, to secure a higher ranking on the Forbes 400 list of wealthy Americans. Greenberg also wrote that *Forbes* had vastly overestimated Trump's wealth and wrongly included him on the Forbes 400 rankings of 1982, 1983, and 1984.^[46]

Trump has often said he began his career with "a small loan of one million dollars" from his father, and that he had to pay it back with interest.^[47] In October 2018, *The New York Times* reported that Trump "was a millionaire by age 8," borrowed at least \$60 million from his father, largely failed to repay those loans, and had received \$413 million (adjusted for inflation) from his father's business empire over his lifetime.^{[48][49]} According to the report, Trump and his family committed tax fraud, which a lawyer for Trump denied. The tax department of New York said it is investigating.^{[50][51]} Trump's investments underperformed the stock market and the New York property market.^{[52][53]} *Forbes* estimated in October 2018 that the value of Trump's personal brand licensing business had declined by 88 percent since 2015, to \$3 million.^[54]



Trump and wife Ivana in the receiving line of a state dinner for King Fahd of Saudi Arabia in 1985, with U.S. president Ronald Reagan and First Lady Nancy Reagan

Trump's tax returns from 1985 to 1994 show net losses totaling \$1.17 billion over the ten-year period, in contrast to his claims about his financial health and business abilities. *The New York Times* reported that "year after year, Mr. Trump appears to have lost more money than nearly any other individual American taxpayer" and that Trump's "core business losses in 1990 and 1991—more than \$250 million each year—were more than double those of the nearest taxpayers in the I.R.S. information for those years." In 1995 his reported losses were \$915.7 million.^{[55][56]}

According to a September 2020 analysis by *The New York Times* of twenty years of data from Trump's tax returns, Trump had accumulated hundreds of millions in losses and deferred declaring \$287 million in forgiven debt as taxable income.^[57] According to the analysis, Trump's main sources of income were his share of revenue from The Apprentice and income from businesses in which he was a minority partner, while his majority-owned businesses were largely running at losses.^[57] A significant portion of Trump's income was in tax credits due to his losses, which enables him to avoid paying income tax, or paying as little as \$750, for several years.^[57] Over the past decade, Trump has been balancing his businesses' losses by selling and taking out loans against assets, including a \$100 million mortgage on Trump Tower (due in 2022) and the liquidation

of over \$200 million in stocks and bonds.^[57] Trump has personally guaranteed \$421 million in debt, most of which is due to be repaid by 2024. The tax records also showed Trump had unsuccessfully pursued business deals in China, including by developing a partnership with a major government-controlled company.^[58]

Trump has a total of over \$1 billion in debts, secured by his assets, according to a *Forbes* report in October 2020. \$640 million or more was owed to various banks and trust organizations. Lenders include Deutsche Bank, UBS, and Bank of China. Approximately \$450 million was owed to unknown creditors. The current value of Trump's assets exceeds his indebtedness, according to the report.^[59]

Business career

Real estate

While a student at Wharton and after graduating in 1968, Trump worked at his father Fred's real estate company, Trump Management, which owned middle-class rental housing in New York City's outer boroughs.^{[60][61][62]} In 1971, he became president of the company and began using The Trump Organization as an umbrella brand.^[63] It was registered as a corporation in 1981.^[64]

Manhattan developments

Trump attracted public attention in 1978 with the launch of his family's first Manhattan venture, the renovation of the derelict Commodore Hotel, adjacent to Grand Central Terminal. The financing was facilitated by a \$400 million city property tax abatement arranged by Fred Trump,^[65] who also joined Hyatt in guaranteeing \$70 million in bank construction financing.^{[66][67]} The hotel reopened in 1980 as the Grand Hyatt Hotel,^[68] and that same year, Trump obtained rights to develop Trump Tower, a mixed-use skyscraper in Midtown Manhattan.^[69] The building houses the headquarters of the Trump Organization and was Trump's primary residence until 2019.^{[70][71]}



Trump Tower in Midtown Manhattan

In 1988, Trump acquired the Plaza Hotel in Manhattan with a loan of \$425 million from a consortium of banks. Two years later, the hotel filed for bankruptcy protection, and a reorganization plan was approved in 1992.^[72] In 1995, Trump lost the hotel to Citibank and investors from Singapore and Saudi Arabia, who assumed \$300 million of the debt.^{[73][74]}

In 1996, Trump acquired the vacant 71-story skyscraper at 40 Wall Street. After an extensive renovation, the high-rise was renamed the Trump Building.^[75] In the early 1990s, Trump won the right to develop a 70-acre (28 ha) tract in the Lincoln Square neighborhood near the Hudson River. Struggling with debt from other ventures in 1994, Trump sold most of his interest in the project to Asian investors, who were able to finance completion of the project, Riverside South.^[76]

Palm Beach estate

In 1985, Trump acquired the Mar-a-Lago estate in Palm Beach, Florida.^[77] Trump converted the estate into a private club with an initiation fee and annual dues and used a wing of the house as a private residence.^[78] In 2019, Trump declared Mar-a-Lago his primary residence.^[71]

Atlantic City casinos



Entrance of the Trump Taj Mahal in Atlantic City

In 1984, Trump opened Harrah's at Trump Plaza, a hotel and casino in Atlantic City, New Jersey. The project received financing from the Holiday Corporation, which also managed the operation. Gambling had been legalized there in 1977 to revitalize the once-popular seaside destination.^[79]



Mar-a-Lago in 2009

The property's poor financial results worsened tensions between Holiday and Trump, who paid Holiday \$70 million in May 1986 to take sole control of the property.^[80] Earlier, Trump had also acquired a partially completed building in Atlantic City from

the Hilton Corporation for \$320 million. Upon its completion in 1985, that hotel and casino were called Trump Castle. Trump's then-wife Ivana managed it until 1988.^{[81][82]}

Trump acquired a third casino in Atlantic City, the Trump Taj Mahal, in 1988 in a highly leveraged transaction.^[83] It was financed with \$675 million in junk bonds and completed at a cost of \$1.1 billion, opening in April 1990.^{[84][85][86]} The project went bankrupt the following year,^[85] and the reorganization left Trump with only half his initial ownership stake and required him to pledge personal guarantees of future performance.^[87] Facing "enormous debt," he gave up control of his money-losing airline, Trump Shuttle, and sold his megayacht, the Trump Princess, which had been indefinitely docked in Atlantic City while leased to his casinos for use by wealthy gamblers.^{[88][89]}

In 1995, Trump founded Trump Hotels & Casino Resorts (THCR), which assumed ownership of Trump Plaza, Trump Castle, and the Trump Casino in Gary, Indiana.^[90] THCR purchased the Taj Mahal in 1996 and underwent successive bankruptcies in 2004, 2009, and 2014, leaving Trump with only ten percent ownership.^[91] He remained chairman of THCR until 2009.^[92]

Golf courses

The Trump Organization began acquiring and constructing golf courses in 1999.^[93] It owned 11 golf courses and resorts worldwide and managed another four as of July 2020.^[94]

From his inauguration until the end of 2019, Trump spent around one of every five days at one of his golf clubs.^[95]

Branding and licensing

The Trump name has been licensed for various consumer products and services, including foodstuffs, apparel, adult learning courses, and home furnishings.^{[96][97]} According to an analysis by *The Washington Post*, there are more than fifty licensing or management deals involving Trump's name, which have generated at least \$59 million in yearly revenue for his companies.^[98] By 2018, only two consumer goods companies continued to license his name.^[97]

Legal affairs and bankruptcies

Fixer Roy Cohn served as Trump's lawyer and mentor for 13 years in the 1970s and 1980s.^{[99][100]} According to Trump, Cohn sometimes waived fees due to their friendship.^[61] In 1973, Cohn helped Trump countersue the United States government for \$100 million over its charges that Trump's properties had racial discriminatory practices. Trump and Cohn lost that case when the countersuit was dismissed and the government's case went forward.^[101] In 1975, an agreement was struck requiring Trump's properties to furnish the New York Urban League with a list of all apartment vacancies, every week for two years, among other things.^[102] Cohn introduced political consultant Roger Stone to Trump, who enlisted Stone's services to deal with the federal government.^[103]

As of April 2018, Trump and his businesses had been involved in more than 4,000 state and federal legal actions, according to a running tally by USA Today.^[104]

While Trump has not filed for personal bankruptcy, his over-leveraged hotel and casino businesses in Atlantic City and New York filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection six times between 1991 and 2009.^{[105][106]} They continued to operate while the banks restructured debt and reduced Trump's shares in the properties.^{[105][106]}

During the 1980s, more than 70 banks had lent Trump \$4 billion,^[107] but in the aftermath of his corporate bankruptcies of the early 1990s, most major banks declined to lend to him, with only Deutsche Bank still willing to lend money.^[108] The New York Times reported days after the storming of the United States Capitol that the bank had decided not to do business with Trump or his company in the future.^[109]

In April 2019, the House Oversight Committee issued subpoenas seeking financial details from Trump's banks, Deutsche Bank and Capital One, and his accounting firm, Mazars USA. In response, Trump sued the banks, Mazars, and committee chairman Elijah Cummings to prevent the disclosures.^{[110][111]} In May, DC District Court judge Amit Mehta ruled that Mazars must comply with the subpoena,^[112] and judge Edgardo Ramos of the Southern District Court of New York ruled that the banks must also comply.^{[113][114]} Trump's attorneys appealed the rulings,^[115] arguing that Congress was attempting to usurp the "exercise of law-enforcement authority that the Constitution reserves to the executive branch."^{[116][117]}

Side ventures

In September 1983, Trump purchased the New Jersey Generals, a team in the United States Football League. After the 1985 season, the league folded, largely due to Trump's strategy of moving games to a fall schedule (where they competed with the NFL for audience) and trying to force a merger with the NFL by bringing an antitrust suit against the organization.^{[118][119]}

Trump's businesses have hosted several boxing matches at the Atlantic City Convention Hall adjacent to and promoted as taking place at the Trump Plaza in Atlantic City.^{[120][121]} In 1989 and 1990, Trump lent his name to the Tour de Trump cycling stage race, which was an attempt to create an American equivalent of European races such as the Tour de France or the Giro d'Italia.^[122]



Trump International Hotel and Tower in Chicago



Trump at a New York Mets baseball game in 2009

In the late 1980s, Trump mimicked the actions of Wall Street's so-called corporate raiders. Trump began to purchase significant blocks of shares in various public companies, leading some observers to think he was engaged in the practice called greenmail, or feigning the intent to acquire the companies and then pressuring management to repurchase the buyer's stake at a premium. *The New York Times* found that Trump initially made millions of dollars in such stock transactions, but later "lost most, if not all, of those gains after investors stopped taking his takeover talk seriously."^{[55][123][124]}

In 1988, Trump purchased the defunct Eastern Air Lines shuttle, with 21 planes and landing rights in New York City, Boston, and Washington, D.C. He financed the purchase with \$380 million from 22 banks, rebranded the operation the Trump Shuttle, and operated it until 1992. Trump failed to earn a profit with the airline and sold it to USAir.^[125]

In 1992, Trump, his siblings Maryanne, Elizabeth, and Robert, and his cousin John W. Walter, each with a 20 percent share, formed All County Building Supply & Maintenance Corp. The company had no offices and is alleged to have been a shell company for paying the vendors providing services and supplies for Trump's rental units and then billing those services and supplies to Trump Management with markups of 20–50 percent and more. The proceeds generated by the markups were shared by the owners.^{[49][126]} The increased costs were used as justification to get state approval for increasing the rents of Trump's rent-stabilized units.^[49]



Trump's star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame

From 1996 to 2015, Trump owned all or part of the Miss Universe pageants, including Miss USA and Miss Teen USA.^{[127][128]} Due to disagreements with CBS about scheduling, he took both pageants to NBC in 2002.^{[129][130]} In 2007, Trump received a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame for his work as producer of Miss Universe.^[131] After NBC and Univision dropped the pageants from their broadcasting lineups in June 2015,^[132] Trump bought NBC's share of the Miss Universe Organization and sold the entire company to the William Morris talent agency.^[127]

Trump University

In 2004, Trump co-founded Trump University, a company that sold real estate training courses priced from \$1,500 to \$35,000.^{[133][134]} After New York State authorities notified the company that its use of the word "university" violated state law, its name was changed to Trump Entrepreneur Initiative in 2010.^[135]

In 2013, the State of New York filed a \$40 million civil suit against Trump University, alleging that the company made false statements and defrauded consumers.^{[136][137]} In addition, two class actions were filed in federal court against Trump and his companies. Internal documents revealed that employees were instructed to use a hard-sell approach, and former employees testified that Trump University had defrauded or lied to its students.^{[138][139][140]} Shortly after he won the presidency, Trump agreed to pay a total of \$25 million to settle the three cases.^[141]

Foundation

The Donald J. Trump Foundation was a private foundation established in 1988.^{[142][143]} In the foundation's final years its funds mostly came from donors other than Trump, who did not donate any personal funds to the charity from 2009 until 2014.^[144] The foundation gave to health care and sports-related charities, as well as conservative groups.^[145]

In 2016, *The Washington Post* reported that the charity had committed several potential legal and ethical violations, including alleged self-dealing and possible tax evasion.^[146] Also in 2016, the New York State attorney general's office said the foundation appeared to be in violation of New York laws regarding charities

and ordered it to immediately cease its fundraising activities in New York.^{[147][148]} Trump's team announced in December 2016 that the foundation would be dissolved.^[149]

In June 2018, the New York attorney general's office filed a civil suit against the foundation, Trump, and his adult children, seeking \$2.8 million in restitution and additional penalties.^{[150][151]} In December 2018, the foundation ceased operation and disbursed all its assets to other charities.^[152] In November 2019, a New York state judge ordered Trump to pay \$2 million to a group of charities for misusing the foundation's funds, in part to finance his presidential campaign.^{[153][154]}

Media career

Books

Trump has written up to 19 books on business, financial, or political topics, though he has used ghostwriters to do this.^[155] Trump's first book, *The Art of the Deal* (1987), was a *New York Times* Best Seller. While Trump was credited as co-author, the entire book was ghostwritten by Tony Schwartz.^[156] According to *The New Yorker*, "The book expanded Trump's renown far beyond New York City, making him an emblem of the successful tycoon."^[156] Trump has called the book his second favorite, after the Bible.^[157]

Film and television

Trump made cameo appearances in eight films and television shows from 1985 to 2001.^{[158][159]}

Trump had a sporadic relationship with the professional wrestling promotion WWE since the late 1980s.^[160] He appeared at WrestleMania 23 in 2007 and was inducted into the celebrity wing of the WWE Hall of Fame in 2013.^[161]

Starting in the 1990s, Trump was a guest about 24 times on the nationally syndicated Howard Stern Show.^[162] He also had his own short-form talk radio program called *Trumped!* (one to two minutes on weekdays) from 2004 to 2008.^{[163][164]} From 2011 until 2015, he was a weekly unpaid guest commentator on Fox & Friends.^{[165][166]}

In 2003, Trump became the co-producer and host of *The Apprentice*, a reality show in which Trump played the role of a chief executive and contestants competed for a year of employment at the Trump Organization. Trump eliminated contestants with the catchphrase "You're fired."^[167] He later co-hosted *The Celebrity Apprentice*, in which celebrities competed to win money for charities.^[167] Trump, who had been a member since 1989, resigned from the Screen Actors Guild in February 2021 rather than face a disciplinary committee hearing for inciting the January 6, 2021 mob attack on the U.S. Capitol and for his "reckless campaign of misinformation aimed at discrediting and ultimately threatening the safety of journalists."^[168] Two days later, the union permanently barred him from readmission.^[169]

Pre-presidential political career

Trump's political party affiliation changed numerous times. He registered as a Republican in 1987, a member of the Independence Party, the New York state affiliate of the Reform Party, in 1999,^[170] a Democrat in 2001, a Republican in 2009, unaffiliated in 2011, and a Republican in 2012.^[171]



Trump and President Bill Clinton in June 2000

In 1987, Trump placed full-page advertisements in three major newspapers,^[172] advocating peace in Central America, accelerated nuclear disarmament talks with the Soviet Union, and reduction of the federal budget deficit by making American allies pay "their fair share" for military defense.^[173] He ruled out running for local office but not for the presidency.^[172]

In 2000, Trump ran in the California and Michigan primaries for nomination as the Reform Party candidate for the 2000 United States

presidential election but withdrew from the race in February 2000.^{[174][175][176]} A July 1999 poll matching him against likely Republican nominee George W. Bush and likely Democratic nominee Al Gore showed Trump with seven percent support.^[177]



Trump speaking at CPAC 2011

In 2011, Trump speculated about running against President Barack Obama in the 2012 election, making his first speaking appearance at the Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) in February 2011 and giving speeches in early primary states.^{[178][179]} In May 2011, he announced he would not run,^[178] and he endorsed Mitt Romney in February 2012.^[180] Trump's presidential ambitions were generally not taken seriously at the time.^[181]

2016 presidential campaign

Republican primaries

On June 16, 2015, Trump announced his candidacy for President of the United States.^{[182][183]} His campaign was initially not taken seriously by political analysts, but he quickly rose to the top of opinion polls.^[184]

On Super Tuesday, Trump received the most votes, and he remained the front-runner throughout the primaries.^[185] After a landslide win in Indiana on May 3, 2016—which prompted the remaining candidates Ted Cruz and John Kasich to suspend their presidential campaigns—RNC chairman Reince Priebus declared Trump the presumptive Republican nominee.^[186]

General election campaign

Hillary Clinton had a significant lead over Trump in national polls throughout most of 2016. In early July, her lead narrowed in national polling averages.^{[187][188]}

On July 15, 2016, Trump announced his selection of Indiana governor Mike Pence as his vice presidential running mate.^[189] Four days later, the two were officially nominated by the Republican Party at the Republican National Convention.^[190]



Trump campaigning in Fountain Hills, Arizona, March 2016. The cap he is wearing advertises the campaign slogan Make America Great Again (MAGA). Such caps were ubiquitous during the campaign.

Trump and Clinton faced off in three presidential debates in September and October 2016. Trump's refusal to say whether he would accept the result of the election drew attention, with some saying it undermined democracy.^{[191][192]}



Candidate Trump and running mate Mike Pence at the Republican National Convention, July 2016

Political positions

Trump's campaign platform emphasized renegotiating U.S.–China relations and free trade agreements such as NAFTA and the Trans-Pacific Partnership, strongly enforcing immigration laws, and building a new wall along the U.S.–Mexico border. His other campaign positions included pursuing energy independence while opposing climate change regulations such as the Clean Power Plan and the Paris Agreement, modernizing and expediting services for veterans, repealing and replacing the Affordable Care Act, abolishing Common Core education standards, investing in infrastructure, simplifying the tax code while reducing taxes for all economic classes, and imposing tariffs on imports by companies that offshore jobs. During the campaign, he advocated a largely non-interventionist approach to foreign policy while increasing military spending, extreme vetting or banning immigrants from Muslim-majority countries^[193] to pre-empt domestic Islamic terrorism, and aggressive military action against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant. He described NATO as "obsolete".^{[194][195]}

Trump's political positions and rhetoric were right-wing populist.^{[196][197][198]} *Politico* has described his positions as "eclectic, improvisational and often contradictory,"^[199] while NBC News counted "141 distinct shifts on 23 major issues" during his campaign.^[200]

Campaign rhetoric

Trump said he disdained political correctness and frequently made claims of media bias.^{[201][202][203]} His fame and provocative statements earned him an unprecedented amount of free media coverage, elevating his standing in the Republican primaries.^[204]

Trump made a record number of false statements compared to other candidates,^{[205][206][207]} the press reported on his campaign lies and falsehoods, with the *Los Angeles Times* saying, "Never in modern presidential politics has a major candidate made false statements as routinely as Trump has."^[208] His campaign statements were often opaque or suggestive.^[209]

Trump adopted the phrase "truthful hyperbole," coined by his ghostwriter Tony Schwartz, to describe his public speaking style.^{[210][211]}

Support from the far-right

According to Michael Barkun, the Trump campaign was remarkable for bringing fringe ideas, beliefs, and organizations into the mainstream.^[212] During his presidential campaign, Trump was accused of pandering to white supremacists.^[213] He retweeted racist Twitter accounts,^[214] and repeatedly refused to condemn David Duke, the Ku Klux Klan or white supremacists.^[215] Duke enthusiastically supported Trump and said he and like-minded people voted for Trump because of his promises to "take our country back".^{[216][217]} After repeated questioning by reporters, Trump said he disavowed Duke and the Klan.^[218]

The alt-right movement coalesced around and enthusiastically supported Trump's candidacy,^{[219][220]} due in part to its opposition to multiculturalism and immigration.^{[221][222][223]}

In August 2016, he appointed Steve Bannon, the executive chairman of Breitbart News—described by Bannon as "the platform for the alt-right"—as his campaign CEO.^[224] After the election, Trump condemned supporters who celebrated his victory with Nazi salutes.^{[225][226]}

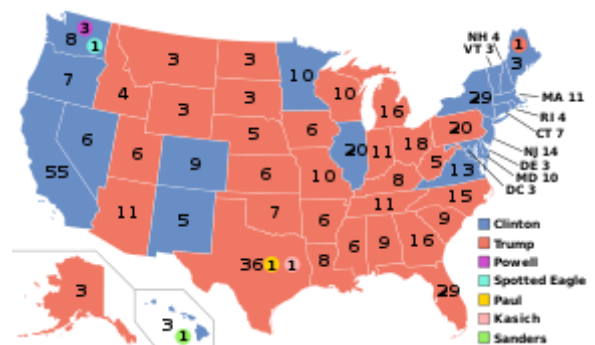
Financial disclosures

Trump's FEC-required reports listed assets above \$1.4 billion and outstanding debts of at least \$315 million.^{[45][227]} Trump did not release his tax returns, contrary to the practice of every major candidate since 1976 and his promises in 2014 and 2015 to do so if he ran for office.^{[228][229]} He said his tax returns were being audited, and his lawyers had advised him against releasing them.^[230] After a lengthy court battle to block release of his tax returns and other records to the Manhattan district attorney for a criminal investigation, including two appeals by Trump to the United States Supreme Court, in February 2021 the high court allowed the records to be released to the prosecutor for review by a grand jury.^{[231][232]}

In October 2016, portions of Trump's state filings for 1995 were leaked to a reporter from *The New York Times*. They show that Trump had declared a loss of \$916 million that year, which could have let him avoid taxes for up to 18 years.^[233] In March 2017, the first two pages of Trump's 2005 federal income tax returns were leaked to MSNBC. The document states that Trump had a gross adjusted income of \$150 million and paid \$38 million in federal taxes. The White House confirmed the authenticity of the documents.^{[234][235]}

Election to the presidency

On November 8, 2016, Trump received 306 pledged electoral votes versus 232 for Clinton. The official counts were 304 and 227 respectively, after defections on both sides.^[236] Trump received nearly 2.9 million fewer popular votes than Clinton, which made him the fifth person to be elected president while losing the popular vote.^[237]



2016 electoral vote results. Trump won 304–227



President Obama and president-elect Trump on November 10, 2016

Trump's victory was a political upset.^[238] Polls had consistently shown Clinton with a nationwide—though diminishing—lead, as well as an advantage in most of the competitive states. Trump's support had been modestly underestimated, while Clinton's had been overestimated.^[239]

Trump won 30 states; included were Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin, which had been part of what was considered a blue wall of Democratic strongholds since the 1990s. Clinton won 20 states and the District of Columbia. Trump's victory marked the return of an undivided

Republican government—a Republican White House combined with Republican control of both chambers of Congress.^[240]

Trump was the oldest person to take office as president at the time of his inauguration.^[241] He is also the first president who did not serve in the military or hold any government office prior to becoming president.^[242]

Protests

Trump's election victory sparked numerous protests.^{[243][244]} On the day after Trump's inauguration, an estimated 2.6 million people worldwide, including an estimated half million in Washington, D.C., protested against Trump in the Women's Marches.^[245] Marches against his travel ban began across the country on January 29, 2017, just nine days after his inauguration.^[246]



Women's March in Washington on January 21, 2017

Presidency (2017–2021)

Early actions

Trump was inaugurated as the 45th president of the United States on January 20, 2017. During his first week in office, he signed six executive orders: interim procedures in anticipation of repealing the Affordable Care Act ("Obamacare"), withdrawal from the Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations, reinstatement of the Mexico City Policy, authorizing the Keystone XL and Dakota Access Pipeline construction projects, reinforcing border security, and beginning the planning and design process to construct a wall along the U.S. border with Mexico.^[247]



Trump is sworn in as president by Chief Justice John Roberts.

Trump's daughter Ivanka and her husband Jared Kushner became Assistant to the President and Senior Advisor to the President, respectively.^{[248][249]}

Conflicts of interest

Before being inaugurated, Trump moved his businesses into a revocable trust run by his sons, Eric and Donald Jr, and a business associate.^{[250][251]} However Trump continued to profit from his businesses^[252] and continued to have knowledge of how his administration's policies affected his businesses.^[251] Though Trump said he would eschew "new foreign deals," the Trump Organization pursued expansions of its operations in Dubai, Scotland, and the Dominican Republic.^[252]

Trump was sued for violating the Domestic and Foreign Emoluments Clauses of the U.S. Constitution,^[253] marking the first time that the clauses had been substantively litigated.^{[253][254]} The plaintiffs said that Trump's business interests could allow foreign governments to influence him.^{[253][252][255][254]} Trump called the clause "phony".^{[256][252]} After Trump's term had ended, the U.S. Supreme Court dismissed the cases as moot.^[257]

Domestic policy

Economy and trade

Trump took office at the height of the longest economic expansion in American history,^[258] which began in June 2009 and continued until February 2020, when the COVID-19 recession began.^[259]

In December 2017, Trump signed tax legislation that permanently cut the corporate tax rate to 21 percent, lowered personal income tax rates until 2025, increased child tax credits, doubled the estate tax exemption to \$11.2 million, and limited the state and local tax deduction to \$10,000.^[260]

Trump is a skeptic of trade liberalization, adopting these views in the 1980s, and sharply criticized NAFTA during the Republican primary campaign in 2015.^{[261][262][263]} He withdrew the U.S. from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) negotiations,^[264] imposed tariffs on steel and aluminum imports,^[265] and launched a trade war with China by sharply increasing tariffs on 818 categories (worth \$50 billion) of Chinese goods imported into the U.S.^{[266][267]} On several occasions, Trump said incorrectly that these import tariffs are paid by China into the U.S. Treasury.^[268] Although Trump pledged during his 2016 campaign to significantly reduce the U.S.'s large trade deficits, the U.S. trade deficit reached its highest level in 12 years under his administration.^[269] Following a 2017–2018 renegotiation, Trump signed the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) as the successor to NAFTA on January 29, 2020.^[270] The revised trade deal became effective on July 1, 2020.^[271]



Trump speaks to automobile workers in Michigan, March 2017

Despite a campaign promise to eliminate the national debt in eight years, Trump as president approved large increases in government spending, as well as the 2017 tax cut. As a result, the federal budget deficit increased by almost 50 percent, to nearly \$1 trillion in 2019.^[272] Under Trump, the U.S. national debt increased by 39 percent, reaching \$27.75 trillion by the end of his term; the U.S. debt-to-GDP ratio also hit a post-World War II high.^[273]

Although the U.S. unemployment rate hit a 50-year low (3.5 percent) in February 2020, the unemployment rate hit a 90-year high (14.7 percent), matching Great Depression levels, just two months later, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.^[274] Trump left office with 3 million fewer jobs in the U.S. than when he took office, making Trump the only modern U.S. president to leave office with a smaller workforce.^[258]

An analysis published by *The Wall Street Journal* in October 2020 found the trade war Trump initiated in early 2018 neither revived American manufacturing nor resulted in the reshoring of factory production.^[275]

Energy and climate

Trump rejects the scientific consensus on climate change.^{[276][277]} He slashed the budget for renewable energy research and reversed Obama-era policies directed at curbing climate change.^[278] In June 2017, Trump announced the withdrawal of the United States from the Paris Agreement, making the U.S. the only nation in the world to not ratify the agreement.^[279]

Trump rolled back more than 100 federal environmental regulations, including those that curbed greenhouse gas emissions, air and water pollution, and the use of toxic substances. He weakened protections for animals and environmental standards for federal infrastructure projects, and expanded permitted areas for drilling and resource extraction, such as allowing drilling in the Arctic Refuge.^[280] Trump aimed to boost the production and exports of fossil fuels;^{[281][282]} under Trump, natural gas expanded, but coal continued to decline.^{[283][284]}

Deregulation

During his presidency, Trump dismantled many federal regulations on health, labor, and the environment, among other topics.^[285] Trump signed 15 Congressional Review Act resolutions repealing federal regulations, becoming the second president to sign a CRA resolution, and the first president to sign more than one CRA resolution.^[286] During his first six weeks in office, he delayed, suspended or reversed ninety federal regulations.^{[287][288]}

On January 30, 2017, Trump signed Executive Order 13771, which directed that for every new regulation administrative agencies issue "at least two prior regulations be identified for elimination."^[289] Agency defenders expressed opposition to Trump's criticisms, saying the bureaucracy exists to protect people against well-organized, well-funded interest groups.^[290]

Health care

During his campaign, Trump vowed to repeal and replace the Affordable Care Act,^[291] and urged Congress to do so. In May 2017, the Republican-controlled House of Representatives passed a bill to repeal the ACA in a party-line vote,^[292] but repeal proposals were narrowly voted down in the Senate after three Republicans joined all Democrats in opposing it.^[293]

Trump scaled back the implementation of the ACA through Executive Orders 13765^[294] and 13813.^[295] Trump has expressed a desire to "let Obamacare fail"; his administration cut the ACA enrollment period in half and drastically reduced funding for advertising and other ways to encourage enrollment.^{[296][297]} The 2017 tax bill signed by Trump effectively repealed the ACA's individual health insurance mandate in 2019,^[298] and a budget bill Trump signed in 2019 repealed the Cadillac plan tax.^{[299][300]} As president, Trump falsely claimed he saved the coverage of pre-existing conditions provided by the ACA;^[301] in fact, the Trump administration joined a lawsuit seeking to strike down the entire ACA, including protections for those with pre-existing conditions.^{[302][303]} If successful, the lawsuit would eliminate health insurance coverage for up to 23 million Americans.^[302] As a 2016 candidate, Trump promised to protect funding for Medicare and other social safety-net programs, but in January 2020 he suggested he was willing to consider cuts to such programs.^[304]

Trump's policies in response to the opioid epidemic have been widely criticized as ineffectual and harmful. U.S. opioid overdose deaths declined slightly in 2018, but surged to a new record of 50,052 deaths in 2019.^[305]

Social issues

Trump favored modifying the 2016 Republican platform opposing abortion, to allow for exceptions in cases of rape, incest, and circumstances endangering the health of the mother.^[306] He said he was committed to appointing "pro-life" justices, pledging in 2016 to appoint justices who would "automatically" overturn Roe v. Wade.^[307] He says he personally supports "traditional marriage" but considers the nationwide legality of same-sex marriage a "settled" issue.^[308] In March 2017, the Trump administration rolled back key components of the Obama administration's workplace protections against discrimination of LGBT people.^[309]

Trump says he is opposed to gun control in general, although his views have shifted over time.^[310] After several mass shootings during his term, Trump initially said he would propose legislation to curtail gun violence, but this was abandoned in November 2019.^[311] The Trump administration has taken an anti-marijuana position, revoking Obama-era policies that provided protections for states that legalized marijuana.^[312]

Long favoring capital punishment,^[313] Trump approved the first federal executions in 17 years;^[314] under Trump, the federal government executed 13 prisoners, more than in the previous 56 years combined.^[315] In 2016, Trump said he supported the use of interrogation torture methods such as waterboarding^{[316][317]} but later appeared to recant this due to the opposition of Defense Secretary James Mattis.^[318]



Trump, the First Lady, and Senator John Cornyn meeting with survivors of the 2019 El Paso shooting

Other issues

Pardons and commutations

Most of Trump's pardons were granted to people with personal or political connections to him.^{[319][320]} In his term, Trump sidestepped regular Department of Justice procedures for considering pardons; instead he often entertained pardon requests from his associates or from celebrities.^[319]

In 2017, Trump pardoned former Arizona sheriff Joe Arpaio who was convicted of contempt of court for disobeying a court order to halt the racial profiling of Latinos.^[321] In 2018, Trump pardoned former Navy sailor Kristian Saucier, who was convicted of taking classified photographs of a submarine;^[322] Scooter Libby, a political aide to former vice president Dick Cheney, who was convicted of obstruction of justice, perjury, and making false statements to the FBI;^[323] conservative commentator Dinesh D'Souza, who had made illegal political campaign contributions;^[324] and he commuted the life sentence of Alice Marie Johnson, who had been convicted of drug trafficking, following a request by celebrity Kim Kardashian.^[325] In 2019, Trump pardoned or reversed the sentences of three American soldiers convicted or accused of war crimes in Afghanistan or Iraq.^[326] In 2020, he pardoned four Blackwater mercenaries convicted of killing Iraqi civilians in the 2007 Nisour Square massacre.^[327] He also pardoned white-collar criminals Michael Milken, Bernard Kerik, and Edward J. DeBartolo Jr. and commuted former Illinois governor Rod Blagojevich's 14-year corruption sentence.^{[328][329]} In December 2020, he pardoned Charles Kushner, Ivanka Trump's father-in-law, who had served two years in federal prison for witness tampering, tax evasion, and illegal campaign donations.^[319]

Trump pardoned or commuted the sentences for five people convicted as a result of investigations into Russian interference in the 2016 presidential elections.^{[319][327]} In November 2020, Trump pardoned his former National Security Advisor Michael Flynn and, in December, his 2016 campaign adviser George Papadopoulos and lawyer Alex van der Zwaan; all three had pleaded guilty of lying to federal officials during the investigations.^[327] Also in December 2020, Trump pardoned his friend and advisor Roger Stone whose 40-month sentence for lying to Congress, witness tampering, and obstruction he had already commuted in July; and his 2016 campaign manager Paul Manafort who had been sentenced to more than seven years in prison for bank and tax fraud and other crimes.^[330]

In his last full day in office, Trump granted 143 pardons and commutations. He pardoned his former chief strategist Steve Bannon; Trump fundraiser Elliott Broidy; and former Republican congressmen Rick Renzi, Robert Hayes, and Randall "Duke" Cunningham, and commuted the sentences of dozens of people including former Detroit mayor Kwame Kilpatrick and sports gambler Billy Walters; the latter had paid tens of thousands of dollars to former Trump attorney John M. Dowd to plead his case with Trump.^[331]

Lafayette Square protester removal and photo op

On June 1, 2020, federal law enforcement officials used batons, rubber bullets, pepper spray projectiles, stun grenades, and smoke to remove a largely peaceful crowd of protesters from Lafayette Square, outside the White House.^{[332][333]} Trump then walked to St. John's Episcopal Church, where protesters had set a small fire the night before; he posed for photographs holding a Bible, with senior administration officials later joining him in photos.^{[332][334]} Trump said on June 3 that the protesters were cleared because "they tried to burn down the church [on May 31] and almost succeeded", describing the church as "badly hurt".^[335]

Religious leaders condemned the treatment of protesters and the photo opportunity itself.^[336] Many retired military leaders and defense officials condemned Trump's proposal to use the U.S. military against anti-police brutality protesters.^[337] The chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Mark A. Milley, later apologized

for accompanying Trump on the walk and thereby "creat[ing] the perception of the military involved in domestic politics."^[338]

In June 2021, the Interior Inspector General, which reviewed U.S. Park Police actions, found that Attorney General William Barr had urged Park Police to clear the park, but concluded that this encouragement did not influence the decision by Park Police, which had already decided to clear the park to install fencing.^[339] The report did not assess if Barr or Trump's planned visit "influenced the Secret Service's actions" in clearing the park.^[340]

Immigration

Trump's proposed immigration policies were a topic of bitter and contentious debate during the campaign. He promised to build a wall on the Mexico–United States border to restrict illegal movement and vowed Mexico would pay for it.^[341] He pledged to deport millions of illegal immigrants residing in the United States,^[342] and criticized birthright citizenship for incentivizing "anchor babies."^[343] As president, he frequently described illegal immigration as an "invasion" and conflated immigrants with the criminal gang MS-13, though research shows undocumented immigrants have a lower crime rate than native-born Americans.^[344]

Trump has attempted to drastically escalate immigration enforcement, including harsher immigration enforcement policies against asylum seekers from Central America than any modern U.S. president.^{[345][346]}

From 2018 onwards, Trump deployed nearly 6,000 troops to the U.S.–Mexico border,^[347] to stop most Central American migrants from seeking U.S. asylum, and from 2020 used the public charge rule to restrict immigrants using government benefits from getting permanent residency via green cards.^[348] Trump has reduced the number of refugees admitted into the U.S. to record lows. When Trump took office, the annual limit was 110,000; Trump set a limit of 18,000 in the 2020 fiscal year and 15,000 in the 2021 fiscal year.^{[349][350]} Additional restrictions implemented by the Trump administration caused significant bottlenecks in processing refugee applications, resulting in fewer refugees accepted compared to the allowed limits.^[351]

Travel ban

Following the 2015 San Bernardino attack, Trump proposed to ban Muslim foreigners from entering the United States until stronger vetting systems could be implemented.^[352] He later reframed the proposed ban to apply to countries with a "proven history of terrorism."^[353]

On January 27, 2017, Trump signed Executive Order 13769, which suspended admission of refugees for 120 days and denied entry to citizens of Iraq, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen for 90 days, citing security concerns. The order took effect immediately and without warning.^[354] Confusion and protests caused chaos at airports.^[355] Multiple legal challenges were filed against the order, and a federal judge blocked its implementation nationwide.^[356] On March 6, Trump issued a revised order, which excluded Iraq and gave other exemptions, but was again blocked by federal judges in three states.^[357] In a decision in June 2017, the Supreme Court ruled that the ban could be enforced on visitors who lack a "credible claim of a *bona fide* relationship with a person or entity in the United States."^[358]

The temporary order was replaced by Presidential Proclamation 9645 on September 24, 2017, which permanently restricts travel from the originally targeted countries except Iraq and Sudan, and further bans travelers from North Korea and Chad, along with certain Venezuelan officials.^[359] After lower courts partially blocked the new restrictions, the Supreme Court allowed the September version to go into full effect on December 4, 2017,^[360] and ultimately upheld the travel ban in a June 2019 ruling.^[361]

Family separation at border



Children sitting within a wire mesh compartment in the Ursula detention facility in McAllen, Texas, June 2018

The Trump administration separated more than 5,400 children of migrant families from their parents at the U.S.–Mexico border while attempting to enter the U.S, a sharp increase in the number of family separations at the border starting from the summer of 2017.^{[362][363]} In April 2018, the Trump administration announced a "zero tolerance" policy whereby every adult suspected of illegal entry would be criminally prosecuted.^[364] This resulted in family separations, as the migrant adults were put in criminal detention for prosecution, while their children were separated as unaccompanied alien minors.^[365] Administration officials described the policy as a way to deter illegal immigration.^[366]

The policy of family separations was unprecedented in previous administrations and sparked public outrage.^{[366][367]} Trump falsely asserted that his administration was merely following the law, blaming Democrats, despite the separations being his administration's policy.^{[368][369][370]}

Although Trump originally argued that the separations could not be stopped by an executive order, he proceeded to sign an executive order on June 20, 2018, mandating that migrant families be detained together, unless the administration judged that doing so would harm the child.^{[371][372]} On June 26, 2018, a federal judge concluded that the Trump administration had "no system in place to keep track of" the separated children, nor any effective measures for family communication and reunification;^[373] the judge ordered for the families to be reunited, and family separations stopped, except in the cases where the parent(s) are judged unfit to take care of the child, or if there is parental approval.^[374] Despite the federal court order, the Trump administration continued to practice family separations, with more than a thousand migrant children separated.^[363]

Trump wall and government shutdown

In the longest U.S. government shutdown in history, the federal government was partially shut down for 35 days from December 2018 to January 2019.^{[375][376]} The shutdown occurred because Trump refused to extend government funding unless Congress allocated \$5.6 billion in funds for his promised border wall.^[377]

About half of Americans blamed Trump for the shutdown, and Trump's approval ratings dropped.^[378] Trump and Congress ended the shutdown by approving temporary funding that provided no funds for the wall but provided delayed paychecks to government workers.^[375]

The shutdown resulted in around 800,000 government employees either being furloughed or working without pay, estimated congressional aides.^[379] The shutdown resulted in an estimated permanent loss of \$3 billion to the economy, according to the CBO.^[380]

To prevent another imminent shutdown, Congress and Trump in February 2019 approved a funding bill that included \$1.375 billion for 55 miles of border fencing, in lieu of Trump's intended wall.^[381] Wanting even more funds for the wall, Trump simultaneously declared a National Emergency Concerning the Southern Border of the United States in hopes of getting another \$6.7 billion without congressional approval.^[381] In doing so, Trump acknowledged that he "didn't need to" declare a national emergency to "do the wall", but he "would rather do it much faster".^[381] Both the House and the Senate attempted to block Trump's national emergency declaration, but there were not enough votes in Congress for a veto override.^[382] Legal challenges against Trump's fund diversions resulted in \$2.5 billion of wall funding originally meant for anti-drug programs being approved, but \$3.6 billion of wall funding originally meant for military construction was blocked.^[383]



Trump examines border wall prototypes in Otay Mesa, California.

The "Trump wall" that was constructed was an expansion of the Mexico–United States barrier; most of this "wall" was bollard fencing.^[384] Trump's target, from 2015 to 2017, was 1,000 miles of wall.^[385] During his term, the U.S. government built 49 miles of new barriers and around 406 miles of replacement barriers.^[386]

Foreign policy



Trump with the other G7 leaders at the 45th summit in France, 2019

Trump described himself as a "nationalist"^[387] and his foreign policy as "America First."^{[388][389]} He espoused isolationist, non-interventionist, and protectionist views.^{[390][391]} His foreign policy was marked by praise and support of populist, neo-nationalist and authoritarian governments.^[392] Hallmarks of foreign relations during Trump's tenure included unpredictability and uncertainty,^[389] a lack of a consistent foreign policy,^[393] and strained and sometimes antagonistic relationships with the U.S.'s European allies.^[394]

Trump questioned the need for NATO,^[390] criticized the U.S.'s NATO allies, and privately suggested on multiple occasions that the United States should withdraw from the alliance.^{[395][396]}

Trump actively supported the Saudi Arabian-led intervention in Yemen against the Houthis and in 2017 signed a \$110 billion agreement to sell arms to Saudi Arabia,^[397] In 2018, the USA provided limited intelligence and logistical support for the Saudi Arabian-led intervention in Yemen against the Houthis.^{[398][399]} Trump approved the deployment of additional U.S. troops to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates following a 2019 attack on Saudi oil facilities which the United States blamed on Iran.^{[400][401]}

U.S. troop numbers in Afghanistan increased from 8,500 to 14,000, as of January 2017,^[402] reversing his pre-election position critical of further involvement in Afghanistan.^[403] In February 2020, the Trump administration signed a conditional peace agreement with the Taliban, which calls for the withdrawal of foreign troops in 14 months if the Taliban uphold the terms of the agreement.^{[404][405]}



Trump, King Salman of Saudi Arabia, and Egyptian president Abdel Fattah el-Sisi at the 2017 Riyadh summit in Saudi Arabia

Trump supported many of the policies of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.^[406] Under Trump, the U.S. recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel^[407] and Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights,^[408] leading to international condemnation including from the United Nations General Assembly, the European Union and the Arab League.^{[409][410]}

Syria

Trump ordered missile strikes in April 2017 and in April 2018 against the Assad regime in Syria, in retaliation for the Khan Shaykhun and Douma chemical attacks, respectively.^{[411][412]}

In December 2018, Trump declared "we have won against ISIS," contradicting Department of Defense assessments, and ordered the withdrawal of all troops from Syria.^{[413][414]} The next day, Mattis resigned in protest, calling his decision an abandonment of the U.S.'s Kurdish allies who played a key role in fighting ISIS.^[415] One week after his announcement, Trump said he would not approve any extension of the American deployment in Syria.^[416]

In October 2019, after Trump spoke to Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, the White House acknowledged Turkey would carry out a military offensive into northern Syria, and U.S. troops in northern Syria were withdrawn from the area, and said that ISIS fighters captured by the U.S. in the area would be Turkey's responsibility.^[417] As a result, Turkey launched an invasion, attacking and displacing American-allied Kurds in the area. Later that month, the U.S. House of Representatives, in a rare bipartisan vote of 354 to 60, condemned Trump's withdrawal of U.S. troops from Syria, for "abandoning U.S. allies, undermining the struggle against ISIS, and spurring a humanitarian catastrophe."^{[418][419]}

Iran

In May 2018, Trump announced the United States' unilateral departure from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), a nuclear deal negotiated with the U.S., Iran, and five other world powers in 2015.^[420] After withdrawing from the agreement, the Trump administration applied a policy of "maximum pressure" on Iran via economic sanctions, without support of other parties to the deal.^{[421][422]}

Following Iranian missile tests in January 2017, the Trump administration sanctioned 25 Iranian individuals and entities.^{[423][424][425]} In August 2017, Trump signed legislation imposing additional sanctions against Iran, Russia, and North Korea.^[426]

In January 2020, Trump ordered a U.S. airstrike that killed Iranian general and Quds Force commander Qasem Soleimani, Iraqi Popular Mobilization Forces commander Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, and eight other people.^[427] Trump publicly threatened to attack Iranian cultural sites, or react "in a disproportionate manner" if Iran retaliated.^[428] Several days later, Iran retaliated with airstrikes against US airbases in Iraq, accidentally shooting down Ukraine International Airlines Flight 752.^[429]

China

Before and during his presidency, Trump repeatedly accused China of taking unfair advantage of the U.S.^[430] During his presidency, Trump launched a trade war against China, sanctioned Huawei for its alleged ties to Iran,^[431] significantly increased visa restrictions on Chinese students and scholars,^[432] and classified China as a "currency manipulator."^[433] Trump also juxtaposed verbal attacks on China with praise of Chinese Communist Party leader Xi Jinping,^[434] which was attributed to trade war negotiations with the leader.^{[435][436]} After initially praising China for its handling of the COVID-19 pandemic,^[437] he began a campaign of criticism over its response starting in March.^[438]



Donald Trump met with Chinese leader Xi Jinping at 2018 G20 Summit.

Trump said he resisted punishing China for its human rights abuses against ethnic minorities in the northwestern Xinjiang region for fear of jeopardizing trade negotiations.^[439] In July 2020, the Trump administration imposed sanctions and visa restrictions against senior Chinese officials, in response to expanded mass detention camps holding more than a million of the country's Uyghur Muslim ethnic minority.^[440]

North Korea



Trump meets Kim Jong-un at the Singapore summit, June 2018

In 2017, when North Korea's nuclear weapons were increasingly seen as a serious threat,^[441] Trump escalated his rhetoric, warning that North Korean aggression would be met with "fire and fury like the world has never seen."^{[442][443]} In 2017, Trump declared that he wanted North Korea's "complete denuclearization," and engaged in name-calling with leader Kim Jong-un.^{[442][444]} After this period of tension, Trump and Kim exchanged at least 27 letters in which the two men described a warm personal friendship.^{[445][446]}

At Kim's suggestion,^[447] Trump met Kim three times: in Singapore in 2018, in Hanoi in 2019, and in the Korean Demilitarized Zone in 2019.^[448] Trump became the first sitting U.S. president to meet a

North Korean leader or to set foot in North Korea.^[448] Trump also lifted some U.S. sanctions against North Korea.^[449] However, no denuclearization agreement was reached,^[450] and talks in October 2019 broke down after one day.^[451] North Korea continued to build up its arsenal of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles.^{[452][453]}

Russia

Trump has repeatedly praised and rarely criticized Russian president Vladimir Putin,^{[454][455]} but has opposed some actions of the Russian government.^{[456][457]} The Trump administration lifted U.S. sanctions imposed on Russia after its 2014 annexation of Crimea.^{[458][459]} Trump also supported a potential return of Russia to the G7,^[460] and did not confront Putin over its alleged bounties against American soldiers in Afghanistan.^[461]



Putin and Trump shaking hands at the G20 Osaka summit, June 2019

Trump withdrew the U.S. from the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, citing alleged Russian non-compliance.^{[462][463]} After he met Putin at the Helsinki Summit in July 2018, Trump drew

bipartisan criticism for accepting Putin's denial of Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election, rather than accepting the findings of U.S. intelligence agencies.^{[464][465][466]}

Personnel

Trump's Cabinet nominations included U.S. senator from Alabama Jeff Sessions as Attorney General,^[467] banker Steve Mnuchin as Treasury Secretary,^[468] retired Marine Corps general James Mattis as Defense Secretary,^[469] and ExxonMobil CEO Rex Tillerson as Secretary of State.^[470] Trump also brought on board politicians who had opposed him during the presidential campaign, such as neurosurgeon Ben Carson as Secretary of Housing and Urban Development,^[471] and South Carolina governor Nikki Haley as Ambassador to the United Nations.^[472]

The Trump administration had a high turnover of personnel, particularly among White House staff. By the end of Trump's first year in office, 34 percent of his original staff had resigned, been fired, or been reassigned.^[473] As of early July 2018, 61 percent of Trump's senior aides had left^[474] and 141 staffers had left in the previous year.^[475] Both figures set a record for recent presidents—more change in the first 13 months than his four immediate predecessors saw in their first two years.^[476] Notable early departures included National Security Advisor Michael Flynn (after just 25 days in office), and Press Secretary Sean Spicer.^[476] Close personal aides to Trump including Steve Bannon, Hope Hicks, John McEntee, and Keith Schiller quit or were forced out.^[477] Some, like Hicks and McEntee, later returned to the White House in different posts.^[478] Trump publicly disparaged several of his former top officials, calling them incompetent, stupid, or crazy.^[479]



Cabinet meeting, March 2017

Trump had four White House chiefs of staff, marginalizing or pushing out several.^[480] Reince Priebus was replaced after seven months by retired Marine general John F. Kelly.^[481] Kelly resigned in December 2018 after a tumultuous tenure in which his influence waned, and Trump subsequently disparaged him.^[482] Kelly was succeeded by Mick Mulvaney as acting chief of staff; he was replaced in March 2020 by Mark Meadows.^[480]

On May 9, 2017, Trump dismissed FBI director James Comey. While initially attributing this action to Comey's conduct in the investigation about Hillary Clinton's emails, Trump said a few days later that he was concerned with Comey's roles in the ongoing Trump-Russia investigations, and that he had intended to fire Comey earlier.^[483] According to a Comey memo of a private conversation in February, Trump said he "hoped" Comey would drop the investigation into National Security Advisor Michael Flynn.^[484] In March and April, Trump told Comey the ongoing suspicions formed a "cloud" impairing his presidency,^[485] and asked him to publicly state that he was not personally under investigation.^[486]

Two of Trump's 15 original Cabinet members were gone within 15 months: Health and Human Services Secretary Tom Price was forced to resign in September 2017 due to excessive use of private charter jets and military aircraft, and Trump replaced Tillerson as Secretary of State with Mike Pompeo in March 2018 over disagreements on foreign policy.^{[487][477]} In 2018, EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt and Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke resigned amid multiple investigations into their conduct.^{[488][489]}

Trump was slow to appoint second-tier officials in the executive branch, saying many of the positions are unnecessary. In October 2017, there were still hundreds of sub-cabinet positions without a nominee.^[490] By January 8, 2019, of 706 key positions, 433 had been filled (61 percent) and Trump had no nominee for 264 (37 percent).^[491]

Judiciary

After Republicans won control of the U.S. Senate in 2014, only 28.6 percent of judicial nominees were confirmed, "the lowest percentage of confirmations from 1977 to 2018."^[492] At the end of the Obama presidency, 105 judgeships were vacant.^[493]

Trump appointed 226 Article III federal judges, including 54 federal appellate judges.^{[494][495][496]} Senate Republicans, led by Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, rapidly confirmed Trump's judicial appointees, shifting the federal judiciary to the right.^{[495][497]} The appointees were overwhelmingly white men and younger on average than the appointees of Trump's predecessors.^[497] Many were affiliated with the Federalist Society.^{[497][498]}

Trump made three nominations to the Supreme Court: Neil Gorsuch, Brett Kavanaugh, and Amy Coney Barrett.^[499] Gorsuch was confirmed in 2017 in a mostly party-line vote of 54–45, after Republicans invoked the "nuclear option" (a historic change to Senate rules removing the 60-vote threshold for advancing Supreme Court nominations) to defeat a Democratic filibuster.^[500] Trump's predecessor Obama had nominated Merrick Garland in 2016 to fill the vacancy, left by the death of Antonin Scalia, but Senate Republicans under McConnell refused to consider the nomination in the last year of Obama's presidency, angering Democrats.^[500] Trump nominated Kavanaugh in 2018 to replace retiring Justice Anthony Kennedy; the Senate confirmed Kavanaugh in a mostly party-line vote of 50–48, after a bitter confirmation battle centered on Christine Blasey Ford's allegation that Kavanaugh had attempted to rape her when they were teenagers, which Kavanaugh denied.^[501] In 2020, weeks before the elections, Trump nominated Amy Coney Barrett to fill the vacancy left by the death of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg.^[499] On October 26, 2020, the Senate voted 52–48 to confirm her nomination.^[502]

As president, Trump disparaged courts and judges whom he disagreed with, often in personal terms, and questioned the judiciary's constitutional authority. Trump's attacks on the courts have drawn rebukes from observers, including sitting federal judges, who are concerned about the effect of Trump's statements on the judicial independence and public confidence in the judiciary.^{[503][504][505]}

COVID-19 pandemic

In December 2019, COVID-19 erupted in Wuhan, China; the SARS-CoV-2 virus spread worldwide within weeks.^{[506][507]} The first confirmed case in the U.S. was reported on January 20, 2020.^[508] The outbreak was officially declared a public health emergency by Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar on January 31, 2020.^[509]

Trump's public statements on COVID-19 were at odds with his private statements. In February 2020 Trump publicly asserted that the outbreak in the U.S. was less deadly than influenza, was "very much under control," and would soon be over.^[510] At the same time he acknowledged the opposite in a private conversation with Bob Woodward. In March 2020, Trump privately told Woodward that he was deliberately "playing it down" in public so as not to create panic.^{[511][512]}



Trump signs the Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act into law on March 6, 2020.

Initial response

Trump was slow to address the spread of the disease, initially dismissing the imminent threat and ignoring persistent public health warnings and calls for action from health officials within his administration and Secretary Azar.^{[513][514]} Instead, throughout January and February he focused on economic and political considerations of the outbreak.^[515] By mid-March, most global financial markets had severely contracted in response to the emerging pandemic.^[516] Trump continued to claim that a vaccine was months away, although HHS and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) officials had repeatedly told him that vaccine development would take 12–18 months.^[517] Trump also falsely claimed that "anybody that wants a test can get a test," despite the availability of tests being severely limited.^[518]

On March 6, Trump signed the Coronavirus Preparedness and Response Supplemental Appropriations Act into law, which provided \$8.3 billion in emergency funding for federal agencies.^[519] On March 11, the World Health Organization (WHO) recognized the spread of COVID-19 as a pandemic,^[506] and Trump announced partial travel restrictions for most of Europe, effective March 13.^[520] That same day, he gave his first serious assessment of the virus in a nationwide Oval Office address, calling the outbreak "horrible" but "a temporary moment" and saying there was no financial crisis.^[521] On March 13, he declared a national emergency, freeing up federal resources.^[522]

In September 2019, the Trump administration terminated United States Agency for International Development's PREDICT program, a \$200 million epidemiological research program initiated in 2009 to provide early warning of pandemics abroad.^{[523][524]} The program trained scientists in sixty foreign laboratories to detect and respond to viruses that have the potential to cause pandemics. One such laboratory was the Wuhan lab that first identified the virus that causes COVID-19. After revival in April 2020, the program was given two 6-month extensions to help fight COVID-19 in the U.S. and other countries.^{[525][526]}

On April 22, Trump signed an executive order restricting some forms of immigration to the United States.^[527] In late spring and early summer, with infections and death counts continuing to rise, he adopted a strategy of blaming the states for the growing pandemic, rather than accepting that his initial assessments of the course of the pandemic were overly-optimistic or his failure to provide presidential leadership.^[528]

White House Coronavirus Task Force

Trump established the White House Coronavirus Task Force on January 29, 2020.^[529] Beginning in mid-March, Trump held a daily task force press conference, joined by medical experts and other administration officials,^[530] sometimes disagreeing with them by promoting unproven treatments.^[531] Trump was the main speaker at the briefings, where he praised his own response to the pandemic, frequently criticized rival presidential candidate Joe Biden, and denounced the press.^{[530][532]} On March 16, he acknowledged for the first time that the pandemic was not under control and that months of disruption to daily lives and a recession might occur.^[533] His repeated use of the terms "Chinese virus" and "China virus" to describe COVID-19 drew criticism from health experts.^{[534][535][536]}



Trump conducts a COVID-19 press briefing with members of the White House Coronavirus Task Force on March 15, 2020.

By early April, as the pandemic worsened and amid criticism of his administration's response, Trump refused to admit any mistakes in his handling of the outbreak, instead blaming the media, Democratic state governors, the previous administration, China, and the WHO.^[537] By mid-April 2020, some national news agencies began limiting live coverage of his daily press briefings, with The Washington Post reporting that "propagandistic and false statements from Trump alternate with newsworthy pronouncements from members of his White House Coronavirus Task Force, particularly coronavirus response coordinator Deborah Birx and National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases Director Anthony S. Fauci."^[538] The daily coronavirus

task force briefings ended in late April, after a briefing at which Trump suggested the dangerous idea of injecting a disinfectant to treat COVID-19,^[539] the comment was widely condemned by medical professionals.^{[540][541]}

In early May, Trump proposed the phase-out of the coronavirus task force and its replacement with another group centered on reopening the economy. Amid a backlash, Trump said the task force would "indefinitely" continue.^[542] By the end of May, the coronavirus task force's meetings were sharply reduced.^[543]

World Health Organization

Prior to the pandemic, Trump criticized the WHO and other international bodies, which he asserted were taking advantage of U.S. aid.^[544] His administration's proposed 2021 federal budget, released in February, proposed reducing WHO funding by more than half.^[544] In May and April, Trump accused the WHO of "severely mismanaging and covering up the spread of the coronavirus" and alleged without evidence that the organization was under Chinese control and had enabled the Chinese government's concealment of the origins of the pandemic.^{[544][545][546]} He then announced that he was withdrawing funding for the organization.^[544] Trump's criticisms and actions regarding the WHO were seen as attempts to distract attention from his own mishandling of the pandemic.^{[544][547][548]} In July 2020, Trump announced the formal withdrawal of the United States from the WHO effective July 2021.^{[545][546]} The decision was widely condemned by health and government officials as "short-sighted," "senseless," and "dangerous."^{[545][546]}



Poland's president Andrzej Duda visited the White House on June 24, 2020, the first foreign leader to do so since the start of the pandemic.

Testing

In June and July, Trump said several times that the U.S. would have fewer cases of coronavirus if it did less testing, that having a large number of reported cases "makes us look bad."^{[549][550]} The CDC guideline at the time was that any person exposed to the virus should be "quickly identified and tested" even if they are not showing symptoms, because asymptomatic people can still spread the virus.^{[551][552]} In August 2020, however, the CDC quietly lowered its recommendation for testing, advising that people who have been exposed to the virus, but are not showing symptoms, "do not necessarily need a test." The change in guidelines was made by HHS political appointees under Trump administration pressure, against the wishes of CDC scientists.^{[553][554][555]} The day after this political interference was reported, the testing guideline was changed back to its original recommendation, stressing that anyone who has been in contact with an infected person should be tested.^[555]

Pressure to abandon pandemic mitigation measures

In April 2020, Republican-connected groups organized anti-lockdown protests against the measures state governments were taking to combat the pandemic;^{[556][557]} Trump encouraged the protests on Twitter,^[558] even though the targeted states did not meet the Trump administration's own guidelines for reopening.^[559] In April 2020, he first supported, then later criticized, Georgia Governor Brian Kemp's plan to reopen some nonessential businesses.^[560] Throughout the spring he increasingly pushed for ending the restrictions as a way to reverse the damage to the country's economy.^[561]

Trump often refused to wear a face mask at public events, contrary to his own administration's April 2020 guidance that Americans should wear masks in public^[562] and despite nearly unanimous medical consensus that masks are important to preventing the spread of the virus.^[563] By June, Trump had said masks were a "double-edged sword"; ridiculed Biden for wearing masks; continually emphasized that mask-wearing was optional; and suggested that wearing a mask was a political statement against him personally.^[563] Trump's contradiction of medical recommendations weakened national efforts to mitigate the pandemic.^{[562][563]}

Despite record numbers of COVID-19 cases in the U.S. from mid-June onward and an increasing percentage of positive test results, Trump largely continued to downplay the pandemic, including his false claim in early July 2020 that 99 percent of COVID-19 cases are "totally harmless."^{[564][565]} He also began insisting that all states should open schools to in-person education in the fall despite a July spike in reported cases.^[566]

Political pressure on health agencies

Trump repeatedly pressured federal health agencies to take actions he favored,^[553] such as approving unproven treatments^{[567][568]} or speeding up the approval of vaccines.^[568] Trump administration political appointees at HHS sought to control CDC communications to the public that undermined Trump's claims that the pandemic was under control. CDC resisted many of the changes, but increasingly allowed HHS personnel to review articles and suggest changes before publication.^{[569][570]} Trump alleged without evidence that FDA scientists were part of a "deep state" opposing him, and delaying approval of vaccines and treatments to hurt him politically.^[571]

COVID-19 outbreak at the White House

On October 2, 2020, Trump announced that he had tested positive for COVID-19.^{[572][573]} He was treated at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center for a severe case of the disease while continuing to downplay the virus. His wife, their son Barron, and numerous staff members and visitors also became infected.^{[574][41]}



Trump boards helicopter for COVID-19 treatment on October 2, 2020

COVID-19 pandemic and the 2020 presidential campaign

By July 2020, Trump's handling of the COVID-19 pandemic became a major issue for the 2020 presidential election.^[575] Democratic challenger Joe Biden sought to make the election a referendum on Trump's performance on the COVID-19 pandemic and the economy.^[576] Polls indicated voters blamed Trump for his pandemic response^[575] and disbelieved his rhetoric concerning the virus, with an Ipsos/ABC News poll indicating 65 percent of Americans disapproving of his pandemic response.^[577] In the final months of the campaign, Trump repeatedly claimed that the U.S. was "rounding the turn" in managing the pandemic, despite increasing numbers of reported cases and deaths.^[578] A few days before the November 3 election, the United States reported more than 100,000 cases in a single day for the first time.^[579]

Investigations

The Crossfire Hurricane FBI investigation into possible links between Russia and the Trump campaign was launched in mid-2016 during the campaign season. After he assumed the presidency, Trump was the subject of increasing Justice Department and congressional scrutiny, with investigations covering his election campaign,

transition, and inauguration, actions taken during his presidency, along with his private businesses, personal taxes, and charitable foundation.^[51] There were 30 investigations of Trump, including ten federal criminal investigations, eight state and local investigations, and twelve Congressional investigations.^[580]

Hush money payments

During the 2016 presidential election campaign, American Media, Inc. (AMI), the parent company of the National Enquirer,^[581] and a company set up by Trump's attorney Michael Cohen paid Playboy model Karen McDougal and adult film actress Stormy Daniels for keeping silent about their alleged affairs with Trump between 2006 and 2007.^[582] Cohen pleaded guilty in 2018 to breaking campaign finance laws, saying he had arranged both payments at the direction of Trump to influence the presidential election.^[583] Trump denied the affairs and claimed he was not aware of Cohen's payment to Daniels, but he reimbursed him in 2017.^{[584][585]} Federal prosecutors asserted that Trump had been involved in discussions regarding non-disclosure payments as early as 2014.^[586] Court documents showed that the FBI believed Trump was directly involved in the payment to Daniels, based on calls he had with Cohen in October 2016.^{[587][588]} Federal prosecutors closed the investigation in 2019,^[589] but the Manhattan District Attorney subpoenaed the Trump Organization and AMI for records related to the payments^[590] and Trump and the Trump Organization for eight years of tax returns.^[591]

Russian election interference

In January 2017, American intelligence agencies—the CIA, the FBI, and the NSA, represented by the Director of National Intelligence—jointly stated with "high confidence" that the Russian government interfered in the 2016 presidential election to favor the election of Trump.^{[592][593]} In March 2017, FBI Director James Comey told Congress "the FBI, as part of our counterintelligence mission, is investigating the Russian government's efforts to interfere in the 2016 presidential election. That includes investigating the nature of any links between individuals associated with the Trump campaign and the Russian government, and whether there was any coordination between the campaign and Russia's efforts."^[594]

The connections between Trump associates and Russia were widely reported by the press.^{[595][596]} One of Trump's campaign managers, Paul Manafort, worked from December 2004 to February 2010 to help pro-Russian politician Viktor Yanukovich win the Ukrainian presidency.^[597] Other Trump associates, including former National Security Advisor Michael T. Flynn and political consultant Roger Stone, were connected to Russian officials.^{[598][599]} Russian agents were overheard during the campaign saying they could use Manafort and Flynn to influence Trump.^[600] Members of Trump's campaign and later his White House staff, particularly Flynn, were in contact with Russian officials both before and after the November election.^{[601][602]} On December 29, 2016, Flynn talked with Russian Ambassador Sergey Kislyak about sanctions that were imposed that same day; Flynn later resigned in the midst of controversy over whether he misled Pence.^[603] Trump told Kislyak and Sergei Lavrov in May 2017 he was unconcerned about Russian interference in U.S. elections.^[604]

Trump and his allies promoted a conspiracy theory that Ukraine, rather than Russia, interfered in the 2016 election—which was also promoted by Russia to frame Ukraine.^[605] After the Democratic National Committee was hacked, Trump first claimed it withheld "its server" from the FBI (in actuality there were more than 140 servers, of which digital copies were given to the FBI); second that CrowdStrike, the company which investigated the servers, was Ukraine-based and Ukrainian-owned (in actuality, CrowdStrike is U.S.-based, with the largest owners being American companies); and third that "the server" was hidden in Ukraine. Members of the Trump administration spoke out against the conspiracy theories.^[606]

2017 FBI counterintelligence inquiry

After Trump fired FBI director James Comey in May 2017, the FBI opened a counterintelligence investigation into Trump's personal and business dealings with Russia. It was discontinued after deputy attorney general Rod Rosenstein gave the bureau the false impression that the incipient Special Counsel investigation would pursue it.^[607]

Special counsel investigation

On May 17, 2017, Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein appointed Robert Mueller, a former director of the FBI, to serve as special counsel for the Department of Justice (DOJ) investigating "links and/or coordination" between the Russian government and Trump's campaign and any matters directly arising from the investigation, taking over the existing "Crossfire Hurricane" FBI investigation.^[608] The special counsel also investigated whether Trump's dismissal of James Comey as FBI director constituted obstruction of justice^[609] and the Trump campaign's possible ties to Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Turkey, Qatar, Israel, and China.^[610]

Trump denied collusion between his campaign and the Russian government.^[611] He sought to fire Mueller and shut down the investigation multiple times but backed down after his staff objected or after changing his mind.^[612] He bemoaned the recusal of his first Attorney General Jeff Sessions regarding Russia matters, and believed Sessions should have stopped the investigation.^[613]

On March 22, 2019, Mueller concluded his investigation and gave his report to Attorney General William Barr.^[614] Two days later, Barr sent a letter to Congress purporting to summarize the report's main conclusions. A federal court, as well as Mueller himself, said Barr had mischaracterized the investigation's conclusions, confusing the public.^{[615][616][617]} Trump repeatedly and falsely claimed that the investigation "exonerated" him; in fact, the Mueller report expressly stated that it did not exonerate Trump.^{[618][619]}

A redacted version of the report was publicly released on April 18, 2019. The first volume found that Russia interfered in 2016 to favor Trump's candidacy and hinder Clinton's.^{[620][621]} Despite "numerous links between the Russian government and the Trump campaign," the prevailing evidence "did not establish" that Trump campaign members conspired or coordinated with Russian interference.^{[622][623]} The report revealed sweeping Russian interference^[623] and detailed how Trump and his campaign welcomed and encouraged it, believing they would politically benefit.^{[624][625][626]}

The Mueller report's second volume set forth ten "episodes" of potential obstruction of justice by Trump, but opted not to make any "traditional prosecutorial judgment" on whether Trump broke the law, suggesting that Congress should make such a determination.^{[627][628]} Investigators decided they could not "apply an approach that could potentially result in a judgment that the President committed crimes" as an Office of Legal Counsel opinion stated that a sitting president could not be indicted, and investigators would not accuse him of a crime when he cannot clear his name in court.^[629] The report concluded that Congress, having the authority to take action against a president for wrongdoing, "may apply the obstruction laws."^[630] The House of Representatives subsequently launched an impeachment inquiry following the Trump-Ukraine scandal, but did not pursue an article of impeachment related to the Mueller investigation.^{[631][632]}

Associates



The redacted version of the Mueller report released by the Department of Justice on April 18, 2019

In August 2018, former Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort was convicted on eight felony counts of false tax filing and bank fraud.^[633] Trump said he felt very badly for Manafort and praised him for resisting the pressure to cooperate with prosecutors. According to Rudy Giuliani, Trump's personal attorney, Trump had sought advice about pardoning Manafort but was counseled against it.^[634]

In November 2018, Trump's former attorney Michael Cohen pleaded guilty to lying to Congress about Trump's 2016 attempts to reach a deal with Russia to build a Trump Tower in Moscow. Cohen said he had made the false statements on behalf of Trump, who was identified as "Individual-1" in the court documents.^[635]

Five Trump associates pleaded guilty or were convicted in connection with Mueller's investigation and related cases: Manafort, Cohen, deputy campaign manager Rick Gates, foreign policy advisor George Papadopoulos, Michael Flynn.^{[636][637]}

In February 2020, Trump campaign adviser Roger Stone was sentenced to 40 months in prison for lying to Congress and witness tampering regarding his attempts to learn more about hacked Democratic emails during the 2016 election. The sentencing judge said Stone "was prosecuted for covering up for the president."^[638]

First impeachment (2019–2020)

In August 2019, a whistleblower filed a complaint with the Inspector General of the Intelligence Community about a July 25 phone call between Trump and President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelensky, during which Trump had pressured Zelensky to investigate CrowdStrike and Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden and his son Hunter, adding that the White House had attempted to cover-up the incident.^[639] The whistleblower stated that the call was part of a wider campaign by the Trump administration and Trump's personal attorney Rudy Giuliani, which may have included withholding financial aid from Ukraine in July 2019 and canceling Vice President Pence's May 2019 Ukraine trip.^[640] Trump later confirmed that he withheld military aid from Ukraine, offering contradictory reasons for the decision.^{[641][642]}



Members of House of Representatives vote on two articles of impeachment (H.Res. 755 (<https://www.congress.gov/bill/116th-congress/house-resolutions/755>) December 18, 2019

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi initiated a formal impeachment inquiry on September 24, 2019.^[643] The Trump administration subsequently released a memorandum of the July 25 phone call, confirming that after Zelensky mentioned purchasing American anti-tank missiles, Trump asked Zelensky to investigate and to discuss these matters with Giuliani and Attorney General William Barr.^{[639][644]} The testimony of multiple administration officials and former officials confirmed that this was part of a broader effort to further Trump's personal interests by giving him an advantage in the upcoming presidential election.^[645] In October 2019, William B. Taylor Jr., the chargé d'affaires for Ukraine, testified before congressional committees that soon after arriving in Ukraine in June 2019, he found that Zelensky was being subjected to pressure directed by Trump and led by Giuliani. According to Taylor and others, the goal was to coerce Zelensky into making a public commitment to investigate the company that employed Hunter Biden, as well as rumors about Ukrainian involvement in the 2016 U.S. presidential election.^[646] He said it was made clear that until Zelensky made such an announcement, the administration would not release scheduled military aid for Ukraine and not invite Zelensky to the White House.^[647]

On December 13, 2019, the House Judiciary Committee voted along party lines to pass two articles of impeachment: one for abuse of power and one for obstruction of Congress.^[648] After debate, the House of Representatives impeached Trump on both articles on December 18.^[649]

Impeachment trial in the Senate

The Senate impeachment trial began on January 16, 2020.^[650] On January 22, the Republican Senate majority rejected amendments proposed by the Democratic minority to call witnesses and subpoena documents; evidence collected during the House impeachment proceedings was entered into the Senate record.^[651]

For three days, January 22–24, the House impeachment managers presented their case to the Senate. They cited evidence to support charges of abuse of power and obstruction of Congress, and asserted that Trump's actions were exactly what the founding fathers had in mind when they created the Constitution's impeachment process.^[652]

Responding over the next three days, Trump's lawyers did not deny the facts as presented in the charges but said Trump had not broken any laws or obstructed Congress.^[653] They argued that the impeachment was "constitutionally and legally invalid" because Trump was not charged with a crime and that abuse of power is not an impeachable offense.^[653] On January 31, the Senate voted against allowing subpoenas for witnesses or documents; 51 Republicans formed the majority for this vote.^[654] The impeachment trial was the first in U.S. history without witness testimony.^[655]



Trump displaying the front page of *The Washington Post* reporting his acquittal by the Senate

Trump was acquitted of both charges by the Republican Senate majority, 52–48 on abuse of power and 53–47 on obstruction of Congress. Senator Mitt Romney was the only Republican who voted to convict Trump on one of the charges, the abuse of power.^[656]

Following his acquittal, Trump fired impeachment witnesses and other political appointees and career officials he deemed insufficiently loyal.^[657]

2020 presidential election

Breaking with precedent, Trump filed to run for a second term with the FEC within a few hours of assuming the presidency.^[658] Trump held his first re-election rally less than a month after taking office.^{[659][660]} In his first two years in office, Trump's reelection committee reported raising \$67.5 million, allowing him to begin 2019 with \$19.3 million cash on hand.^[661] From the beginning of 2019 through July 2020, the Trump campaign and Republican Party raised \$1.1 billion but spent \$800 million of that amount, losing their cash advantage over the Democratic nominee, former vice president Joe Biden.^[662] The cash shortage forced the campaign to scale-back advertising spending.^[663]

Starting in spring 2020, Trump began to sow doubts about the election, repeatedly claiming without evidence that the election would be "rigged"^[664] and that the expected widespread use of mail balloting would produce "massive election fraud."^{[665][666]} On July 30, Trump raised the idea of delaying the election.^[667] When in August the House of Representatives voted for a US\$25 billion grant to the U.S. Postal Service for the expected surge in mail voting, Trump blocked funding, saying he wanted to prevent any increase in voting by mail.^[668] Trump became the Republican nominee on August 24, 2020.^[669] He repeatedly refused to say whether he would accept the results of the election and commit to a peaceful transition of power if he lost.^{[670][671]}

Trump campaign advertisements focused on crime, claiming that cities would descend into lawlessness if his opponent, Biden, won the presidency.^[672] Trump repeatedly misrepresented Biden's positions during the campaign.^{[673][674][675]} Trump's campaign message shifted to appeals to racism in an attempt to reclaim voters lost from his base.^[676]

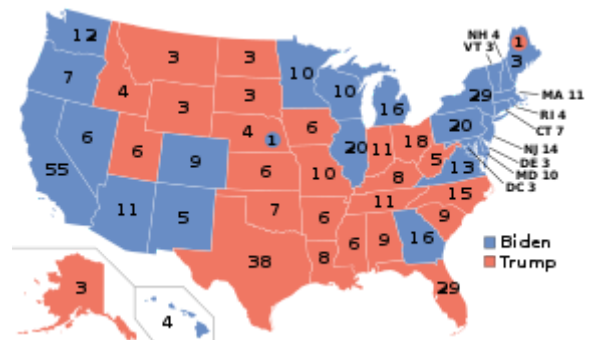


Trump at a 2020 campaign rally in Arizona

Biden won the election on November 3, receiving 81.3 million votes (51.3 percent) to Trump's 74.2 million (46.8 percent)^{[677][678]} and winning the Electoral College by 306 to 232.^{[679][678][677]}

Election aftermath

At 2 a.m. the morning after the election, with the results still unclear, Trump declared victory.^[680] After Biden was projected the winner days later, Trump said, "this election is far from over" and baselessly alleged election fraud.^[681] Trump and his allies filed many legal challenges to the results, which were rejected by at least 86 judges in both the state and federal courts, including by federal judges appointed by Trump himself, finding no factual or legal basis.^{[682][683]} Trump's unsubstantiated allegations of widespread voting fraud were also refuted by state election officials.^[684] After Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) director Chris Krebs contradicted Trump's fraud allegations, Trump dismissed him on November 17.^[685] On December 11, the U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear a case from the Texas attorney general which asked the court to overturn the election results in four states won by Biden.^[686]



2020 Electoral College results. Trump lost 232-306.

Trump withdrew from public activities in the weeks following the election.^[687] He initially blocked government officials from cooperating in Biden's presidential transition.^{[688][689]} After three weeks, the administrator of the General Services Administration ascertained Biden the "apparent winner" of the election, allowing the disbursement of transition resources to his team.^[690] Trump still did not formally concede while claiming he recommended the GSA begin transition protocols.^[691]

The Electoral College formalized Biden's victory on December 14.^[679] From November to January, Trump repeatedly sought help to overturn the results of the election, personally pressuring various Republican local and state office-holders, Republican state and federal legislators, and Vice President Pence, urging various actions such as replacing presidential electors, or a request for Georgia officials to "find" votes and announce a "recalculated" result.^{[692][693][694]} On February 10, 2021, Georgia prosecutors opened a criminal investigation into Trump's efforts to subvert the election in Georgia.^[695]

Trump did not attend Biden's inauguration, leaving Washington for Florida hours before.^[696]

U.S. Capitol attack

On January 6, 2021, while congressional certification of the presidential election results was taking place in the Capitol, Trump held a rally at The Ellipse, where he called for the election result to be overturned and urged his supporters to "take back our country" by marching to the Capitol to "show strength" and "fight like hell."^{[697][698]} Trump's speech started at noon. By 12:30 p.m., rally attendees had gathered outside the Capitol, and at 1 p.m, his supporters pushed past police barriers onto Capitol grounds. Trump's speech ended at 1:10 p.m., the crowd grew larger as more supporters marched on the Capitol. Around 2:15 p.m. the mob

broke into the building, disrupting certification and causing the evacuation of Congress.^[699] During the violence, Trump posted mixed messages on Twitter and Facebook, eventually tweeting to the rioters at 6 p.m, "go home with love & in peace," but describing them as "great patriots" and "very special," while still complaining that the election was stolen.^{[700][701]} After the mob was removed from the Capitol, Congress reconvened and confirmed the Biden election win in the early hours of the following morning.^[702] There were many injuries, and five people, including a Capitol Police officer, died.^{[703][704][705]}

Second impeachment (2021)

On January 11, 2021, an article of impeachment charging Trump with incitement of insurrection against the U.S. government was introduced to the House.^[706] The House voted 232–197 to impeach Trump on January 13, making him the first U.S. officeholder to be impeached twice.^[707] The impeachment, which was the most rapid in history, followed an unsuccessful bipartisan effort to strip Trump of his powers and duties via Section 4 of the 25th Amendment.^[708] Ten Republicans voted for impeachment—the most members of a party ever to vote to impeach a president of their own party.^[709]



Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi signing the second impeachment of Trump

Senate Democrats asked to begin the trial immediately, while Trump was still in office, but then Senate majority leader Mitch McConnell blocked the plan.^[710] On February 13, following a five-day Senate trial, Trump was acquitted when the Senate voted 57–43 for conviction, falling ten votes short of the two-thirds majority required to convict; seven Republicans joined every Democrat in voting to convict, the most bipartisan support in any Senate impeachment trial of a president or former president.^{[711][712]} Most Republicans voted to acquit Trump, though some held him responsible but felt the Senate did not have jurisdiction over former presidents (Trump had left office on January 20; the Senate voted 56–44 the trial was constitutional^[713]). Included in the latter group was McConnell, who said Trump was "practically and morally responsible for provoking the events of the day" but "constitutionally not eligible for conviction."^[714]

Post-presidency

After his term ended, Trump went to live at his Mar-a-Lago club in Palm Beach, Florida.^{[715][716]} As provided for by the Former Presidents Act,^[717] he established an office there to handle his post-presidential activities.^{[717][718]}

Since leaving the presidency, Trump has been the subject of several probes into both his business dealings and his actions during the presidency. In February 2021, the District Attorney for Fulton County, Georgia, announced a criminal probe into Trump's phone calls to Brad Raffensperger.^[719] Separately, the New York State Attorney General's Office is conducting a civil and criminal investigation into Trump's business activities. The criminal investigation is in conjunction with the Manhattan District Attorney's Office.^[720] By May 2021, a special grand jury was considering indictments.^{[721][722]} On July 1, 2021, New York prosecutors charged the Trump Organization with a "15 year 'scheme to defraud' the government". The organization's Chief Financial Officer, Allen Weisselberg was arraigned on grand larceny, tax fraud, and other charges.^{[723][724]}

Trump's false claims concerning the 2020 election were commonly referred to as the "big lie" by his critics and in reporting. In May 2021, Trump and his supporters attempted to co-opt the term, using "lie" to refer to the election itself. The Republican party used Trump's false election narrative as justification to impose new voting restrictions in its favor.^{[725][726][727][728]}

In June 2021, multiple national publications reported that Trump had told several people he could be reinstated as president in August.^{[729][730]} On June 6, 2021, Trump resumed his campaign-style rallies with an 85-minute speech at the annual North Carolina Republican Party convention.^{[729][731]} On June 27, he held his first public rally since his January 6 rally before the riot at the Capitol.^[732]

Public profile

Approval ratings

For much of his term through September 2020, Trump's approval and disapproval ratings were unusually stable, reaching a high of 49 percent and a low of 35 percent.^{[733][734]} He completed his term with a record-low approval rating of between 29 percent and 34 percent (the lowest of any president since modern scientific polling began); his average approval rating throughout his term was a record-low 41 percent.^{[735][736]} Trump's approval ratings showed a record partisan gap: over the course of his presidency, Trump's approval rating among Republicans was 88 percent and his approval rating among Democrats was 7 percent.^[736]

In Gallup's annual poll asking Americans to name the man they admire the most, Trump placed second to Obama in 2017 and 2018, tied with Obama for most admired man in 2019, and was named most admired in 2020.^{[737][738]} Since Gallup started conducting the poll in 1948,^[739] Trump is the first elected president not to be named most admired in his first year in office.^[739]

A Gallup poll in 134 countries comparing the approval ratings of U.S. leadership between the years 2016 and 2017 found that Trump led Obama in job approval in only 29, most of them non-democracies,^[740] with approval of US leadership plummeting among US allies and G7 countries. Overall ratings were similar to those in the last two years of the George W. Bush presidency.^[741] By mid-2020, only 16% of international respondents expressed confidence in Trump according to a 13-nation Pew Research poll, a confidence score lower than those historically accorded to Russia's Vladimir Putin and China's Xi Jinping.^[742]

C-SPAN, which conducted surveys of presidential leadership each time the administration changed since 2000,^[743] ranked Trump fourth-lowest overall in their 2021 President Historians Survey, with Trump rated lowest in the leadership characteristics categories for moral authority and administrative skills.^{[744][745]}

Social media

Trump's social media presence attracted attention worldwide since he joined Twitter in 2009. He frequently tweeted during the 2016 election campaign and as president, until his ban in the final days of his term.^[746] Over twelve years, Trump posted around 57,000 tweets.^[747] Trump frequently used Twitter as a direct means of communication with the public, sidelining the press.^[747] A White House press secretary said early in his presidency that Trump's tweets were official presidential statements, used for announcing policies and personnel changes.^{[748][749][750]}

Trump's tweets often contained falsehoods, eventually causing Twitter to tag some of them with fact-checking warnings beginning in May 2020.^[751] Trump responded by threatening to "strongly regulate" or "close down" social media platforms.^[752] In the days after the storming of the United States Capitol, Trump was banned from Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and other platforms.^[753] Twitter blocked attempts by Trump and his staff to circumvent the ban through the use of others' accounts.^[754] The loss of Trump's social media megaphone, including his 88.7 million Twitter followers, diminished his ability to shape events,^{[755][756]} and prompted a dramatic decrease in the volume of misinformation shared on Twitter.^[757] In May 2021, an

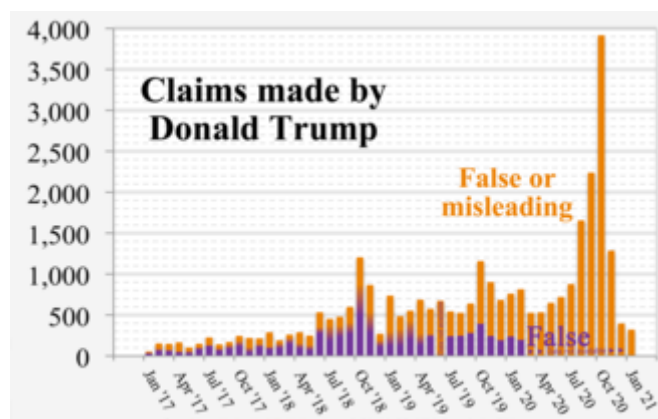
advisory group to Facebook evaluated that site's indefinite ban of Trump and concluded that it had been justified at the time but should be re-evaluated in six months.^[758] In June 2021, Facebook suspended the account for two years.^[759] On June 26, Trump joined the video platform Rumble.^[760]

In July 2021, Trump filed class-action lawsuits in the Southern District of Florida against Facebook, Google, Twitter, and their CEOs, demanding that they rescind their suspension of his accounts as a violation of the First Amendment, and accusing them of censoring conservatives. Legal analysts said the suits have virtually no chance of success, since they are private companies with a right to moderate their platforms.^[761]

False statements

As a candidate and as president, Trump frequently made false statements in public speeches and remarks^{[765][205]} to an extent unprecedented in American politics.^{[766][767][211]} His falsehoods became a distinctive part of his political identity.^[767]

Trump's false and misleading statements were documented by fact-checkers, including at the *Washington Post*, which tallied a total of 30,573 false or misleading statements made by Trump over his four-year term.^[762] Trump's falsehoods increased in frequency over time, rising from about 6 false or misleading claims per day in his first year as president to 16 per day in his second year to 22 per day in his third year to 39 per day in his final year.^[768] He reached 10,000 false or misleading claims 27 months into his term; 20,000 false or misleading claims 14 months later, and 30,000 false or misleading claims five months later.^[768]



Fact-checkers from *The Washington Post*,^[762] the *Toronto Star*,^[763] and CNN^[764] compiled data on "false or misleading claims" (orange background), and "false claims" (violet foreground), respectively.

Some of Trump's falsehoods were inconsequential, such as his claims of a large crowd size during his inauguration.^{[769][770]} Others had more far-reaching effects, such as Trump's promotion of unproven antimalarial drugs as a treatment for COVID-19 in a press conference and on Twitter in March 2020.^{[771][772]} The claims had consequences worldwide, such as a shortage of these drugs in the United States and panic-buying in Africa and South Asia.^{[773][774]} Other misinformation, such as misattributing a rise in crime in England and Wales to the "spread of radical Islamic terror," served Trump's domestic political purposes.^[775] As a matter of principle, Trump does not apologize for his falsehoods.^[776]

Despite the frequency of Trump's falsehoods, the media rarely referred to them as lies.^{[777][778]} Nevertheless, in August 2018 *The Washington Post* declared for the first time that some of Trump's misstatements (statements concerning hush money paid to Stormy Daniels and Playboy model Karen McDougal) were lies.^{[779][778]}

In 2020, Trump was a significant source of disinformation on national voting practices and the COVID-19 pandemic.^[780] Trump's attacks on mail-in ballots and other election practices served to weaken public faith in the integrity of the 2020 presidential election,^{[664][781]} while his disinformation about the pandemic delayed and weakened the national response to it.^{[780][514][782]}

Some view the nature and frequency of Trump's falsehoods as having profound and corrosive consequences on democracy.^[783] James Pfiffner, professor of policy and government at George Mason University, wrote in 2019 that Trump lies differently from previous presidents, because he offers "egregious false statements that

are demonstrably contrary to well-known facts"; these lies are the "most important" of all Trump lies. By calling facts into question, people will be unable to properly evaluate their government, with beliefs or policy irrationally settled by "political power"; this erodes liberal democracy, wrote Pfiffner.^[784]

Promotion of conspiracy theories

Before and throughout his presidency, Trump has promoted numerous conspiracy theories, including Obama birtherism, the Clinton Body Count theory, QAnon, and alleged Ukrainian interference in U.S. elections.^[785] In October 2020, Trump retweeted a QAnon follower who asserted that Osama bin Laden was still alive, a body double had been killed in his place, and that "Biden and Obama may have had SEAL Team Six killed."^[786]

During and since the 2020 United States presidential election, Trump has promoted various conspiracy theories for his defeat including the "dead voter" conspiracy theory,^[787] and without providing any evidence he has created other conspiracy theories such as that "some states allowed voters to turn in ballots after Election Day; that vote-counting machines were rigged to favor Mr Biden; and even that the FBI, the Justice Department and the federal court system were complicit in an attempt to cover up election fraud."^[788]

Relationship with the press

Throughout his career, Trump has sought media attention, with a "love-hate" relationship with the press.^[789] Trump began promoting himself in the press in the 1970s.^[790] Fox News anchor Bret Baier and former House speaker Paul Ryan have characterized Trump as a "troll" who makes controversial statements to see people's "heads explode."^{[791][792]}

In the 2016 campaign, Trump benefited from a record amount of free media coverage, elevating his standing in the Republican primaries.^[204] *New York Times* writer Amy Chozick wrote in 2018 that Trump's media dominance, which enthalls the public and creates "can't miss" reality television-type coverage, was politically beneficial for him.^[793]



Trump talking to the press, March 2017

As a candidate and as president, Trump frequently accused the press of bias, calling it the "fake news media" and "the enemy of the people."^[794] In 2018, journalist Lesley Stahl recounted Trump's saying he intentionally demeaned and discredited the media "so when you write negative stories about me no one will believe you."^[795]

As president, Trump privately and publicly mused about revoking the press credentials of journalists he viewed as critical.^[796] His administration moved to revoke the press passes of two White House reporters, which were restored by the courts.^[797] In 2019, a member of the foreign press reported many of the same concerns as those of media in the U.S., expressing concern that a normalization process by reporters and media results in an inaccurate characterization of Trump.^[798] The Trump White House held about a hundred formal press briefings in 2017, declining by half during 2018 and to two in 2019.^[797]

As president, Trump deployed the legal system to intimidate the press.^[799] In early 2020, the Trump campaign sued *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and CNN for alleged defamation in opinion pieces about Russian election interference.^{[800][801]} Legal experts said that the lawsuits lacked merit and were not likely to

succeed.^{[799][802]} By March 2021, the lawsuits against *The New York Times* and CNN had been dismissed.^{[803][804]}

Racial views

Many of Trump's comments and actions have been considered racist.^[805] He has repeatedly denied this, asserting: "I am the least racist person there is anywhere in the world."^[806] In national polling, about half of Americans say that Trump is racist; a greater proportion believe that he has emboldened racists.^{[807][808][809]} Several studies and surveys have found that racist attitudes fueled Trump's political ascent and have been more important than economic factors in determining the allegiance of Trump voters.^{[810][811]} Racist and Islamophobic attitudes are a strong indicator of support for Trump.^[812]

In 1975, he settled a 1973 Department of Justice lawsuit that alleged housing discrimination against black renters.^[61] He has also been accused of racism for insisting a group of black and Latino teenagers were guilty of raping a white woman in the 1989 Central Park jogger case, even after they were exonerated by DNA evidence in 2002. As of 2019, he maintained this position.^[813]

Trump relaunched his political career in 2011 as a leading proponent of "birther" conspiracy theories alleging that Barack Obama, the first black U.S. president, was not born in the United States.^{[814][815]} In April 2011, Trump claimed credit for pressuring the White House to publish the "long-form" birth certificate, which he considered fraudulent, and later saying this made him "very popular".^{[816][817]} In September 2016, amid pressure, he acknowledged that Obama was born in the U.S. and falsely claimed the rumors had been started by Hillary Clinton during her 2008 presidential campaign.^[818] In 2017, he reportedly still expressed birther views in private.^[819]

According to an analysis in *Political Science Quarterly*, Trump made "explicitly racist appeals to whites" during his 2016 presidential campaign.^[820] In particular, his campaign launch speech drew widespread criticism for claiming Mexican immigrants were "bringing drugs, they're bringing crime, they're rapists."^{[821][822]} His later comments about a Mexican-American judge presiding over a civil suit regarding Trump University were also criticized as racist.^[823]

Trump's comment on the 2017 far-right rally in Charlottesville, Virginia—that there were "very fine people on both sides"—was widely criticized as implying a moral equivalence between the white supremacist demonstrators and the counter-protesters at the rally.^{[824][825][826]}

In a January 2018 Oval Office meeting to discuss immigration legislation, Trump reportedly referred to El Salvador, Haiti, Honduras, and African nations as "shithole countries."^[827] His remarks were condemned as racist.^{[828][829]}

In July 2019, Trump tweeted that four Democratic congresswomen—all minorities, three of whom are native-born Americans—should "go back" to the countries they "came from."^[830] Two days later the House of Representatives voted 240–187, mostly along party lines, to condemn his "racist comments."^[831] White nationalist publications and social media sites praised his remarks, which continued over the following days.^[832] Trump continued to make similar remarks during his 2020 campaign.^[833]



[Play media](#)

Trump answers questions from reporters about the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville.

Misogyny and allegations of sexual misconduct

Trump has a history of insulting and belittling women when speaking to media and on social media. He made lewd comments, demeaned women's looks, and called them names like 'dog', 'crazed, crying lowlife', 'face of a pig', or 'horseface'.^{[834][835][836]}

In October 2016, two days before the second presidential debate, a 2005 "hot mic" recording surfaced in which Trump was heard bragging about kissing and groping women without their consent, saying "when you're a star, they let you do it, you can do anything... grab 'em by the pussy."^[837] The incident's widespread media exposure led to Trump's first public apology during the campaign^[838] and caused outrage across the political spectrum.^[839]

At least twenty-six women have publicly accused Trump of sexual misconduct as of September 2020, including his then-wife Ivana. There were allegations of rape, violence, being kissed and groped without consent, looking under women's skirts, and walking in on naked women.^{[840][841][842]} In 2016, he denied all accusations, calling them "false smears," and alleged there was a conspiracy against him.^[843]

Allegations of inciting violence

Research suggests Trump's rhetoric caused an increased incidence of hate crimes.^{[844][845][846]} During the 2016 campaign, he urged or praised physical attacks against protesters or reporters.^{[847][848]} Since then, some defendants prosecuted for hate crimes or violent acts cited Trump's rhetoric in arguing that they were not culpable or should receive a lighter sentence.^[849] In May 2020, a nationwide review by ABC News identified at least 54 criminal cases from August 2015 to April 2020 in which Trump was invoked in direct connection with violence or threats of violence by mostly white men against mostly members of minority groups.^[850] On January 13, 2021, the House of Representatives impeached Trump for incitement of insurrection for his actions prior to the storming of the U.S. Capitol by a violent mob of his supporters^[707] who acted in his name.^[851]

Popular culture

Trump has been the subject of parody, comedy, and caricature. He has been parodied regularly on *Saturday Night Live* by Phil Hartman, Darrell Hammond, and Alec Baldwin and in *South Park* as Mr. Garrison. *The Simpsons* episode "Bart to the Future"—written during his 2000 campaign for the Reform Party—anticipated a Trump presidency. Trump's wealth and lifestyle had been a fixture of hip-hop lyrics since the 1980s; he was named in hundreds of songs, most often with a positive tone.^[852] Mentions of Trump in hip-hop largely turned negative and pejorative after he ran for office in 2015.^[852]

Notes

- a. Presidential elections in the United States are decided by the Electoral College. Each state names a number of electors equal to its representation in Congress and (in most states) all delegates vote for the winner of the local state vote.
- b. Mueller, Robert (March 2019). "Report on the Investigation into Russian Interference in the 2016 Presidential Election" (<https://www.justice.gov/storage/report.pdf>). I. p. 2. "In connection with that analysis, we addressed the factual question whether members of the Trump Campaign 'coordinat[ed]'—a term that appears in the appointment order—with Russian election interference activities. Like collusion, 'coordination' does not have a settled definition in federal criminal law. We understood coordination to require an agreement—tacit or express—between the Trump Campaign and the Russian government on election interference. That requires more than the two parties taking actions that were informed by or responsive to the other's actions or interests. We applied the term coordination in that sense when stating in the

report that the investigation did not establish that the Trump campaign coordinated with the Russian government in its election interference activities."

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- [Archive of Donald Trump's Tweets \(https://www.thetrumparchive.com/\)](https://www.thetrumparchive.com/)
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 - [Donald Trump \(https://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/607230\)](https://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/607230) at the *Encyclopædia Britannica*
 - [Donald Trump collected news and commentary \(https://www.nytimes.com/topic/person/donald-trump\)](https://www.nytimes.com/topic/person/donald-trump) from *The New York Times*
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 - [Donald Trump's page on WhiteHouse.gov \(https://www.whitehouse.gov/about-the-white-house/presidents/donald-j-trump/\)](https://www.whitehouse.gov/about-the-white-house/presidents/donald-j-trump/)
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George H. W. Bush

George Herbert Walker Bush^[a] (June 12, 1924 – November 30, 2018) was an American politician, diplomat, and businessman who served as the 41st president of the United States from 1989 to 1993. A member of the Republican Party, Bush also served as the 43rd vice president from 1981 to 1989 under Ronald Reagan, in the U.S. House of Representatives, as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, and as Director of Central Intelligence.

Bush was raised in Greenwich, Connecticut, United States, and attended Phillips Academy before serving in the United States Navy Reserve during World War II. After the war, he graduated from Yale and moved to West Texas, where he established a successful oil company. After an unsuccessful run for the United States Senate, he won the election to the 7th congressional district of Texas in 1966. President Richard Nixon appointed Bush to the position of Ambassador to the United Nations in 1971 and to the position of chairman of the Republican National Committee in 1973. In 1974, President Gerald Ford appointed him as the Chief of the Liaison Office to the People's Republic of China, and in 1976 Bush became the Director of Central Intelligence. Bush ran for president in 1980, but was defeated in the Republican presidential primaries by Ronald Reagan. He was then elected vice president in 1980 and 1984 as Reagan's running mate.

In the 1988 presidential election, Bush defeated Democrat Michael Dukakis, becoming the first incumbent vice president to be elected president since Martin Van Buren in 1836. Foreign policy drove the Bush presidency, as he navigated the final years of the Cold War and played a key role in the reunification of Germany. Bush presided over the invasion of Panama and the Gulf War, ending the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait in the latter conflict. Though the agreement was not ratified until after he left office, Bush negotiated and signed the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which created a trade bloc consisting of the United States, Canada, and Mexico. Domestically, Bush reneged on a 1988 campaign promise by signing a bill that increased taxes and helped reduce the federal budget deficit. He also signed the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and appointed David Souter and Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court. Bush lost the 1992 presidential election to Democrat Bill Clinton

George H. W. Bush



Official portrait, 1989

41st President of the United States

In office

January 20, 1989 – January 20, 1993

Vice President Dan Quayle

Preceded by Ronald Reagan

Succeeded by Bill Clinton

43rd Vice President of the United States

In office

January 20, 1981 – January 20, 1989

President Ronald Reagan

Preceded by Walter Mondale

Succeeded by Dan Quayle

11th Director of Central Intelligence

In office

January 30, 1976 – January 20, 1977

President Gerald Ford

Deputy Vernon A. Walters

E. Henry Knoche

Preceded by William Colby

Succeeded by Stansfield Turner

2nd Chief of the U.S. Liaison Office to the People's Republic of China

following an economic recession and the decreased emphasis of foreign policy in a post–Cold War political climate.

After leaving office in 1993, Bush was active in humanitarian activities, often working alongside Bill Clinton, his former opponent. With the victory of his son, George W. Bush, in the 2000 presidential election, the two became the second father–son pair to serve as the nation's president, following John Adams and John Quincy Adams. Another son, Jeb Bush, unsuccessfully sought the Republican presidential nomination in the 2016 Republican primaries. Historians generally rank Bush as an above-average president.

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	In office
	September 26, 1974 – December 7, 1975
President	<u>Gerald Ford</u>
Preceded by	<u>David K. E. Bruce</u>
Succeeded by	<u>Thomas S. Gates Jr.</u>
	Chair of the <u>Republican National Committee</u>
	In office
	January 19, 1973 – September 16, 1974
Preceded by	<u>Bob Dole</u>
Succeeded by	<u>Mary Smith</u>
	10th <u>United States Ambassador to the United Nations</u>
	In office
	March 1, 1971 – January 18, 1973
President	<u>Richard Nixon</u>
Preceded by	<u>Charles Yost</u>
Succeeded by	<u>John A. Scali</u>
	Member of the <u>U.S. House of Representatives from Texas's 7th district</u>
	In office
	January 3, 1967 – January 3, 1971
Preceded by	<u>John Dowdy</u>
Succeeded by	<u>Bill Archer</u>
	Personal details
Born	<u>George Herbert Walker Bush</u> June 12, 1924 <u>Milton, Massachusetts, U.S.</u>
Died	November 30, 2018 (aged 94) <u>Houston, Texas, U.S.</u>
Resting place	<u>George H.W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum</u>
Political party	<u>Republican</u>
Spouse(s)	<u>Barbara Pierce</u> (<u>m.</u> 1945; died 2018)
Children	<u>George</u> · <u>Robin</u> · <u>Jeb</u> · <u>Neil</u> · <u>Marvin</u> · <u>Dorothy</u>
Parents	<u>Prescott Bush</u> <u>Dorothy Walker</u>
Relatives	<u>Bush family</u>
Education	<u>Yale University (BA)</u>

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Occupation	Politician · businessman
Civilian awards	List of honors and awards
Signature	
Website	Presidential Library (http://buslibrary.tamu.edu)
Military service	
Nickname(s)	"Skin"
Allegiance	 United States
Branch/service	 United States Navy
Years of service	1942–1945
Rank	 Lieutenant (junior grade)
Unit	Fast Carrier Task Force
Battles/wars	World War II <ul style="list-style-type: none">Pacific War
Military awards	 Distinguished Flying Cross  Air Medal (3)^[1]  Presidential Unit Citation

Early life and education (1924–1948)



George H. W. Bush at his grandfather's house in [Kennebunkport](#), c. 1925

George Herbert Walker Bush was born in [Milton, Massachusetts](#)^[2] on June 12, 1924. He was the second son of [Prescott Bush](#) and Dorothy (Walker) Bush.^[3] His paternal grandfather, [Samuel P. Bush](#), worked as an executive for a railroad parts company in [Columbus, Ohio](#),^[4] while his maternal grandfather and namesake, [George Herbert Walker](#), led [Wall Street](#) investment bank [W. A. Harriman & Co.](#)^[5] Walker was known as

"Pop", and young Bush was called "Poppy" as a tribute to him.^[6] The Bush family moved to Greenwich, Connecticut in 1925, and Prescott took a position with W. A. Harriman & Co. (which later merged into Brown Brothers Harriman & Co.) the following year.^[7]

Bush spent most of his childhood in Greenwich, at the family vacation home in Kennebunkport, Maine,^[b] or at his maternal grandparents' plantation in South Carolina.^[9] Because of the family's wealth, Bush was largely unaffected by the Great Depression.^[10] He attended Greenwich Country Day School from 1929 to 1937 and Phillips Academy, an elite private academy in Massachusetts, from 1937 to 1942.^[11] While at Phillips Academy, he served as president of the senior class, secretary of the student council, president of the community fund-raising group, a member of the editorial board of the school newspaper, and captain of the varsity baseball and soccer teams.^[12]

World War II



Bush in his Grumman TBF Avenger aboard USS *San Jacinto* in 1944

On his 18th birthday, immediately after graduating from Phillips Academy, he enlisted in the United States Navy as a naval aviator.^[13] After a period of training, he was commissioned as an ensign in the Naval Reserve at Naval Air Station Corpus Christi on June 9, 1943, becoming one of the youngest aviators in the Navy.^{[14][c]} Beginning in 1944, Bush served in the Pacific theater, where he flew a Grumman TBF Avenger, a torpedo bomber capable of taking off from aircraft carriers.^[19] His squadron was assigned to the USS *San Jacinto* as a member of Air Group 51, where his lanky physique earned him the nickname "Skin".^[20]

Bush flew his first combat mission in May 1944, bombing Japanese-held Wake Island,^[21] and was promoted to lieutenant (junior grade) on August 1, 1944. During an attack on a Japanese installation in Chichijima, Bush's aircraft successfully attacked several targets, but was downed by enemy fire.^[18] Though both of Bush's fellow crew members died, Bush successfully bailed out from the aircraft and was rescued by the USS *Finback*.^{[22][d]}

Several of the aviators shot down during the attack were captured and executed, and their livers were eaten by their captors.^[23] Bush's survival after such a close brush with death shaped him profoundly, leading him to ask, "Why had I been spared and what did God have for me?"^[24] He was later awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for his role in the mission.^[25]

Bush returned to *San Jacinto* in November 1944, participating in operations in the Philippines. In early 1945, he was assigned to a new combat squadron, VT-153, where he trained to take part in an invasion of mainland Japan. On September 2, 1945, before any invasion took place, Japan formally surrendered following the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.^[26] Bush was released from active duty that same month, but was not formally discharged from the Navy until October 1955, at which point he had reached the rank of lieutenant.^[18] By the end of his period of active service, Bush had flown 58 missions, completed 128 carrier landings, and recorded 1228 hours of flight time.^[27]

Marriage and college years

Bush met Barbara Pierce at a Christmas dance in Greenwich in December 1941,^[28] and, after a period of courtship, they became engaged in December 1943.^[29] While Bush was on leave from the Navy, they married in Rye, New York, on January 6, 1945.^[30] The Bushes enjoyed a strong marriage, and Barbara would later be

a popular First Lady, seen by many as "a kind of national grandmother".^{[31][e]} They have six children: George W. (b. 1946), Robin (1949-1953), Jeb (b. 1953), Neil (b. 1955), Marvin (b. 1956), and Doro (b. 1959).^[13] Their oldest daughter, Robin, died of leukemia in 1953.^[34]

Bush enrolled at Yale College, where he took part in an accelerated program that enabled him to graduate in two and a half years rather than the usual four.^[13] He was a member of the Delta Kappa Epsilon fraternity and was elected its president.^[35] He also captained the Yale baseball team and played in the first two College World Series as a left-handed first baseman.^[36] Like his father, he was a member of the Yale cheerleading squad^[37] and was initiated into the Skull and Bones secret society. He graduated Phi Beta Kappa in 1948 with a Bachelor of Arts degree, majoring in economics and minoring in sociology.^[38]



Bush in Phillips Academy's 1942 yearbook

Business career (1948–1963)



Bush, top right, stood with his wife and children, mid-1960s

After graduating from Yale, Bush moved his young family to West Texas. Biographer Jon Meacham writes that Bush's relocation to Texas allowed him to move out of the "daily shadow of his Wall Street father and Grandfather Walker, two dominant figures in the financial world", but would still allow Bush to "call on their connections if he needed to raise capital."^[39] His first position in Texas was an oil field equipment salesman^[40] for Dresser Industries, which was led by family friend Neil Mallon.^[41] While working for Dresser, Bush lived in various places with his family: Odessa, Texas; Ventura, Bakersfield and Compton, California; and Midland, Texas.^[42] In 1952, he volunteered for the successful presidential campaign of Republican candidate Dwight D. Eisenhower. That same year, his father won election to represent Connecticut in the United

States Senate as a member of the Republican Party.^[43]

With support from Mallon and Bush's uncle, George Herbert Walker Jr., Bush and John Overbey launched the Bush-Overbey Oil Development Company in 1951.^[44] In 1953 he co-founded the Zapata Petroleum Corporation, an oil company that drilled in the Permian Basin in Texas.^[45] In 1954, he was named president of the Zapata Offshore Company, a subsidiary which specialized in offshore drilling.^[46] Shortly after the subsidiary became independent in 1959, Bush moved the company and his family from Midland to Houston.^[47] There, he befriended James Baker, a prominent attorney who later became an important political ally.^[48] Bush remained involved with Zapata until the mid-1960s, when he sold his stock in the company for approximately \$1 million.^[49]

In 1988, *The Nation* published an article alleging that Bush worked as an operative of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) during the 1960s; Bush denied this claim.^[50]

Early political career (1963–1971)

Entry into politics



Former president Dwight D. Eisenhower with Bush

By the early 1960s, Bush was widely regarded as an appealing political candidate, and some leading Democrats attempted to convince Bush to become a Democrat. He declined to leave the Republican Party, later citing his belief that the national Democratic Party favored "big, centralized government". The Democratic Party had historically dominated Texas, but Republicans scored their first major victory in the state with John G. Tower's victory in a 1961 special election to the United States Senate. Motivated by Tower's victory, and hoping to prevent the far-right John Birch Society from coming to power, Bush ran for the chairmanship of the Harris County Republican Party, winning election in February 1963.^[51] Like most other Texas Republicans, Bush supported conservative Senator Barry Goldwater over the more centrist Nelson Rockefeller in the 1964 Republican Party

presidential primaries.^[52]

In 1964, Bush sought to unseat liberal Democrat Ralph W. Yarborough in Texas's U.S. Senate election.^[53] Bolstered by superior fundraising, Bush won the Republican primary by defeating former gubernatorial nominee Jack Cox in a run-off election. In the general election, Bush attacked Yarborough's vote for the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which banned racial and gender discrimination in public institutions and in many privately owned businesses. Bush argued that the act unconstitutionally expanded the powers of the federal government, but he was privately uncomfortable with the racial politics of opposing the act.^[54] He lost the election 56 percent to 44 percent, though he did run well ahead of Barry Goldwater, the Republican presidential nominee.^[53] Despite the loss, the *New York Times* reported that Bush was "rated by political friend and foe alike as the Republicans' best prospect in Texas because of his attractive personal qualities and the strong campaign he put up for the Senate".^[55]

U.S. House of Representatives

In 1966, Bush ran for the United States House of Representatives in Texas's 7th congressional district, a newly redistricted seat in the Greater Houston area. Initial polling showed him trailing his Democratic opponent, Harris County District Attorney Frank Briscoe, but he ultimately won the race with 57 percent of the vote.^[56] In an effort to woo potential candidates in the South and Southwest, House Republicans secured Bush an appointment to the powerful United States House Committee on Ways and Means, making Bush the first freshman to serve on the committee since 1904.^[57] His voting record in the House was generally conservative. He supported the Nixon administration's Vietnam policies, but broke with Republicans on the issue of birth control, which he supported. He also voted for the Civil Rights Act of 1968, although it was generally unpopular in his district.^{[58][59]} In 1968, Bush joined several other Republicans in issuing the party's Response to the State of the Union address; Bush's part of the address focused on a call for fiscal responsibility.^[60]



Bush in 1969

Though most other Texas Republicans supported Ronald Reagan in the 1968 Republican Party presidential primaries, Bush endorsed Richard Nixon, who went on to win the party's nomination. Nixon considered selecting Bush as his running mate in the 1968 presidential election, but he ultimately chose Spiro Agnew instead. Bush won re-election to the House unopposed, while Nixon defeated Hubert Humphrey in the presidential election.^[61] In 1970, with President Nixon's support, Bush gave up his seat in the House to run for the Senate against Yarborough. Bush easily won the Republican primary, but Yarborough was defeated by the more conservative Lloyd Bentsen in the Democratic primary.^[62] Ultimately, Bentsen defeated Bush, taking 53.5 percent of the vote.^[63]

Nixon and Ford administrations (1971–1977)

Ambassador to the United Nations

After the 1970 Senate election, Bush accepted a position as a senior adviser to the president, but he convinced Nixon to instead appoint him as the U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations.^[64] The position represented Bush's first foray into foreign policy, as well as his first major experiences with the Soviet Union and China, the two major U.S. rivals in the Cold War.^[65] During Bush's tenure, the Nixon administration pursued a policy of détente, seeking to ease tensions with both the Soviet Union and China.^[66] Bush's ambassadorship was marked by a defeat on the China question, as the United Nations General Assembly voted to expel the Republic of China and replace it with the People's Republic of China in October 1971.^[67] In the 1971 crisis in Pakistan, Bush supported an Indian motion at the UN General Assembly to condemn the Pakistani government of Yahya Khan for waging genocide in East Pakistan (modern Bangladesh), referring to the "tradition which we have supported that the human rights question transcended domestic jurisdiction and should be freely debated".^[68] Bush's support for India at the UN put him into conflict with Nixon who was supporting Pakistan, partly because Yahya Khan was a useful intermediary in his attempts to reach out to China and partly because the president was fond of Yahya Khan.^[69]



Bush as ambassador to the United Nations, 1971

Chairman of the Republican National Committee

After Nixon won a landslide victory in the 1972 presidential election, he appointed Bush as chair of the Republican National Committee (RNC).^{[70][71]} In that position, he was charged with fundraising, candidate recruitment, and making appearances on behalf of the party in the media.

When Agnew was being investigated for corruption, Bush assisted, at the request of Nixon and Agnew, in pressuring John Glenn Beall Jr., the U.S. Senator from Maryland to force his brother, George Beall the U.S. Attorney in Maryland, who was supervising the investigation into Agnew. Attorney Beall ignored the pressure.^[72]

During Bush's tenure at the RNC, the Watergate scandal emerged into public view; the scandal originated from the June 1972 break-in of the Democratic National Committee, but also involved later efforts to cover up the break-in by Nixon and other members of the White House.^[73] Bush initially defended Nixon steadfastly, but as Nixon's complicity became clear he focused more on defending the Republican Party.^[58]

Following the resignation of Vice President Agnew in 1973 for a scandal unrelated to Watergate, Bush was considered for the position of vice president, but the appointment instead went to Gerald Ford.^[74] After the public release of an audio recording that confirmed that Nixon had plotted to use the CIA to cover up the Watergate break-in, Bush joined other party leaders in urging Nixon to resign.^[75] When Nixon resigned on August 9, 1974, Bush noted in his diary that "There was an aura of sadness, like somebody died... The [resignation] speech was vintage Nixon—a kick or two at the press—enormous strains. One couldn't help but look at the family and the whole thing and think of his accomplishments and then think of the shame... [President Gerald Ford's swearing-in offered] indeed a new spirit, a new lift."^[76]

Head of U.S. Liaison Office in China



Bush as U.S. Liaison to China, c. 1975

Upon his ascension to the presidency, Ford strongly considered Bush, Donald Rumsfeld, and Nelson Rockefeller for the vacant position of vice president. Ford ultimately chose Nelson Rockefeller, partly because of the publication of a news report claiming that Bush's 1970 campaign had benefited from a secret fund set up by Nixon; Bush was later cleared of any suspicion by a special prosecutor.^[77] Bush accepted appointment as Chief of the U.S. Liaison Office in the People's Republic of China, making him the de facto ambassador to China.^[78] According to biographer Jon Meacham, Bush's time in China convinced him that American engagement abroad was needed to ensure global stability, and that the United States "needed to be visible but not pushy, muscular but not domineering."^[79]

Director of Central Intelligence

In January 1976, Ford brought Bush back to Washington to become the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI), placing him in charge of the CIA.^[80] In the aftermath of the Watergate scandal and the Vietnam War, the CIA's reputation had been damaged for its role in various covert operations, and Bush was tasked with restoring the agency's morale and public reputation.^{[81][f]} During Bush's year in charge of the CIA, the U.S. national security apparatus actively supported Operation Condor operations and right-wing military dictatorships in Latin America.^{[82][83]} Meanwhile, Ford decided to drop Rockefeller from the ticket for the 1976 presidential election; he considered Bush as his running mate, but ultimately chose Bob Dole.^[84] In his capacity as DCI, Bush gave national security briefings to Jimmy Carter both as a presidential candidate and as president-elect.^[85]



Bush, as CIA Director, listens at a meeting following the assassinations in Beirut of Francis E. Meloy Jr. and Robert O. Waring, 1976.

1980 presidential election

Bush's tenure at the CIA ended after Carter narrowly defeated Ford in the 1976 presidential election. Out of public office for the first time since the 1960s, Bush became chairman on the Executive Committee of the First International Bank in Houston.^[86] He also spent a year as a part-time professor of Administrative Science at Rice University's Jones School of Business,^[87] continued his membership in the Council on Foreign Relations, and joined the Trilateral Commission. Meanwhile, he began to lay the groundwork for his candidacy in the 1980 Republican Party presidential primaries.^[88] In the 1980 Republican primary campaign, Bush faced Ronald Reagan, who was widely regarded as the front-runner, as well as other contenders like Senator Bob Dole, Senator Howard Baker, Texas Governor John Connally, Congressman Phil Crane, and Congressman John B. Anderson.^[89]

Bush's campaign cast him as a youthful, "thinking man's candidate" who would emulate the pragmatic conservatism of President Eisenhower.^[90] In the midst of the Soviet–Afghan War, which brought an end to a period of détente, and the Iran hostage crisis, in which 52 Americans were taken hostage, the campaign highlighted Bush's foreign policy experience.^[91] At the outset of the race, Bush focused heavily on winning the January 21 Iowa caucuses, making 31 visits to the state.^[92] He won a close victory in Iowa with 31.5% to Reagan's 29.4%. After the win, Bush stated that his campaign was full of momentum, or "the Big Mo",^[93] and Reagan reorganized his campaign.^[94] Partly in response to the Bush campaign's frequent questioning of Reagan's age (Reagan turned 69 in 1980), the Reagan campaign stepped up attacks on Bush, painting him as



1980 campaign logo



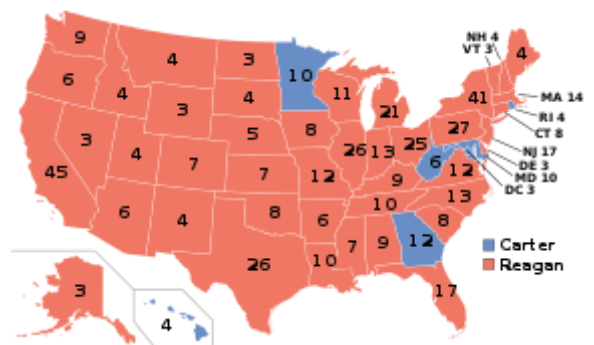
Ronald Reagan, moderator Jon Breen, and Bush participate in the Nashua, New Hampshire Presidential Debate, 1980

an elitist who was not truly committed to conservatism.^[95] Prior to the New Hampshire primary, Bush and Reagan agreed to a two-person debate, organized by *The Nashua Telegraph* but paid for by the Reagan campaign.^[94]

Days before the debate, Reagan announced that he would invite four other candidates to the debate; Bush, who had hoped that the one-on-one debate would allow him to emerge as the main alternative to Reagan in the primaries, refused to debate the other candidates. All six candidates took the stage, but Bush refused to speak in the presence of the other candidates. Ultimately, the other four candidates left the stage and the debate continued, but Bush's refusal to debate anyone other

than Reagan badly damaged his campaign in New Hampshire.^[96] He ended up decisively losing New Hampshire's primary to Reagan, winning just 23 percent of the vote.^[94] Bush revitalized his campaign with a victory in Massachusetts, but lost the next several primaries. As Reagan built up a commanding delegate lead, Bush refused to end his campaign, but the other candidates dropped out of the race.^[97] Criticizing his more conservative rival's policy proposals, Bush famously labeled Reagan's supply side-influenced plans for massive tax cuts as "voodoo economics".^[98] Though he favored lower taxes, Bush feared that dramatic reductions in taxation would lead to deficits and, in turn, cause inflation.^[99]

After Reagan clinched a majority of delegates in late May, Bush reluctantly dropped out of the race.^[100] At the 1980 Republican National Convention, Reagan made the last-minute decision to select Bush as his vice presidential nominee after negotiations with Ford regarding a Reagan-Ford ticket collapsed.^[101] Though Reagan had resented many of the Bush campaign's attacks during the primary campaign, and several conservative leaders had actively opposed Bush's nomination, Reagan ultimately decided that Bush's popularity with moderate Republicans made him the best and safest pick. Bush, who had believed his political career might be over following the primaries, eagerly accepted the position and threw himself into campaigning for the Reagan-Bush ticket.^[102] The 1980



The Reagan-Bush ticket won the 1980 presidential election with 50.7% of the popular vote and a large majority of the electoral vote

general election campaign between Reagan and Carter was conducted amid a multitude of domestic concerns and the ongoing Iran hostage crisis, and Reagan sought to focus the race on Carter's handling of the economy.^[103] Though the race was widely regarded as a close contest for most of the campaign, Reagan ultimately won over the large majority of undecided voters.^[104] Reagan took 50.7 percent of the popular vote and 489 of the 538 electoral votes, while Carter won 41% of the popular vote and John Anderson, running as an independent candidate, won 6.6% of the popular vote.^[105]

Vice Presidency (1981–1989)

As vice president, Bush generally maintained a low profile, recognizing the constitutional limits of the office; he avoided decision-making or criticizing Reagan in any way. This approach helped him earn Reagan's trust, easing tensions left over from their earlier rivalry.^[94] Bush also generally enjoyed a good relationship with Reagan staffers, including his close friend Jim Baker, who served as Reagan's initial chief of staff.^[106] His understanding of the vice presidency was heavily influenced by Vice President Walter Mondale, who enjoyed a strong relationship with President Carter in part because of his ability to avoid confrontations with senior staff and Cabinet members, and by Vice President Nelson Rockefeller's difficult relationship with some

members of the White House staff during the Ford administration.^[107] The Bushes attended a large number of public and ceremonial events in their positions, including many state funerals, which became a common joke for comedians. As the President of the Senate, Bush also stayed in contact with members of Congress and kept the president informed on occurrences on Capitol Hill.^[94]

First term

On March 30, 1981, while Bush was in Texas, Reagan was shot and seriously wounded by John Hinckley Jr. Bush immediately flew back to Washington D.C.; when his plane landed, his aides advised him to proceed directly to the White House by helicopter in order to show that the government was still functioning.^[94] Bush rejected the idea, as he feared that



Reagan and Bush in a meeting to discuss the United States' invasion of Grenada with a group of bipartisan members of Congress in October 1983

such a dramatic scene risked giving the impression that he sought to usurp Reagan's powers and prerogatives.^[108] During Reagan's short period of incapacity, Bush presided over Cabinet meetings, met with congressional leaders and foreign leaders, and briefed reporters, but he consistently rejected the possibility of invoking the Twenty-fifth Amendment.^[109] Bush's handling of the attempted assassination and its

aftermath made a positive impression on Reagan, who recovered and returned to work within two weeks of the shooting. From then on, the two men would have regular Thursday lunches in the Oval Office.^[110]

Bush was assigned by Reagan to chair two special task forces, one on deregulation and one on international drug smuggling. Both were popular issues with conservatives, and Bush, largely a moderate, began courting them through his work. The deregulation task force reviewed hundreds of rules, making specific recommendations on which ones to amend or revise, in order to curb the size of the federal government.^[94] The Reagan administration's deregulation push had a strong impact on broadcasting, finance, resource extraction, and other economic activities, and the administration eliminated numerous government positions.^[111] Bush also oversaw the administration's national security crisis management organization, which had traditionally been the responsibility of the National Security Advisor.^[112] In 1983, Bush toured Western Europe as part of the Reagan administration's ultimately successful efforts to convince skeptical NATO allies to support the deployment of Pershing II missiles.^[113]

Reagan's approval ratings fell after his first year in office, but they bounced back when the United States began to emerge from recession in 1983.^[114] Former Vice President Walter Mondale was nominated by the Democratic Party in the 1984 presidential election. Down in the polls, Mondale selected Congresswoman Geraldine Ferraro as his running mate in hopes of galvanizing support for his campaign, thus making Ferraro the first female major party vice presidential nominee in U.S. history.^[115] She and Bush squared off in a single



Official portrait of Vice President Bush (1981)



President Ronald Reagan with Bush

televised vice presidential debate.^[94] Public opinion polling consistently showed a Reagan lead in the 1984 campaign, and Mondale was unable to shake up the race.^[116] In the end, Reagan won re-election, winning 49 of 50 states and receiving 59% of the popular vote to Mondale's 41%.^[117]

Second term

Mikhail Gorbachev came to power in the Soviet Union in 1985. Rejecting the ideologically rigidity of his three elderly sick predecessors, Gorbachev insisted on urgently needed economic and political reforms called "glasnost" (openness) and "perestroika" (restructuring).^[118] At the 1987 Washington Summit, Gorbachev and Reagan signed the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, which committed both signatories to the total abolition of their respective short-range and medium-range missile stockpiles.^[119] The treaty marked the beginning of a new era of trade, openness, and cooperation between the two powers.^[120] President Reagan and Secretary of State George Shultz took the lead in these negotiations, but Bush sat in on many meetings. Bush did not agree with many of the Reagan policies, but he did tell Gorbachev that he would seek to continue improving relations if he succeeded Reagan.^{[121][122]} On July 13, 1985, Bush became the first vice president to serve as acting president when Reagan underwent surgery to remove polyps from his colon; Bush served as the acting president for approximately eight hours.^[123]

In 1986, the Reagan administration was shaken by a scandal when it was revealed that administration officials had secretly arranged weapon sales to Iran during the Iran–Iraq War. The officials had used the proceeds to fund the anti-communist Contras in Nicaragua. Democrats had passed a law that appropriated funds could not be used to help the Contras. Instead the administration used non-appropriated funds from the sales.^[94] When news of affair broke to the media, Bush stated that he had been "out of the loop" and unaware of the diversion of funds.^[124] Biographer Jon Meacham writes that "no evidence was ever produced proving Bush was aware of the diversion to the contras," but he criticizes Bush's "out of the loop" characterization, writing that the "record is clear that Bush was aware that the United States, in contravention of its own stated policy, was trading arms for hostages".^[125] The Iran–Contra scandal, as it became known, did serious damage to the Reagan presidency, raising questions about Reagan's competency.^[126] Congress established the Tower Commission to investigate the scandal, and, at Reagan's request, a panel of federal judges appointed Lawrence Walsh as a special prosecutor charged with investigating the Iran–Contra scandal.^[127] The investigations continued after Reagan left office and, though Bush was never charged with a crime, the Iran–Contra scandal would remain a political liability for him.^[128]

1988 presidential election

Bush began planning for a presidential run after the 1984 election, and he officially entered the 1988 Republican Party presidential primaries in October 1987.^[94] He put together a campaign led by Reagan staffer Lee Atwater, and which also included his son, George W. Bush, and media consultant Roger Ailes.^[129] Though he had moved to the right during his time as vice president, endorsing a Human Life Amendment and repudiating his earlier comments on "voodoo economics," Bush still faced



Vice President Bush standing with President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev on the New York City waterfront in 1988



1988 Campaign logo

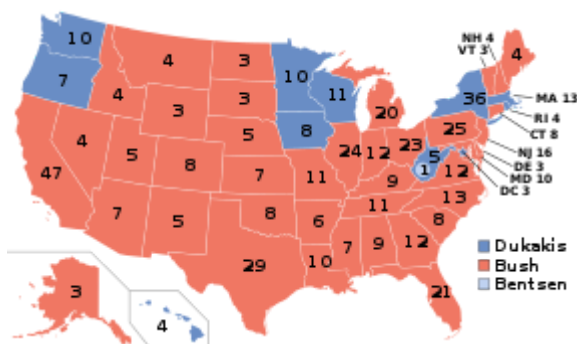
opposition from many conservatives in the Republican Party.^[130] His major rivals for the Republican nomination were Senate Minority Leader Bob Dole of Kansas, Congressman Jack Kemp of New York, and Christian televangelist Pat Robertson.^[131] Reagan did not publicly endorse any candidate, but he privately expressed support for Bush.^[132]

Though considered the early front-runner for the nomination, Bush came in third in the Iowa caucus, behind Dole and Robertson.^[133] Much as Reagan had done in 1980, Bush reorganized his staff and concentrated on the New Hampshire primary.^[94] With help from Governor John H. Sununu and an effective campaign attacking Dole for raising taxes, Bush overcame an initial polling deficit and won New Hampshire with 39 percent of the vote.^[134] After Bush won South Carolina and 16 of the 17 states holding a primary on Super Tuesday, his competitors dropped out of the race.^[135]



John Ashcroft and Vice President Bush campaign in St. Louis, Missouri, 1988

Bush, occasionally criticized for his lack of eloquence when compared to Reagan, delivered a well-received speech at the Republican convention. Known as the "thousand points of light" speech, it described Bush's vision of America: he endorsed the Pledge of Allegiance, prayer in schools, capital punishment, and gun rights.^[136] Bush also pledged that he would not raise taxes, stating: "Congress will push me to raise taxes, and I'll say no, and they'll push, and I'll say no, and they'll push again. And all I can say to them is: read my lips. No new taxes."^[137] Bush selected little-known Senator Dan Quayle of Indiana as his running mate. Though Quayle had compiled an unremarkable record in Congress, he was popular among many conservatives, and the campaign hoped that Quayle's youth would appeal to younger voters.^[138]



Bush won the 1988 presidential election with 53.4% of the popular vote and a large majority of the electoral vote

Meanwhile, the Democratic Party nominated Governor Michael Dukakis, who was known for presiding over an economic turnaround in Massachusetts.^[139] Leading in the general election polls against Bush, Dukakis ran an ineffective, low-risk campaign.^[140] The Bush campaign attacked Dukakis as an unpatriotic liberal extremist and seized on the Willie Horton case, in which a convicted felon from Massachusetts raped a woman while on a prison furlough, a program Dukakis supported as governor. The Bush campaign charged that Dukakis presided over a "revolving door" that allowed dangerous convicted felons to leave prison.^[141] Dukakis damaged his own campaign with a widely mocked ride in an M1 Abrams tank and a poor performance at the second

presidential debate.^[142] Bush also attacked Dukakis for opposing a law that would require all students to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.^[136] The election is widely considered to have had a high level of negative campaigning, though political scientist John Geer has argued that the share of negative ads was in line with previous presidential elections.^[143]

Bush defeated Dukakis by a margin of 426 to 111 in the Electoral College, and he took 53.4 percent of the national popular vote.^[144] Bush ran well in all the major regions of the country, but especially in the South.^[145] He became the first sitting vice president to be elected president since Martin Van Buren in 1836 and the first person to succeed a president from his own party via election since Herbert Hoover in 1929.^{[94][g]} In the concurrent congressional elections, Democrats retained control of both houses of Congress.^[147]

Presidency (1989–1993)

Bush was inaugurated on January 20, 1989, succeeding Ronald Reagan. In his inaugural address, Bush said:

I come before you and assume the Presidency at a moment rich with promise. We live in a peaceful, prosperous time, but we can make it better. For a new breeze is blowing, and a world refreshed by freedom seems reborn; for in man's heart, if not in fact, the day of the dictator is over. The totalitarian era is passing, its old ideas blown away like leaves from an ancient, lifeless tree. A new breeze is blowing, and a nation refreshed by freedom stands ready to push on. There is new ground to be broken, and new action to be taken.^[148]



Chief Justice William Rehnquist administers the Presidential Oath of Office to George H. W. Bush

Bush's first major appointment was that of James Baker as Secretary of State.^[149] Leadership of the Department of Defense went to Dick Cheney, who had previously served as Gerald Ford's chief of staff and would later serve as vice president under his son George W. Bush.^[150] Jack Kemp joined the administration as Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, while Elizabeth Dole, the wife of Bob Dole and a former Secretary of Transportation, became the Secretary of Labor under Bush.^[151] Bush retained several Reagan officials, including Secretary of the Treasury Nicholas F. Brady, Attorney General Dick Thornburgh, and Secretary of Education Lauro Cavazos.^[152] New Hampshire Governor John Sununu, a strong supporter of Bush during the 1988 campaign, became chief of staff.^[149] Brent Scowcroft was appointed as the National Security Advisor, a role he had also held under Ford.^[153]

Foreign affairs

End of the Cold War



Map showing the division of East and West Germany until 1990, with Berlin in yellow.

During the first year of his tenure, Bush put a pause on Reagan's détente policy toward the USSR.^[154] Bush and his advisers were initially divided on Gorbachev; some administration officials saw him as a democratic reformer, but others suspected him of trying to make the minimum changes necessary to restore the Soviet Union to a competitive position with the United States.^[155] In 1989, all the Communist governments collapsed in Eastern Europe. Gorbachev declined to send in the Soviet military, effectively abandoning the Brezhnev Doctrine. The U.S. was not directly involved in these upheavals, but the Bush administration avoided gloating over the demise of the Eastern Bloc to avoid undermining further democratic reforms.^[156]

Bush and Gorbachev met at the Malta Summit in December 1989. Though many on the right remained wary of Gorbachev, Bush came away with the belief that Gorbachev would negotiate in good faith.^[157] For the remainder of his term, Bush sought cooperative relations with Gorbachev, believing that he was the key to peace.^[158] The primary issue at the Malta Summit was the potential reunification of Germany. While Britain and France were wary of a re-unified Germany, Bush joined West German Chancellor Helmut Kohl in

pushing for German reunification.^[159] Bush believed that a reunified Germany would serve American interests.^[160] After extensive negotiations, Gorbachev agreed to allow a reunified Germany to be a part of NATO, and Germany officially reunified in October 1990 after paying billions of marks to Moscow.^[161]

Gorbachev used force to suppress nationalist movements within the Soviet Union itself.^[162] A crisis in Lithuania left Bush in a difficult position, as he needed Gorbachev's cooperation in the reunification of Germany and feared that the collapse of the Soviet Union could leave nuclear arms in dangerous hands. The Bush administration mildly protested Gorbachev's suppression of Lithuania's independence movement, but took no action to directly intervene.^[163] Bush warned independence movements of the disorder that could come with secession from the Soviet Union; in a 1991 address that critics labeled the "Chicken Kiev speech", he cautioned against "suicidal nationalism".^[164] In July 1991, Bush and Gorbachev signed the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START I) treaty, in which both countries agreed to cut their strategic nuclear weapons by 30 percent.^[165]



Bush and Mikhail Gorbachev at the Helsinki Summit in 1990

In August 1991, hard-line Communists launched a coup against Gorbachev; while the coup quickly fell apart, it broke the remaining power of Gorbachev and the central Soviet government.^[166] Later that month, Gorbachev resigned as general secretary of the Communist party, and Russian president Boris Yeltsin ordered the seizure of Soviet property. Gorbachev clung to power as the President of the Soviet Union until December 1991, when the Soviet Union dissolved.^[167] Fifteen states emerged from the Soviet Union, and of those states, Russia was the largest and most populous. Bush and Yeltsin met in February 1992, declaring a new era of "friendship and partnership".^[168] In January 1993, Bush and Yeltsin agreed to START II, which provided for further nuclear arms reductions on top of the original START treaty.^[169] The collapse of the Soviet Union prompted reflections on the future of the world following the end of the Cold War; one political scientist, Francis Fukuyama, speculated that humanity had reached the "end of history" in that liberal, capitalist democracy had permanently triumphed over Communism and fascism.^[170] Meanwhile, the collapse of the Soviet Union and other Communist governments led to post-Soviet conflicts in Central Europe, Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and Africa that would continue long after Bush left office.^[171]



In 1991, the Soviet Union dissolved into fifteen independent republics, including Russia (labeled 11)

Invasion of Panama

During the 1980s, the U.S. had provided aid to Panamanian leader Manuel Noriega, an anti-Communist dictator who engaged in drug trafficking. In May 1989, Noriega annulled the results of a democratic presidential election in which Guillermo Endara had been elected. Bush objected to the annulment of the election and worried about the status of the Panama Canal with Noriega still in office.^[172] Bush dispatched 2,000 soldiers to the country, where they began conducting regular military exercises in violation of prior treaties.^[173] After a U.S. serviceman was shot by Panamanian forces in December 1989, Bush ordered the United States invasion of Panama, known as "Operation Just Cause". The invasion was the first large-scale American military operation in more than 40 years that was not related to the Cold War. American forces quickly took control of the Panama Canal Zone and Panama City. Noriega surrendered on January 3, 1990, and was quickly transported to a prison in the United States. Twenty-three Americans died in the operation,

while another 394 were wounded. Noriega was convicted and imprisoned on racketeering and drug trafficking charges in April 1992.^[172] Historian Stewart Brewer argues that the invasion "represented a new era in American foreign policy" because Bush did not justify the invasion under the Monroe Doctrine or the threat of Communism, but rather on the grounds that it was in the best interests of the United States.^[174]

Gulf War

Faced with massive debts and low oil prices in the aftermath of the Iran–Iraq War, Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein decided to conquer the country of Kuwait, a small, oil-rich country situated on Iraq's southern border.^[175] After Iraq invaded Kuwait in August 1990, Bush imposed economic sanctions on Iraq and assembled a multi-national coalition opposed to the invasion.^[176] The administration feared that a failure to respond to the invasion would embolden Hussein to attack Saudi Arabia or Israel, and wanted to discourage other countries from similar aggression.^[177] Bush also wanted to ensure continued access to oil, as Iraq and Kuwait collectively accounted for 20 percent of the world's oil production, and Saudi Arabia produced another 26 percent of the world's oil supply.^[178]



Iraq (green) invaded Kuwait (orange) in 1990

At Bush's insistence, in November 1990, the United Nations Security Council approved a resolution authorizing the use of force if Iraq did not withdrawal from Kuwait by January 15, 1991.^[179] Gorbachev's support, as well as China's abstention, helped ensure passage of the UN resolution.^[180] Bush convinced Britain, France, and other nations to commit soldiers to an operation against Iraq, and he won important financial backing from Germany, Japan, South Korea, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.^[181] In January 1991, Bush asked Congress to approve a joint resolution authorizing a war against Iraq.^[182] Bush believed that the UN resolution had already provided him with the necessary authorization to launch a military operation against Iraq, but he wanted to show that the nation was united behind a military action.^[183] Despite the opposition of a majority of Democrats in both the House and the Senate, Congress approved the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Iraq Resolution of 1991.^[182]

After the January 15 deadline passed without an Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait, U.S. and coalition forces began a conducted a bombing campaign that devastated Iraq's power grid and communications network, and resulted in the desertion of about 100,000 Iraqi soldiers. In retaliation, Iraq launched Scud missiles at Israel and Saudi Arabia, but most of the missiles did little damage. On February 23, coalition forces began a ground invasion into Kuwait, evicting Iraqi forces by the end of February 27. About 300 Americans, as well as approximately 65 soldiers from other coalition nations, died during the military action.^[184] A cease fire was arranged on March 3, and the UN passed a resolution establishing a peacekeeping force in a demilitarized zone between Kuwait and Iraq.^[185] A March 1991 Gallup poll showed that Bush had an approval rating of 89 percent, the highest presidential approval rating in the history of Gallup polling.^[186] After 1991, the UN maintained economic sanctions against Iraq, and the United Nations Special Commission was assigned to ensure that Iraq did not revive its weapons of mass destruction program.^[187]



Bush meets with Robert Gates, General Colin Powell, Secretary Dick Cheney and others about the situation in the Persian Gulf

NAFTA

In 1987, the U.S. and Canada had reached a free trade agreement that eliminated many tariffs between the two countries. President Reagan had intended it as the first step towards a larger trade agreement to eliminate most tariffs among the United States, Canada, and Mexico.^[188] The Bush administration, along with the Progressive Conservative Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, spearheaded the negotiations of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) with Mexico. In addition to lowering tariffs, the proposed treaty would affect patents, copyrights, and trademarks.^[189] In 1991, Bush sought fast track authority, which grants the president the power to submit an international trade agreement to Congress without the possibility of amendment. Despite congressional opposition led by House Majority Leader Dick Gephardt, both houses of Congress voted to grant Bush fast track authority. NAFTA was signed in December 1992, after Bush lost re-election,^[190] but President Clinton won ratification of NAFTA in 1993.^[191] NAFTA remains controversial for its impact on wages, jobs, and overall economic growth.^[192]



From left to right: (standing) President Carlos Salinas, President Bush, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney; (seated) Jaime Serra Puche, Carla Hills, and Michael Wilson at the NAFTA Initialing Ceremony, October 1992

Domestic affairs

Economy and fiscal issues

The U.S. economy had generally performed well since emerging from recession in late 1982, but it slipped into a mild recession in 1990. The unemployment rate rose from 5.9 percent in 1989 to a high of 7.8 percent in mid-1991.^{[193][194]} Large federal deficits, spawned during the Reagan years, rose from \$152.1 billion in 1989^[195] to \$220 billion for 1990;^[196] the \$220 billion deficit represented a threefold increase since 1980.^[197] As the public became increasingly concerned about the economy and other domestic affairs, Bush's well-received handling of foreign affairs became less of an issue for most voters.^[198] Bush's top domestic priority was to bring an end to federal budget deficits, which he saw as a liability for the country's long-term economic health and standing in the world.^[199] As he was opposed to major defense spending cuts^[200] and had pledged to not raise taxes, the president had major difficulties in balancing the budget.^[201]

Bush and congressional leaders agreed to avoid major changes to the budget for fiscal year 1990, which began in October 1989. However, both sides knew that spending cuts or new taxes would be necessary in the following year's budget in order to avoid the draconian automatic domestic spending cuts required by the Gramm–Rudman–Hollings Balanced Budget Act of 1987.^[202] Bush and other leaders also wanted to cut deficits because Federal Reserve Chair Alan Greenspan refused to lower interest rates, and thus stimulate economic growth, unless the federal budget deficit was reduced.^[203] In a statement released in late June 1990, Bush said that he would be open to a deficit reduction program which included spending cuts, incentives for economic growth, budget process reform, as well as tax increases.^[204] To fiscal conservatives in the Republican Party, Bush's statement represented a betrayal, and they heavily criticized him for compromising so early in the negotiations.^[205]

In September 1990, Bush and Congressional Democrats announced a compromise to cut funding for mandatory and discretionary programs while also raising revenue, partly through a higher gas tax. The compromise additionally included a "pay as you go" provision that required that new programs be paid for at the time of implementation.^[206] House Minority Whip Newt Gingrich led the conservative opposition to the bill, strongly opposing any form of tax increase.^[207] Some liberals also criticized the budget cuts in the compromise, and in October, the House rejected the deal, resulting in a brief government shutdown. Without

the strong backing of the Republican Party, Bush agreed to another compromise bill, this one more favorable to Democrats. The Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990 (OBRA-90), enacted on October 27, 1990, dropped much of the gasoline tax increase in favor of higher income taxes on top earners. It included cuts to domestic spending, but the cuts were not as deep as those that had been proposed in the original compromise. Bush's decision to sign the bill damaged his standing with conservatives and the general public, but it also laid the groundwork for the budget surpluses of the late 1990s.^[208]

Discrimination

The disabled had not received legal protections under the landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964, and many faced discrimination and segregation by the time Bush took office. In 1988, Lowell P. Weicker Jr. and Tony Coelho had introduced the Americans with Disabilities Act, which barred employment discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities.

The bill had passed the Senate but not

the House, and it was reintroduced in 1989. Though some conservatives opposed the bill due to its costs and potential burdens on businesses, Bush strongly supported it, partly because his son, Neil, had struggled with dyslexia. After the bill passed both houses of Congress, Bush signed the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 into law in July 1990.^[210] The act required employers and public accommodations to make "reasonable accommodations" for the disabled, while providing an exception when such accommodations imposed an "undue hardship".^[211]

"Even the strongest person couldn't scale the Berlin Wall to gain the elusive promise of independence that lay just beyond. And so, together we rejoiced when that barrier fell. And now I sign legislation which takes a sledgehammer to another wall, one which has for too many generations separated Americans with disabilities from the freedom they could glimpse, but not grasp."

-Bush's remarks at the signing ceremony for the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990^[209]

Senator Ted Kennedy later led the congressional passage of a separate civil rights bill designed to facilitate launching employment discrimination lawsuits.^[212] In vetoing the bill, Bush argued that it would lead to racial quotas in hiring.^{[213][214]} In November 1991, Bush signed the Civil Rights Act of 1991, which was largely similar to the bill he had vetoed in the previous year.^[212]

In August 1990, Bush signed the Ryan White CARE Act, the largest federally funded program dedicated to assisting persons living with HIV/AIDS.^[215] Throughout his presidency, the AIDS epidemic grew dramatically in the U.S. and around the world, and Bush often found himself at odds with AIDS activist groups who criticized him for not placing a high priority on HIV/AIDS research and funding. Frustrated by the administration's lack of urgency on the issue, ACT UP, dumped the ashes of HIV/AIDS victims on the White House lawn during a viewing of the AIDS Quilt in 1992.^[216] By that time, HIV had become the leading cause of death in the U.S. for men aged 25–44.^[217]

Environment

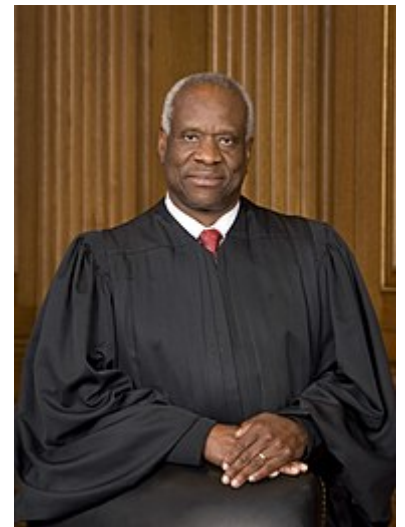
In June 1989, the Bush administration proposed a bill to amend the Clean Air Act. Working with Senate Majority Leader George J. Mitchell, the administration won passage of the amendments over the opposition of business-aligned members of Congress who feared the impact of tougher regulations.^[218] The legislation sought to curb acid rain and smog by requiring decreased emissions of chemicals such as sulfur dioxide,^[219] and was the first major update to the Clean Air Act since 1977.^[220] Bush also signed the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 in response to the Exxon Valdez oil spill. However, the League of Conservation Voters criticized some of Bush's other environmental actions, including his opposition to stricter auto-mileage standards.^[221]

Points of Light

President Bush devoted attention to voluntary service as a means of solving some of America's most serious social problems. He often used the "thousand points of light" theme to describe the power of citizens to solve community problems. In his 1989 inaugural address, President Bush said, "I have spoken of a thousand points of light, of all the community organizations that are spread like stars throughout the Nation, doing good."^[222] During his presidency, Bush honored numerous volunteers with the Daily Point of Light Award, a tradition that was continued by his presidential successors.^[223] In 1990, the Points of Light Foundation was created as a nonprofit organization in Washington to promote this spirit of volunteerism.^[224] In 2007, the Points of Light Foundation merged with the Hands On Network to create a new organization, Points of Light.^[225]

Judicial appointments

Bush appointed two justices to the Supreme Court of the United States. In 1990, Bush appointed a largely unknown state appellate judge, David Souter, to replace liberal icon William Brennan.^[226] Souter was easily confirmed and served until 2009, but joined the liberal bloc of the court, disappointing Bush.^[226] In 1991, Bush nominated conservative federal judge Clarence Thomas to succeed Thurgood Marshall, a long-time liberal stalwart. Thomas, the former head of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), faced heavy opposition in the Senate, as well as from pro-choice groups and the NAACP. His nomination faced another difficulty when Anita Hill accused Thomas of having sexually harassed her during his time as the chair of EEOC. Thomas won confirmation in a narrow 52–48 vote; 43 Republicans and 9 Democrats voted to confirm Thomas's nomination, while 46 Democrats and 2 Republicans voted against confirmation.^[227] Thomas became one of the most conservative justices of his era.^[228]



Bush appointed Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court in 1991

Other issues

Bush's education platform consisted mainly of offering federal support for a variety of innovations, such as open enrollment, incentive pay for outstanding teachers, and rewards for schools that improve performance with underprivileged children.^[229] Though Bush did not pass a major educational reform package during his presidency, his ideas influenced later reform efforts, including Goals 2000 and the No Child Left Behind Act.^[230] Bush signed the Immigration Act of 1990,^[231] which led to a 40 percent increase in legal immigration to the United States.^[232] The act more than doubled the number of visas given to immigrants on the basis of job skills.^[233] In the wake of the savings and loan crisis, Bush proposed a \$50 billion package to rescue the savings and loans industry, and also proposed the creation of the Office of Thrift Supervision to regulate the industry. Congress passed the Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery, and Enforcement Act of 1989, which incorporated most of Bush's proposals.^[234]

Public image

Bush was widely seen as a "pragmatic caretaker" president who lacked a unified and compelling long-term theme in his efforts.^{[235][236][237]} Indeed, Bush's sound bite where he refers to the issue of overarching purpose as "the vision thing" has become a metonym applied to other political figures accused of similar difficulties.^{[238][239][240][241][242][243]} His ability to gain broad international support for the Gulf War and the war's result were seen as both a diplomatic and military triumph,^[244] rousing bipartisan approval,^[245] though his decision to withdraw without removing Saddam Hussein left mixed feelings, and attention returned to the

domestic front and a souring economy.^[246] A *New York Times* article mistakenly depicted Bush as being surprised to see a supermarket barcode reader;^{[247][248]} the report of his reaction exacerbated the notion that he was "out of touch".^[247] Amid the early 1990s recession, his image shifted from "conquering hero" to "politician befuddled by economic matters".^[249]

At the elite level, a number of commentators and political experts deplored the state of American politics in 1991–1992, and reported the voters were angry. Many analysts blamed the poor quality of national election campaigns.^[250]

1992 presidential campaign

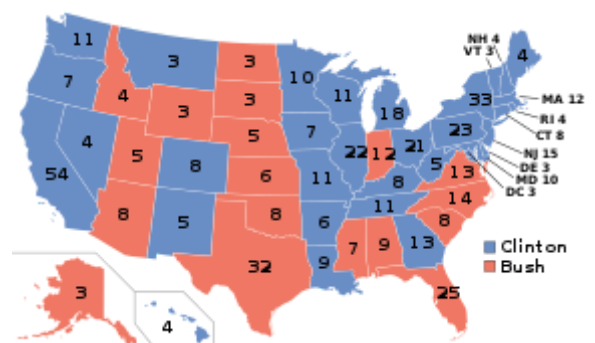
Bush announced his reelection bid in early 1992; with a coalition victory in the Persian Gulf War and high approval ratings, Bush's reelection initially looked likely.^[251] As a result, many leading Democrats, including Mario Cuomo, Dick Gephardt, and Al Gore, declined to seek their party's presidential nomination.^[252] However, Bush's tax increase had angered many conservatives, who believed that Bush had strayed from the conservative principles of Ronald Reagan.^[253] He faced a challenge from conservative political columnist Pat Buchanan in the 1992 Republican primaries.^[254] Bush fended off Buchanan's challenge and won his party's nomination at the 1992 Republican National Convention, but the convention adopted a socially conservative platform strongly influenced by the Christian right.^[255]

Meanwhile, the Democrats nominated Governor Bill Clinton of Arkansas. A moderate who was affiliated with the Democratic Leadership Council (DLC), Clinton favored welfare reform, deficit reduction, and a tax cut for the middle class.^[256] In early 1992, the race took an unexpected twist when Texas billionaire H. Ross Perot launched a third party bid, claiming that neither Republicans nor Democrats could eliminate the deficit and make government more efficient. His message appealed to voters across the political spectrum disappointed with both parties' perceived fiscal irresponsibility.^[257] Perot also attacked NAFTA, which he claimed would lead to major job losses.^[258] National polling taken in mid-1992 showed Perot in the lead, but Clinton experienced a surge through effective campaigning and the selection of Senator Al Gore, a popular and relatively young Southerner, as his running mate.^[259]

Clinton won the election, taking 43 percent of the popular vote and 370 electoral votes, while Bush won 37.5 percent of the popular vote and 168 electoral votes.^[260] Perot won 19% of the popular vote, one of the highest totals for a third-party candidate in U.S. history, drawing equally from both major candidates, according to exit polls.^[261] Clinton performed well in the Northeast, the Midwest, and the West Coast, while also waging the strongest Democratic campaign in the South since the 1976 election.^[262] Several factors were important in Bush's defeat. The ailing economy which arose from recession may have been the main factor in Bush's loss, as 7 in 10 voters said on election day that the economy was either "not so good" or "poor".^{[263][264]} On the eve of the 1992 election, the unemployment rate stood at 7.8%, which was the highest it had been since 1984.^[265] The president was also damaged by his alienation of many conservatives in his party.^[266] Bush blamed Perot in part for his defeat, though exit polls showed that Perot drew his voters about equally from Clinton and Bush.^[267]



Bush's approval ratings (red) compared to his disapproval ratings (blue) during his presidency



Bush was defeated in the 1992 presidential election by Bill Clinton

Despite his defeat, Bush left office with a 56 percent job approval rating in January 1993.^[268] Like many of his predecessors, Bush issued a series of pardons during his last days in office. In December 1992, he granted executive clemency to six former senior government officials implicated in the Iran-Contra scandal, most prominently former Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger.^[269] The charges against the six were that they lied to or withheld information from Congress. The pardons effectively brought an end to the Iran-Contra scandal.^[270]

According to Seymour Martin Lipset, the 1992 election had several unique characteristics. Voters felt that economic conditions were worse than they actually were, which harmed Bush. A rare event was the a strong third-party candidate. Liberals launched a backlash against 12 years of a conservative White House. The chief factor was Clinton's uniting his party, and winning over a number of heterogeneous groups.^[271]

Post-presidency (1993–2018)

Appearances

After leaving office, Bush and his wife built a retirement house in the community of West Oaks, Houston.^[272] He established a presidential office within the Park Laureate Building on Memorial Drive in Houston.^[273] He also frequently spent time at his vacation home in Kennebunkport, took annual cruises in Greece, went on fishing trips in Florida, and visited the Bohemian Club in Northern California. He declined to serve on corporate boards, but delivered numerous paid speeches and served as an adviser to The Carlyle Group, a private equity firm.^[274] He never published his memoirs, but he and Brent Scowcroft co-wrote *A World Transformed*, a 1999 work on foreign policy. Portions of his letters and his diary were later published as *The China Diary of George H. W. Bush* and *All The Best, George Bush*.^[275]



President Bill Clinton meeting with former presidents George H.W. Bush and Jimmy Carter at the White House in September 1993

During a 1993 visit to Kuwait, Bush was targeted in an assassination plot directed by the Iraqi Intelligence Service. President Clinton retaliated when he ordered the firing of 23 cruise missiles at Iraqi Intelligence Service headquarters in Baghdad.^[276] Bush did not publicly comment on the assassination attempt or the missile strike, but privately spoke with Clinton shortly before the strike took place.^[277] In the 1994 gubernatorial elections, his sons George W. and Jeb concurrently ran for Governor of Texas and Governor of Florida. Concerning their political careers, he advised them both that "[a]t some point both of you may want to say 'Well, I don't agree with my Dad on that point' or 'Frankly I think Dad was wrong on that.' Do it. Chart your own course, not just on the issues but on defining yourselves".^[278] George W. won his race against Ann Richards while Jeb lost to Lawton Chiles. After the results came in, the elder Bush told ABC, "I have very mixed emotions. Proud father, is the way I would sum it all up."^[279] Jeb would again run for governor of Florida in 1998 and win at the same time that his brother George W. won re-election in Texas. It marked the second time in United States history that a pair of brothers served simultaneously as governors.^[280]

Bush supported his son's candidacy in the 2000 presidential election, but did not actively campaign in the election and did not deliver a speech at the 2000 Republican National Convention.^[281] George W. Bush defeated Al Gore in the 2000 election and was re-elected in 2004. Bush and his son thus became the second father-son pair to each serve as President of the United States, following John Adams and John Quincy Adams.^[282] Through previous administrations, the elder Bush had ubiquitously been known as "George Bush" or "President Bush", but following his son's election the need to distinguish between them has made retronymic forms such as "George H. W. Bush" and "George Bush Sr." and colloquialisms such as "Bush 41"

and "Bush the Elder" more common.^[283] Bush advised his son on some personnel choices, approving of the selection of Dick Cheney as running mate and the retention of George Tenet as CIA Director. However, he was not consulted on all appointments, including that of his old rival, Donald Rumsfeld, as Secretary of Defense.^[284] Though he avoided giving unsolicited advice to his son, Bush and his son also discussed some matters of policy, especially regarding national security issues.^[285]



George and Barbara Bush, 2001

In his retirement, Bush generally avoided publicly expressing his opinion on political issues, instead using the public spotlight to support various charities.^[286] Despite earlier political differences with Bill Clinton, the two former presidents eventually became friends.^[287] They appeared together in television ads, encouraging aid for victims of Hurricane Katrina and the 2004 Indian Ocean earthquake and tsunami.^[288]

Final years

Bush supported Republican John McCain in the 2008 presidential election,^[289] and Republican Mitt Romney in the 2012 presidential election,^[290] but both were defeated by Democrat Barack Obama. In 2011, Obama awarded Bush with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor in the United States.^[291]

Bush supported his son Jeb's bid in the 2016 Republican primaries.^[292] Jeb Bush's campaign struggled however, and he withdrew from the race during the primaries. Neither George H.W. nor George W. Bush endorsed the eventual Republican nominee, Donald Trump,^[293] all three Bushes emerged as frequent critics of Trump's policies and speaking style, while Trump frequently criticized George W. Bush's presidency. George H. W. Bush later said that he voted for the Democratic nominee, Hillary Clinton, in the general election.^[294] After the election, Bush wrote a letter to president-elect Donald Trump in January 2017 to inform him that because of his poor health, he would not be able to attend Trump's inauguration on January 20; he gave him his best wishes.^[295]



From left to right: George H. W. Bush, Barack Obama, George W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and Jimmy Carter.

In August 2017, after the violence at Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, both Presidents Bush released a joint statement saying, "America must always reject racial bigotry, anti-Semitism, and hatred in all forms[. ...] As we pray for Charlottesville, we are all reminded of the fundamental truths recorded by that city's most prominent citizen in the Declaration of Independence: we are all created equal and endowed by our Creator with unalienable rights."^{[296][297]}

On April 17, 2018, Barbara Bush, died at the age of 92^[298] at her home in Houston, Texas. Her funeral was held at St. Martin's Episcopal Church in Houston four days later.^{[299][300]} Bush, along with former Presidents Barack Obama, George W. Bush (son), Bill Clinton and fellow First Ladies Melania Trump, Michelle Obama, Laura Bush (daughter-in-law) and Hillary Clinton were representatives who attended the funeral and who took a photo together after the service as a sign of unity, which went viral online.^{[301][302]}

On November 1, Bush went to the polls to vote early in the midterm elections. This would be his final public appearance.^[303]

Death and funeral

After a long battle with vascular Parkinson's disease, Bush died at his home in Houston on November 30, 2018, at the age of 94.^{[304][305]} At the time of his death he was the longest-lived U.S. president,^[306] a distinction now held by Jimmy Carter.^[307] He was also the third-oldest vice president.^[h] Bush lay in state in the Rotunda of the U.S. Capitol from December 3 through December 5; he was the 12th U.S. president to be accorded this honor.^{[309][310]} Then, on December 5, Bush's casket was transferred from the Capitol rotunda to Washington National Cathedral where a state funeral was held.^[311] After the funeral, Bush's body was transported to George H.W. Bush Presidential Library in College Station, Texas, where he was buried next to his wife Barbara and daughter Robin.^[312] At the funeral, former president George W. Bush eulogized his father saying,



Members of the public pay their respects at the casket of George H. W. Bush lying in state in the Rotunda of the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C.

"He looked for the good in each person, and he usually found it."^[311]

Personal life

In 1991, *The New York Times* revealed that Bush was suffering from Graves' disease, a non-contagious thyroid condition that his wife Barbara also suffered from.^[313] In an interview with Larry King in November 2010, Bush lamented that he already had trouble walking due to Parkinsonitis.^[314] Subsequently in July 2012, Bush mentioned that he suffered from vascular parkinsonism, a form of Parkinson's disease which forced him to use a motorized scooter or wheelchair from that time onwards.^[315]

Bush was a lifelong Episcopalian and a member of St. Martin's Episcopal Church in Houston. As President, Bush regularly attended services at St. John's Episcopal Church in Washington D.C.^[316] He cited various moments in his life on the deepening of his faith, including his escape from Japanese forces in 1944, and the death of his three-year-old daughter Robin in 1953.^[317] His faith was reflected in his Thousand Points of Light speech, his support for prayer in schools, and his support for the pro-life movement (following his election as vice president).^{[318][317]}

Legacy

Historical reputation

Polls of historians and political scientists have ranked Bush in the top half of presidents. A 2018 poll of the American Political Science Association's Presidents and Executive Politics section ranked Bush as the 17th best president out of 44.^[319] A 2017 C-Span poll of historians also ranked Bush as the 20th best president out of 43.^[320] Richard Rose described Bush as a "guardian" president, and many other historians and political scientists have similarly described Bush as a passive, hands-off president who was "largely content with things as they were".^[321] Professor Steven Knott writes that "[g]enerally the Bush presidency is viewed as successful in foreign affairs but a disappointment in domestic affairs."^[322]

Biographer Jon Meacham writes that, after he left office, many Americans viewed Bush as "a gracious and underappreciated man who had many virtues but who had failed to project enough of a distinctive identity and vision to overcome the economic challenges of 1991–92 and to win a second term."^[323] Bush himself noted

that his legacy was "lost between the glory of Reagan ... and the trials and tribulations of my sons."^[324] In the 2010s, Bush was fondly remembered for his willingness to compromise, which contrasted with the intensely partisan era that followed his presidency.^[325]

In 2018, Vox highlighted Bush for his "pragmatism" as a moderate Republican president by working across the aisle.^[326] They specifically noted Bush's accomplishments within the domestic policy by making bipartisan deals, including raising the tax budget among the wealthy with the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1990. Bush also helped pass the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 which The New York Times described as "the most sweeping anti-discrimination law since the Civil Rights Act of 1964."^[327] In response to the Exxon Valdez oil spill, Bush built another bipartisan coalition to strengthen the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990.^{[328][329]} Bush also championed and signed into a law the Immigration Act of 1990, a sweeping bipartisan immigration reform act that made it easier for immigrants to legally enter the country, while also granting immigrants fleeing violence the temporary protected status visa, as well as lifted the pre-naturalization English testing process, and finally "eliminated the exclusion of homosexuals under what Congress now deemed the medically unsound classification of "sexual deviant" that was included in the 1965 act."^{[330][331]} Bush stated, "Immigration is not just a link to our past but its also a bridge to America's future".^[332]

According to USA Today, the legacy of Bush's presidency was defined by his victory over Iraq after the invasion of Kuwait, and by his presiding over the Dissolution of the Soviet Union and the German reunification.^[333] Michael Beschloss and Strobe Talbott praise Bush's handling of the USSR, especially how he prodded Gorbachev in terms of releasing control over the satellite states and permitting German unification—and especially a united Germany in NATO.^[334] Andrew Bacevich judges the Bush administration as "morally obtuse" in the light of its "business-as-usual" attitude towards China after the massacre in Tiananmen Square and its uncritical support of Gorbachev as the Soviet Union disintegrated.^[335] David Rothkopf argues:

In the recent history of U.S. foreign policy, there has been no president, nor any president's team, who, when confronted with profound international change and challenges, responded with such a thoughtful and well-managed foreign policy....[the Bush administration was] a bridge over one of the great fault lines of history [that] ushered in a 'new world order' it described with great skill and professionalism."^[336]

Memorials, awards, and honors

In 1990, Time magazine named him the Man of the Year.^[337] In 1997, the Houston Intercontinental Airport was renamed as the George Bush Intercontinental Airport.^[338] In 1999, the CIA headquarters in Langley, Virginia, was named the George Bush Center for Intelligence in his honor.^[339] In 2011, Bush, an avid golfer, was inducted in the World Golf Hall of Fame.^[340] The USS George H.W. Bush (CVN-77), the tenth and last Nimitz-class supercarrier of the United States Navy, was named for Bush.^{[341][342]} Bush is commemorated on a postage stamp that was issued by the United States Postal Service in 2019.^[343]



Bush visits NAS JRB during Hurricane Katrina relief efforts



The George H.W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum on the west campus of Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas

The George H.W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum, the tenth U.S. presidential library, was completed in 1997.^[344] It contains the presidential and vice presidential papers of Bush and the vice presidential papers of Dan Quayle.^[345] The library is located on a 90-acre (36 ha) site on the west campus of Texas A&M University in College Station, Texas.^[346] Texas A&M University also hosts the Bush School of Government and Public Service, a graduate public policy school.^[346]

See also

- Electoral history of George H. W. Bush
- List of presidents of the United States
- List of presidents of the United States by previous experience

Notes

- a. Since around 2000 he has usually been called **George H. W. Bush**, **Bush Senior**, **Bush 41** or **Bush the Elder** to distinguish him from his eldest son, George W. Bush, who served as the 43rd president from 2001 to 2009; previously he was usually referred to simply as **George Bush**.
- b. Bush later purchased the estate, which is now known as the Bush compound.^[8]
- c. For decades, Bush was considered the youngest aviator in the U.S. Navy during his period of service,^[15] but such claims are now regarded as speculation.^[16] His official Navy biography called him "the youngest" in 2001,^[17] but by 2018 the Navy biography described him as "one of the youngest".^[18]
- d. Bush's fellow crew members for the mission were William G. White and John Delaney. According to the accounts of an American pilot and a Japanese individual, another parachute from Bush's aircraft opened, but the bodies of White and Delaney were never recovered.^[22]
- e. At the time of his wife's death on April 17, 2018, George H. W. had been married to Barbara for 73 years, the longest presidential marriage in American history at that point.^[32] The length of their marriage was surpassed in 2019 by the marriage of Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter.^[33]
- f. Biographer Jon Meacham writes that it was widely assumed at the time that Donald Rumsfeld had engineered Bush's appointment as CIA Director since the post was regarded as a "political graveyard". Meacham writes that it is more likely that the key factor in Bush's appointment was that Ford believed Bush would work better with Secretary of State Henry Kissinger than would Elliot Richardson, his original pick for the CIA post.^[81]
- g. The 1988 presidential election remains the only presidential election since 1948 in which either party won a third consecutive term.^[146]
- h. The longest-lived U.S. vice president is John Nance Garner, who died on November 7, 1967, 15 days short of his 99th birthday.^[308]


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External links

- [George H.W. Bush Presidential Library Center](https://web.archive.org/web/20190206232136/https://www.bush41.org/) (<https://web.archive.org/web/20190206232136/https://www.bush41.org/>)
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- *George H. W. Bush* (<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/films/bush/player/>) an American Experience documentary
- Works by George H. W. Bush (<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/author/1672>) at Project Gutenberg
- George H. W. Bush (<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/4311>) at Find a Grave

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George W. Bush

George Walker Bush (born July 6, 1946) is an American politician and businessman who served as the 43rd president of the United States from 2001 to 2009. A member of the Republican Party, Bush previously served as the 46th governor of Texas from 1995 to 2000. He was born into the Bush family; his father, George H. W. Bush, was the 41st president of the United States from 1989 to 1993.

As the eldest son of Barbara and George H. W. Bush, he is the second son of a former United States president to himself become president, with the first being John Quincy Adams, the son of John Adams. He flew warplanes in the Texas and Alabama Air National Guard. After graduating from Yale College in 1968 and Harvard Business School in 1975, he worked in the oil industry. Bush married Laura Welch in 1977 and unsuccessfully ran for the U.S. House of Representatives shortly thereafter. He later co-owned the Texas Rangers baseball team before defeating incumbent Ann Richards in the 1994 Texas gubernatorial election. As governor, Bush successfully sponsored legislation for tort reform, increased education funding, set higher standards for schools, and reformed the criminal justice system. Bush also helped make Texas the leading producer of wind powered electricity in the U.S. Bush was elected president in 2000 when he defeated Democratic incumbent Vice President Al Gore after a narrow and contested win that involved a Supreme Court decision to stop a recount in Florida. He became the fourth person to be elected president without a popular vote victory.

Upon taking office, Bush pushed through a \$1.3 trillion tax cut program and the No Child Left Behind Act, a major education reform bill. He also pushed for socially conservative efforts, such as the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act and faith-based welfare initiatives.

A decisive event reshaping his administration was the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, Bush created the United States Department of Homeland Security and declared a global war on terrorism. He ordered an invasion of Afghanistan to overthrow the Taliban, destroy the terrorist group al-Qaeda, and capture Osama bin Laden. He also signed the controversial Patriot Act in order to authorize surveillance of suspected terrorists. In 2003, Bush ordered an invasion of Iraq, arguing that the Saddam Hussein regime possessed weapons of mass destruction. Intense criticism came when no WMD stockpiles were ever found nor evidence of an operational relationship with al-Qaeda. Bush also

George W. Bush



Official portrait, 2003

43rd President of the United States

In office

January 20, 2001 – January 20, 2009

Vice President Dick Cheney

Preceded by Bill Clinton

Succeeded by Barack Obama

46th Governor of Texas

In office

January 17, 1995 – December 21, 2000

Lieutenant Bob Bullock

Rick Perry

Preceded by Ann Richards

Succeeded by Rick Perry

Personal details

Born George Walker Bush
July 6, 1946
New Haven,
Connecticut, U.S.

Political party Republican

Spouse(s) Laura Welch (m... 1977)

Children Barbara · Jenna

signed into law the Medicare Modernization Act, which created Medicare Part D, and funding for the AIDS relief program, PEPFAR.

Bush was re-elected to a second term in 2004, defeating Democratic senator John Kerry. During his second term, Bush reached multiple free trade agreements and successfully nominated John Roberts and Samuel Alito to the Supreme Court. He sought major changes to Social Security and immigration laws, but both efforts failed in Congress. The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq continued, and in 2007 he launched a surge of troops in Iraq. Bush received criticism from across the political spectrum^{[4][5]} for his handling of Hurricane Katrina^{[6][7]} and for the midterm dismissal of U.S. attorneys. In the midst of it, the Democratic Party regained control of Congress in the 2006 elections. In December 2007, the U.S. entered the Great Recession, prompting the Bush administration to obtain congressional approval for multiple economic programs intended to preserve the country's financial system, including the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP) to buy toxic assets from financial institutions.

Bush was among the most popular, as well as unpopular, U.S. presidents in history; he received the highest recorded approval ratings in the wake of the 9/11 attacks, but one of the lowest such ratings during the 2008 financial crisis.^[8] Bush finished his second term in office in 2009 and returned to Texas. In 2010, he published his memoir, *Decision Points*.^[9] His presidential library opened in 2013. His presidency has been rated as below-average in historical rankings of U.S. presidents, although his public favorability ratings have improved since leaving office.

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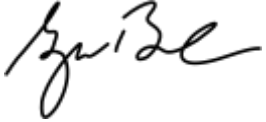



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Parents	<u>George H. W. Bush</u> <u>Barbara Pierce</u>
Relatives	<u>Bush family</u>
Residence	<u>Crawford, Texas, U.S.</u>
Alma mater	<u>Yale University (BA)</u> <u>Harvard University (MBA)</u>
Occupation	Politician · businessman
Civilian awards	<u>List of honors and awards</u>
Signature	
Website	<u>Official website (http://georgewbush.com)</u> <u>Presidential Library (http://georgewbushlibrary.smu.edu)</u> <u>Presidential Center (http://bushcenter.org)</u> <u>White House Archives (https://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/index.html)</u>
Military service	
Nickname(s)	"Dubya" ^[2] · "GWB" ^[3]
Allegiance	 <u>United States</u>
Branch/service	<u>Texas Air National Guard</u> <u>Alabama Air National Guard</u>
Years of service	1968–1974
Rank	 <u>First Lieutenant</u>
Unit	<u>147th Reconnaissance Wing</u> <u>187th Fighter Wing</u>
Military awards	<u>Air Force Pilot's Badge</u>  <u>Outstanding Unit Award</u>

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Early life and career

George Walker Bush was born on July 6, 1946, at Grace-New Haven Hospital (now [Yale New Haven Hospital](#)) in [New Haven, Connecticut](#), while his father was a student at [Yale](#).^[10] He was the first child of [George Herbert Walker Bush](#) and [Barbara Pierce](#). He was raised in [Midland](#) and [Houston, Texas](#), with four siblings, [John](#), [Neil](#), [Marvin](#) and [Dorothy](#). Another younger sister, [Robin](#), died from [leukemia](#) at the age of three in 1953.^[11] His paternal grandfather, [Prescott Bush](#), was a U.S. Senator from [Connecticut](#).^[12] His father was [Ronald Reagan](#)'s vice president from 1981 to 1989 and the 41st U.S. president from 1989 to 1993. Bush has [English](#) and some [German](#) ancestry, along with more distant [Dutch](#), [Welsh](#), [Irish](#), [French](#), and [Scottish](#) roots.^[13]



George W. Bush with his parents, [Barbara](#) and [George H. W. Bush](#), c. 1947

Education

Bush attended public schools in [Midland, Texas](#) until the family moved to [Houston](#) after he had completed seventh grade. He then spent two years at [The Kinkaid School](#), a [prep school](#) in [Piney Point Village, Texas](#) in the [Houston area](#).^[14]

Bush attended high school at [Phillips Academy](#), a [boarding school](#) in [Andover, Massachusetts](#), where he played baseball and was the head cheerleader during his senior year.^{[15][16]} He attended [Yale University](#) from 1964 to 1968, graduating with a [Bachelor of Arts](#) degree in [history](#).^[17] During this time, he was a cheerleader and a member of the [Delta Kappa Epsilon](#), serving as the president of the fraternity during his senior



Bush in Phillips Academy's 1964 yearbook

year.^{[18][19][20]} Bush became a member of the Skull and Bones society as a senior.^[21] Bush was a rugby union player and was on Yale's 1st XV.^[22] He characterized himself as an average student.^[23] His GPA during his first three years at Yale was 77, and he had a similar average under a nonnumeric rating system in his final year.^[24]

In the fall of 1973, Bush entered Harvard Business School. He graduated in 1975 with an MBA degree. He is the only U.S. president to have earned an MBA.^[25]

Family and personal life

Bush was engaged to Cathryn Lee Wolfman in 1967, but the engagement did not last. Bush and Wolfman remained on good terms after the end of the relationship.^[26] While Bush was at a backyard barbecue in 1977, friends introduced him to Laura Welch, a schoolteacher and librarian. After a three-month courtship, she accepted his marriage proposal and they wed on November 5 of that year.^[27] The couple settled in Midland, Texas. Bush left his family's Episcopal Church to join his wife's United Methodist Church.^[28] On November 25, 1981, Laura Bush gave birth to fraternal twin daughters, Barbara and Jenna.^[27] Bush describes being challenged by Billy Graham to consider faith in Jesus "Christ as the risen Lord", how he began to read the Bible daily, "surrendering" to the "Almighty", that "faith is a walk" and that he was "moved by God's love".^[29]



George and Laura Bush with their daughters Jenna and Barbara, 1990

Alcohol abuse

Prior to getting married, Bush struggled with multiple episodes of alcohol abuse.^[30] In one instance on September 4, 1976, he was pulled over near his family's summer home in Kennebunkport, Maine, for driving under the influence of alcohol. He was cited for DUI, fined \$150 (equivalent to \$682 in 2020), and got his Maine driver's license briefly suspended.^[31] Bush said his wife has had a stabilizing effect on his life,^[27] and he attributes her influence to his 1986 decision to give up alcohol.^[32] While Governor of Texas, Bush said of his wife, "I saw an elegant, beautiful woman who turned out not only to be elegant and beautiful, but very smart and willing to put up with my rough edges, and I must confess has smoothed them off over time."^[27] Bush also claims that his faith in God was critical in the process to give up drink. "I believe that God helped open my eyes, which were closing because of booze".^[33]

Hobbies

Bush has been an avid reader throughout his adult life, preferring biographies and histories.^[34] During his presidency, Bush read the Bible daily,^[35] though at the end of his second term he said on television that he is "not a literalist" about Bible interpretation.^{[36][37]} Walt Harrington, a journalist, recalled seeing "books by John Fowles, F. Scott Fitzgerald, James Joyce, and Gore Vidal lying about, as well as biographies of Willa Cather and Queen Victoria" in his home when Bush was a Texas oilman. Other activities include cigar smoking and golf.^[38] After leaving the White House, Bush took up oil painting.^[39]

Military career



Lt. George W. Bush in the Texas Air National Guard, 1968

In May 1968, Bush was commissioned into the Texas Air National Guard.^[40] After two years of training in active-duty service,^[41] he was assigned to Houston, flying Convair F-102s with the 147th Reconnaissance Wing out of the Ellington Field Joint Reserve Base.^{[40][42]} Critics, including former Democratic National Committee Chairman Terry McAuliffe, have alleged that Bush was favorably treated due to his father's political standing as a member of the House of Representatives, citing his selection as a pilot despite his low pilot aptitude test scores and his irregular attendance.^[40] In June 2005, the United States Department of Defense released all the records of Bush's Texas Air National Guard service, which remain in its official archives.^[43]

In late 1972 and early 1973, he drilled with the 187th Fighter Wing of the Alabama Air National Guard. He had moved to Montgomery, Alabama, to work on the unsuccessful U.S. Senate campaign of Republican Winton M. Blount.^{[44][45]} In 1972, Bush was suspended from flying for failure to take a scheduled physical exam.^[46] He was honorably discharged from the Air Force Reserve on November 21, 1974.^[47]

He remains the most recent President to serve in the United States Military.^[48]

Business career

In 1977, Bush established Arbusto Energy, a small oil exploration company, although it did not begin operations until the following year.^{[49][50]} He later changed the name to Bush Exploration. In 1984, his company merged with the larger Spectrum 7, and Bush became chairman. The company was hurt by decreased oil prices, and it folded into HKN, Inc.,^[51] with Bush becoming a member of HKN's board of directors. Questions of possible insider trading involving HKN arose, but a Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) investigation concluded that the information Bush had at the time of his stock sale was not sufficient to constitute insider trading.^[52]



Bush greeting President Ronald Reagan in 1988

In April 1989, Bush arranged for a group of investors to purchase a controlling interest in the Texas Rangers baseball franchise for \$89 million and invested \$500,000 himself to start. He then was managing general partner for five years.^[53] He actively led the team's projects and regularly attended its games, often choosing to sit in the open stands with fans.^[54] Bush's sale of his shares in the Rangers in 1998 brought him over \$15 million from his initial \$800,000 investment.^[55]

Early political involvement

In 1978, Bush ran for the House of Representatives from Texas's 19th congressional district. The retiring member, George H. Mahon, had held the district for the Democratic Party since 1935. Bush's opponent, Kent Hance, portrayed him as out of touch with rural Texans, and Bush lost the election with 46.8 percent of the vote to Hance's 53.2 percent.^[56]

Bush and his family moved to Washington, D.C., in 1988 to work on his father's campaign for the U.S. presidency.^{[57][58]} He was a campaign advisor and liaison to the media, and assisted his father by campaigning across the country.^[59] In December 1991, Bush was one of seven people named by his father to run his father's 1992 presidential re-election campaign, as a "campaign advisor".^[60] The previous month, his father

had asked him to tell White House chief of staff John H. Sununu to resign.^[61]

Governor of Texas (1995–2000)

Bush declared his candidacy for the 1994 Texas gubernatorial election at the same time his brother Jeb sought the governorship of Florida. His campaign focused on four themes: welfare reform, tort reform, crime reduction, and education improvement.^[59] Bush's campaign advisers were Karen Hughes, Joe Allbaugh, and Karl Rove.^[62]



Governor Bush (right) with father, former president George H. W. Bush, and wife, Laura, in 1997

After easily winning the Republican primary, Bush faced popular Democratic incumbent Governor Ann Richards.^{[59][63]} In the course of the campaign, Bush pledged to sign a bill allowing Texans to obtain permits to carry concealed weapons. Richards had vetoed the bill, but Bush signed it into law after he became governor.^[64] According to *The Atlantic*, the race "featured a rumor that she was a lesbian, along with a rare instance of such a tactic's making it into the public record – when a regional chairman of the Bush campaign allowed himself, perhaps inadvertently, to be quoted criticizing Richards for 'appointing avowed homosexual activists' to state jobs".^[65] *The Atlantic*, and

others, connected the lesbian rumor to Karl Rove,^[66] but Rove denied being involved.^[67] Bush won the general election with 53.5 percent against Richards' 45.9 percent.^[68]

Bush used a budget surplus to push through Texas's largest tax-cut, \$2 billion.^[62] He extended government funding for organizations providing education of the dangers of alcohol and drug use and abuse, and helping to reduce domestic violence.^[69] Critics contended that during his tenure, Texas ranked near the bottom in environmental evaluations. Supporters pointed to his efforts to raise the salaries of teachers and improve educational test scores.^[59]

In 1999, Bush signed a law that required electric retailers to buy a certain amount of energy from renewable sources (RPS),^{[70][71][72]} which helped Texas eventually become the leading producer of wind powered electricity in the U.S.^{[73][74][75]}

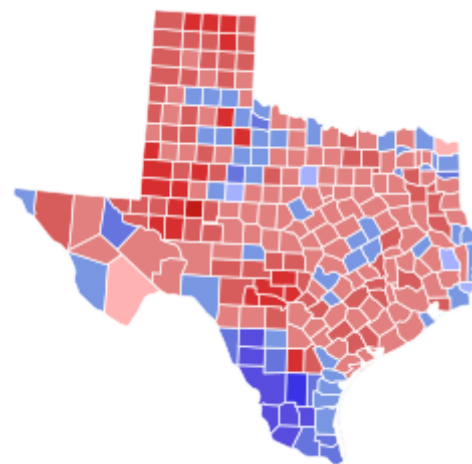
In 1998, Bush won re-election with a record^[59] 69 percent of the vote.^[76] He became the first governor in Texas history to be elected to two consecutive four-year terms.^[59] In his second term, Bush promoted faith-based organizations and enjoyed high approval ratings.^[59] He proclaimed June 10, 2000, to be Jesus Day in Texas, a day on which he urged all Texans to "answer the call to serve those in need".^[77]

Throughout Bush's first term, he was the focus of national attention as a potential future presidential candidate. Following his re-election, speculation soared, and within a year he decided to seek the 2000 Republican presidential nomination.^[59]

Presidential campaigns



George W. Bush with his father outside the White House, April 29, 1992



Results of the 1994 gubernatorial election in Texas

2000 presidential candidacy

Primary

Incumbent Democratic president Bill Clinton was in his second and final term, and the field for nomination in both parties was wide open. Bush was the governor of Texas in June 1999 when he announced his candidacy for president, joining John McCain, Alan Keyes, Steve Forbes, Gary Bauer, Orrin Hatch, Elizabeth Dole, Dan Quayle, Pat Buchanan, Lamar Alexander, John Kasich, and Bob Smith.

Bush portrayed himself as a compassionate conservative, implying he was more centrist than other Republicans. He campaigned on a platform that included bringing integrity and honor back to the White House, increasing the size of the military, cutting taxes, improving education, and aiding minorities.^[59] By early 2000, the race had centered on Bush and McCain.^[59]



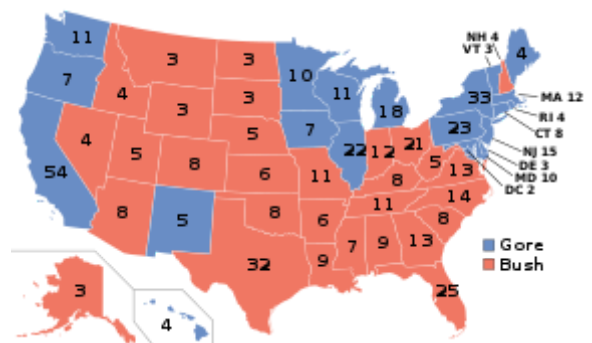
George W. Bush in Concord, New Hampshire, signing to be a presidential candidate

Bush won the Iowa caucuses and, although heavily favored to win the New Hampshire primary, trailed McCain by 19 percent and lost. Despite this he regained momentum and effectively became the front runner after the South Carolina primary, which according to The Boston Globe made history for his campaign's negativity. The New York Times described it as a smeat campaign.^{[78][79][80]}

General election

On July 25, 2000, Bush surprised some observers when he selected Dick Cheney – a former White House chief of staff, representative and secretary of defense – to be his running mate. At the time, Cheney was serving as head of Bush's vice presidential search committee. Soon after at the 2000 Republican National Convention, Bush and Cheney were officially nominated by the Republican Party.

Bush continued to campaign across the country and touted his record as Governor of Texas.^[59] During his campaign, Bush criticized his Democratic opponent, incumbent Vice President Al Gore, over gun control and taxation.^[81]



2000 electoral vote results

When the election returns were tallied on November 7, Bush had won 29 states, including Florida. The closeness of the Florida outcome led to a recount.^[59] The initial recount also went to Bush, but the outcome was tied up in lower courts for a month until eventually reaching the U.S. Supreme Court.^[82] On December 9, in the controversial Bush v. Gore ruling,^[83] the Court reversed a Florida Supreme Court decision that had ordered a third count, and stopped an ordered statewide hand recount based on the argument that the use of different standards among Florida's counties violated the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.^[59] The machine recount showed that Bush had won the Florida vote by a margin of 537 votes out of six million casts.^[84] Although he had received 543,895 fewer individual nationwide votes than Gore, Bush won the election, receiving 271 electoral votes to Gore's 266 (Gore had actually been awarded 267 votes by the states pledged to him plus the District of Columbia, but one D.C. elector abstained). Bush was the first person to win an American presidential election with fewer popular votes than another candidate since Benjamin Harrison in 1888.^[84]

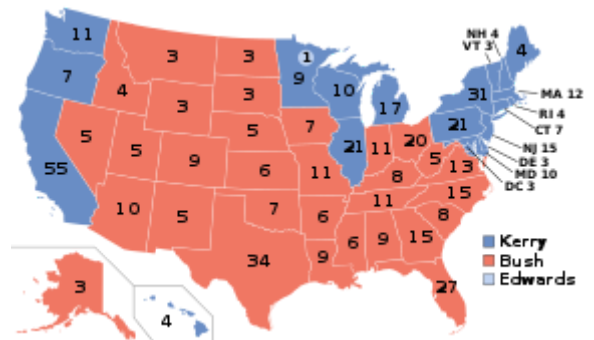
2004 presidential candidacy

In his 2004 bid for re-election, Bush commanded broad support in the Republican Party and did not encounter a primary challenge. He appointed Ken Mehlman as campaign manager, and Karl Rove devised a political strategy.^[85] Bush and the Republican platform emphasized a strong commitment to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan,^[86] support for the USA PATRIOT Act,^[87] a renewed shift in policy for constitutional amendments banning abortion and same-sex marriage,^{[86][88]} reforming Social Security to create private investment accounts,^[86] creation of an ownership society,^[86] and opposing mandatory carbon emissions controls.^[89] Bush also called for the implementation of a guest worker program for immigrants,^[86] which was criticized by conservatives.^[90]



George W. Bush speaks at a campaign rally in 2004

The Bush campaign advertised across the U.S. against Democratic candidates, including Bush's emerging opponent, Massachusetts Senator John Kerry. Kerry and other Democrats attacked Bush on the Iraq War, and accused him of failing to stimulate the economy and job growth. The Bush campaign portrayed Kerry as a staunch liberal who would raise taxes and increase the size of government. The Bush campaign continuously criticized Kerry's seemingly contradictory statements on the war in Iraq,^[59] and argued that Kerry lacked the decisiveness and vision necessary for success in the War on Terror.



2004 electoral vote results

Following the resignation of CIA director George Tenet in 2004, Bush nominated Porter Goss to head the agency. The White House ordered Goss to purge agency officers who were disloyal to the administration.^[91] After Goss' appointment, many of the CIA's senior agents were fired or quit. The CIA has been accused of deliberately leaking classified information to undermine the 2004 election.^[92]

In the election, Bush carried 31 of 50 states, receiving 286 electoral votes. He won an absolute majority of the popular vote (50.7 percent to his opponent's 48.3 percent).^[93] Bush's father George H.W. Bush was the previous president who won an absolute majority of the popular vote; he accomplished that feat in the 1988 election. Additionally, it was the first time since Herbert Hoover's election in 1928 that a Republican president was elected alongside re-elected Republican majorities in both Houses of Congress.

Presidency (2001–2009)

Bush had originally outlined an ambitious domestic agenda, but his priorities were significantly altered following the September 11 attacks.^[94] Wars were waged in Afghanistan and Iraq, and there were significant domestic debates regarding immigration, healthcare, Social Security, economic policy, and treatment of terrorist detainees. Over an eight-year period, Bush's once-high approval ratings^[95] steadily declined, while his disapproval numbers increased significantly.^[96] In 2007, the United States entered the longest post-World War II recession.^[97]

Domestic policy

Economic policy

Bush took office during a period of economic recession in the wake of the bursting of the dot-com bubble.^[98] The terrorist attacks also impacted the economy.

His administration increased federal government spending from \$1.789 trillion to \$2.983 trillion (60 percent), while revenues increased from \$2.025 trillion to \$2.524 trillion (from 2000 to 2008). Individual income tax revenues increased by 14 percent, corporate tax revenues by 50 percent, and customs and duties by 40 percent. Discretionary defense spending was increased by 107 percent, discretionary domestic spending by 62 percent, Medicare spending by 131 percent, social security by 51 percent, and income security spending by 130 percent. Cyclically adjusted, revenues rose by 35 percent and spending by 65 percent.^[99] The increase in spending was more than under any predecessor since Lyndon B. Johnson.^[100] The number of economic regulation governmental workers increased by 91,196.^[101]



President Bush delivering an address following the September 11 attacks to a joint session of Congress, September 20, 2001



President Bush signing a \$1.35 trillion tax cut into law, June 7, 2001

The surplus in fiscal year 2000 was \$237 billion – the third consecutive surplus and the largest surplus ever.^[102] In 2001, Bush's budget estimated that there would be a \$5.6 trillion surplus over the next ten years.^[103] Facing congressional opposition, Bush held townhall style meetings across the U.S. in order to increase public support for his plan for a \$1.35 trillion tax cut program, one of the largest tax cuts in U.S. history.^[59] Bush argued that unspent government funds should be returned to taxpayers, saying "the surplus is not the government's money. The surplus is the people's money."^[59] Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan warned of a recession and Bush stated that a tax cut would stimulate the economy and create jobs.^[104] Treasury Secretary Paul H. O'Neill, opposed some of the tax cuts on the basis that they would contribute to budget deficits and undermine Social Security.^[105] O'Neill disputes the claim, made in Bush's book *Decision Points*, that he never openly disagreed with him on planned tax cuts.^[106] By 2003, the economy showed signs of improvement, though job growth remained stagnant.^[59] Another tax cut was passed that year.

Between 2001 and 2008, GDP grew at an average annual rate of 2.125 percent,^[107] less than for past business cycles.^[108] Bush entered office with the Dow Jones Industrial Average at 10,587, and the average peaked in October 2007 at over 14,000. When Bush left office, the average was at 7,949, one of the lowest levels of his presidency.^[109] Only four other U.S. presidents have left office with the stock market lower than when they began.^[110]

Unemployment originally rose from 4.2 percent in January 2001 to 6.3 percent in June 2003, but subsequently dropped to 4.5 percent in July 2007.^[111] Adjusted for inflation, median household income dropped by \$1,175 between 2000 and 2007,^[112] while Professor Ken Homa of Georgetown University has noted that "Median real after-tax household income went up two percent".^[113] The poverty rate increased from 11.3 percent in 2000 to 12.3 percent in 2006 after peaking at 12.7 percent in 2004.^[114] By October 2008, due to increases in spending,^{[115]:273} the national debt had risen to \$11.3 trillion,^[116] more than doubling it since 2000.^{[117][118]} Most debt was accumulated as a result of what became known as the "Bush tax cuts" and increased national security spending.^[119] In March 2006, then-Senator Barack Obama said when he voted against raising the debt ceiling: "The fact that we are here today to debate raising America's debt limit is a sign of leadership failure."^[120] By the end of Bush's presidency, unemployment climbed to 7.2 percent.^[121]

In December 2007, the United States entered the longest post-World War II recession,^[97] caused by a housing market correction, a subprime mortgage crisis, soaring oil prices, and other factors. In February 2008, 63,000 jobs were lost, a five-year record,^[122] and in November, over 500,000 jobs were lost, which marked the largest loss of jobs in the United States in 34 years.^[123] The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that in the last four months of 2008, 1.9 million jobs were lost.^[124] By the end of 2008, the U.S. had lost 2.6 million jobs.^[125]

To aid with the situation, Bush signed a \$170 billion economic stimulus package which was intended to improve the economic situation by sending tax rebate checks to many Americans and providing tax breaks for struggling businesses. The Bush administration pushed for significantly increased regulation of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac in 2003,^[126] and after two years, the regulations passed the House but died in the Senate. Many Republican senators, as well as influential members of the Bush Administration, feared that the agency created by these regulations would merely be mimicking the private sector's risky practices.^{[127][128][129]} In September 2008, the crisis became much more serious beginning with the government takeover of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac followed by the collapse of Lehman Brothers and a federal bailout of American International Group for \$85 billion.^[130]

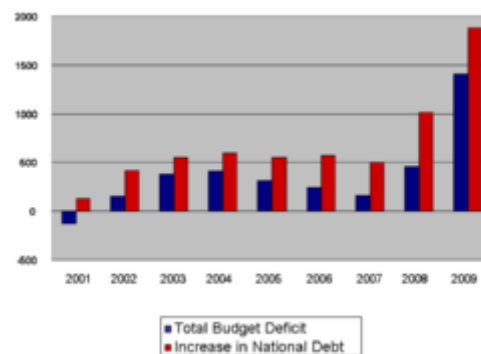
Many economists and world governments determined that the situation had become the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression.^{[131][132]} Additional regulation over the housing market would have been beneficial, according to former Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan.^[133] Bush, meanwhile, proposed a financial rescue plan to buy back a large portion of the U.S. mortgage market.^[134] Vince Reinhart, a former Federal Reserve economist now at the American Enterprise Institute, said "it would have helped for the Bush administration to empower the folks at Treasury and the Federal Reserve and the comptroller of the currency and the FDIC to look at these issues more closely", and additionally, that it would have helped "for Congress to have held hearings".^[128]

Education and public health

Bush undertook many educational agendas, such as increasing the funding for the National Science Foundation and National Institutes of Health in his first years of office and creating education programs to strengthen the grounding in science and mathematics for American high school students. Funding for the NIH was cut in 2006, the first such cut in 36 years, due to rising inflation.^[135]

One of the administration's early major initiatives was the No Child Left Behind Act, which aimed to measure and close the gap between rich and poor student performance, provide options to parents with students in low-performing schools, and target more federal funding to low-income schools. This landmark education initiative passed with broad bipartisan support, including that of Senator Ted Kennedy of Massachusetts.^[136] It was signed into law by Bush in early 2002.^[137] Many contend that the initiative has been successful, as cited by the fact that students in the U.S. have performed significantly better on state reading and math tests since Bush signed "No Child Left Behind" into law.^[138] Critics argue that it is underfunded^[139] and that NCLBA's focus on "high-stakes testing" and quantitative outcomes is counterproductive.^[140]

Total Deficits vs. National Debt Increases (\$ Billions)



Deficit and debt increases 2001–2009. Gross debt has increased over \$500 billion each year since FY2003.

On November 1, 2005, Bush announced a *National Strategy for Pandemic Influenza* to prepare the United States for a flu pandemic, which culminated in an implementation plan published by the Homeland Security Council in May 2006.^{[141][142]}

After being re-elected, Bush signed into law a Medicare drug benefit program that, according to Jan Crawford, resulted in "the greatest expansion in America's welfare state in forty years" – the bill's costs approached \$7 trillion.^{[115]:274} In 2007, Bush opposed and vetoed State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) legislation, which was added by the Democrats onto a war funding bill and passed by Congress. The SCHIP legislation would have significantly expanded federally funded health care benefits and plans to children of some low-income families. It was to be funded by an increase in the cigarette tax.^[143] Bush viewed the legislation as a move toward socialized health care, and asserted that the program could benefit families making as much as \$83,000 per year who did not need the help.^[144]



President Bush signing the No Child Left Behind Act into law, January 8, 2002

On May 21, 2008, Bush signed into law the Genetic Information Nondiscrimination Act (GINA).^{[145][146]} The bill aimed to protect Americans against health insurance and employment discrimination based on a person's genetic information. The issue had been debated for 13 years before it finally became law. The measure is designed to protect citizens without hindering genetic research.

Social services and Social Security

Following Republican efforts to pass the Medicare Act of 2003, Bush signed the bill, which included major changes to the Medicare program by providing beneficiaries with some assistance in paying for prescription drugs, while relying on private insurance for the delivery of benefits.^[147] The retired persons lobby group AARP worked with the Bush Administration on the program and gave their endorsement. Bush said the law, estimated to cost \$400 billion over the first ten years, would give the elderly "better choices and more control over their health care".^[148]



President Bush discussing Social Security reform at the Lake Nona YMCA Family Center in Orlando, Florida, March 18, 2005

Bush began his second term by outlining a major initiative to "reform" Social Security,^[149] which was facing record deficit projections beginning in 2005. Bush made it the centerpiece of his domestic agenda despite opposition from some in the U.S. Congress.^[149] In his 2005 State of the Union Address, Bush discussed the potential impending bankruptcy of the program and outlined his new program, which included partial privatization of the system, personal Social Security accounts, and options to permit Americans to divert a portion of their Social Security tax (FICA) into secured investments.^[149] Democrats opposed the proposal to partially privatize the system.^[149]

Bush embarked on a 60-day national tour, campaigning for his initiative in media events known as "Conversations on Social Security" in an attempt to gain public support.^[150] Nevertheless, public support for the proposal declined,^[151] and the House Republican leadership decided not to put Social Security reform on the priority list for the remainder of their 2005 legislative agenda.^[152] The proposal's legislative prospects were further diminished by autumn 2005 due to political fallout from the response to Hurricane Katrina.^[153] After the Democrats gained control of both houses of Congress in the 2006 midterm elections, there was no prospect of further congressional action on the Bush proposal for the remainder of his term in office.

Environmental policies

Upon taking office in 2001, Bush stated his opposition to the Kyoto Protocol, an amendment to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change which seeks to impose mandatory targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, citing that the treaty exempted 80 percent of the world's population^[154] and would have cost tens of billions of dollars per year.^[155] He also cited that the Senate had voted 95–0 in 1997 on a resolution expressing its disapproval of the protocol.

In May 2001, Bush signed an executive order to create an interagency task force to streamline energy projects,^[156] and later signed two other executive orders to tackle environmental issues.^[157]

In 2002, Bush announced the Clear Skies Act of 2003,^[158] which aimed at amending the Clean Air Act to reduce air pollution through the use of emissions trading programs. Many experts argued that this legislation would have weakened the original legislation by allowing higher emission rates of pollutants than were previously legal.^[159] The initiative was introduced to Congress, but failed to make it out of committee.

Later in 2006, Bush declared the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands a national monument, creating the largest marine reserve to date. The Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument comprises 84 million acres (340,000 km²) and is home to 7,000 species of fish, birds, and other marine animals, many of which are specific to only those islands.^[160] The move was hailed by conservationists for "its foresight and leadership in protecting this incredible area".^[161]

Bush has said he believes that global warming is real^[162] and has noted that it is a serious problem, but he asserted there is a "debate over whether it's man-made or naturally caused".^[163] The Bush Administration's stance on global warming remained controversial in the scientific and environmental communities. Critics have alleged that the administration^[164] misinformed the public and did not do enough to reduce carbon emissions and deter global warming.^[165]

Energy policies

In his 2006 State of the Union Address, Bush declared, "America is addicted to oil" and announced his Advanced Energy Initiative to increase energy development research.^[166]

In his 2007 State of the Union Address, Bush renewed his pledge to work toward diminished reliance on foreign oil by reducing fossil fuel consumption and increasing alternative fuel production.^[167] Amid high gasoline prices in 2008, Bush lifted a ban on offshore drilling.^[168] However, the move was largely symbolic because there was still a federal law banning offshore drilling. Bush said, "This means that the only thing standing between the American people and these vast oil reserves is action from the U.S. Congress."^[168] Bush had said in June 2008, "In the long run, the solution is to reduce demand for oil by promoting alternative energy technologies. My administration has worked with Congress to invest in gas-saving technologies like advanced batteries and hydrogen fuel cells ... In the short run, the American economy will continue to rely largely on oil. And that means we need to increase supply, especially here at home. So my administration has repeatedly called on Congress to expand domestic oil production."^[169]



President Bush delivering a statement on energy, urging Congress to end offshore oil drill ban, June 18, 2008

In his 2008 State of the Union Address, Bush announced that the U.S. would commit \$2 billion over the next three years to a new international fund to promote clean energy technologies and fight climate change, saying, "Along with contributions from other countries, this fund will increase and accelerate the deployment of all

forms of cleaner, more efficient technologies in developing nations like India and China, and help leverage substantial private-sector capital by making clean energy projects more financially attractive." He also announced plans to reaffirm the United States' commitment to work with major economies, and, through the UN, to complete an international agreement that will slow, stop, and eventually reverse the growth of greenhouse gases; he stated, "This agreement will be effective only if it includes commitments by every major economy and gives none a free ride."^[170]

Stem cell research and first veto

Federal funding for medical research involving the creation or destruction of human embryos through the Department of Health and Human Services and the National Institutes of Health has been forbidden by law since the passage of the Dickey-Wicker Amendment in 1995.^[171] Bush has said he supports adult stem cell research and has supported federal legislation that finances adult stem cell research. However, Bush did not support embryonic stem cell research.^[172] On August 9, 2001, Bush signed an executive order lifting the ban on federal funding for the 71 existing "lines" of stem cells,^[173] but the ability of these existing lines to provide an adequate medium for testing has been questioned. Testing can be done on only 12 of the original lines, and all approved lines have been cultured in contact with mouse cells, which creates safety issues that complicate development and approval of therapies from these lines.^[174] On July 19, 2006, Bush used his veto power for the first time in his presidency to veto the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act. The bill would have repealed the Dickey-Wicker Amendment, thereby permitting federal money to be used for research where stem cells are derived from the destruction of an embryo.^[175]

Immigration

Nearly eight million immigrants came to the United States from 2000 to 2005, more than in any other five-year period in the nation's history.^[176] Almost half entered illegally.^[177] In 2006, Bush urged Congress to allow more than twelve million illegal immigrants to work in the United States with the creation of a "temporary guest-worker program". Bush also urged Congress to provide additional funds for border security and committed to deploying 6,000 National Guard troops to the Mexico–United States border.^[178] From May to June 2007, Bush strongly supported the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act of 2007, which was written by a bipartisan group of Senators with the active participation of the Bush administration.^[179] The bill envisioned a legalization program for illegal immigrants, with an eventual path to citizenship; establishing a guest worker program; a series of border and work site enforcement measures; a reform of the green card application process and the introduction of a point-based "merit" system for green cards; elimination of "chain migration" and of the Diversity Immigrant Visa; and other measures. Bush argued that the lack of legal status denies the protections of U.S. laws to millions of people who face dangers of poverty and exploitation, and penalizes employers despite a demand for immigrant labor.^[180] Bush contended that the proposed bill did not amount to amnesty.^[181]



President Bush discussing border security with Secretary of Homeland Security Michael Chertoff near El Paso, November 2005

A heated public debate followed, which resulted in a substantial rift within the Republican Party, most conservatives opposed it because of its legalization or amnesty provisions.^[182] The bill was eventually defeated in the Senate on June 28, 2007, when a cloture motion failed on a 46–53 vote.^[183] Bush expressed disappointment upon the defeat of one of his signature domestic initiatives.^[184] The Bush administration later proposed a series of immigration enforcement measures that do not require a change in law.^[185]

On September 19, 2010, former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said that Bush offered to accept 100,000 Palestinian refugees as American citizens if a permanent settlement had been reached between Israel and the Palestinian Authority.^[186]

Hurricane Katrina

Hurricane Katrina struck early in Bush's second term and was one of the most damaging natural disasters in U.S. history. Katrina formed in late August during the 2005 Atlantic hurricane season and devastated much of the north-central Gulf Coast of the United States, particularly New Orleans.^[187]

Bush declared a state of emergency in Louisiana on August 27^[188] and in Mississippi and Alabama the following day.^[189] The eye of the hurricane made landfall on August 29, and New Orleans began to flood due to levee breaches; later that day, Bush declared a major disaster in Louisiana,^[190] officially authorizing FEMA to start using federal funds to assist in the recovery effort.



President Bush shaking hands with New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin after viewing the devastation of Hurricane Katrina, September 2, 2005



President Bush with hurricane victims in Biloxi, September 2, 2005

On August 30, DHS Secretary Michael Chertoff declared it "an incident of national significance",^[191] triggering the first use of the newly created National Response Plan. Three days later, on September 2, National Guard troops first entered the city of New Orleans.^[192] The same day, Bush toured parts of Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama and declared that the success of the recovery effort up to that point was "not enough".^[193]

As the disaster in New Orleans intensified, Bush was widely criticized for downplaying his administration's role in the inadequate response. Leaders attacked Bush for having appointed incompetent leaders to positions of power at FEMA, notably Michael D.

Brown,^[194] federal response resources to respond were also limited as a result of being allocated to the Iraq War^[195] and Bush himself did not act upon warnings of floods.^{[196][197]} Bush responded to mounting criticism by claiming to accept full responsibility for the federal government's failures in its handling of the emergency.^[192] It has been argued that with Katrina, Bush passed a political tipping point from which he would not recover.^[198]

Midterm dismissal of U.S. attorneys

During Bush's second term, a controversy arose over the Justice Department's midterm dismissal of seven United States Attorneys.^[199] The White House maintained that they were fired for poor performance.^[200] Attorney General Alberto Gonzales later resigned over the issue, along with other senior members of the Justice Department.^{[201][202]} The House Judiciary Committee issued subpoenas for advisers Harriet Miers and Josh Bolten to testify regarding this matter, but Bush directed Miers and Bolten to not comply with those subpoenas, invoking his right of executive privilege. Bush maintained that all his advisers were protected under a broad executive privilege protection to receive candid advice. The Justice Department determined that the President's order was legal.^[203]

Although Congressional investigations focused on whether the Justice Department and the White House were using the U.S. Attorney positions for political advantage, no official findings have been released. On March 10, 2008, the Congress filed a federal lawsuit to enforce their issued subpoenas.^[204] On July 31, 2008, a United States district court judge ruled that Bush's top advisers were not immune from Congressional subpoenas.^[205]

In all, twelve Justice Department officials resigned rather than testify under oath before Congress. They included Attorney General Alberto Gonzales^[206] and his chief of staff Kyle Sampson,^[207] Gonzales' liaison to the White House Monica Goodling,^[208] aide to the president Karl Rove^[209] and his senior aide Sara Taylor.^[210] In addition, legal counsel to the president Harriet Miers^[211] and deputy chief of staff to the president Joshua Bolten^[212] were both found in contempt of Congress.^[210]

In 2010, the Justice Department investigator concluded that though political considerations did play a part in as many as four of the attorney firings,^[213] the firings were "inappropriately political", but not criminal. According to the prosecutors, there was insufficient evidence to pursue prosecution for any criminal offense.^[214]

Foreign policy

During his presidential campaign, Bush's foreign policy platform included support for stronger economic and political relationship with Latin America, especially Mexico, and a reduction of involvement in "nation-building" and other small-scale military engagements. The administration pursued a national missile defense.^[215] Bush was an advocate of China's entry into the World Trade Organization.^[216]

After the September 11 attacks, Bush launched the War on Terror, in which the United States military and a small international coalition invaded Afghanistan. In his 2002 State of the Union Address, Bush referred to an "axis of evil" consisting of Iraq, Iran and North Korea.^[217] In 2003, Bush then launched the invasion of Iraq, searching for weapons of mass destruction, which he described as being part of the War on Terrorism.^[218] Those invasions led to the toppling of the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and the removal of Saddam Hussein from power in Iraq.^[219]

Bush began his second term with an emphasis on improving strained relations with European nations. He appointed long-time adviser Karen Hughes to oversee a global public relations campaign. Bush lauded the pro-democracy struggles in Georgia and Ukraine.^[220]

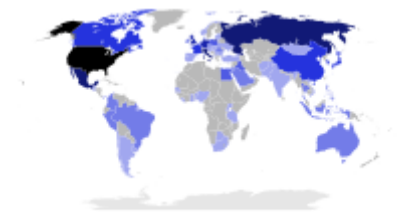
In March 2006, Bush reversed decades of U.S. policy when he visited India in a trip focused particularly on areas of nuclear energy, counter-terrorism co-operation; and discussions that would eventually lead to the India–United States Civil Nuclear Agreement.^{[221][222]} This was in stark contrast to the stance taken by his predecessor, Bill Clinton, whose approach and response to India after the 1998 nuclear tests has been characterized as "sanctions and hectoring".^[223]



President Bush announces his nomination of Alberto Gonzales as the next U.S. Attorney General, November 10, 2004.



President Bush with Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi in 2005



Countries visited by President George W. Bush during his time in office



President and Mrs Bush with Her Majesty The Queen and The Duke of Edinburgh, 2007

Midway through Bush's second term, questions arose whether Bush was retreating from his freedom and democracy agenda, which was highlighted in policy changes toward some oil-rich former Soviet republics in central Asia.^[224]

In an address before both Houses of Congress on September 20, 2001, Bush thanked the nations of the world for their support following the September 11 attacks. He specifically thanked UK Prime Minister Tony Blair for traveling to Washington to show "unity of purpose with America", and said "America has no truer friend than Great Britain."^[225]

September 11 attacks

The September 11 terrorist attacks were a major turning point in Bush's presidency. That evening, he addressed the nation from the Oval Office, promising a strong response to the attacks. He also emphasized the need for the nation to come together and comfort the families of the victims. Three days after the attacks, Bush visited Ground Zero and met with Mayor Rudy Giuliani, firefighters, police officers, and volunteers. Bush addressed the gathering via a megaphone while standing on rubble: "I can hear you. The rest of the world hears you. And the people who knocked these buildings down will hear all of us soon."^[226]



President Bush, beside firefighter Bob Beckwith, addresses rescue workers at Ground Zero.

In a September 20 speech, Bush condemned Osama bin Laden and his organization Al-Qaeda, and issued an ultimatum to the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, where bin Laden was operating, to "hand over the terrorists, or ... share in their fate".^[227]

War on Terrorism

After September 11, Bush announced a global War on Terror. The Afghan Taliban regime was not forthcoming with Osama bin Laden, so Bush ordered the invasion of Afghanistan to overthrow the Taliban regime.^[228] In his January 29, 2002 State of the Union Address, he asserted that an "axis of evil" consisting of North Korea, Iran, and Iraq was "arming to threaten the peace of the world" and "pose[d] a grave and growing danger".^[229] The Bush Administration asserted both a right and the intention to wage preemptive war, or preventive war.^[230] This became the basis for the Bush Doctrine which weakened the unprecedented levels of international and domestic support for the United States which had followed the September 11 attacks.^[231]



President Bush presenting former British Prime Minister Tony Blair the U.S. Presidential Medal of Freedom, January 13, 2009

Dissent and criticism of Bush's leadership in the War on Terror increased as the war in Iraq continued.^{[232][233][234]} In 2006, a National Intelligence Estimate concluded that the Iraq War had become the "cause célèbre for jihadists".^{[235][236]}

Afghanistan invasion

On October 7, 2001, U.S. and British forces initiated bombing campaigns that led to the arrival of Northern Alliance troops in Kabul on November 13. The main goals of the war were to defeat the Taliban, drive al-Qaeda out of Afghanistan, and capture key al-Qaeda leaders. In December 2001, the Pentagon reported that the Taliban had been defeated,^[237] but cautioned that the war would go on to continue weakening Taliban and al-Qaeda leaders.^[237] Later that month the UN had installed the Afghan Transitional Administration chaired by Hamid Karzai.^{[238][239]}



President Bush and President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan in Kabul, March 1, 2006

Efforts to kill or capture al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden failed as he escaped a battle in December 2001 in the mountainous region of Tora Bora, which the Bush Administration later acknowledged to have resulted from a failure to commit enough U.S. ground troops.^[240] It was not until May 2011, two years after Bush left office, that bin Laden was killed by U.S. forces under the Obama administration. Bin Laden's successor, Ayman al-Zawahiri, remains at large.

Despite the initial success in driving the Taliban from power in Kabul, by early 2003 the Taliban was regrouping, amassing new funds and recruits.^[241] The 2005 failure of Operation Red Wings showed that the Taliban had returned.^[242] In 2006, the Taliban insurgency appeared larger, fiercer and better organized than expected, with large-scale allied offensives such as Operation Mountain Thrust attaining limited success.^{[243][244][245]} As a result, Bush commissioned 3,500 additional troops to the country in March 2007.^[246]

Iraq invasion

Beginning with his January 29, 2002 State of the Union address, Bush began publicly focusing attention on Iraq, which he labeled as part of an "axis of evil" allied with terrorists and posing "a grave and growing danger" to U.S. interests through possession of weapons of mass destruction.^{[229][247]}

In the latter half of 2002, CIA reports contained assertions of Saddam Hussein's intent of reconstituting nuclear weapons programs, not properly accounting for Iraqi biological and chemical weapons, and that some Iraqi missiles had a range greater than allowed by the UN sanctions.^{[248][249]} Contentions that the Bush Administration manipulated or exaggerated the threat and evidence of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction capabilities would eventually become a major point of criticism for the president.^{[250][251]}

In late 2002 and early 2003, Bush urged the United Nations to enforce Iraqi disarmament mandates, precipitating a diplomatic crisis. In November 2002, Hans Blix and Mohamed ElBaradei led UN weapons inspectors in Iraq, but were advised by the U.S. to depart the country four days prior to the U.S. invasion, despite their requests for more time to complete their tasks.^[252] The U.S. initially sought a UN Security Council resolution authorizing the use of military force but dropped the bid for UN approval due to vigorous opposition from several countries.^[253] The Bush administration's claim that the Iraq War was part of the War on Terror had been questioned and contested by political analysts.^[254]



President Bush, with Naval Flight Officer Lieutenant Ryan Philips, after landing on the USS Abraham Lincoln prior to his Mission Accomplished speech, May 1, 2003



President Bush paying a surprise visit to Baghdad International Airport, November 27, 2003

More than 20 nations (most notably the United Kingdom), designated the "coalition of the willing" joined the United States^[255] in invading Iraq. They launched the invasion on March 20, 2003. The Iraqi military was quickly defeated. The capital, Baghdad, fell on April 9, 2003. On May 1, Bush declared the end of major combat operations in Iraq. The initial success of U.S. operations increased his popularity, but the U.S. and allied forces faced a growing insurgency led by sectarian groups; Bush's "Mission Accomplished" speech was later criticized as premature.^[256] From 2004 until 2007, the situation in Iraq deteriorated further, with some observers arguing that there was a full-scale civil war in Iraq.^[257] Bush's policies met with criticism, including demands domestically to set a timetable to withdraw troops from Iraq. The 2006 report of the bipartisan Iraq Study Group, led by

James Baker, concluded that the situation in Iraq was "grave and deteriorating". While Bush admitted there were strategic mistakes made in regards to the stability of Iraq,^[258] he maintained he would not change the overall Iraq strategy.^{[259][260]} According to Iraq Body Count, some 251,000 Iraqis have been killed in the civil war following the U.S.-led invasion, including at least 163,841 civilians.^[261]

In January 2005, elections recognized by the West as free and fair were held in Iraq for the first time in 50 years.^[262] This led to the election of Jalal Talabani as president and Nouri al-Maliki as Prime Minister of Iraq. A referendum to approve a constitution in Iraq was held in October 2005, supported by most Shiites and many Kurds.^[263]

On January 10, 2007, Bush announced a surge of 21,500 more troops for Iraq, as well as a job program for Iraqis, more reconstruction proposals, and \$1.2 billion (equivalent to \$1.5 billion in 2020) for these programs.^[264] On May 1, 2007, Bush used his second-ever veto to reject a bill setting a deadline for the withdrawal of U.S. troops,^[265] saying the debate over the conflict was "understandable" but insisting that a continued U.S. presence there was crucial.^[266]



President Bush with Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, July 25, 2006



[Play media](#)

Bush "shoeing" incident in Baghdad, December 2008

In March 2008, Bush praised the Iraqi government's "bold decision" to launch the Battle of Basra against the Mahdi Army, calling it "a defining moment in the history of a free Iraq".^[267] He said he would carefully weigh recommendations from his commanding General David Petraeus and Ambassador Ryan Crocker about how to proceed after the end of the military buildup in the summer of 2008. He also praised the Iraqis' legislative achievements, including a pension law, a revised de-Baathification law, a new budget, an amnesty law, and a provincial powers measure that, he said, set the stage for the Iraqi elections.^[268] By July 2008, American troop deaths had reached their lowest number since the war began,^[269] and due to increased stability in Iraq, Bush announced the withdrawal of additional American forces.^[269] During his last visit to Iraq in December 2008, Iraqi journalist Muntadhar al-Zaidi threw both of his shoes to Bush amid an

official press conference with Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki.^[270] Al-Zaidi yelled the strikes on Bush as "farewell kiss" and "for the widows and orphans and all those killed in Iraq."^[271]

In March 2010, Center for Public Integrity released a report that President Bush's administration had made more than 900 false pretenses in a two-year period about alleged threat of Iraq against the United States, as his rationale to engage war in Iraq.^[272] Senior war crimes prosecutor Benjamin B. Ferencz has suggested that Bush should be tried in the International Criminal Court for '269 war crime charges' related to the Iraq War.^{[273][274]}

Surveillance

Following the terrorist attacks of September 11, Bush issued an executive order that authorized the President's Surveillance Program. The new directive allowed the National Security Agency to monitor communications between suspected terrorists outside the U.S. and parties within the U.S. without obtaining a warrant, which previously had been required by the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act.^[275] As of 2009, the other provisions of the program remained highly classified.^[276] Once the Department of Justice Office of Legal Counsel questioned its original legal opinion that FISA did not apply in a time of war, the program was subsequently re-authorized by the President on the basis that the warrant requirements of FISA were implicitly superseded by the subsequent passage of the Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Terrorists.^[277] The program proved to be controversial; critics of the administration and organizations such as the American Bar Association argued that it was illegal.^[278] In August 2006, a U.S. district court judge ruled that the NSA electronic surveillance program was unconstitutional,^[279] but on July 6, 2007, that ruling was vacated by the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit on the grounds that the plaintiffs lacked standing.^[280] On January 17, 2007, Attorney General Alberto Gonzales informed U.S. Senate leaders that the program would not be reauthorized by the President, but would be subjected to judicial oversight.^[281] Later in 2007, the NSA launched a replacement for the program, referred to as PRISM, which was subject to the oversight of the United States Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court.^[282] This program was not publicly revealed until reports by The Washington Post^[282] and The Guardian^[283] emerged in June 2013.^[282]

Interrogation policies

Bush authorized the CIA to use waterboarding and several other "enhanced interrogation techniques" that several critics, including Barack Obama, would label as torture.^{[284][285][286][287]} Between 2002 and 2003, the CIA considered certain enhanced interrogation techniques, such as waterboarding, to be legal based on secret Justice Department legal opinions arguing that terror detainees were not protected by the Geneva Conventions' ban on torture, which was described as "an unconstitutional infringement of the President's authority to conduct war".^{[288][289]} The CIA had exercised the technique on certain key terrorist suspects under authority given to it in the Bybee Memo from the Attorney General, though that memo was later withdrawn.^[290] While not permitted by the U.S. Army Field Manuals which assert "that harsh interrogation tactics elicit unreliable information",^[288] the Bush administration believed these enhanced interrogations "provided critical information" to preserve American lives.^[291] Critics, such as former CIA officer Bob Baer, have stated that information was suspect, "you can get anyone to confess to anything if the torture's bad enough."^[292]



President Bush at the celebration of the sixtieth anniversary of victory in World War II, Red Square, Moscow

On October 17, 2006, Bush signed the Military Commissions Act of 2006 into law.^[293] The new rule was enacted in the wake of the Supreme Court's decision in Hamdan v. Rumsfeld, 548 U.S. 557 (<https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/548/557/>) (2006),^[294] which allowed the U.S. government to prosecute unlawful

enemy combatants by military commission rather than a standard trial. The law also denied the detainees access to habeas corpus and barred the torture of prisoners. The provision of the law allowed the president to determine what constitutes "torture".^[293]

On March 8, 2008, Bush vetoed H.R. 2082,^[295] a bill that would have expanded congressional oversight over the intelligence community and banned the use of waterboarding as well as other forms of interrogation not permitted under the United States Army Field Manual on Human Intelligence Collector Operations, saying that "the bill Congress sent me would take away one of the most valuable tools in the War on Terror".^[296] In April 2009, the ACLU sued and won release of the secret memos that had authorized the Bush administration's interrogation tactics.^[297] One memo detailed specific interrogation tactics including a footnote that described waterboarding as torture as well as that the form of waterboarding used by the CIA was far more intense than authorized by the Justice Department.^[298]

North Korea condemnation

Bush publicly condemned Kim Jong-il of North Korea and identified North Korea as one of three states in an "axis of evil". He said that "the United States of America will not permit the world's most dangerous regimes to threaten us with the world's most destructive weapons."^[229] Within months, "both countries had walked away from their respective commitments under the U.S.–DPRK Agreed Framework of October 1994."^[299] North Korea's October 9, 2006, detonation of a nuclear device further complicated Bush's foreign policy, which centered for both terms of his presidency on "[preventing] the terrorists and regimes who seek chemical, biological, or nuclear weapons from threatening the United States and the world".^[229] Bush condemned North Korea's position, reaffirmed his commitment to "a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula", and said that "transfer of nuclear weapons or material by North Korea to states or non-state entities would be considered a grave threat to the United States", for which North Korea would be held accountable.^[300] On May 7, 2007, North Korea agreed to shut down its nuclear reactors immediately pending the release of frozen funds held in a foreign bank account. This was a result of a series of three-way talks initiated by the United States and including China.^[301] On September 2, 2007, North Korea agreed to disclose and dismantle all its nuclear programs by the end of 2007.^[302] By May 2009, North Korea had restarted its nuclear program and threatened to attack South Korea.^[303]



President Bush with China's president and Communist Party leader Hu Jintao, 2006

On June 22, 2010, "While South Korea prospers, the people of North Korea have suffered profoundly," he said, adding that communism had resulted in dire poverty, mass starvation and brutal suppression. "In recent years," he went on to say, "the suffering has been compounded by the leader who wasted North Korea's precious few resources on personal luxuries and nuclear weapons programs."^[304]

Syria sanctions

Bush expanded economic sanctions on Syria.^[305] In 2003, Bush signed the Syria Accountability Act, which expanded sanctions on Syria. In early 2007, the Treasury Department, acting on a June 2005 executive order, froze American bank accounts of Syria's Higher Institute of Applied Science and Technology, Electronics Institute, and National Standards and Calibration Laboratory. Bush's order prohibits Americans from doing business with these institutions suspected of helping spread weapons of mass destruction^[306] and being supportive of terrorism.^[307] Under separate executive orders signed by Bush in 2004 and later 2007, the Treasury Department froze the assets of two Lebanese and two Syrians, accusing them of activities to "undermine the legitimate political process in Lebanon" in November 2007. Those designated included:

Assaad Halim Hardan, a member of Lebanon's parliament and current leader of the Syrian Socialist National Party; Wi'am Wahhab, a former member of Lebanon's government (Minister of the Environment) under Prime Minister Omar Karami (2004–2005); Hafiz Makhlef, a colonel and senior official in the Syrian General Intelligence Directorate and a cousin of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad; and Muhammad Nasif Khayrbik, identified as a close adviser to Assad.^[308]

PEPFAR

In the State of the Union address in January 2003, Bush outlined a five-year strategy for global emergency AIDS relief, the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). Bush announced \$15 billion for this effort^[309] which directly supported life-saving antiretroviral treatment for more than 3.2 million men, women and children worldwide.^[310] The U.S. government had spent some \$44 billion on the project since 2003 (a figure that includes \$7 billion contributed to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria, a multilateral organization),^[311] which saved an estimated five million lives.^[312] According to *The New York Times* correspondent Peter Baker, "Bush did more to stop AIDS and more to help Africa than any president before or since."^[312]

Assassination attempt

On May 10, 2005, Vladimir Arutyunian, a native Georgian who was born to a family of ethnic Armenians, threw a live hand grenade toward a podium where Bush was speaking at Freedom Square in Tbilisi, Georgia. Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili was seated nearby. It landed in the crowd about 65 feet (20 m) from the podium after hitting a girl, but it did not detonate. Arutyunian was arrested in July 2005, confessed, was convicted and was given a life sentence in January 2006.^[313]

Other issues

Bush signed the Strategic Offensive Reductions Treaty with Russia. He withdrew U.S. support for several international agreements, including the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty (ABM) with Russia.^[314]

Bush emphasized a careful approach to the conflict between Israel and the Palestinians; he denounced Palestine Liberation Organization leader Yasser Arafat for his support of violence, but sponsored dialogues between Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and Palestinian National Authority President Mahmoud Abbas. Bush supported Sharon's unilateral disengagement plan, and lauded the democratic elections held in Palestine after Arafat's death.

In July 2001, Bush visited Pope John Paul II at Castel Gandolfo.^[315]

Bush also expressed U.S. support for the defense of Taiwan following the stand-off in April 2001 with China over the Hainan Island incident, when an EP-3E Aries II surveillance aircraft collided with a People's Liberation Army Air Force jet, leading to the detention of U.S. personnel. From 2003 to 2004, Bush authorized U.S. military intervention in Haiti and Liberia to protect U.S. interests. Bush condemned the militia



President Bush with Russian president Vladimir Putin in Shanghai, October 21, 2001. Russia had cooperated with U.S. in the War on Terror.



President Bush, Mahmoud Abbas, and Ariel Sharon meet at the Red Sea Summit in Aqaba, Jordan, June 4, 2003



President Bush and Ukrainian Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko, April 1, 2008

attacks Darfur and denounced the killings in Sudan as genocide.^[316] Bush said an international peacekeeping presence was critical in Darfur, but he opposed referring the situation to the International Criminal Court.

On June 10, 2007, Bush met with Albanian Prime Minister Sali Berisha and became the first president to visit Albania.^[317] Bush has voiced his support for the independence of Kosovo.^[318] Bush opposed South Ossetia's independence.^[319] On August 15, 2008, Bush said of Russia's invasion of the country of Georgia: "Bullying and intimidation are not acceptable ways to conduct foreign policy in the 21st century."^[320]

Bush opened the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City, Utah. Departing from previous practice, he stood among a group of U.S. athletes rather than from a ceremonial stand or box, saying: "On behalf of a proud, determined, and grateful nation, I declare open the Games of

Salt Lake City, celebrating the Olympic Winter Games."^[321] In 2008, in the course of a good-will trip to Asia, he attended the Summer Olympics in Beijing.^[322]

Bush twice invoked Section 3 of the Twenty-fifth Amendment, which allows a president to temporarily transfer the powers and duties of his office to the vice president, who then becomes acting president. On June 29, 2002, Bush underwent a colonoscopy and invoked the provision, making Vice President Cheney the acting president. Bush was awake and resumed his presidential powers after two hours. On July 21, 2007, Bush again invoked the provision in preparation for another colonoscopy. Again, Bush resumed his presidential powers after two hours.^[323]



Bush and Abdullah of Saudi Arabia. Saudi Arabia is a key U.S. ally in the Middle East.

Judicial appointments

Supreme Court

On July 19, 2005, following the announcement of the retirement of Associate Justice Sandra Day O'Connor on July 1, Bush nominated federal appellate judge John Roberts to be O'Connor's replacement; however, following the death of Chief Justice William Rehnquist on September 3, that still-pending nomination was withdrawn on September 5, with Bush instead nominating Roberts to be the next Chief Justice of the United States. He was confirmed by the Senate on September 29, 2005.^[324]

On October 3, 2005, Bush nominated White House Counsel Harriet Miers to succeed O'Connor; however, Miers withdrew her nomination on October 27 after encountering significant opposition from both parties, who found her to be ill-prepared and uninformed on the law,^{[115]:278} once again leaving no nominee to replace O'Connor. Finally, on October 31, Bush nominated federal appellate judge Samuel Alito, who was confirmed by the Senate to replace O'Connor on January 31, 2006.^[325]



Supreme Court Justice nominee John Roberts and President Bush, July 19, 2005

Other courts

In addition to his two Supreme Court appointments, Bush appointed 61 judges to the United States courts of appeals and 261 judges to the United States district courts. Each of these numbers, along with his 324 judicial appointments.

Cultural and political image

Domestic

Image

Bush's upbringing in West Texas, his accent, his vacations on his Texas ranch, and his penchant for country metaphors contribute to his folksy, American cowboy image.^{[326][327]} "I think people look at him and think John Wayne", said Piers Morgan, editor of the British Daily Mirror.^[328]

Bush has been parodied by the media,^[329] comedians, and other politicians.^[330] Detractors tended to cite linguistic errors made by Bush during his public speeches, which are colloquially referred to as Bushisms.^[331]

In contrast to his father, who was perceived as having troubles with an overarching unifying theme, Bush embraced larger visions and was seen as a man of larger ideas and associated huge risks.^[332]

Tony Blair wrote in 2010 that the caricature of Bush as being dumb is "ludicrous" and that Bush is "very smart".^[333] In an interview with *Playboy*, *The New York Times* columnist David Brooks said Bush "was 60 IQ points smarter in private than he was in public. He doesn't want anybody to think he's smarter than they are, so puts on a Texas act."^[334]

Job approval

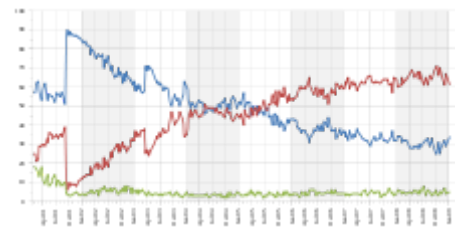
Bush began his presidency with approval ratings near 50 percent.^[335] After the September 11 attacks, Bush gained an approval rating of 90 percent,^[336] maintaining 80–90 percent approval for four months after the attacks. It remained over 50 percent during most of his first term^[8] and then fell to as low as 19 percent in his second term.^[337]

In 2000 and again in 2004, *Time* magazine named George W. Bush as its Person of the Year, a title awarded to someone who the editors believe "has done the most to influence the events of the year".^[338] In May 2004, Gallup reported that 89 percent of the Republican electorate approved of Bush.^[339] However, the support waned due mostly to a minority of Republicans' frustration with him on issues of spending, illegal immigration, and Middle Eastern affairs.^[340]

Within the United States armed forces, according to an unscientific survey, the president was strongly supported in the 2004 presidential elections.^[341] While 73 percent of military personnel said they would vote for Bush, 18 percent preferred his Democratic rival, John Kerry.^[341] According to Peter Feaver, a Duke



Supreme Court Justice nominee Samuel Alito and President Bush, October 31, 2005



■ approve
■ disapprove
■ unsure

Gallup/*USA Today* Bush public opinion polling from February 2001 to January 2009

University political scientist who has studied the political leanings of the U.S. military, members of the armed services supported Bush because they found him more likely than Kerry to complete the War in Iraq.^[341]

Bush's approval rating went below the 50 percent mark in AP-Ipsos polling in December 2004.^[342] Thereafter, his approval ratings and approval of his handling of domestic and foreign policy issues steadily dropped. After his re-election in 2004, Bush received increasingly heated criticism from across the political spectrum^{[4][5][343]} for his handling of the Iraq War, his response to Hurricane Katrina,^{[6][7][344]} and to the Abu Ghraib prisoner abuse, NSA warrantless surveillance, the Plame affair, and Guantanamo Bay detention camp controversies.^[345]

Amid this criticism, the Democratic Party regained control of Congress in the 2006 elections. Polls conducted in 2006 showed an average of 37 percent approval ratings for Bush,^[346] the lowest for any second-term president at that point in his term since Harry S. Truman in March 1951 (when Truman's approval rating was 28 percent),^{[342][347]} which contributed to what Bush called the "thumping" of the Republican Party in the 2006 mid-term elections.^[348] Throughout most of 2007, Bush's approval rating hovered in the mid-thirties;^[349] the average for his entire second term was 37 percent, according to Gallup.^[350]

By the beginning of 2008, his final year in office, Bush's approval rating had dropped to a low of just 19 percent, largely from the loss of support among Republicans.^[337] Commenting on his low poll numbers and accusations of being "the worst president,"^{[351][352]} Bush would say, "I make decisions on what I think is right for the United States based upon principles. I frankly don't give a damn about the polls."^[353]



President Bush's approval rating

There were calls for Bush's impeachment, though most polls showed a plurality of Americans would not support such an action.^[354] The arguments offered for impeachment usually centered on the NSA warrantless surveillance controversy,^[355] the Bush administration's justification for the war in Iraq, and alleged violations of the Geneva Conventions.^[356] Representative Dennis Kucinich (D-OH), who had run against Bush during the 2004 presidential campaign, introduced 35 articles of impeachment on the floor of the House of Representatives against Bush on June 9, 2008, but Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) declared that impeachment was "off the table".^[357]

In April 2008, Bush's disapproval ratings reached the highest ever recorded for any president in the 70-year history of the Gallup poll, with 69 percent of those polled disapproving of the job Bush was doing as president and 28 percent approving – although the majority (66 percent) of Republicans still approved of his job performance.^[358]

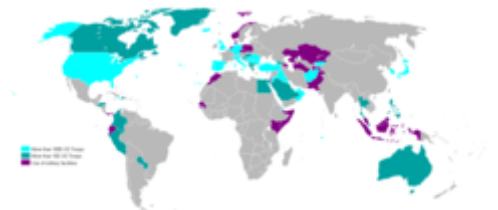
In polls conducted in the fall, just before the 2008 election, his approval ratings remained at record lows of 19 to 20 percent,^{[359][360]} while his disapproval ratings ranged from 67 percent to as high as 75 percent.^{[360][361]} In polling conducted January 9–11, 2009, his final job approval rating by Gallup was 34 percent, which placed him on par with Jimmy Carter and Harry S. Truman, the other presidents whose final Gallup ratings measured in the low 30s (Richard Nixon's final Gallup approval rating was even lower, at 24 percent).^[362] According to a CBS News/New York Times poll conducted January 11–15, 2009, Bush's final approval rating in office was 22 percent, the lowest in American history.^[359]

Foreign perceptions

Bush was criticized internationally and targeted by the global anti-war and anti-globalization movements for his administration's foreign policy.^{[363][364]} Views of him within the international community – even in France, a close ally of the United States – were more negative than those of most previous American

presidents.^[365]

Bush was described as having especially close personal relationships with Tony Blair of the United Kingdom and Vicente Fox of Mexico, although formal relations were sometimes strained.^{[366][367][368]} Other leaders, such as Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan,^[369] Yoweri Museveni of Uganda,^[370] José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero of Spain,^[371] and Hugo Chávez of Venezuela,^[372] openly criticized the president. Later in Bush's presidency, tensions arose between him and Vladimir Putin, which led to a cooling of their relationship.^[373]



Countries with a U.S. military presence in 2007

In 2006, most respondents in 18 of 21 countries surveyed around the world were found to hold an unfavorable opinion of Bush. Respondents indicated that they judged his administration as negative for world security.^{[374][375]} In 2007, the Pew Global Attitudes Project reported that during the Bush presidency, attitudes towards the United States, and towards Americans, became less favorable around the world.^[376] The Pew Research Center's 2007 Global Attitudes poll found that in only nine countries of 47 did most respondents express "a lot of confidence" or "some confidence" in Bush: Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Israel, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Mali, Nigeria, and Uganda.^[377] A March 2007 survey of Arab opinion conducted by Zogby International and the University of Maryland found that Bush was the most disliked leader in the Arab world.^[378]

During a June 2007 visit to the predominantly Muslim^[379] Albania, Bush was greeted enthusiastically. Albania has a population of 2.8 million,^[380] has troops in both Iraq and Afghanistan, and the country's government is highly supportive of American foreign policy.^[381] A huge image of the President was hung in the middle of the capital city of Tirana flanked by Albanian and American flags while a local street was named after him.^{[382][383]} A shirt-sleeved statue of Bush was unveiled in Fushë-Krujë, a few kilometers northwest of Tirana.^[384] The Bush administration's support for the independence of Albanian-majority Kosovo, while endearing him to the Albanians, has troubled U.S. relations with Serbia, leading to the February 2008 torching of the U.S. embassy in Belgrade.^[385]

Acknowledgments and dedications

On May 7, 2005, during an official state visit to Latvia, Bush was awarded the Order of the Three Stars presented to him by President Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga.^[386] A few places outside the United States bear Bush's name. In 2005, the Tbilisi City Council voted to rename a street in honor of the U.S. president.^[387] Previously known as Melaani Drive, the street links the Georgian capital's airport with the city center and was used by Bush's motorcade during his visit four months earlier.^[388] A street in Tirana, formerly known as Rruga Punëtorët e Rilindjes, situated directly outside the Albanian Parliament, was renamed after Bush a few days before he made the first-ever visit by an American president to Albania in June 2007.^[389] In Jerusalem, a small plaza with a monument bearing his name is also dedicated to Bush.^[390]

In 2012, Estonian President Toomas Hendrik Ilves awarded Bush the Order of the Cross of Terra Mariana for his work in expanding NATO.^[391]



Statue of George W. Bush at Fushë-Krujë, Albania

Two elementary schools are named after him: George W. Bush Elementary School of the Stockton Unified School District in Stockton, California,^[392] and George W. Bush Elementary School of the Wylie Independent School District in St. Paul, Texas, in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.^[393]

Post-presidency (2009–present)

Residence

Following the inauguration of Barack Obama, Bush and his family flew from Andrews Air Force Base to a homecoming celebration in Midland, Texas, following which they returned to their ranch in Crawford, Texas.^[394] They bought a home in the Preston Hollow neighborhood of Dallas, Texas, where they settled down.^[395]

He makes regular appearances at various events throughout the Dallas/Fort Worth area, most notably when he conducted the opening coin toss at the Dallas Cowboys first game in the team's new stadium in Arlington^[396] and an April 2009 visit to a Texas Rangers game, where he thanked the people of Dallas for helping him settle in and was met with a standing ovation.^[397] He also attended every home playoff game for the Texas Rangers 2010 season and, accompanied by his father, threw out the ceremonial first pitch at Rangers Ballpark in Arlington for Game 4 of the 2010 World Series on October 31, 2010.^[398]

On August 6, 2013, Bush was successfully treated for a coronary artery blockage with a stent. The blockage had been found during an annual medical examination.^[399]

In reaction to the 2016 shooting of Dallas police officers, Bush stated: "Laura and I are heartbroken by the heinous acts of violence in our city last night. Murdering the innocent is always evil, never more so than when the lives taken belong to those who protect our families and communities."^[400]

Publications and appearances

Since leaving office, Bush has kept a relatively low profile^[401] though he has made public appearances, most notably after the release of his memoirs in 2010 and for the 10th anniversary of the September 11 attacks in 2011. In March 2009, he delivered his first post-presidency speech in Calgary, Alberta,^{[402][403]} appeared via video on *The Colbert Report* during which he praised U.S. troops for earning a "special place in American history,"^[404] and attended the funeral of Senator Ted Kennedy.^[405] Bush made his debut as a motivational speaker on October 26 at the "Get Motivated" seminar in Dallas.^[406] In the aftermath of the Fort Hood shooting on November 5, 2009, the Bushes paid an undisclosed visit to the survivors and the victims' families the day following the shooting, having contacted the base commander requesting that the visit be private and not involve press coverage.^[407]

Bush released his memoirs, *Decision Points*, on November 9, 2010. During a pre-release appearance promoting the book, Bush said he considered his biggest accomplishment to be keeping "the country safe amid a real danger", and his greatest failure to be his inability to secure the passage of Social Security reform.^[408]



Bush and his wife Laura boarding Air Force One after the inauguration of Barack Obama



George W. Bush, then-President Barack Obama, and Bill Clinton in the Oval Office, January 16, 2010

He also made news defending his administration's enhanced interrogation techniques, specifically the waterboarding of Khalid Sheikh Mohammed, saying, "I'd do it again to save lives."^[409]

In 2012, he wrote the foreword of *The 4% Solution: Unleashing the Economic Growth America Needs*, an economics book published by the George W. Bush Presidential Center.^{[410][411]} He also presented the book at the Parkland Memorial Hospital in Dallas, Texas.^[412]

Bush appeared on NBC's *The Tonight Show with Jay Leno* on November 19, 2013, along with the former First Lady, Laura Bush. When asked by Leno why he does not comment publicly about the Obama administration, Bush said, "I don't think it's good for the country to have a former president criticize his successor."^[413] Despite this statement, Bush vocally disagreed with Obama's withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq in 2011, calling it a "strategic blunder", borrowing a term that had been used by South Carolina Senator Lindsey Graham.^[414]

In 2013, Bush and his wife Laura travelled with then President Obama and Michelle Obama to the memorial service of South African President and civil rights leader Nelson Mandela.^[415] There they joined former Presidents Clinton and Carter.^[416]

Alongside the 2014 United States–Africa Leaders Summit, Bush, Michelle Obama, the State Department, and the George W. Bush Institute hosted a daylong forum on education and health with the spouses of the African leaders attending the summit. Bush urged African leaders to avoid discriminatory laws that make the treatment of HIV/AIDS more difficult.^[417]

Bush has spoken in favor of increased global participation of women in politics and societal matters in foreign countries.^{[418][419]}

On November 2, 2014, Bush spoke at an event to 200 business and civic leaders at the George W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum to raise awareness for the upcoming Museum of the Bible in Washington D.C.^{[35][420]}

Bush published a biography of his father, George Bush, called *41: A Portrait of My Father*. It was released on November 11, 2014.^[421]

In an interview published by Israel Hayom magazine on June 12, 2015, Bush said "boots on the ground" would be needed in order to defeat the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIS). He added that people had said during his presidency that he should withdraw American troops from Iraq, but he chose the opposite, sending 30,000 more troops in order to defeat Al Qaeda in Iraq, and that they indeed were defeated. Bush was also asked about Iran but declined to answer, stating that any answer he gives would be interpreted as undermining Obama.^[422]

In February 2016, George W. Bush spoke and campaigned for his brother Jeb Bush in South Carolina during a rally for the Jeb Bush presidential campaign in the 2016 Republican Party presidential primaries.^[423]



Bush with Barack and Michelle Obama, as they board Air Force One for South Africa and Nelson Mandela's funeral in 2013



Charlie Strong (left), Texas Longhorns head football coach, George W. Bush and Reverend Jesse Jackson hold up a Texas Longhorns football jersey at the LBJ Presidential Library in 2014.



The Bushes with the Obamas and John Lewis celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the Selma Marches in 2015

While Bush endorsed the Republican Party's 2012 presidential nominee, Mitt Romney, he declined to endorse the 2016 Republican nominee, Donald Trump.^[424] Also, Bush attended neither the 2012 nor the 2016 Republican National Conventions, where Romney and Trump, respectively, were formally nominated.^{[425][426]} On the eve of Trump's nomination, it was reported that Bush had privately expressed concern about the current direction of the Republican Party and told a group of his former aides and advisors, "I'm worried that I will be the last Republican president."^{[427][428]} Bush and his wife Laura did not vote for Trump in the 2016 presidential election according to a spokesperson for the Bush family, instead choosing to leave their presidential ballots blank.^[429] After the election, Bush, his father, and his brother Jeb called Trump on the phone to congratulate him on his victory.^[430] Both he and Laura attended Trump's inauguration, and images of Bush struggling to put on a rain poncho during the ceremony became an internet meme.^[431] While leaving the event, Bush allegedly described the ceremony, in particular Trump's inaugural address, as "some weird shit".^[432]

In February 2017, Bush released a book of his own portraits of veterans called Portraits of Courage (full title: Portraits of Courage: A Commander in Chief's Tribute to America's Warriors).^[433]

Following the white nationalist Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, Bush and his father released a joint statement condemning the violence and ideologies present at the rally; "America must always reject racial bigotry, anti-Semitism, and hatred in all forms. As we pray for Charlottesville, we are all reminded of the fundamental truths recorded by that city's most prominent citizen in the Declaration of Independence: we are all created equal and endowed by our Creator with unalienable rights. We know these truths to be everlasting because we have seen the decency and greatness of our country."^[434] Their statement came as President Trump was facing controversy over his statements about the rally. Subsequently, Bush gave a speech in New York where he noted of the current political climate, "Bigotry seems emboldened. Our politics seems more vulnerable to conspiracy theories and outright fabrication." He continued, "Bigotry in any form is blasphemy against the American creed and it means the very identity of our nation depends on the passing of civic ideals to the next generation," while urging citizens to oppose threats to American democracy and be positive role models for young people.^[435] The speech was widely interpreted as a denouncement of Donald Trump and his ideologies, despite Bush not mentioning Trump by name.^{[435][436][437][438]}

In April 2018, Bush and his father met in Texas with Mohammad bin Salman, the crown prince and de facto ruler of Saudi Arabia.^[439]

In May 2019, on the 10th anniversary of former South Korean president Roh Moo-hyun's passing, George Bush visited South Korea to pay respects to Roh and gave a short eulogy.^[440]

On June 1, 2020, Bush released a statement addressing the murder of George Floyd and the subsequent nationwide reaction and protests.^{[441][442]} In the statement, Bush wrote that he and former first lady Laura Bush "are anguished by the brutal suffocation of George Floyd and disturbed by the injustice and fear that suffocate our country".^[443] He also elaborated on the racial injustices perpetrated by the police saying, that "it is time for America to examine our tragic failures", adding "Many doubt the justice of our country, and with good reason. Black people see the repeated violation of their rights without an urgent and adequate response from American institutions".^[444]



Bush with then-President Barack Obama at the Dallas memorial for the five officers killed in July 2016



George W. Bush and Laura Bush with President Donald Trump and First Lady Melania Trump in 2018

On July 30, 2020 Both George Bush and his wife Laura Bush, along with former Presidents Bill Clinton and Barack Obama, attended and spoke at the funeral for civil rights leader and congressman John Lewis at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta.^[445] At the service Bush stated in his remarks, "We live in a better and nobler country today because of John Lewis and his abiding faith in the power of God, the power of democracy and in the power of love to lift us all to a higher ground ... The story that began in true isn't ending today, nor is the work."^{[446][447]}

Bush did not give any endorsements during the 2020 presidential election.^[448] He also did not attend the 2020 Republican National Convention where President Trump was re-nominated.^[449] He told People magazine in April 2021 that he did not vote for either Trump or Biden in the November election. Instead, Bush wrote in Condoleezza Rice, who served as his secretary of state from 2005 to 2009.^[450]

When the election was called for Democratic candidate Joe Biden on November 7, 2020, Bush offered his congratulations to Biden and his running mate Kamala Harris the following day, and congratulated Trump and his supporters "on a hard-fought campaign". Bush's outreach to Biden was notable since Republican candidate Donald Trump had not yet conceded. Bush then issued a statement saying that while Trump was within his rights to call for recounts, he believed the election was "fundamentally fair" and that "its outcome is clear", and said he would offer Biden "my prayers for his success, and my pledge to help in any way I can", as he had for Trump and Obama.^{[451][452][453]}



Bush at the inauguration of Joe Biden, with his wife Laura

Despite not making any presidential endorsements in 2020, he did, however, hold a virtual fundraiser for U.S. Senators Susan Collins (R-ME), Cory Gardner (R-CO), Martha McSally (R-AZ), and Thom Tillis (R-NC). All four were up for reelection and were struggling in the polls.^[454] Collins and Tillis were reelected, while Gardner and McSally were not.

On January 6, 2021, following the 2021 storming of the United States Capitol, Bush denounced the violence and attack on the U.S. Capitol alongside the three other living former presidents, Barack Obama, Bill Clinton, Jimmy Carter,^[455] releasing a statement saying that "this is how election results are disputed in a banana republic, not our democratic republic"^[456] and that "it is a sickening and heartbreaking sight".^[457] He also echoed President-elect Joe Biden's message stating that what occurred at the capital was an "insurrection."^[458] On January 20, 2021, Bush and Laura attended the inauguration of Joe Biden, alongside Barack Obama, Michelle Obama, Bill Clinton and Hillary Clinton.^[459]

Collaborations

In January 2010, at President Obama's request, Bush and Bill Clinton established the Clinton Bush Haiti Fund to raise contributions for relief and recovery efforts following the 2010 Haiti earthquake earlier that month.^[460]

On May 2, 2011, President Obama called Bush, who was at a restaurant with his wife, to inform him that Osama bin Laden had been killed.^[461] The Bushes joined the Obamas in New York City to mark the tenth anniversary of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. At the Ground Zero memorial, Bush read a letter that President Abraham Lincoln wrote to a widow who had lost five sons during the Civil War.^[462]



[Play media](#)

President Obama with former Presidents Clinton and Bush announce the Clinton Bush Haiti Fund after the 2010 earthquake.













On September 7, 2017, Bush partnered with former presidents Jimmy Carter, George H. W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and Barack Obama to work with One America Appeal to help the victims of Hurricane Harvey and Hurricane Irma in the Gulf Coast and Texas communities.^[463]

Over the years, President Bush has had a good-natured friendship with Michelle Obama. "President Bush and I, we are forever seatmates because of protocol, and that's how we sit at all the official functions," Mrs. Obama told the *Today Show*. "He's my partner in crime at every major thing where all the 'formers' gather. So we're together all the time." She later added, "I love him to death. He's a wonderful man, he's a funny man."^[464] Bush and Obama have sat next to each other at many events including the 50th anniversary of the historic civil rights march in Selma (2015), the interfaith memorial service for the victims in Dallas (2016), the opening at the National Museum of African American History and Culture (2016), and at the funerals for Nancy Reagan (2016), and John McCain (2018). Bush famously passed mints to Mrs. Obama during the McCain funeral in September 2018 and gave them to her again during the funeral of his father in December 2018.^[465]

Art

After serving as president, Bush began painting as a hobby after reading Winston Churchill's essay "Painting as a Pastime." Subjects have included people, dogs, and still life.^[466] He has also painted self-portraits and portraits of world leaders, including Vladimir Putin and Tony Blair.^{[467][468][469]} In February 2017, Bush released a book of portraits of veterans, *Portraits of Courage*.^[433] The net proceeds from his book are donated to the George W. Bush Presidential Center. In May 2019, on the 10th anniversary of former South Korean president Roh Moo-hyun's passing, George Bush drew a portrait of Roh to give to his family.^[470]

Honors

-  Albania:
 -  Recipient of the National Flag Order (June 10, 2007)^[471]
-  Benin:
 -  Grand Cross of the National Order of Benin (February 16, 2008)^[472]
-  Estonia:
 -  First Class of the Order of the Cross of Terra Mariana (February 1, 2002)^[473]
-  Latvia:
 -  Commander Grand Cross with Chain of the Order of the Three Stars (May 7, 2005)^[474]
-  Liberia:
 -  Grand Cordon of the Order of the Pioneers of Liberia (February 21, 2008)^[475]
-  Saudi Arabia:
 -  Collar of the Order of King Abdulaziz (January 14, 2008)^[476]

In popular culture

- *Saturday Night Live* (2000–2009) – Comedian Will Ferrell played a satirical caricature of George W. Bush on the show for many years.

- *W.* (2008) – a biographical drama film directed by Oliver Stone, in which George W. Bush is portrayed by Josh Brolin.^[477]
- *Vice* (2018) – a biographical comedy-drama film written and directed by Adam McKay, in which George W. Bush is portrayed by Sam Rockwell,^[478] who was nominated for an Academy Award for Best Supporting Actor for his performance.^[479]

Legacy

President Bush's legacy continues to develop today. Supporters credit Bush's counterterrorism policies with preventing another major terrorist attack from occurring in the U.S. after 9/11 and also praise individual policies such as the Medicare prescription drug benefit and the AIDS relief program known as PEPFAR. Critics often point to his handling of the Iraq War, specifically the failure to find weapons of mass destruction, that were the main rationale behind the initial invasion – as well as his handling of tax policy, Hurricane Katrina, climate change and the 2008 financial crisis – as proof that George W. Bush was unfit to be president.^{[480][481][482]}



George W. Bush Presidential Center, on the campus of Southern Methodist University (SMU)

Several historians and commentators hold that Bush was one of the most consequential presidents in American history. Princeton University scholar Julian Zelizer described Bush's presidency as a "transformative" one, and said that "some people hate him, some people love him, but I do think he'll have a much more substantive perception as time goes on".^[483] Bryon Williams of *The Huffington Post* referred to Bush as "the most noteworthy president since FDR" and said the Patriot Act "increased authority of the executive branch at the expense of judicial opinions about when searches and seizures are reasonable" as evidence.^[484] Bush's administration presided over the largest tax cuts since the presidency of Ronald Reagan,^[485] and his homeland security reforms proved to be the most significant expansion of the federal government since the Great Society.^[486] Much of these policies have endured in the administrations of his two immediate successors, Barack Obama and Donald Trump.^{[487][488]}

Reception

The George W. Bush presidency has been ranked among the worst in surveys of presidential scholars published in the late 2000s and 2010s.^{[489][490][491]}

A 2010 Siena Research Institute survey of the opinions of historians, political scientists, and presidential scholars ranked him 39th out of 43 presidents. The survey respondents gave President Bush low ratings on his handling of the U.S. economy, communication, ability to compromise, foreign policy accomplishments, and intelligence.^[492] Bush said in 2013, "Ultimately history will judge the decisions I made, and I won't be around because it will take time for the objective historians to show up. So I am pretty comfortable with it. I did what I did."^[493]

Among the public, his reputation has improved since his presidency ended in 2009. In February 2012, Gallup reported that "Americans still rate George W. Bush among the worst presidents, though their views have become more positive in the three years since he left office."^[494] Gallup had earlier noted that Bush's favorability ratings in public opinion surveys had begun to rise a year after he had left office, from 40 percent in January 2009 and 35 percent in March 2009, to 45 percent in July 2010, a period during which he had remained largely out of the news.^[495] A poll conducted in June 2013 marked the first time recorded by Gallup where his ratings have been more positive than negative, with 49 percent viewing him favorably compared to

46 percent unfavorably.^[496] Other pollsters have noted similar trends of slight improvement in Bush's personal favorability since the end of his presidency.^[497] In April 2013, Bush's approval rating stood at 47 percent approval and 50 percent disapproval in a poll jointly conducted for *The Washington Post* and ABC, his highest approval rating since December 2005.^[498] Bush had achieved notable gains among seniors, non-college whites, and moderate and conservative Democrats since leaving office, although majorities disapproved of his handling of the economy (53 percent) and the Iraq War (57 percent).^[499] His 47 percent approval rating was equal to that of President Obama's in the same polling period.^[500] A CNN poll conducted that same month found that 55 percent of Americans said Bush's presidency had been a failure, with opinions divided along party lines, and 43 percent of independents calling it a success.^[501] Bush's public image saw greater improvement in 2017, with a YouGov survey showing 51 percent of favorability from Democrats.^[502] A 2018 CNN poll subsequently found that 61 percent of respondents held of a favorable view of Bush, an increase of nine points from 2015.^[503] The improvement has been interpreted as Democrats viewing him more favorably in response to Donald Trump's presidency,^{[504][505][506]} an assessment that has also been expressed by Bush himself.^[507]

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See also

- [Bibliography of George W. Bush](#)
- [Electoral history of George W. Bush](#)
- [Fictionalized portrayals of George W. Bush](#)
- [List of George W. Bush legislation and programs](#)
- [List of multilingual presidents of the United States](#)
- [List of nicknames for George W. Bush](#)
- [List of nicknames used by George W. Bush](#)
- [List of presidents of the United States](#)
- [List of presidents of the United States by previous experience](#)
- [Political positions of George W. Bush](#)

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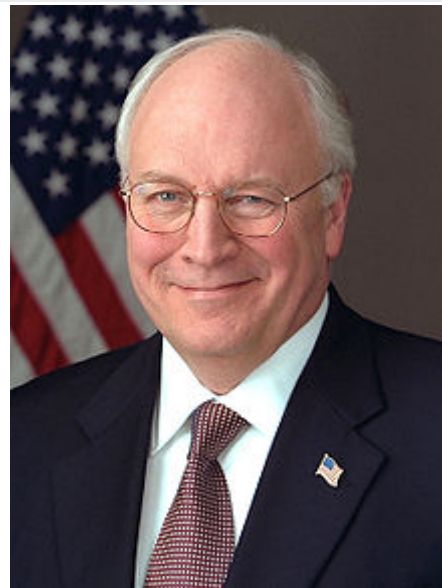
Dick Cheney

Richard Bruce Cheney (/ˈtʃeɪni/ *CHAYN-ee*;^[1] born January 30, 1941) is an American politician and businessman who served as the 46th vice president of the United States from 2001 to 2009 under George W. Bush. Cheney, often cited as the most powerful vice president in American history,^{[2][3]} ended his tenure as an unpopular figure in American politics.^[4] He is currently the oldest living former U.S. vice president, following the death of Walter Mondale in 2021.

Born in Lincoln, Nebraska, Cheney grew up there and later in Casper, Wyoming.^[5] He attended Yale University before earning a Bachelor of Arts and Master of Arts in political science from the University of Wyoming. He began his political career as an intern for Congressman William A. Steiger, eventually working his way into the White House during the Nixon and Ford administrations. He served as White House chief of staff from 1975 to 1977. In 1978, he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, and represented Wyoming's at-large congressional district from 1979 to 1989, briefly serving as House minority whip in 1989. He was selected as Secretary of Defense during the presidency of George H. W. Bush, and held the position for most of Bush's term from 1989 to 1993.^[6] During his time there, he oversaw 1991's Operation Desert Storm, among other actions. Out of office during the Clinton administration, he was the chairman and CEO of Halliburton from 1995 to 2000.

In July 2000, Cheney was chosen by presumptive Republican presidential nominee George W. Bush as his running mate in the 2000 presidential election. They defeated their Democratic opponents, incumbent Vice President Al Gore and Senator Joe Lieberman. In 2004 Cheney was reelected to his second term as vice president with Bush as president, defeating their Democratic opponents Senators John Kerry and John Edwards. During Cheney's tenure as vice president, he played a leading behind-the-scenes role in the George W. Bush administration's response to the September 11 attacks and coordination of the Global War on Terrorism. He was an early proponent of invading Iraq, alleging that the Saddam Hussein regime possessed a weapons of mass destruction program (no active WMDs were ever found in Iraq) and the Hussein regime had an operational relationship with Al-Qaeda (even though there was scant credible evidence of such a relationship at the time). He also pressured the intelligence community to provide intelligence consistent with the administration's rationales for invading Iraq. Cheney was often criticized for the Bush Administration's

Dick Cheney



Official portrait, 2004

46th Vice President of the United States

In office

January 20, 2001 – January 20, 2009

President George W. Bush

Preceded by Al Gore

Succeeded by Joe Biden

17th United States Secretary of Defense

In office

March 21, 1989 – January 20, 1993

President George H. W. Bush

Deputy Donald J. Atwood Jr.

Preceded by Frank Carlucci

Succeeded by Les Aspin

House Minority Whip

In office

January 3, 1989 – March 20, 1989

Leader Robert H. Michel

Preceded by Trent Lott

Succeeded by Newt Gingrich

Chair of the House Republican Conference

policies regarding the campaign against terrorism, and for his support of wiretapping by the National Security Agency (NSA) and of torture.^{[7][8][9]} He publicly disagreed with President Bush's position against same-sex marriage in 2004.^[10]

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	In office
	June 4, 1987 – January 3, 1989
Deputy	<u>Lynn Morley Martin</u>
Leader	<u>Robert H. Michel</u>
Preceded by	<u>Jack Kemp</u>
Succeeded by	<u>Jerry Lewis</u>
	Member of the U.S. House of Representatives from Wyoming's at-large district
	In office
	January 3, 1979 – March 20, 1989
Preceded by	<u>Teno Roncalio</u>
Succeeded by	<u>Craig L. Thomas</u>
	7th White House Chief of Staff
	In office
	November 21, 1975 – January 20, 1977
President	<u>Gerald Ford</u>
Preceded by	<u>Donald Rumsfeld</u>
Succeeded by	<u>Hamilton Jordan</u> (1979)
	White House Deputy Chief of Staff
	In office
	December 18, 1974 – November 21, 1975
President	<u>Gerald Ford</u>
Preceded by	<i>Position created</i>
Succeeded by	<u>Landon Butler</u>
	Personal details
Born	<u>Richard Bruce Cheney</u> January 30, 1941 <u>Lincoln, Nebraska, U.S.</u>
Political party	<u>Republican</u>
Spouse(s)	<u>Lynne Vincent</u> (m. 1964)
Children	<u>Liz</u> · <u>Mary</u>
Education	<u>Yale University</u> <u>University of Wisconsin–Madison</u> <u>University of Wyoming</u> (BA, MA)
Signature	

Personal life

Health problems

Hunting incident

Works

References

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External links

Early life and education

Cheney was born in Lincoln, Nebraska, the son of Marjorie Lorraine (née Dickey) and Richard Herbert Cheney. He is of predominantly English, as well as Welsh, Irish, and French Huguenot ancestry. His father was a soil conservation agent for the U.S. Department of Agriculture and his mother was a softball star in the 1930s;^[11] Cheney was one of three children. He attended Calvert Elementary School^{[12][13]} before his family moved to Casper, Wyoming,^[14] where he attended Natrona County High School.

He attended Yale University, but by his own account had problems adjusting to the college, and dropped out.^{[15][16]} Among the influential teachers from his days in New Haven was Professor H. Bradford Westerfield, whom Cheney repeatedly credited with having helped to shape his approach to foreign policy.^[17] He later attended the University of Wyoming, where he earned both a Bachelor of Arts and a Master of Arts in political science. He subsequently started, but did not finish, doctoral studies at the University of Wisconsin–Madison.^[18]

In November 1962, at the age of 21, Cheney was convicted of driving while intoxicated (DWI). He was arrested for DWI again the following year.^[19] Cheney said that the arrests made him "think about where I was and where I was headed. I was headed down a bad road if I continued on that course."^[20]

In 1964, he married Lynne Vincent, his high school sweetheart, whom he had met at age 14.

When Cheney became eligible for the draft, during the Vietnam War, he applied for and received five draft deferments. In 1989, *The Washington Post* writer George C. Wilson interviewed Cheney as the next Secretary of Defense; when asked about his deferments, Cheney reportedly said, "I had other priorities in the '60s than military service."^[21] Cheney testified during his confirmation hearings in 1989 that he received deferments to finish a college career that lasted six years rather than four, owing to sub-par academic performance and the need to work to pay for his education. Upon graduation, Cheney was eligible for the draft, but at the time, the Selective Service System was not inducting married men.^[22] On October 6, 1965, the draft was expanded to include married men without children; Cheney's first daughter, Elizabeth, was born 9 months and two days later.^{[23][22]} Cheney's fifth and final deferment granted him "3-A" status, a "hardship" deferment available to men with dependents. In January 1967, Cheney turned 26 and was no longer eligible for the draft.^[23]

In 1966 Cheney dropped out of the doctoral program at the University of Wisconsin to work as staff aide for Gov. Warren Knowles.^[24]

In 1968 Cheney was awarded an American Political Science Association congressional fellowship and moved to Washington.^[24]

Early White House appointments



Cheney greeting President Richard Nixon in 1970 with then-Director of the Office of Economic Opportunity Donald Rumsfeld in the background.

Cheney's political career began in 1969, as an intern for Congressman William A. Steiger during the Richard Nixon Administration. He then joined the staff of Donald Rumsfeld, who was then Director of the Office of Economic Opportunity from 1969 to 1970.^[19] He held several positions in the years that followed: White House Staff Assistant in 1971, Assistant Director of the Cost



White House Chief of Staff Donald Rumsfeld (left) and his assistant Cheney (right) meet with President Gerald Ford at the White House, April 1975

of Living Council from 1971 to 1973, and Deputy Assistant to the president from 1974 to 1975. As deputy assistant, Cheney suggested several options in a memo to Rumsfeld, including use of the US Justice Department, that the Ford administration could use to limit damage from an article, published by The New York Times, in which investigative reporter Seymour Hersh reported that Navy submarines had tapped into Soviet undersea communications as part of a highly classified program, Operation Ivy Bells.^{[25][26]}

Cheney was Assistant to the President and White House Deputy Chief of Staff under Gerald Ford from December 1974 to November 1975.^{[27][28][29]} When Rumsfeld was named Secretary of Defense, Cheney became White House Chief of Staff, succeeding Rumsfeld.^[19] He later was campaign manager for Ford's 1976 presidential campaign.^[30]

U.S. House of Representatives (1979–1989)

Elections

In 1978, Cheney was elected to represent Wyoming in the U.S. House of Representatives and succeeded retiring Democratic Congressman Teno Roncalio, having defeated his Democratic opponent, Bill Bagley. Cheney was re-elected five times, serving until 1989.

Tenure

Leadership

In 1987, he was elected Chairman of the House Republican Conference. The following year, he was elected House Minority Whip.^[31] He served for two and a half months before he was appointed Secretary of Defense instead of former U.S. Senator John G. Tower, whose nomination had been rejected by the U.S. Senate in March 1989.^[32]

Votes

He voted against the creation of the U.S. Department of Education, citing his concern over budget deficits and expansion of the federal government, and claiming that the Department was an encroachment on states' rights.^[33] He voted against funding Head Start, but reversed his position in 2000.^[34]

Cheney initially voted in 1978 against establishing a national holiday in honor of Martin Luther King Jr., but supported creation of Martin Luther King Jr. Day five years later, in 1983.^[35]

Cheney supported Bob Michel's (R-IL) bid to become Republican Minority Leader.^[36] In April 1980, Cheney endorsed Governor Ronald Reagan for president, becoming one of Reagan's earliest supporters.^[37]

In 1986, after President Ronald Reagan vetoed a bill to impose economic sanctions on South Africa for its policy of apartheid, Cheney was one of 83 Representatives to vote against overriding Reagan's veto.^[38] In later years, he articulated his opposition to unilateral sanctions against many different countries, stating "they almost never work"^[39] and that in that case they might have ended up hurting the people instead.^[40]

In 1986, Cheney, along with 145 Republicans and 31 Democrats, voted against a non-binding Congressional resolution calling on the South African government to release Nelson Mandela from prison, after the Democrats defeated proposed amendments that would have required Mandela to renounce violence sponsored by the African National Congress (ANC) and requiring it to oust the communist faction from its leadership; the resolution was defeated. Appearing on CNN, Cheney addressed criticism for this, saying he opposed the resolution because the ANC "at the time was viewed as a terrorist organization and had a number of interests that were fundamentally inimical to the United States."^[41]

The federal building in Casper, a regional center of the fossil fuel industry, is named the Dick Cheney Federal Building.^{[42][43]}

Committee assignments

Originally declining, U.S. Congressman Barber Conable persuaded Cheney to join the moderate Republican Wednesday Group in order to move up the leadership ranks. He was elected Chairman of the Republican Policy Committee from 1981 to 1987. Cheney was the Ranking Member of the Select Committee to investigate the Iran-Contra Affair.^{[19][44][45]} He promoted Wyoming's petroleum and coal businesses as well.^[46]

Secretary of Defense (1989–1993)

President George H. W. Bush nominated Cheney for the office of Secretary of Defense immediately after the U.S. Senate failed to confirm John Tower for that position.^[47] The senate confirmed Cheney by a vote of 92 to 0^[47] and he served in that office from March 1989 to January 1993. He directed the United States invasion of Panama and Operation Desert Storm in the Middle East. In 1991, he was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by Bush.^{[31][24]} Later that year, he received the U.S. Senator John Heinz Award for Greatest Public Service by an Elected or Appointed Official, an award given out annually by Jefferson Awards.^[48]

Cheney has said his time at the Pentagon was the most rewarding period of his public service career, calling it "the one that stands out." In 2014, Cheney recounted that when he met with President George H. W. Bush to accept the offer, he passed a painting in the private residence entitled *The Peacemakers*, which depicted President Lincoln, General Grant, and William Tecumseh Sherman. "My great-grandfather had served under William Tecumseh Sherman throughout the war," Cheney said, "and it occurred to me as I was in the room as



Cheney meets with President Ronald Reagan, July 1983

I walked in to talk to the President about becoming Secretary of Defense, I wondered what he would have thought that his great-grandson would someday be in the White House with the President talking about taking over the reins of the U.S. military."^[49]

Early tenure

Cheney worked closely with Pete Williams, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, and Paul Wolfowitz, Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, from the beginning of his tenure. He focused primarily on external matters, and left most of the internal DoD management to Deputy Secretary of Defense Donald Atwood.^[32]



Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney, 1989–1993

Budgetary practices

Cheney's most immediate issue as Secretary of Defense was the Department of Defense budget. Cheney deemed it appropriate to cut the budget and downsize the military, following the Reagan Administration's peacetime defense buildup at the height of the Cold War.^[50] As part of the fiscal year 1990 budget, Cheney assessed the requests from each of the branches of the armed services for such expensive programs as the Avenger II Naval attack aircraft, the B-2 stealth bomber, the V-22 Osprey tilt-wing helicopter, the Aegis destroyer and the MX missile, totaling approximately \$4.5 billion in light of changed world politics.^[32] Cheney opposed the V-22 program, which Congress had already appropriated funds for, and initially refused to issue contracts for it before relenting.^[51] When the 1990 Budget came before Congress in the summer of 1989, it settled on a figure between the Administration's request and the House Armed Services Committee's recommendation.^[32]

In subsequent years under Cheney, the proposed and adopted budgets followed patterns similar to that of 1990. Early in 1991, he unveiled a plan to reduce military strength by the mid-1990s to 1.6 million, compared with 2.2 million when he entered office. Cheney's 1993 defense budget was reduced from 1992, omitting programs that Congress had directed the Department of Defense to buy weapons that it did not want, and omitting unrequested reserve forces.^[32]

Over his four years as Secretary of Defense, Cheney downsized the military and his budgets showed negative real growth, despite pressures to acquire weapon systems advocated by Congress. The Department of Defense's total obligational authority in current dollars declined from \$291 billion to \$270 billion. Total military personnel strength decreased by 19 percent, from about 2.2 million in 1989 to about 1.8 million in 1993.^[32] Notwithstanding the overall reduction in military spending, Cheney directed the development of a Pentagon plan to ensure U.S. military dominance in the post-Cold War era.^[52]

Political climate and agenda



Secretary Cheney with President Bush, 1991



Secretary of Defense Cheney delivering a speech before the launch of destroyer USS Arleigh Burke

Cheney publicly expressed concern that nations such as Iraq, Iran, and North Korea, could acquire nuclear components after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. The end of the Cold War, the fall of the Soviet Union, and the disintegration of the Warsaw Pact obliged the first Bush Administration to reevaluate the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO's) purpose and makeup. Cheney believed that NATO should remain the foundation of European security relationships and that it would remain important to the United States in the long term; he urged the alliance to lend more assistance to the new democracies in Eastern Europe.^[32]

Cheney's views on NATO reflected his skepticism about prospects for peaceful social development in the former Eastern Bloc countries, where he saw a high potential for political uncertainty and instability. He felt that the Bush Administration was too optimistic in supporting General Secretary of the CPSU Mikhail Gorbachev and his successor, Russian President Boris Yeltsin.^[32] Cheney worked to maintain strong ties between the United States and its European allies.^[53]

Cheney persuaded the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to allow bases for U.S. ground troops and war planes in the nation. This was an important element of the success of the Gulf War, as well as a lightning-rod for Islamists, such as Osama bin Laden, who opposed having non-Muslim armies near their holy sites.^[54]

International situations

Using economic sanctions and political pressure, the United States mounted a campaign to drive Panamanian ruler General Manuel Antonio Noriega from power after he fell from favor.^[32] In May 1989, after Guillermo Endara had been duly elected President of Panama, Noriega nullified the election outcome, drawing intensified pressure. In October, Noriega suppressed a military coup, but in December, after soldiers of the Panamanian army killed a U.S. serviceman, the United States invasion of Panama began under Cheney's direction. The stated reason for the invasion was to seize Noriega to face drug charges in the United States, protect U.S. lives and property, and restore Panamanian civil liberties.^[55] Although the mission was controversial,^[56] U.S. forces achieved control of Panama and Endara assumed the presidency; Noriega was convicted and imprisoned on racketeering and drug trafficking charges in April 1992.^[57]

In 1991, the Somali Civil War drew the world's attention. In August 1992, the United States began to provide humanitarian assistance, primarily food, through a military airlift. At President Bush's direction, Cheney dispatched the first of 26,000 U.S. troops to Somalia as part of the Unified Task Force (UNITAF), designed to provide security and food relief.^[32] Cheney's successors as Secretary of Defense, Les Aspin and William J. Perry, had to contend with both the Bosnian and Somali issues.



Secretary of Defense Cheney during a press conference on the Gulf War

Iraqi invasion of Kuwait

On August 1, 1990, Iraqi President Saddam Hussein sent the invading Iraqi forces into neighboring Kuwait, a small petroleum-rich state long claimed by Iraq as part of its territory. This invasion sparked the initiation of the Persian Gulf War and it brought worldwide condemnation.^[58] An estimated 140,000 Iraqi troops quickly took control of Kuwait City and moved on to the Saudi Arabia/Kuwait border.^[32] The United States had already begun to develop contingency plans for the defense of Saudi Arabia by the U.S. Central Command, headed by General Norman Schwarzkopf, because of its important petroleum reserves.

U.S. and world reaction



Cheney meets with Prince Sultan, Minister of Defence and Aviation in Saudi Arabia to discuss how to handle the invasion of Kuwait

Cheney and Schwarzkopf oversaw planning for what would become a full-scale U.S. military operation. According to General Colin Powell, Cheney "had become a glutton for information, with an appetite we could barely satisfy. He spent hours in the National Military Command Center peppering my staff with questions."^[32]



Bush meets with Robert Gates, General Colin Powell, Secretary Cheney and others about the situation in the Persian Gulf and Operation Desert Shield, January 15, 1991

Shortly after the Iraqi invasion, Cheney made the first of several visits to Saudi Arabia where King Fahd requested U.S. military assistance. The United Nations took action as well, passing a series of resolutions condemning Iraq's invasion of Kuwait; the UN Security Council authorized "all means necessary" to eject Iraq from Kuwait, and demanded that the country withdraw its forces by January 15, 1991.^[58] By then, the United States had a force of about 500,000 stationed in Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf. Other nations, including Britain, Canada, France, Italy, Syria, and Egypt, contributed troops, and other allies, most notably Germany and Japan, agreed to provide financial support for the coalition effort, named Operation Desert Shield.^[32]

On January 12, 1991, Congress authorized Bush to use military force to enforce Iraq's compliance with UN resolutions on Kuwait.^[58]

Military action

The first phase of Operation Desert Storm, which began on January 17, 1991, was an air offensive to secure air superiority and attack Iraqi forces, targeting key Iraqi command and control centers, including the cities of Baghdad and Basra. Cheney turned most other Department of Defense matters over to Deputy Secretary Atwood and briefed Congress during the air and ground phases of the war.^[32] He flew with Powell to the region to review and finalize the ground war plans.^[58]

After an air offensive of more than five weeks, Coalition forces launched the ground war on February 24. Within 100 hours, Iraqi forces had been routed from Kuwait and Schwarzkopf reported that the basic objective – expelling Iraqi forces from Kuwait – had been met on February 27.^[59] After consultation with Cheney and other members of his national security team, Bush declared a suspension of hostilities.^[58] On working with this national security team, Cheney has said, "there have been five Republican presidents since Eisenhower. I worked for four of them and worked closely with a fifth – the Reagan years when I was part of the House leadership. The best national security team I ever saw was that one. The least friction, the most cooperation, the highest degree of trust among the principals, especially."^[60]

Aftermath

A total of 147 U.S. military personnel died in combat, and another 236 died as a result of accidents or other causes.^{[32][59]} Iraq agreed to a formal truce on March 3, and a permanent cease-fire on April 6.^[32] There was subsequent debate about whether Coalition forces should have driven as far as Baghdad to oust Saddam Hussein from power. Bush agreed that the decision to end the ground war when they did was correct, but the debate persisted as Hussein remained in power and rebuilt his military forces.^[32] Arguably the most significant debate concerned whether U.S. and Coalition forces had left Iraq too soon.^{[61][62]} In an April 15, 1994

interview with C-SPAN, Cheney was asked if the U.S.-led Coalition forces should have moved into Baghdad. Cheney replied that occupying and attempting to take over the country would have been a "bad idea" and would have led to a "quagmire", explaining that:

Because if we'd gone to Baghdad we would have been all alone. There wouldn't have been anybody else with us. There would have been a U.S. occupation of Iraq. None of the Arab forces that were willing to fight with us in Kuwait were willing to invade Iraq. Once you got to Iraq and took it over, took down Saddam Hussein's government, then what are you going to put in its place? That's a very volatile part of the world, and if you take down the central government of Iraq, you could very easily end up seeing pieces of Iraq fly off: part of it, the Syrians would like to have to the west, part of it – eastern Iraq – the Iranians would like to claim, they fought over it for eight years. In the north you've got the Kurds, and if the Kurds spin loose and join with the Kurds in Turkey, then you threaten the territorial integrity of Turkey. It's a quagmire if you go that far and try to take over Iraq. The other thing was casualties. Everyone was impressed with the fact we were able to do our job with as few casualties as we had. But for the 146 Americans killed in action, and for their families – it wasn't a cheap war. And the question for the president, in terms of whether or not we went on to Baghdad, took additional casualties in an effort to get Saddam Hussein, was how many additional dead Americans is Saddam worth? Our judgment was, not very many, and I think we got it right.^{[63][64]}

Cheney regarded the Gulf War as an example of the kind of regional problem the United States was likely to continue to face in the future.^[65]

We're always going to have to be involved [in the Middle East]. Maybe it's part of our national character, you know we like to have these problems nice and neatly wrapped up, put a ribbon around it. You deploy a force, you win the war and the problem goes away. But it doesn't work that way in the Middle East. It never has, and isn't likely to in my lifetime.

Private sector career

Between 1987 and 1989, during his last term in Congress, Cheney served on the board of the Council on Foreign Relations foreign policy organization.^[66]

With the new Democratic administration under President Bill Clinton in January 1993, Cheney joined the American Enterprise Institute. He also served a second term as a Council on Foreign Relations director from 1993 to 1995.^[66] From 1995 until 2000, he served as chairman of the board and chief executive officer of Halliburton, a Fortune 500 company.

Cheney's record as CEO was subject to some dispute among Wall Street analysts. A 1998 merger between Halliburton and Dresser Industries attracted the criticism of some Dresser executives for Halliburton's lack of accounting transparency.^[67] Halliburton shareholders pursued a class-action lawsuit alleging that the corporation artificially inflated its stock price during this period, though Cheney was not named as an individual defendant in the suit. In June 2011, the United States Supreme Court reversed a lower court ruling and allowed the case to continue in litigation.^[68] Cheney was named in a December 2010 corruption complaint filed by the Nigerian government against Halliburton, which the company settled for \$250 million.^[69]

During Cheney's term, Halliburton changed its accounting practices regarding revenue realization of disputed costs on major construction projects.^[70] Cheney resigned as CEO of Halliburton on July 25, 2000. As vice president, he argued that this step, along with establishing a trust and other actions, removed any conflict of interest.^[71] Cheney's net worth, estimated to be between \$19 million and \$86 million,^[72] is largely derived from his post at Halliburton.^[73] His 2006 gross joint income with his wife was nearly \$8.82 million.^[74]

He was also a member of the board of advisors of the Jewish Institute for National Security Affairs (JINSA) before becoming vice president.^[54]

2000 presidential election

In early 2000, while serving as the CEO of Halliburton, Cheney headed then-Governor of Texas George W. Bush's vice-presidential search committee. On July 25, after reviewing Cheney's findings, Bush surprised some pundits by asking Cheney himself to join the Republican ticket.^{[19][75]} Halliburton reportedly reached agreement on July 20 to allow Cheney to retire, with a package estimated at \$20 million.^[76]

A few months before the election Cheney put his home in Dallas up for sale and changed his drivers' license and voter registration back to Wyoming. This change was necessary to allow Texas' presidential electors to vote for both Bush and Cheney without contravening the Twelfth Amendment to the United States Constitution, which forbids electors from voting for "an inhabitant of the same state with themselves"^[77] for both president and vice president.

Cheney campaigned against Al Gore's running mate, Joseph Lieberman, in the 2000 presidential election. While the election was undecided, the Bush-Cheney team was not eligible for public funding to plan a transition to a new administration. So, Cheney opened a privately funded transition office in Washington. This office worked to identify candidates for all important positions in the cabinet.^[78] According to Craig Unger, Cheney advocated Donald Rumsfeld for the post of Secretary of Defense to counter the influence of Colin Powell at the State Department, and tried unsuccessfully to have Paul Wolfowitz named to replace George Tenet as director of the Central Intelligence Agency.^[79]

Vice Presidency (2001–2009)

First term (2001–2005)

Following the September 11, 2001 attacks, Cheney remained physically apart from Bush for security reasons. For a period, Cheney stayed at a variety of undisclosed locations, out of public view.^[80] Cheney later revealed in his memoir *In My Time* that these "undisclosed locations" included his official vice presidential residence, his home in Wyoming, and Camp David.^[81] He also utilized a heavy security detail, employing a motorcade of 12 to 18 government vehicles for his daily commute from the vice presidential residence at the U.S. Naval Observatory to the White House.^[82]

On the morning of June 29, 2002, Cheney served as acting president from 7:09 am to 9:24 am, under the terms of the 25th Amendment to the Constitution, while Bush was undergoing a colonoscopy.^{[83][84]}



Vice President Cheney watching the initial 9/11 attack

Iraq War

Following 9/11, Cheney was instrumental in providing a primary justification for a renewed war against Iraq. Cheney helped shape Bush's approach to the "War on Terror", making numerous public statements alleging Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction,^[85] and making several personal visits to CIA headquarters, where he questioned mid-level agency analysts on their conclusions.^[86] Cheney continued to allege links between Saddam Hussein and al-Qaeda, even though President Bush received a classified President's Daily Brief on September 21, 2001, indicating the U.S. intelligence community had no evidence linking Saddam Hussein to the September 11 attacks and that "there was scant credible evidence that Iraq had any significant collaborative ties with Al Qaeda."^[87] Furthermore, in 2004, the 9/11 Commission concluded that there was no "collaborative relationship" between Iraq and al-Qaeda.^[88] By 2014, Cheney continued to misleadingly claim that Saddam "had a 10-year relationship with al Qaeda."^[89]



Cheney speaks to US troops at Camp Anaconda, Iraq in 2008

Following the US invasion of Iraq, Cheney remained steadfast in his support of the war, stating that it would be an "enormous success story",^[90] and made many visits to the country. He often criticized war critics, calling them "opportunists" who were peddling "cynical and pernicious falsehoods" to gain political advantage while US soldiers died in Iraq. In response, Senator John Kerry asserted, "It is hard to name a government official with less credibility on Iraq [than Cheney]."^[91]

In a March 24, 2008, extended interview conducted in Ankara, Turkey, with ABC News correspondent Martha Raddatz on the fifth anniversary of the original U.S. military assault on Iraq, Cheney responded to a question about public opinion polls showing that Americans had lost confidence in the war by simply replying "So?"^[92] This remark prompted widespread criticism, including from former Oklahoma Republican Congressman Mickey Edwards, a long-time personal friend of Cheney.^[93]

Second term (2005–2009)

Bush and Cheney were re-elected in the 2004 presidential election, running against John Kerry and his running mate, John Edwards. During the election, the pregnancy of his daughter Mary and her sexual orientation as a lesbian became a source of public attention for Cheney in light of the same-sex marriage debate.^[94] Cheney has stated that he is in favor of gay marriages personally, but that each individual U.S. state should decide whether to permit it or not.^[95]

Cheney's former chief legal counsel, David Addington,^[96] became his chief of staff and remained in that office until Cheney's departure from office. John P. Hannah served as Cheney's national security adviser.^[97] Until his indictment and resignation^[98] in 2005, I. Lewis "Scooter" Libby, Jr. served in both roles.^[99]

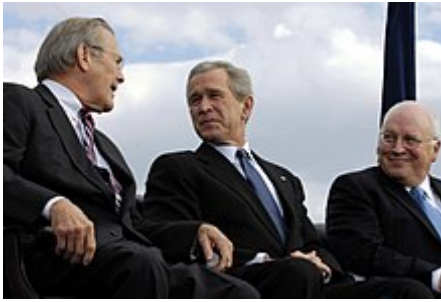


President of Lithuania Valdas Adamkus (right) meets with Vice President Cheney in Vilnius, May 2006

On the morning of July 21, 2007, Cheney once again served as acting president, from 7:16 am to 9:21 am. Bush transferred the power of the presidency prior to undergoing a medical procedure, requiring sedation, and later resumed his powers and duties that same day.^[100]

After his term began in 2001, Cheney was occasionally asked if he was interested in the Republican nomination for the 2008 elections. However, he always maintained that he wished to retire upon the expiration of his term and he did not run in the 2008 presidential primaries. The Republicans nominated Arizona Senator

Disclosure of documents



Cheney (far right) with former Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and President Bush

Cheney was a prominent member of the National Energy Policy Development Group (NEPDG),^[102] commonly known as the Energy Task Force, composed of energy industry representatives, including several Enron executives. After the Enron scandal, the Bush administration was accused of improper political and business ties. In July 2003, the Supreme Court ruled that the US Department of Commerce must disclose NEPDG documents, containing references to companies that had made agreements with the previous Iraqi government to extract Iraq's petroleum.^[103]

Beginning in 2003, Cheney's staff opted not to file required reports with the National Archives and Records Administration office charged with assuring that the executive branch protects classified information, nor did it allow inspection of its record keeping.^[104] Cheney refused to release the documents, citing his executive privilege to deny congressional information requests.^{[105][106]} Media outlets such as Time magazine and CBS News questioned whether Cheney had created a "fourth branch of government" that was not subject to any laws.^[107] A group of historians and open-government advocates filed a lawsuit in the US District Court for the District of Columbia, asking the court to declare that Cheney's vice-presidential records are covered by the Presidential Records Act of 1978 and cannot be destroyed, taken or withheld from the public without proper review.^{[108][109][110][111]}

CIA leak scandal

On October 18, 2005, The Washington Post reported that the vice president's office was central to the investigation of the Valerie Plame CIA leak scandal, for Cheney's former chief of staff, Lewis "Scooter" Libby, was one of the figures under investigation.^[112] Libby resigned his positions as Cheney's chief of staff and assistant on national security affairs later in the month after he was indicted.

In February 2006, The National Journal reported that Libby had stated before a grand jury that his superiors, including Cheney, had authorized him to disclose classified information to the press regarding intelligence on Iraq's weapons.^[113] That September, Richard Armitage, former Deputy Secretary of State, publicly announced that he was the source of the revelation of Plame's status. Armitage said he was not a part of a conspiracy to reveal Plame's identity and did not know whether one existed.^[114]

On March 6, 2007, Libby was convicted on four felony counts for obstruction of justice, perjury, and making false statements to federal investigators.^[115] In his closing arguments, independent prosecutor Patrick Fitzgerald said that there was "a cloud over the vice president",^[116] an apparent reference to Cheney's interview with FBI agents investigating the case, which was made public in 2009.^[117] Cheney lobbied President George W. Bush vigorously and unsuccessfully to grant Libby a full presidential pardon up to the day of Barack Obama's inauguration, likening Libby to a "soldier on the battlefield".^{[118][119]} Libby was subsequently pardoned by President Donald Trump in April 2018.^[120]



Handwritten note above Joe Wilson's editorial by Cheney referring to the covert agent before the leak took place

Assassination attempt

On February 27, 2007, at about 10 am, a suicide bomber killed 23 people and wounded 20 more outside Bagram Airfield in Afghanistan during a visit by Cheney. The Taliban claimed responsibility for the attack and declared that Cheney was its intended target. They also claimed that Osama bin Laden supervised the operation.^[121] The bomb went off outside the front gate while Cheney was inside the base and half a mile away. He reported hearing the blast, saying "I heard a loud boom... The Secret Service came in and told me there had been an attack on the main gate."^[122] The purpose of Cheney's visit to the region had been to press Pakistan for a united front against the Taliban.^[123]

Policy formulation

Cheney has been characterized as the most powerful and influential Vice President in history.^{[124][125]} Both supporters and critics of Cheney regard him as a shrewd and knowledgeable politician who knows the functions and intricacies of the federal government. A sign of Cheney's active policy-making role was then-House Speaker Dennis Hastert's provision of an office near the House floor for Cheney^[126] in addition to his office in the West Wing,^[127] his ceremonial office in the Old Executive Office Building,^[128] and his Senate offices (one in the Dirksen Senate Office Building and another off the floor of the Senate).^{[126][129]}

Cheney has actively promoted an expansion of the powers of the presidency, saying that the Bush administration's challenges to the laws which Congress passed after Vietnam and Watergate to contain and oversee the executive branch – the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, the Presidential Records Act, the Freedom of Information Act and the War Powers Resolution – are, in Cheney's words, "a restoration, if you will, of the power and authority of the president".^{[130][131]}

In June 2007, *The Washington Post* summarized Cheney's vice presidency in a Pulitzer Prize-winning^[132] four-part series, based in part on interviews with former administration officials. The articles characterized Cheney not as a "shadow" president, but as someone who usually has the last words of counsel to the president on policies, which in many cases would reshape the powers of the presidency. When former Vice President Dan Quayle suggested to Cheney that the office was largely ceremonial, Cheney reportedly replied, "I have a different understanding with the president." The articles described Cheney as having a secretive approach to the tools of government, indicated by the use of his own security classification and three man-sized safes in his offices.^[133]

The articles described Cheney's influence on decisions pertaining to detention of suspected terrorists and the legal limits that apply to their questioning, especially what constitutes torture.^[134] U.S. Army Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson, who served as Colin Powell's chief of staff when he was both Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the same time Cheney was Secretary of Defense, and then later when Powell was Secretary of State, stated in an in-depth interview that Cheney and Donald Rumsfeld established an alternative program to interrogate post-9/11 detainees because of their mutual distrust of CIA.^[135]

The Washington Post articles, principally written by Barton Gellman, further characterized Cheney as having the strongest influence within the administration in shaping budget and tax policy in a manner that assures "conservative orthodoxy."^[136] They also highlighted Cheney's behind-the-scenes influence on the Bush administration's environmental policy to ease pollution controls for power plants, facilitate the disposal of



Cheney speaks to the press flanked by fellow Republicans Mitch McConnell (left) and Trent Lott, April 2007



Pope Benedict XVI, Vice President Dick Cheney and Mrs. Lynne Cheney at a farewell ceremony for the Pope at John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York.



Vice President Cheney escorts former first lady Nancy Reagan at the commissioning ceremony of the USS Ronald Reagan, 2003

nuclear waste, open access to federal timber resources, and avoid federal constraints on greenhouse gas emissions, among other issues. The articles characterized his approach to policy formulation as favoring business over the environment.^[137]

In June 2008, Cheney allegedly attempted to block efforts by Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice to strike a controversial US compromise deal with North Korea over the communist state's nuclear program.^[138]

In July 2008, a former Environmental Protection Agency official stated publicly that Cheney's office had pushed significantly for large-scale deletions from a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report on the health effects of global warming "fearing the presentation by a leading health official might make it harder to avoid regulating greenhouse gases."^[139] In October, when the report appeared with six pages cut from the testimony, the White House stated that the changes were made due to concerns regarding the



Cheney walks with Saudi Crown Prince Sultan bin Abdul-Aziz, May 2007

accuracy of the science. However, according to the former senior adviser on climate change to Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Stephen Johnson, Cheney's office was directly responsible for nearly half of the original testimony being deleted.^[139]

In his role as President of the U.S. Senate, Cheney broke with the Bush Administration Department of Justice, and signed an amicus brief to the United States Supreme Court in the case of Heller v. District of Columbia that successfully challenged gun laws in the nation's capital on Second Amendment grounds.^[140]

On February 14, 2010, in an appearance on ABC's This Week, Cheney reiterated his support of waterboarding and for the torture of captured terrorist suspects, saying, "I was and remain a strong proponent of our enhanced interrogation program."^[141]

Post-vice presidency (2009–present)

The Washington Post reported in 2008 that Cheney purchased a home in McLean, Virginia, part of the Washington suburbs, which he was to tear down for a replacement structure. He also maintains homes in Wyoming and on Maryland's Eastern Shore.^[142]

Political activity

In July 2012, Cheney used his Wyoming home to host a private fund-raiser for Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney, which netted over \$4 million in contributions from attendees for Romney's campaign.^[143]

Cheney is the subject of the documentary film *The World According to Dick Cheney*, which premiered March 15, 2013, on the Showtime television channel.^{[144][145][146]} Cheney was also reported to be the subject of an HBO television mini-series based on Barton Gellman's 2008 book Angler^[147] and the 2006 documentary *The Dark Side*, produced by the Public Broadcasting Service.^[148]

Cheney maintained a visible public profile after leaving office,^[149] being especially critical of Obama administration policies on national security.^{[150][151][152]} In May 2009, Cheney spoke of his support for same-sex marriage, becoming one of the most prominent Republican politicians to do so. Speaking to the National Press Club, Cheney stated: "People ought to be free to enter into any kind of union they wish, any kind of arrangement they wish. I do believe, historically, the way marriage has been regulated is at a state level. It's always been a state issue, and I think that's the way it ought to be handled today."^[153] In 2012, Cheney reportedly encouraged several Maryland state legislators to vote to legalize same-sex marriage in that state.^[154]



Cheney speaking at CPAC in February 2011

Although, by custom, a former vice president unofficially receives six months of protection from the United States Secret Service, President Obama reportedly extended the protection period for Cheney.^[155]

On July 11, 2009, CIA Director Leon Panetta told the Senate and House intelligence committees that the CIA withheld information about a secret counter-terrorism program from Congress for eight years on direct orders from Cheney. Intelligence and Congressional officials have said the unidentified program did not involve the CIA interrogation program and did not involve domestic intelligence activities. They have said the program was started by the counter-terrorism center at the CIA shortly after the attacks of September 11, 2001, but never became fully operational, involving planning and some training that took place off and on from 2001 until this year.^[156] The Wall Street Journal reported, citing former intelligence officials familiar with the matter, that the program was an attempt to carry out a 2001 presidential authorization to capture or kill al Qaeda operatives.^[157]

Cheney has said that the Tea Party Movement is a "positive influence on the Republican Party" and that "I think it's much better to have that kind of turmoil and change in the Republican Party than it would be to have it outside."^[158]

In May 2016, Cheney endorsed Donald Trump as the Republican nominee in the 2016 presidential election.^[159] That November, his daughter Liz won election to the House of Representatives (to his former congressional seat). When she was sworn into office in January 2017, Cheney said he believed she would do well in the position and that he would only offer advice if requested.^[160]



Cheney attending his daughter Liz's ceremonial congressional swearing-in ceremony in January 2017

That March, Cheney said that Russian interference in the 2016 United States elections could be considered "an act of war".^[161]

Views on President Obama

On December 29, 2009, four days after the attempted bombing of an international passenger flight from the Netherlands to United States, Cheney criticized Obama: "[We] are at war and when President Obama pretends we aren't, it makes us less safe. ... Why doesn't he want to admit we're at war? It doesn't fit with the view of the world he brought with him to the Oval Office. It doesn't fit with what seems to be the goal of his presidency – social transformation – the restructuring of American society."^[162] In response, White House Communications Director Dan Pfeiffer wrote on the official White House blog the following day, "[I]t is telling that Vice President Cheney and others seem to be more focused on criticizing the Administration than condemning the attackers. Unfortunately too many are engaged in the typical Washington game of pointing fingers and making political hay, instead of working together to find solutions to make our country safer."^{[163][164]}

During a February 14, 2010 appearance on ABC's *This Week*, Cheney reiterated his criticism of the Obama administration's policies for handling suspected terrorists, criticizing the "mindset" of treating "terror attacks against the United States as criminal acts as opposed to acts of war".^[141]

In a May 2, 2011, interview with ABC News, Cheney praised the Obama administration for the covert military operation in Pakistan that resulted in the death of Osama bin Laden.^[165]

In 2014, during an interview with Sean Hannity, he called Barack Obama a "weak President" after Obama announced his plans to pull forces out of Afghanistan.^[166]



Cheney attending the state funeral of George H. W. Bush in December 2018

Memoir

In August 2011, Cheney published his memoir, *In My Time: A Personal and Political Memoir*, written with Liz Cheney. The book outlines Cheney's recollections of 9/11, the War on Terrorism, the 2001 War in Afghanistan, the run-up to the 2003 Iraq War, so-called "enhanced interrogation techniques" and other events.^[167] According to Barton Gellman, the author of *Angler: The Cheney Vice Presidency*, Cheney's book differs from publicly available records on details surrounding the NSA surveillance program.^{[168][169]}



Cheney in 2012, promoting his book

Exceptional: Why the World Needs a Powerful America

In 2015, Cheney published another book, *Exceptional: Why the World Needs a Powerful America*, again co-authored with his daughter Liz. The book traces the history of U.S. foreign policy and military successes and failures from Franklin Roosevelt's administration through the Obama administration. The authors tell the story of what they describe as the unique role the United States has played as a defender of freedom throughout the world since World War II.^[170] Drawing upon the notion of American exceptionalism, the co-authors criticize Barack Obama's and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's foreign policies, and offer what they see as the solutions needed to restore American greatness and power on the world stage in defense of freedom.^{[171][172]}

Views on President Trump

In May 2018, Cheney supported President Trump's decision to withdraw from the Iran Nuclear Deal.^[173]

He criticized the Trump administration during a forum at the American Enterprise Institute alongside Vice President Mike Pence in March 2019. Questioning his successor on Trump's commitment to NATO and tendency to announce policy decisions on Twitter before consulting senior staff members, Cheney went on to opine, "It seems, at times, as though your administration's approach has more in common with Obama's foreign policy than traditional Republican foreign policy."^[174]

Public perception and legacy

Cheney's early public opinion polls were more favorable than unfavorable, reaching his peak approval rating in the wake of the September 11 attacks at 68 percent.^[175] However, polling numbers for both him and the president gradually declined in their second terms,^{[175][176]} with Cheney reaching his lowest point shortly before leaving office at 13 percent.^{[176][177]} Cheney's Gallup poll figures are mostly consistent with those from other polls:^{[175][178]}

- April 2001 – 63% approval, 21% disapproval
- January 2002 – 68% approval, 18% disapproval
- January 2004 – 56% approval, 36% disapproval
- January 2005 – 50% approval, 40% disapproval
- January 2006 – 41% approval, 46% disapproval
- July 2007 – 30% approval, 60% disapproval
- March 2009 – 30% approval, 63% disapproval

In April 2007, Cheney was awarded an honorary doctorate of public service by Brigham Young University, where he delivered the commencement address.^[179] His selection as commencement speaker was controversial. The college board of trustees issued a statement explaining that the invitation should be viewed "as one extended to someone holding the high office of vice president of the United States rather than to a partisan political figure".^[180] BYU permitted a protest to occur so long as it did not "make personal attacks against Cheney, attack (the) BYU administration, the church or the First Presidency".^[181]

Cheney has been cited as the most powerful vice president in American history.^{[2][3]}

Cheney has been compared to Darth Vader, a characterization originated by his critics, but which was later adopted humorously by Cheney himself as well as by members of his family and staff.^[182]

As a result of Cheney having admitted that he "signed off" on the so-called "enhanced interrogation techniques" program,^{[183][184]} some public officials, as well as several media outlets and advocacy groups, have called for his prosecution under various anti-torture and war crimes statutes.^{[185][186]}

In Jon Meacham's book *Destiny and Power: The American Odyssey of George Herbert Walker Bush*, published in November 2015, the 41st president, although also laudatory of Cheney, is in part critical of the former vice president, whom Bush describes as "having his own empire" and "very hard-line."^[187]

In popular culture

- In Eminem's 2002 single "Without Me", where the lines "I know that you got a job, Ms. Cheney / But your husband's heart problem's complicating" refer to his health problems.
- In *The Day After Tomorrow*, the character Raymond Becker (played by Kenneth Welsh) is intended to be a criticism of Dick Cheney.
- In *W.* (2008), a biographical drama film directed by Oliver Stone, he is portrayed by Richard Dreyfuss.^[188]
- In *War Dogs* (2016 film) where the line "God bless Dick Cheney's America" refers to his support of American military presence in Iraq.
- In *Who Is America?* (2018), a political satire series, Sacha Baron Cohen pranked Cheney into signing a makeshift waterboard kit.^[189]
- In *Vice* (2018), a biographical comedy-drama film written and directed by Adam McKay, Cheney is portrayed by Christian Bale,^[190] for which the latter won a Golden Globe and was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Actor. During an interview by Emmerson Sykes of the ACLU program, *At Liberty*, on January 31, 2019, McKay discussed the movie at length, his

motivation to create the film, and the basis for his choices about portraying many aspects of Cheney's life in the film.^[191]

- In *Mrs. America* (2020), a historical drama television miniseries produced by FX, Cheney is portrayed by Andrew Hodwitz.^[192]
- Bob Rivers did a parody cover called "Cheney's Got a Gun"^[193]

Personal life

Cheney is a member of the United Methodist Church^[194] and was the first Methodist vice president to serve under a Methodist president.^[195]

His wife, Lynne, was chair of the National Endowment for the Humanities from 1986 to 1996. She is now a public speaker, author, and a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute.

The couple have two daughters, Elizabeth "Liz" and Mary Cheney, and seven grandchildren. Liz, congresswoman from Wyoming since 2017, is married to Philip J. Perry, a former General Counsel of the Department of Homeland Security. Mary, a former employee of the Colorado Rockies baseball team and the Coors Brewing Company, was a campaign aide to the Bush re-election campaign; she lives in Great Falls, Virginia, with her wife Heather Poe.^[196] Cheney has publicly supported gay marriage since leaving the vice presidency.^[197]

As of 2015, Cheney had a pet Golden Retriever named Nelson.^{[198][199][200]}

Health problems

Cheney's long histories of cardiovascular disease and periodic need for urgent health care raised questions of whether he was medically fit to serve in public office.^[201] Having smoked approximately 3 packs of cigarettes per day for nearly 20 years,^[202] Cheney had his first of five heart attacks on 18 June 1978,^[203] at age 37. Subsequent heart attacks in 1984, 1988, on 22 November 2000, and on 22 February 2010 resulted in moderate contractile dysfunction of his left ventricle.^{[204][205]} He underwent four-vessel coronary artery bypass grafting in 1988, coronary artery stenting in November 2000, urgent coronary balloon angioplasty in March 2001, and the implantation of a cardioverter-defibrillator in June 2001.^[204]

On September 24, 2005, Cheney underwent a six-hour endo-vascular procedure to repair popliteal artery aneurysms bilaterally, a catheter treatment technique used in the artery behind each knee.^[206] The condition was discovered at a regular physical in July, and was not life-threatening.^[207] Cheney was hospitalized for tests after experiencing shortness of breath five months later. In late April 2006, an ultrasound revealed that the clot was smaller.^[206]

On March 5, 2007, Cheney was treated for deep-vein thrombosis in his left leg at George Washington University Hospital after experiencing pain in his left calf. Doctors prescribed blood-thinning medication and allowed him to return to work.^[208] CBS News reported that during the morning of November 26, 2007, Cheney was diagnosed with atrial fibrillation and underwent treatment that afternoon.^[206]

On July 12, 2008, Cheney underwent a cardiological exam; doctors reported that his heartbeat was normal for a 67-year-old man with a history of heart problems. As part of his annual checkup, he was administered an electrocardiogram and radiological imaging of the stents placed in the arteries behind his knees in 2005. Doctors said that Cheney had not experienced any recurrence of atrial fibrillation and that his special pacemaker had neither detected nor treated any arrhythmia.^[209] On October 15, 2008, Cheney returned to the hospital briefly to treat a minor irregularity.^[210]

On January 19, 2009, Cheney strained his back "while moving boxes into his new house". As a consequence, he was in a wheelchair for two days, including his attendance at the 2009 United States presidential inauguration.^{[211][212]}

On February 22, 2010, Cheney was admitted to George Washington University Hospital after experiencing chest pains. A spokesperson later said Cheney had experienced a mild heart attack after doctors had run tests.^[205] On June 25, 2010, Cheney was admitted to George Washington University Hospital after reporting discomfort.^[213]

In early-July 2010, Cheney was outfitted with a left-ventricular assist device (LVAD) at Inova Fairfax Heart and Vascular Institute to compensate for worsening congestive heart failure.^[214] The device pumped blood continuously through his body.^{[215][216]} He was released from Inova on August 9, 2010,^[217] and had to decide whether to seek a full heart transplant.^{[218][219]} This pump was centrifugal and as a result he remained alive without a pulse for nearly fifteen months.^[220]

On March 24, 2012, Cheney underwent a seven-hour heart transplant procedure at Inova Fairfax Hospital in Woodburn, Virginia. He had been on a waiting list for more than 20 months before receiving the heart from an anonymous donor.^{[221][222]} Cheney's principal cardiologist, Dr. Jonathan Reiner, advised his patient that "it would not be unreasonable for an otherwise healthy 71-year-old man to expect to live another 10 years" with a transplant, saying in a family-authorized interview that he considered Cheney to be otherwise healthy.^[223]

Hunting incident

On February 11, 2006, Dick Cheney accidentally shot Harry Whittington, a 78-year-old Texas attorney, while participating in a quail hunt at Armstrong ranch in Kenedy County, Texas.^[224] Secret Service agents and medical aides, who were traveling with Cheney, came to Whittington's assistance and treated his birdshot wounds to his right cheek, neck, and chest. An ambulance standing by for the Vice President took Whittington to nearby Kingsville before he was flown by helicopter to Corpus Christi Memorial Hospital. On February 14, 2006, Whittington had a non-fatal heart attack and atrial fibrillation due to at least one lead-shot pellet lodged in or near his heart.^[225] Because of the small size of the birdshot pellets, doctors decided to leave up to 30 pieces of the pellets lodged in his body rather than try to remove them.

The Secret Service stated that they notified the Sheriff about one hour after the shooting. Kenedy County Sheriff Ramone Salinas III stated that he first heard of the shooting at about 5:30 pm.^[226] The next day, ranch owner Katharine Armstrong informed the Corpus Christi Caller-Times of the shooting.^[227] Cheney had a televised interview with MSNBC News about the shooting on February 15. Both Cheney and Whittington have called the incident an accident. Early reports indicated that Cheney and Whittington were friends and that the injuries were minor. Whittington has since told The Washington Post that he and Cheney were not close friends but acquaintances. When asked if Cheney had apologized, Whittington declined to answer.^[228]

The sheriff's office released a report on the shooting on February 16, 2006, and witness statements on February 22, indicating that the shooting occurred on a clear sunny day, and Whittington was shot from 30 or 40 yards (40 m) away while searching for a downed bird. Armstrong, the ranch owner, claimed that all in the hunting party were wearing blaze-orange safety gear and none had been drinking.^[229] However, Cheney has acknowledged that he had one beer four or five hours prior to the shooting.^[230] Although Kenedy County Sheriff's Office documents support the official story by Cheney and his party, re-creations of the incident produced by George Gongora and John Metz of the Corpus Christi Caller-Times indicated that the actual shooting distance was closer than the 30 yards claimed.^[231]

The incident hurt Cheney's popularity standing in the polls.^[232] According to polls on February 27, 2006, two weeks after the accident, Dick Cheney's approval rating had dropped 5 percentage points to 18%.^[233] The incident became the subject of a number of jokes and satire.^[234]

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Ben Carson

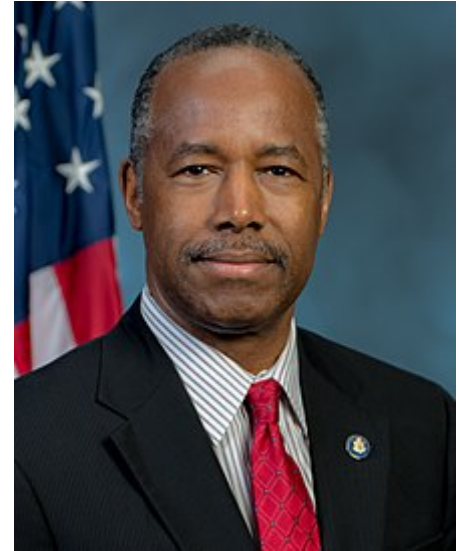
Benjamin Solomon Carson Sr. (born September 18, 1951) is an American retired neurosurgeon and politician who served as the 17th United States Secretary of Housing and Urban Development from 2017 to 2021. He was a candidate for President of the United States in the 2016 Republican primaries. He is considered a pioneer in the field of neurosurgery.^{[3][4][5]}

Carson became the Director of Pediatric Neurosurgery at the Johns Hopkins Children's Center in 1984 at age 33, then the youngest chief of pediatric neurosurgery in the United States.^[6] At retirement, he was professor of neurosurgery, oncology, plastic surgery, and pediatrics at the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine.^[7] Carson's achievements include participating in the first reported separation of conjoined twins joined at the back of the head. Although surgically a success, the twins continued to suffer neurologic/medical complications.^[8] Additional accomplishments include performing the first successful neurosurgical procedure on a fetus inside the womb, developing new methods to treat brain-stem tumors, and revitalizing hemispherectomy techniques for controlling seizures.^{[9][10][6][11]} He wrote over 100 neurosurgical publications. He retired from medicine in 2013.

Carson gained national fame among political conservatives after delivering a speech at the 2013 National Prayer Breakfast which was perceived as critical of the policies of President Barack Obama.^[12] Following widespread speculation of a presidential run, Carson officially announced his campaign for the 2016 Republican nomination for President in May 2015. Carson performed strongly in early polls, leading to his being considered a frontrunner for the nomination during the fall of 2015; however, his polling support began to decline following scrutiny of his foreign policy credentials after the November 2015 Paris attacks.^[13] Carson withdrew from the race after Super Tuesday, following a string of disappointing primary results, and endorsed Donald Trump.^[14] Following Trump's victory, Trump nominated Carson as Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, being confirmed by the United States Senate in a 58–41 vote on March 2, 2017.^[15] Carson has also been seen as a symbol of black conservatism.^[16]

Carson has received numerous honors for his neurosurgery work, including more than 60 honorary doctorate degrees and numerous national merit citations.^[17] In 2001, he was named by CNN and TIME magazine as one of the nation's 20 foremost physicians and scientists and was selected by the Library of

Ben Carson



17th United States Secretary of Housing and Urban Development

In office

March 2, 2017 – January 20, 2021

President Donald Trump

Deputy Pam Patenaude
Brian D. Montgomery

Preceded by Julian Castro

Succeeded by Marcia Fudge

Personal details

Born Benjamin Solomon Carson
September 18, 1951
Detroit, Michigan, U.S.

Political party Republican (1981–1999, 2014–present)^[1]

Other political affiliations Democratic (before 1981)
Independent (1999–2014)

Spouse(s) Candy Rustin (m. 1975)

Children 3

Residence Vienna, Virginia, U.S.

Alma mater Yale University (BA)

Congress as one of 89 "Living Legends" on its 200th anniversary.^[10] In 2008, Carson was bestowed the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian award in the United States.^[18] In 2010, he was elected into the National Academy of Medicine.^[19] He was the subject of the 2009 TV film *Gifted Hands: The Ben Carson Story*, wherein he was portrayed by Cuba Gooding Jr. Carson has also written or co-written six bestselling books.

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References

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University of Michigan (MD)

Occupation Neurosurgeon · politician · academic · author

Net worth US\$29 million (2016)^[2]

Awards Presidential Medal of Freedom (2008)

Scientific career

Fields Neurosurgery, Pediatric neurosurgery

Institutions Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine, National Academy of Medicine

Early life and education

Carson's parents were Robert Solomon Carson Jr. (1914–1992), a World War II U.S. Army veteran, and Sonya Carson (née Copeland, 1928–2017).^[20] Robert Carson was a Baptist minister, but he later became a Cadillac automobile plant laborer. Both his parents came from large families in rural Georgia, and they were living in rural Tennessee when they met and married.^[21] Carson's mother was 13 and his father was 28 when they married, and after his father finished his military service, they moved from Chattanooga, Tennessee, to Detroit,^{[21][22]} where they lived in a large house in the Indian Village neighborhood.^[23] Carson's older brother, Curtis, was born in 1949, when his mother was 20.^[24] In 1950, Carson's parents purchased a new 733-square foot single-family detached home on Deacon Street in the Boynton neighborhood in southwest Detroit.^{[25][26][27]} Carson was born in Detroit, Michigan, on September 18, 1951.

Carson's Detroit Public Schools education began in 1956 with kindergarten at the Fisher School and continued through first, second, and the first half of third grade, during which time he was an average student.^{[28][29]} At the age of five, his mother learned that his father had a prior family and had not divorced his first wife.^[30] In 1959, at the age of eight, his parents separated and he moved with his mother and brother to live for two years with his mother's Seventh-day Adventist older sister and her sister's husband in multi-family dwellings in the Dorchester and Roxbury neighborhoods of Boston.^{[30][31]} In Boston, Carson's mother attempted suicide, had several psychiatric hospitalizations for depression, and for the first time began working outside the home as a domestic worker,^[30] while Carson and his brother attended a two-classroom school at the Berea Seventh-day Adventist church where two teachers taught eight grades, and the vast majority of time was spent singing songs and playing games.^[28]

In 1961, at the age of 10, he moved with his mother and brother back to southwest Detroit, where they lived in a multi-family dwelling in a primarily white neighborhood, (Springwells Village), across the railroad tracks from the Delray neighborhood, while renting out their house on Deacon Street, which his mother received in a divorce settlement.^{[25][30][32]} When they returned to Detroit public schools, Carson and his brother's academic performance initially lagged far behind their new classmates, having, according to Carson, "essentially lost a year of school" by attending the small Seventh-day Adventist parochial school in Boston,^{[28][30][33]} but they both improved when their mother limited their time watching television and required them to read and write book reports on two library books per week.^[34] Carson attended the predominantly white Higgins Elementary School for fifth and sixth grades and the predominantly white Wilson Junior High School for seventh and the first half of eighth grade.^{[29][35]} In 1965, at the age of 13, he moved with his mother and brother back to their house on Deacon Street.^[36] He attended the predominantly black Hunter Junior High School for the second half of eighth grade.^{[29][36]} At the age of eight, Carson dreamt of becoming a missionary doctor, but five years later he aspired to the lucrative lifestyles of psychiatrists portrayed on television, and his brother bought him a subscription to *Psychology Today* for his 13th birthday.^{[37][38]}

High school

By ninth grade, the family's financial situation had improved, his mother surprising neighbors by paying cash to buy a new Chrysler car,^[39] and the only government assistance they still relied on was food stamps.^[40] Carson attended the predominantly black Southwestern High School for ninth through 12th grades, graduating third in his class academically.^{[29][41][42][43]} In high school, he played the euphonium in band and participated in forensics (public speaking),^[44] chess club,^{[45][46]} and the U.S. Army Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps (JROTC) program where he reached its highest rank—cadet colonel.^[41] Carson served as a laboratory

assistant in the high school's biology, chemistry, and physics school laboratories beginning in 10th, 11th, and 12th grades, respectively,^[47] and worked as a biology laboratory assistant at Wayne State University the summer between 11th and 12th grades.^[48]

In his book *Gifted Hands*, Carson relates that as a youth, he had a violent temper. "As a teenager, I would go after people with rocks, and bricks, and baseball bats, and hammers," Carson told NBC's *Meet the Press* in October 2015.^[49] He said he once tried to hit his mother on the head with a hammer over a clothing dispute, while in the ninth grade he tried to stab a friend who had changed the radio station. Fortunately, the blade broke in his friend's belt buckle.^{[50][51][52]} Carson said the intended victim, whose identity he wants to protect, was a classmate, a friend, or a close relative.^{[53][54]} After this incident, Carson said he began reading the Book of Proverbs and applying verses on anger. As a result, he states he "never had another problem with temper".^{[55][56][57]} In his various books and at campaign events, he repeated these stories and said he once attacked a schoolmate with a combination lock. Nine friends, classmates, and neighbors who grew up with him told CNN in 2015 they did not remember the anger or violence he has described.^[58] In response, Carson posted on Facebook a 1997 *Parade Magazine* issue, in which his mother verified the stabbing incident. He then questioned the extent of the effort CNN had exerted in the investigation.^[53]

Carson has said that he protected white students in a biology lab after a race riot broke out at his high school in response to the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968. *The Wall Street Journal* confirmed the riot but could not find anyone who remembered Carson sheltering white students.^{[59][60]}

College

Carson's SAT college admission test scores ranked him somewhere in the low 90th percentile, which according to him resulted in a *Detroit Free Press* article, "Carson Gets Highest SAT Scores in Twenty Years" of any student in Detroit public schools.^{[42][43][61][62]} He wanted to attend college farther away than his brother who was at the University of Michigan.^[63] Carson says he narrowed his college choices to Harvard or Yale but could afford the \$10 application fee to apply for only one of them.^{[43][64]} He said he decided to apply to Yale after seeing a team from Yale defeat a team from Harvard on the *G.E. College Bowl* television show.^{[65][66][67][68][69][70]} Carson was accepted by Yale and offered a full scholarship covering tuition, room and board.^{[71][72]} In 1973, Carson graduated with a B.A. in psychology from Yale "with a fairly respectable grade point average although far from the top of the class".^{[73][74]}

Carson does not say in his books whether he received a college student deferment during the Vietnam War. He does say that his older brother, then a student at the University of Michigan, received a low number (26) in the first draft lottery in 1969 and was able to enlist in the Navy for four years instead of being drafted,^[75] whereas he received a high number (333) in the second draft lottery in 1970.^[76] Carson said he would have readily accepted his responsibility to fight had he been drafted,^[76] but he "identified strongly with the anti-war protesters and the revolutionaries" and enthusiastically voted for anti-war Democratic presidential candidate George McGovern in 1972.^[77] In his book, *America the Beautiful* (2012), Carson said: "The Vietnam War was, in retrospect, not a noble conflict. It brought shame to our nation because of both the outcome and the cause."^[78]

In the summers following his high school graduation until his second year in medical school, Carson worked at a variety of jobs: as a clerk in the payroll office of Ford Motor Company, supervisor of a six-person crew picking up trash along the highway under a federal jobs program for inner-city students, a clerk in the mailroom of Young & Rubicam Advertising, assembling fender parts and inspecting back window louvers on the assembly line at Chrysler, a crane operator at Sennett Steel, and finally a radiology technician taking X-rays.^[79] At Yale, Carson had a part-time job on campus as a student police aide.^[80]

In his autobiography, Carson said he had been offered a scholarship to West Point. *Politico* reported that West Point has no record of his ever seeking admission. The academy does not award scholarships to anyone;^[81] cadets receive a free education and room and board in exchange for a commitment to serve in the military for at least five years after graduation.^{[81][Note 1]} Carson also said the University of Michigan had offered him a scholarship. His staff later said the described scenario was similar to that of West Point, as he never actually applied for entry to the University of Michigan.^{[Note 2][82]}

In his autobiography, *Gifted Hands*, Carson recounted that exams for a Yale psychology course he took his junior year, "Perceptions 301", were inexplicably burned, forcing students to retake the exam. Carson said other students walked out in protest when they discovered the retest was significantly harder than the original examination, but that he alone finished the test. On doing so, Carson said he was congratulated by the course instructor, who told him the retest was a hoax intended to find "the most honest student in the class". Carson said the professor awarded him \$10 and that a photographer for the *Yale Daily News* was present to take his picture, which appeared in the student newspaper with a story about the experiment. Doubts were raised about this story in 2015 during Carson's presidential campaign. *The Wall Street Journal* attempted to verify Carson's account, reporting that Yale undergraduate courses were identified with only two digits in the early 1970s, that Yale had offered no course called "Perceptions 301" at the time, and that Carson's photo had never appeared in the *Yale Daily News*.^[59] Carson, while acknowledging the class number was not correct, said: "You know, when you write a book with a co-writer and you say that there was a class, a lot of [the] time they'll put a number or something just to give it more meat. You know, obviously, decades later, I'm not going to remember the course number."^[83]

Medical school

Carson entered the University of Michigan Medical School in 1973, and at first he struggled academically, doing so poorly on his first set of comprehensive exams that his faculty adviser recommended he drop out of medical school or take a reduced academic load and take longer to finish.^{[84][85]} He continued with a regular academic load, and his grades improved to average in his first year of medical school. By his second year of medical school, Carson began to excel academically by seldom attending lectures and instead studying textbooks and lecture notes from 6 a.m. to 11 p.m.^[86] Carson graduated from the University of Michigan Medical School with an M.D. degree in 1977, and he was elected to the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society.^[74]

Carson was then accepted by the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine neurosurgery program, where he served one year as a surgical intern and five years as a neurosurgery resident, completing the final year as chief resident in 1983.^[87] He then spent one year (1983–1984) as a Senior Registrar in neurosurgery at the Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital in Nedlands, a suburb of Perth, Western Australia.^[88]

Medical career

Upon returning to Johns Hopkins in 1984, Carson was appointed the university's Director of Pediatric Neurosurgery.^[89] As a surgeon, he specialized in traumatic brain injuries, brain and spinal cord tumors, achondroplasia, neurological and congenital disorders, craniosynostosis, epilepsy, and trigeminal neuralgia.^[90] He has said that his hand–eye coordination and three-dimensional reasoning made him a gifted surgeon.^[91]

While at Johns Hopkins, Carson figured in the revival of the hemispherectomy, a drastic surgical procedure in which part or all of one hemisphere of the brain is removed to control severe pediatric epilepsy. Encouraged by John M. Freeman,^[92] he refined the procedure in the 1980s and performed it many times.^{[93][94]}

In 1987, Carson was the lead neurosurgeon of a 70-member surgical team that separated conjoined twins Patrick and Benjamin Binder, who had been joined at the back of the head (craniopagus twins). The separation surgery held promise in part because the twin boys had separate brains.^[95] The Johns Hopkins Children's Center surgical team rehearsed the surgery for weeks, practicing on two dolls secured together by Velcro.^[95] Although there were few follow-up stories following the Binder twins' return to Germany seven months after the operation,^[95] both twins were reportedly "far from normal" two years after the procedure, with one in a vegetative state.^{[95][96][97][98]} Neither twin was ever able to talk or care for himself, and both eventually became institutionalized wards of the state.^[95] Patrick Binder died sometime during the last decade, according to his uncle, who was located by *The Washington Post* in 2015.^[95] The Binder surgery served as a blueprint for similar twin separations, a procedure that was refined in subsequent decades.^[95] Carson participated in four subsequent high-risk conjoined-twin separations, including a 1997 operation on craniopagus Zambian twins Joseph and Luka Banda, which resulted in a normal neurological outcome.^[95] Two sets of twins died, including Iranian twins Ladan and Laleh Bijani. Another separation resulted in the death of one twin and the survival of the other, who is legally blind and struggles to walk.^[99]

According to *The Washington Post*, the Binder surgery "launched the stardom" of Carson, who "walked out of the operating room that day into a spotlight that has never dimmed", beginning with a press conference that was covered worldwide and created name recognition leading to publishing deals and a motivational speaking career.^[95] On the condition the film would have its premiere in Baltimore,^[95] Carson agreed to a cameo appearance as "head surgeon" in the 2003 Farrelly brothers' comedy Stuck on You, starring Matt Damon and Greg Kinnear as conjoined twins who, unhappy after their surgical separation, continue life attached to each other by Velcro.^{[95][100]}

In March 2013, Carson announced he would retire as a surgeon, saying he would "much rather quit when I'm at the top of my game".^[101] His retirement became official on July 1, 2013.^[102]

In 2021, Carson joined Galectin Therapeutics to assist with development of the company's galectin-3 inhibitor, belapectin, as a treatment for NASH cirrhosis and in combination with immunotherapy for the treatment of cancers.^[103]

Articles, books, business relationships, media posts

Carson has written many articles in peer-reviewed journals^[104] and six bestselling books^[105] published by Zondervan, an international Christian media and publishing company. The first book was an autobiography published in 1992. Two others are about his personal philosophies of success and what he sees as the stabilizing influence of religion.^{[106][107]}

According to CNN, Carson had an "extensive relationship" from 2004 to 2014 with Mannatech, a multi-level marketing company that produces dietary supplements made from substances such as aloe vera extract and larch-tree bark.^{[108][109][110]} Carson gave four paid speeches at company events. He has denied being paid by Mannatech to do anything else, saying he has been a "prolific speaker" who has addressed many groups.^[111] In a 2004 speech, he credited the company's products with the disappearance of his prostate cancer symptoms.^{[108][109]} The nature of this relationship became an issue in 2015 during Carson's presidential campaign. Carson's relationship with Mannatech continued after the company paid \$7 million in 2009 to settle a deceptive-marketing lawsuit in Texas over claims that its products could cure autism and cancer.^{[108][112][113]} His most recent paid speech for the company was in 2013, for which he was paid \$42,000. His image appeared on the corporation's website in 2014,^[108] and in the same year, he praised their



Carson and President George W. Bush in 2008

"glyconutrient" supplements in a PBS special that was subsequently featured on the site.^[114]

Carson delivered the keynote address at a Mannatech distributor convention in 2011, during which he said the company had donated funds to help him obtain a coveted endowed-chair post at Johns Hopkins Medicine: "... three years ago I had an endowed chair bestowed upon me and uh, it requires \$2.5 million to do an endowed chair, and I'm proud to say that part of that \$2.5 million came from Mannatech." In October 2015, Carson's campaign team said that "there was no contribution from Mannatech to Johns Hopkins" and that his statement had been "a legitimate mistake on his part. Confusion. He had been doing some fundraising for the hospital and some other chairs about that time, and he simply got things mixed up."^[115]



Ben and Candy Carson with George and Laura Bush in 2008

During the CNBC GOP debate on October 28, 2015, Carson was asked about his relationship with Mannatech. He replied, "That's easy to answer. I didn't have any involvement with Mannatech. Total propaganda. I did a couple speeches for them. I did speeches for other people—they were paid speeches. It is absolutely absurd to say I had any kind of relation with them. Do I take the product? Yes. I think it is a good product."^[116] Politifact rated Carson's denial of any involvement as "false", pointing to his paid speeches for Mannatech and his appearances in promotional videos in which he favorably reviewed its products, despite not being "an official spokesman or sales associate".^[110] When the CNBC moderator commented that Carson was on Mannatech's website, Carson replied that he had not given his permission. Earlier, he had said he was unaware of the company's legal history.^[117]

On November 3, 2015, Mannatech said on its website that for compliance with Federal campaign finance regulations, the company had removed all references to Carson before he announced his bid for the presidency.^[118]

In July 2013, Carson was hired by The Washington Times as a weekly opinion columnist.^[119] In October 2013, Fox News hired Carson as a contributor to provide analysis and commentary across Fox News Channel's daytime and primetime programming, a relationship that lasted until the end of 2014.^[120]

In 2014, some House Republicans (who later formed the House Freedom Caucus) approached Carson about the possibility of his standing for Speaker of the House in the event that the incumbent Speaker, John Boehner, had to step down because of intraparty disunion. Carson declined, citing preparations for his 2016 presidential campaign. Ultimately, Boehner resigned in October 2015, and Paul Ryan was elected as the new Speaker.^[121]

In financial disclosure forms, Carson and his wife reported income of between \$8.9 million and \$27 million from January 2014 to May 3, 2015, when he announced his presidential campaign.^[122] Over that period, Carson received over \$4 million from 141 paid speeches, between \$1.1 million and \$6 million in book royalties, between \$200,000 and \$2 million as a contributor to The Washington Times and Fox News, and between \$2 million and \$10 million as a member of the boards of Kellogg Co. and Costco Wholesale Corp.^[122] He resigned from Costco's board in mid-2015, after serving on it for more than 16 years.^[123] Carson was Chairman of the Baltimore-based biotechnology company Vaccinogen from August 2014^[124] until the announcement of his US presidential bid in May 2015.^[125] Carson had previously served on Vaccinogen's Medical Advisory Board.^[126]

2016 presidential campaign

Background and increasing political visibility

Carson, who had been registered as a Republican, changed his registration to independent in the 1990s after watching Republicans impeach President Clinton for perjury regarding an extramarital affair with Monica Lewinsky. "I just saw so much hypocrisy in both parties," he said.^[127] In February 2013, Carson said he was not a member of any political party.^[128]

In his book *America the Beautiful* (2013), he wrote: "I believe it is a very good idea for physicians, scientists, engineers, and others trained to make decisions based on facts and empirical data to get involved in the political arena."^{[129][130]}



Carson speaking at a campaign event in August 2015

Carson was the keynote speaker at the National Prayer Breakfast on February 7, 2013.^[131] The speech garnered Carson considerable attention because the event is normally apolitical in nature, and the speech was critical of the philosophy and policies of President Barack Obama, who was sitting 10 feet away.^[132] About the speech, Carson said: "I don't think it was particularly political ... You know, I'm a physician."^[133] Regarding the policies of President Obama, he said: "There are a number of policies that I don't believe lead to the growth of our nation and don't lead to the elevation of our nation. I don't want to sit here and say all of his policies are bad. What I would like to see more often in this nation is an open and intelligent conversation."^[133]

Carson's sudden popularity among conservatives led to his being invited as a featured speaker at the 2013 Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC). He tied for seventh place in the Washington Times/CPAC 2013 Straw Poll with 4% of the 3,000 ballots cast.^{[134][135]} In the 2014 CPAC straw poll, he was in third place with 9% of the vote, behind senators Ted Cruz of Texas (with 11%) and Rand Paul of Kentucky (31%).^[136] In the presidential straw poll at the 2013 Values Voter Summit, he and Rick Santorum polled 13%, with winner Ted Cruz polling 42%, and in 2014 he polled 20% to Cruz's winning 25%.^{[137][138]}

On November 4, 2014, the day of the 2014 midterms, he rejoined the Republican Party, saying it was "truly a pragmatic move" because he was considering running for president in 2016.^[127]

In January 2015, The Weekly Standard reported that the Draft Carson Committee had raised \$13 million by the end of 2014, shortly after Carson performed well in a CNN/ORC poll of potential candidates in December 2014, coming second in two different versions. He polled 10% to Mitt Romney's 20%, but in the same poll with Romney removed from the list, Carson polled 11% to Jeb Bush's 14%.^{[139][140]} The Wall Street Journal mentioned that the Draft Carson Committee had chairmen in all of Iowa's 99 counties, and that Carson had recently led two separate Public Policy polls for the state of Pennsylvania.^{[141][142]}

Announcement of campaign

On May 2, 2015, Carson proclaimed that in two days he was going to make a major announcement on his decision on whether to enter the Presidential Race.^[143] In an interview with Cincinnati station WKRC-TV on May 3, 2015, Carson accidentally confirmed his candidacy for president.^[144] The interview was also broadcast live on WPEC.^[145] The next day, May 4, 2015, at the Music Hall Center for the Performing Arts in his home town of Detroit,^[146] he officially announced his run for the Republican nomination in the 2016 U.S. presidential election. The announcement speech was preceded by a choir singing "Lose Yourself" with Carson sitting in the audience. After the song, Carson took the stage and announced his candidacy alongside a speech on his rags to riches life story, at one point stating: "I remember when our favorite drug dealer was killed."^[147]

Surge in polls

In October 2015, the Super PAC supporting Carson, The 2016 Committee (formerly the Draft Carson Committee), announced it had received donations in mostly \$100 increments from more than 200 small businesses around the country over the course of one week. Fox Business reported that "Carson's outsider status is growing his small business support base." Ben Walters, a fundraiser for The 2016 Committee, expressed optimism about Carson's small business support base: "It's unbelievable the diversity of businesses that we are bringing on. We are seeing everything from doctors' offices and folks in the healthcare profession to motorcycle repair shops and bed and breakfasts."^[148]



Carson at a rally in August 2015

In October, it was noted that Carson's "improbable" political career had surged in polls and fundraising, while he continued to participate in nationally televised Republican debates.^{[149][150]}

Decline in polls

The campaign brought considerable attention to Carson's past. CBS News described Carson's narrative of "overcoming impossible odds as a child growing up in an impoverished, single-parent household to reach international prominence as a pediatric neurosurgeon" as "a key part of his presidential campaign".^[151] The Wall Street Journal said the narrative came under "the harsh scrutiny of presidential politics, where rivals and media hunt for embellishments and omissions that can hobble a campaign".^[152] CNN characterized the core narrative as "acts of violence as an angry young man", followed by a spiritual epiphany that transformed Carson into the "composed figure" he now portrays.^[58] Media challenges to a number of Carson's statements included allegations of discrepancies between documented facts and certain assertions in his autobiography *Gifted Hands*—allegations dismissed by Carson as a media "witch hunt".^[81] In November 2015, the Detroit Free Press republished an article from 1988 "to try to bring some clarity to the claims currently being brought into question".^[153]



Carson and Sean Hannity in January 2016

In November 2015, Carson's campaign aired a 60-second TV advertisement in which excerpts from Carson's stump speech were intercut with a rap by an artist named Aspiring Mogul.^[154] They spent \$150,000 on the ads, which were aired in Atlanta, Detroit and Miami.^[155] Carson defended the ad, saying "Well, there are people in the campaign who felt that was a good way to do things ... I support them in doing that, but I probably would have taken a little different approach."^[154] Later, he said the advertisement was done without his knowledge, that "it was done by people who have no concept of the black community and what they were doing", and that he was "horrified" by it.^[156]



Carson speaking before the Nevada caucuses in February 2016

Statements that Carson made regarding foreign policy called into doubt his familiarity with the domain. The New York Times reported in 2015, "Carson has acknowledged being something of a novice on foreign affairs." Regarding the Ukrainian crisis, Carson would send arms to Ukraine to aid it in its fight against pro-Russian rebels. He also believes the Baltic states, current NATO members, should "get involved in NATO".^[157]

In a November 2015 Republican debate, Carson declared his intentions to make ISIS "look like losers" as he would "destroy their caliphate". Carson also advocated capturing a "big energy field" outside of Anbar, Iraq, which he said could be accomplished "fairly easily". Regarding the Middle East, he also claimed that "the Chinese are there", while in contrast, The Guardian reported that "there are no known members of the Chinese armed forces currently engaged in any conflict in the Middle East."^[158]

Carson said he is not opposed to a Palestinian state, but he questioned why it needs "to be within the confines of Israeli territory [...] Is that necessary, or can you sort of slip that area down into Egypt?"^[159]

Withdrawal from campaign

On March 2, following the Super Tuesday 2016 primaries, Carson announced that he did "not see a political path forward" and would not attend the next Republican debate in Detroit.^[14] He said, "[T]his grassroots movement on behalf of 'We the People' will continue," indicating that he would give more details later in the week.^[14] He suspended his campaign on March 4 and announced he would be the new national chairman of My Faith Votes, a group that encourages Christians to exercise their civic duty to vote.^{[14][160]}

In total, Ben Carson's campaign spent \$58 million. However, most of the money went to political consultants and fundraising rather than advertising. Carson questioned whether his campaign was economically sabotaged from within.^{[161][162][163]}

Further activities during the 2016 election

On March 11, 2016, a week after Carson ended his presidential campaign, he endorsed Trump, calling him part of "the voice of the people to be heard".^[164] Carson's subsequent comments that Americans would have to sustain Trump for only four years if he was not a good president drew criticism, and he admitted that he would have preferred another candidate, though he thought Trump had the best chance of winning the general election.^[165] On the other hand, at the press conference Carson said Trump had a "cerebral" side.^[166]

On April 25, Carson expressed opposition to Harriet Tubman replacing Andrew Jackson on the \$20 bill the day after dubbing the replacement "political expediency", though he indicated interest in Tubman having another tribute.^[167] In late April, Carson wrote to the Nevada Republican Party, requesting the two delegates he won in Nevada be released and free to support whoever they want.^[168]

On May 4, after Trump wrapped up the Republican nomination, he hinted that Carson would be among those who would vet his vice-presidential pick.^[169] The same day, in an interview Carson expressed interest in Ted Cruz serving as Attorney General of the United States, a position that Carson said would allow Cruz to prosecute Hillary Clinton, and then as a Supreme Court Justice nominee from the Trump administration.^[170] On May 6, Carson said in an interview that Trump would consider a Democrat as his running mate, conflicting with Trump's assertion that he would not. A Carson spokesperson later said Carson expected Trump to select a Republican.^[171] Carson was said by aide Armstrong Williams in a May 10 interview to have withdrawn from the Trump campaign's vetting team, though the campaign confirmed he was still involved.^[172] Later that month, Carson revealed a list of potential vice-presidential candidates in an interview with The Washington Post.^[173] On May 16, Carson said the media could not keep opinion out of reporting and cited Walter Cronkite as a fair journalist who was, in his words, a "left-wing radical".^[174]

During the Republican National Convention, Carson appeared with former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani in support of the pro-Donald Trump Great America PAC at an event in Cleveland.^[175]

Results

In total, Carson received 857,039 votes during the Republican primaries; this total represented 2.75% of the votes cast. He received the support of seven delegates at the Republican National Convention.^[176] Trump received the Republican nomination^[176] and went on to be elected president on November 8, 2016.^[177]

Secretary of Housing and Urban Development

Nomination and confirmation

After Donald Trump's win in the 2016 election, Carson joined Trump's transition team as Vice Chairman. Carson was also offered a cabinet position in the administration. He declined, in part because of his lack of experience, with an aide stating, "The last thing he would want to do was take a position that could cripple the presidency."^[178] Although it was reported that the position was for Secretary of Health and Human Services, Carson's business manager has disputed this, stating, "Dr. Carson was never offered a specific position, but everything was open to him."^[178] He was eventually offered the position of Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, which he accepted.^[179]

On December 5, 2016, Trump announced that he would nominate Carson to the position of Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.^[180] During the confirmation process, Carson was scrutinized by some housing advocates for what they perceived as his lack of relevant experience.^[15]

On January 24, 2017, the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs voted unanimously to approve the nomination.^[181] Senate Democrats attempted to defeat Carson's nomination via filibuster, but that vote failed on March 1, 2017,^[182] and he was then confirmed by the Senate by a 58–41 vote the next day.^[15]

Tenure



Carson at the 2019 State of the Union

In December 2017, *The Economist* described the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), led by Ben Carson, as "directionless".^[183] Most of the top HUD positions were unfilled and Carson's leadership was "inconspicuous and inscrutable".^[183] Of the policies HUD was enacting, *The Economist* wrote, "it is hard not to conclude that the governing principle at HUD is to take whatever the Obama administration was doing, and do the opposite."^[183] HUD scaled back the enforcement of fair housing laws, halted several fair housing investigations started by the Obama administration^[184] and removed the words "inclusive" and "free from discrimination" from its mission statement.^[184] HUD saw an exodus of career officials

during Carson's tenure.^[185]

On March 6, his first day as secretary, while addressing Housing and Urban Development (HUD) employees, Carson saluted the work ethic of immigrants, and during his comments, he likened slaves to involuntary immigrants. A HUD spokesman said that no one present thought Carson "was equating voluntary immigration with involuntary servitude".^[186] In the same speech, Carson was criticized by some for saying that the human brain "was incapable of forgetting and could be electrically stimulated into perfect recall".^[187]

Under the federal budget proposed by Trump in 2017, HUD's budget for the fiscal year 2018 would be cut by \$6.2 billion (13%) and the Community Development Block Grant, a program which Carson praised in a trip to Detroit as HUD secretary, would be eliminated.^{[188][189]} Carson issued a statement supporting the proposed

cuts.^[190] Carson suggested that federal funds for housing in Detroit could be part of an expected infrastructure bill.^[188]

In April 2017, while speaking in Washington at the National Low Income Housing Coalition conference, Carson said that housing funding would be included in an upcoming infrastructure bill from the Trump administration.^[191]

In July 2017, during his keynote address at the LeadingAge Florida annual convention, Carson stated his concern about "seniors who become destitute" and reported that the Department of Housing and Urban Development had increased public housing programs for the elderly by an unspecified number.^[192]

In summer 2017, Carson allowed his son, Baltimore businessman, Ben Carson Jr., to participate in organizing a HUD "listening tour" in Baltimore. Internal documents obtained by *The Washington Post* under the Freedom of Information Act showed that the younger Carson "put people he'd invited in touch with his father's deputies, joined agency staff on official conference calls about the listening tour and copied his wife on related email exchanges".^[193] The son's involvement prompted HUD staff to express concern; the department's deputy general counsel for operations wrote in a memorandum "that this gave the appearance that the Secretary may be using his position for his son's private gain".^{[193][194]} Carson's wife, son, and daughter-in-law also attended official meetings.^[193] In February 2018, the HUD inspector general's office confirmed that it was looking into the role Carson's family played at the department.^[195]



Carson speaks in 2019

During congressional testimony in May 2019, Carson did not know what the term REO ("Real Estate Owned" refers to housing owned by a bank or lending institution post-foreclosure) stood for and confused it with the cookie, Oreo.^{[196][197]} In response, Carson went on the Fox Business Network where he accused Democrats of adhering to "Saul Alinsky" tactics.^[198]

On March 1, 2020, the office of Vice President Mike Pence announced Carson's addition to the White House Coronavirus Task Force.^[199]

On November 9, 2020, Carson tested positive for COVID-19 after attending President Trump's Election Night party.^{[200][201]} He initially treated himself with a homeopathic oleander extract on the recommendation of Mike Lindell, the founder of My Pillow, Inc., which Carson said caused his symptoms to disappear. Oleander was previously rejected by the Food and Drug Administration as a treatment for COVID-19 and Carson received criticism for promoting an unscientific homeopathic treatment.^{[202][203][204]} He disclosed on November 20 that he subsequently became "extremely sick" and attributed his recovery to Regeneron's experimental antibody therapy. He said that President Trump had given him access to the drug.^[205]

Office furnishing scandal

Carson received criticism for spending up to \$31,000 on a dining set in his office in late 2017.^[206] This expenditure was discovered after Helen Foster, a career HUD official, filed a complaint alleging that she had been demoted from her position because she refused to spend more than the legal \$5,000 limit for office redecorations.^[207] Carson and his spokesman said that he had little or no involvement in the purchase of the dining set. Later, email communications revealed that Carson and his wife selected the dining set.^[208] On March 20, 2018, Carson testified before the United States House Committee on Appropriations that he had "dismissed" himself from the decision to buy the \$31,000 dining room set and "left it to my wife, you know, to choose something".^[209] On September 12, 2019, HUD's inspector general released a report clearing Carson of misconduct.^{[210][211][212]}

Remarks on transgender use of homeless shelters

Carson was accused by members of the Department of Housing and Urban Development of making transphobic remarks at a meeting in San Francisco in September 2019. He warned that "big, hairy men" might infiltrate homeless shelters for women, prompting one woman to walk out. Reps. Joe Kennedy III of Massachusetts and Jennifer Wexton of Virginia called for his resignation, but Carson said the accusations were a "mischaracterization". A HUD spokesperson responded that Carson "does not use derogatory language to refer to transgendered^[213] individuals. Any reporting to the contrary is false."^{[214][215]}

Carson Scholars Fund

In 1994, Carson and his wife started the Carson Scholars Fund that awards scholarships to students in grades 4–11 for "academic excellence and humanitarian qualities".^[216]

Recipients of the Carson Scholars Fund receive a \$1,000 scholarship towards their college education. It has awarded 6,700 scholarships.^{[216][217]} In recognition for his work with the Carson Scholars Fund and other charitable giving throughout his lifetime, Carson was awarded the William E. Simon Prize for Philanthropic Leadership in 2005.^[218]

American Cornerstone Institute

In 2021, Carson founded the American Cornerstone Institute or ACI, a conservative think tank centered around advancing policies that promote "faith, liberty, community, and life."^{[219][220]}

The ACI's mission statement is "dedicated to promoting and preserving individual and religious liberty, helping our country's most vulnerable find new hope, and developing methods to decrease the federal government's role in society and to improve efficiency to best serve ALL our nation's citizens. Headed by world-renowned neurosurgeon, presidential candidate, and former Housing and Urban Development Secretary Dr. Ben Carson, ACI will be a voice for reason and civility in a nation that is increasingly devoid of common sense."^[221]

Personal life

Carson and his wife, fellow Detroit native Lacena "Candy" Rustin, met in 1971 as students at Yale University and married in 1975.^[222] They began living in West Friendship, Maryland, in 1988.^[223] Together, the couple have three sons (Rhoeyce, Benjamin Jr., and Murray), as well as several grandchildren. Their oldest son, Murray, was born in Perth, Australia, while Carson was undertaking a residency there.^[224] In 1981 Carson's wife became pregnant with twins before miscarrying in the fifth month of her pregnancy.^[225]

In 2001, Ben and Candy Carson bought a 48-acre property in Upperco, Maryland.^{[226][227]}

After being diagnosed with prostate cancer, Carson underwent a two-hour operation at the Johns Hopkins Hospital on August 7, 2002.^[228]

In 2013, Carson, his wife, and Carson's mother moved to West Palm Beach, Florida.^{[229][230]}

Surrounding his confirmation as Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, Carson bought a \$1.22 million home in Vienna, Virginia, in February 2017 and sold his West Palm Beach home for over \$900,000 in May 2017.^{[231][232]}

Religion

Carson and his wife are members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church (SDA).^{[233][234]} Carson was baptized at Burns Seventh-day Adventist Church in Detroit. A few years later, he told the pastor at a church he was attending in Inkster, Michigan, that he had not fully understood his first baptism and wanted to be baptized again. He has served as a local elder and Sabbath School teacher in the Seventh-day Adventist Church.^[235] Although Carson is an Adventist, the church has officially cautioned church employees to remain politically neutral.^[236]



Carson speaking at a church service in Des Moines, Iowa

In keeping with his Seventh-day Adventist faith, Carson announced in 2014 his belief "that the United States will play a big role" in the coming apocalypse. He went on to say, "I hope by that time I'm not around anymore."^[237]

In an interview with Katie Couric, Carson said that Jesus Christ came to Earth to redeem the world through his atoning sacrifice and that all people are sinners and need his redemption.^[238]

Carson has stated that he does not believe in hell as understood by some Christians: "You know, I see God as a very loving individual. And why would he torment somebody forever who only had a life of 60 or 70 or 80 years? Even if they were evil. Even if they were only evil for 80 years?" This is fully in line with Adventist teaching, which promotes annihilationism.^[239]

Carson endorsed Seventh-day Adventist theology, which includes belief in a literal reading of the first chapters of Genesis.^[240] In a 2013 interview with Adventist News Network, Carson said: "You know, I'm proud of the fact that I believe what God has said, and I've said many times that I'll defend it before anyone. If they want to criticize the fact that I believe in a literal, six-day creation, let's have at it because I will poke all kinds of holes in what they believe."^[241] Carson's Adventism was raised as an issue by his then-primary rival Donald Trump.^[242] Some Adventists have argued that Carson's political positions on gun rights and religious liberty conflict with historic Adventist teachings in favor of nonviolence, pacifism, and the separation of church and state.^{[236][243]}

Claim about Egyptian pyramids

During a commencement speech at Andrews University in Michigan in 1998, Carson stated that he believed that the pyramids of Giza were created by the Biblical figure Joseph to store grain, despite the fact that the story of Joseph is set in the time of Egypt's Middle Kingdom, five centuries after the pyramids of Giza were built. When questioned about it again in 2015, he stood by his original assertion.^{[244][245]}

Vegetarianism

Consistent with the practice of many Adventists, Carson is a lacto-ovo vegetarian (he will eat dishes containing milk, eggs, or cheese, and occasionally, poultry).^{[246][247][248]} He has said his main reason for becoming vegetarian was health concerns, including avoiding parasites and heart disease, and he emphasizes the environmental benefits of vegetarianism.^[247] His transition was made easier because he had eaten little meat for aesthetic reasons as a child,^[247] and he readily adopted his wife's vegetarianism because she does much of the cooking in their household.^{[247][248]} Speaking in 1990, he said that with the increasing

availability of meat substitutes, "It might take 20 years. But eventually there will no longer be a reason for most people to eat meat. And animals will breathe a sigh of relief."^[247] To avoid causing others discomfort, he is willing to occasionally eat chicken or turkey, although he finds eating pork highly unpleasant.^[248]

Awards and honors

Carson is a member of the American Academy of Achievement,^{[249][250]} Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society,^[251] and the Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans.^[252] Carson has been awarded 38 honorary doctorate degrees and dozens of national merit citations.^[253] Detroit Public Schools opened the Dr. Benjamin Carson High School of Science and Medicine^[254] for students interested in pursuing healthcare careers. The school is partnering with Detroit Receiving Hospital and Michigan State University.^[255]



Carson at the White House in 2008 for the Presidential Medal of Freedom

- In 2000, he received the Award for Greatest Public Service Benefiting the Disadvantaged, an award given out annually by Jefferson Awards.^[256]
- In 2001, he was elected by the Library of Congress on the occasion of its 200th anniversary to be one of the 89 who earned the designation Library of Congress Living Legend.^[257]
- In 2004, he was appointed to serve on The President's Council on Bioethics.^[258]
- In 2005, Carson was awarded the William E. Simon Prize for Philanthropic Leadership.^[259]
- In 2006, he received the Spingarn Medal from the NAACP, their highest honor for outstanding achievement.^[260]
- In 2008, the White House awarded Carson the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor.^[261]
- In 2008, Ford's Theatre Society awarded Carson the Ford's Theatre Lincoln Medal, for exemplifying the qualities embodied by President Abraham Lincoln—including courage, integrity, tolerance, equality, and creative expression—through superior achievements.^{[262][263]}
- In 2008, U.S. News & World Report named Carson as one of "America's Best Leaders".^[264]
- In 2010, he was elected into the National Academy of Sciences Institute of Medicine, considered one of the highest honors in the fields of health and medicine.^[265]
- In 2012, Carson was the Influential Marylander Award recipient from The Daily Record, Baltimore's legal and business newspaper.^[266]
- In 2014, a poll of Americans conducted by Gallup ranked Carson sixth on a list of the most admired persons.^[267]
- He is an emeritus fellow of the Yale Corporation.^[268]

Books

- *Gifted Hands: The Ben Carson Story* (https://archive.org/details/giftedhandsbenca00cars_0). Zondervan. 1992. ISBN 978-0-310-54651-1. (with Cecil Murphey)
- *Think Big: Unleashing Your Potential for Excellence* (https://archive.org/details/thinkbigunleash00cars_1). Zondervan. 1996. ISBN 0-310-21459-9.
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- *Take the Risk: Learning to Identify, Choose, and Live with Acceptable Risk* (<https://archive.org/details/takerisklearning00cars>). Zondervan. 2009. ISBN 978-0-310-25973-2.
- *America the Beautiful: Rediscovering What Made This Nation Great* (https://archive.org/details/americanbeautiful0000cars_y9s0). Thomas Nelson. 2013. ISBN 978-0-310-33091-2. (with Candy Carson)
- *One Nation: What We Can All Do to Save America's Future* (<https://archive.org/details/onenationwhatwec0000cars>). Sentinel. 2014. ISBN 978-1-59523-112-3. (with Candy Carson), on *The New York Times* bestsellers list for 20 straight weeks, five of them as number one^[139]
- *One Vote: Make Your Voice Heard* (<https://archive.org/details/onevotemakeyourv0000cars>). Tyndale House. 2014. ISBN 978-1-4964-0632-3. (with Candy Carson)
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- Ben Carson, MD; Carson, Candy (2015). *A More Perfect Union: What We the People Can Do to Reclaim Our Constitutional Liberties*. ISBN 978-0-698-19500-4. (with Candy Carson)

See also

- [Ben Carson 2016 presidential campaign](#)
- [Ben Carson office furnishing scandal](#)
- [List of African-American Republicans](#)
- [2016 Republican Party presidential candidates](#)

Notes

1. He could have been offered a scholarship for incidentals by a private donor if he applied for admission and then attended.
2. He could have been offered a scholarship by a private donor if he applied for admission and attended.

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Further reading

- *Gifted Hands: The Ben Carson Story* (February 7, 2009), a television movie with the same title as Carson's first book premiered on TNT with Academy Award winner Cuba Gooding Jr. in the lead role and Kimberly Elise portraying his mother.
- *A Doctor in the House: My Life with Ben Carson* (January 5, 2016), a book by Candy Carson

External links

- Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Ben Carson (<https://web.archive.org/web/20190801214555/https://www.hud.gov/about/Secretary>)
- Ben Carson (https://curlie.org/Regional/North_America/United_States/Government/Elections/President/2016/Candidates/Ben_Carson) at Curlie
- Appearances (<https://www.c-span.org/person/?benjamin-carson>) on C-SPAN
- Ben Carson: Dialogue with an Adventist Neurosurgeon (<https://dialogue.adventist.org/2360/ben-carson-dialogue-with-an-adventist-neurosurgeon>) College and University Dialogue Retrieved October 12, 2018

Political offices		
Preceded by <u>Julian Castro</u>	<u>United States Secretary of Housing and Urban Development</u> 2017–2021	Succeeded by <u>Matt Ammon</u> Acting

Retrieved from "https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Ben_Carson&oldid=1033471873"

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Henry Kissinger

Henry Alfred Kissinger KCMG (/ˈkɪsɪndʒər/^[2] German: [ˈkɪsɪŋɐ]; born **Heinz Alfred Kissinger**; May 27, 1923) is an American politician, diplomat, and geopolitical consultant who served as United States Secretary of State and National Security Advisor under the presidential administrations of Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford.^[3] A Jewish refugee who fled Nazi Germany with his family in 1938, he became National Security Advisor in 1969 and U.S. Secretary of State in 1973. For his actions negotiating a ceasefire in Vietnam, Kissinger received the 1973 Nobel Peace Prize under controversial circumstances, with two members of the committee resigning in protest.^[4]

A practitioner of *Realpolitik*,^[5] Kissinger played a prominent role in United States foreign policy between 1969 and 1977. During this period, he pioneered the policy of *détente* with the Soviet Union, orchestrated the opening of relations with China, engaged in what became known as shuttle diplomacy in the Middle East to end the Yom Kippur War, and negotiated the Paris Peace Accords, ending American involvement in the Vietnam War. Kissinger has also been associated with such controversial policies as U.S. involvement in the 1973 Chilean military coup, a "green light" to Argentina's military junta for their Dirty War, and U.S. support for Pakistan during the Bangladesh War despite the genocide being perpetrated by his allies.^[6] After leaving government, he formed Kissinger Associates, an international geopolitical consulting firm. Kissinger has written over a dozen books on diplomatic history and international relations.

Kissinger remains a controversial and polarizing figure in U.S. politics, both condemned as an alleged war criminal by many journalists, political activists, and human rights lawyers,^{[5][7][8]} and venerated as a highly effective U.S. Secretary of State by many prominent international relations scholars.^[9] With the death of centenarian George Shultz in February 2021, Kissinger is the oldest living former U.S. Cabinet member and the last surviving member of Nixon's Cabinet.^[10]

Henry Kissinger

KCMG



Kissinger at the Metropolitan Opera in 2009

56th United States Secretary of State

In office

September 22, 1973 – January 20, 1977

President Richard Nixon
Gerald Ford

Deputy Kenneth Rush
Robert Ingersoll
Charles Robinson

Preceded by William Rogers

Succeeded by Cyrus Vance

8th United States National Security Advisor

In office

January 20, 1969 – November 3, 1975

President Richard Nixon
Gerald Ford

Deputy Richard Allen
Alexander Haig
Brent Scowcroft

Preceded by Walt Rostow

Succeeded by Brent Scowcroft

22nd Chancellor of the College of William & Mary

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	In office
	July 1, 2000 – October 1, 2005
President	<u>Timothy J. Sullivan</u> <u>Gene Nichol</u>
Preceded by	<u>Margaret Thatcher</u>
Succeeded by	<u>Sandra Day O'Connor</u>
Chair of the <u>9/11 Commission</u>	
	In office
	November 27, 2002 – December 14, 2002
President	<u>George W. Bush</u>
Deputy	<u>George J. Mitchell</u> <u>Lee H. Hamilton</u>
Preceded by	Position established
Succeeded by	<u>Thomas Kean</u>
Personal details	
Born	<u>Heinz Alfred Kissinger</u> May 27, 1923 <u>Fürth, Bavaria, Weimar Republic</u> (now <u>Germany</u>)
Political party	<u>Republican</u>
Spouse(s)	<u>Ann Fleischer</u> (<u>m.</u> 1949; <u>div.</u> 1964) <u>Nancy Maginnes</u> (<u>m.</u> 1974)
Children	2
Education	<u>City College of New York</u> <u>Harvard University</u> (<u>AB</u> , <u>AM</u> , <u>PhD</u>)
Civilian awards	<u>Nobel Peace Prize</u>
Signature	
Military service	
Allegiance	 United States
Branch/service	 U.S. Army
Years of service	1943–1946
Rank	 <u>Sergeant</u>
Unit	<u>84th Infantry Division</u> ^[1] <u>970th Counter Intelligence Corps Detachment</u>
Battles/wars	<u>World War II</u>

Early life and education

Kissinger was born Heinz Alfred Kissinger in Fürth, Bavaria, Germany, in 1923 to a German-Jewish family.^[11] His father Louis Kissinger (1887–1982) was a schoolteacher. His mother Paula (Stern) Kissinger (1901–1998), from Leutershausen, was a homemaker. His brother, Walter Kissinger, born in 1924, died in 2021 at 96. The surname Kissinger was adopted in 1817 by his great-great-grandfather

Meyer Löb, after the Bavarian spa town of Bad Kissingen.^[12] In his youth, Kissinger enjoyed playing soccer. He played for the youth team of SpVgg Fürth, which was one of the nation's best clubs at the time.^[13]

	▪ <u>Battle of the Bulge</u>
Military awards	 <u>Bronze Star</u>

In 1938, when Kissinger was 15 years old, he and his family fled Germany as a result of Nazi persecution. During Nazi rule Kissinger and his friends were regularly harassed and beaten by Hitler Youth gangs.^[14] Kissinger sometimes defied the segregation imposed by Nazi racial laws by sneaking into soccer stadiums to watch matches, often resulting in beatings from security guards.^{[15][14]} As a result of the Nazis' anti-Semitic laws Kissinger was unable to gain admittance to the Gymnasium, while his father was dismissed from his teaching job.^{[14][16]} The family briefly emigrated to London before arriving in New York City on September 5. Kissinger later downplayed the influence his experiences of Nazi persecution had on his policies, writing "Germany of my youth had a great deal of order and very little justice; it was not the sort of place likely to inspire devotion to order in the abstract." However many scholars, including Kissinger's biographer Walter Isaacson, have disagreed and argued that his experiences influenced the formation of his realist approach to foreign policy.^[17]

Kissinger spent his high school years in the Washington Heights section of Upper Manhattan as part of the German Jewish immigrant community that resided there at the time. Although Kissinger assimilated quickly into American culture, he never lost his pronounced German accent, due to childhood shyness that made him hesitant to speak.^{[18][19]} After his first year at George Washington High School, he began attending school at night and worked in a shaving brush factory during the day.^[18]

Following high school, Kissinger enrolled in the City College of New York, studying accounting. He excelled academically as a part-time student, continuing to work while enrolled. His studies were interrupted in early 1943, when he was drafted into the US Army.^[20]

Army experience

Kissinger underwent basic training at Camp Croft in Spartanburg, South Carolina. On June 19, 1943, while stationed in South Carolina, at the age of 20 years, he became a naturalized U.S. citizen. The army sent him to study engineering at Lafayette College, Pennsylvania, but the program was canceled, and Kissinger was reassigned to the 84th Infantry Division. There, he made the acquaintance of Fritz Kraemer, a fellow immigrant from Germany who noted Kissinger's fluency in German and his intellect, and arranged for him to be assigned to the military intelligence section of the division. Kissinger saw combat with the division, and volunteered for hazardous intelligence duties during the Battle of the Bulge.^[21]

During the American advance into Germany, Kissinger, only a private, was put in charge of the administration of the city of Krefeld, owing to a lack of German speakers on the division's intelligence staff. Within eight days he had established a civilian administration.^[22] Kissinger was then reassigned to the Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC), where he became a CIC Special Agent holding the enlisted rank of sergeant. He was given charge of a team in Hanover assigned to tracking down Gestapo officers and other saboteurs, for which he was awarded the Bronze Star.^[23] In June 1945, Kissinger was made commandant of the Bensheim metro CIC detachment, Bergstrasse district of Hesse, with responsibility for de-Nazification of the district. Although he possessed absolute authority and powers of arrest, Kissinger took care to avoid abuses against the local population by his command.^[24]

In 1946, Kissinger was reassigned to teach at the European Command Intelligence School at Camp King and, as a civilian employee following his separation from the army, continued to serve in this role.^{[25][26]}

Academic career



Portrait of Kissinger as a Harvard senior in 1950

Henry Kissinger received his AB degree *summa cum laude*, Phi Beta Kappa^[27] in political science from Harvard College in 1950, where he lived in Adams House and studied under William Yandell Elliott^[28]. His senior undergraduate thesis, titled *The Meaning of History: Reflections on Spengler, Toynbee and Kant*, was over 400 pages long, and was the origin of the current limit on length (35,000 words).^{[29][30][31]} He received his MA and PhD degrees at Harvard University in 1951 and 1954, respectively. In 1952, while still a graduate student at Harvard, he served as a consultant to the director of the Psychological Strategy Board^[32].

His doctoral dissertation was titled *Peace, Legitimacy, and the Equilibrium (A Study of the Statesmanship of Castlereagh and Metternich)*.^[33] In his PhD dissertation, Kissinger first introduced the concept of "legitimacy",^[34] which he defined as: "Legitimacy as used here should not be confused with justice. It means no more than an international agreement about the nature of workable arrangements and about the permissible aims and methods of foreign policy".^[35] An international order accepted by all of the major powers is "legitimate" whereas an international order not accepted by one or more of

the great powers is "revolutionary" and hence dangerous.^[35] Thus, when after the Congress of Vienna in 1815, the leaders of Britain, France, Austria, Prussia, and Russia agreed to co-operate in the Concert of Europe to preserve the peace, in Kissinger's viewpoint this international system was "legitimate" because it was accepted by the leaders of all five of the Great Powers of Europe. Notably, Kissinger's *primat der aussenpolitik* approach to diplomacy took it for granted that as long as the decision-makers in the major states were willing to accept the international order, then it is "legitimate" with questions of public opinion and morality dismissed as irrelevant.^[35]

Kissinger remained at Harvard as a member of the faculty in the Department of Government where he served as the director of the Harvard International Seminar between 1951 and 1971. In 1955, he was a consultant to the National Security Council's Operations Coordinating Board^[32]. During 1955 and 1956, he was also study director in nuclear weapons and foreign policy at the Council on Foreign Relations. He released his book *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy* the following year.^[36] The book, which criticized the Eisenhower Administration's "massive retaliation" nuclear doctrine, caused much controversy at the time by proposing the use of tactical nuclear weapons on a regular basis to win wars.^[37]

From 1956 to 1958 he worked for the Rockefeller Brothers Fund as director of its Special Studies Project^[32]. He served as the director of the Harvard Defense Studies Program between 1958 and 1971. In 1958, he also co-founded the Center for International Affairs with Robert R. Bowie where he served as its associate director. Outside of academia, he served as a consultant to several government agencies and think tanks, including the Operations Research Office, the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, Department of State, and the RAND Corporation^[32].

Keen to have a greater influence on U.S. foreign policy, Kissinger became foreign policy advisor to the presidential campaigns of Nelson Rockefeller, supporting his bids for the Republican nomination in 1960, 1964, and 1968.^[38] Kissinger first met Richard Nixon at a party hosted by Clare Booth Luce in 1967, saying that he found him more "thoughtful" than he expected.^[39] During the Republican primaries in 1968, Kissinger again served as the foreign policy adviser to Rockefeller and in July 1968 called Nixon "the most dangerous of all the men running to have as president".^[39] Initially upset when Nixon won the Republican nomination, the ambitious Kissinger soon changed his mind about Nixon and contacted a Nixon campaign aide, Richard Allen, to state he was willing to do anything to help Nixon win.^[40] After Nixon became president in January 1969, Kissinger was appointed as National Security Advisor.

Foreign policy

Kissinger served as National Security Advisor and Secretary of State under President Richard Nixon, and continued as Secretary of State under Nixon's successor Gerald Ford.^[41] With the death of George Shultz in February 2021, Kissinger is the last surviving member of the Nixon administration Cabinet.^[10]

The relationship between Nixon and Kissinger was unusually close, and has been compared to the relationships of Woodrow Wilson and Colonel House, or Franklin D. Roosevelt and Harry Hopkins.^[42] In all three cases, the State Department was relegated to a backseat role in developing foreign policy.^[43] Kissinger and Nixon shared a penchant for secrecy and conducted numerous "backchannel" negotiations, such as that through the Soviet Ambassador to the United States, Anatoly Dobrynin, that excluded State Department experts. Historian David Rothkopf has looked at the personalities of Nixon and Kissinger:

They were a fascinating pair. In a way, they complemented each other perfectly. Kissinger was the charming and worldly Mr. Outside who provided the grace and intellectual-establishment respectability that Nixon lacked, disdained and aspired to. Kissinger was an international citizen. Nixon very much a classic American. Kissinger had a worldview and a facility for adjusting it to meet the times, Nixon had pragmatism and a strategic vision that provided the foundations for their policies. Kissinger would, of course, say that he was not political like Nixon—but in fact he was just as political as Nixon, just as calculating, just as relentlessly ambitious these self-made men were driven as much by their need for approval and their neuroses as by their strengths.^[44]

A proponent of *Realpolitik*, Kissinger played a dominant role in United States foreign policy between 1969 and 1977. In that period, he extended the policy of *détente*. This policy led to a significant relaxation in US–Soviet tensions and played a crucial role in 1971 talks with Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai. The talks concluded with a rapprochement between the United States and China, and the formation of a new strategic anti-Soviet Sino-American alignment. He was jointly awarded the 1973 Nobel Peace Prize with Lê Đức Thọ for helping to establish a ceasefire and U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam. The ceasefire, however, was not durable.^[45] Thọ declined to accept the award^[46] and Kissinger appeared deeply ambivalent about it - he donated his prize money to charity, did not attend the award ceremony, and later offered to return his prize medal.^[40] As National Security Advisor, in 1974 Kissinger directed the much-debated National Security Study Memorandum 200.

***Détente* and the opening to China**

Kissinger initially had little interest in China when he began his work as National Security Adviser in 1969, and the driving force being the rapprochement with China was Nixon.^[47] When Chiang Ching-kuo arrived in Washington in April 1970 for a visit, both Nixon and Kissinger promised him that they would never abandon Taiwan or make any compromises with Mao Zedong, although Nixon did speak vaguely of his wish to improve relations with the People's Republic.^[48]

Kissinger made two trips to China in July and October 1971 (the first of which was made in secret) to confer with Premier Zhou Enlai, then in charge of Chinese foreign policy.^[49] During his visit to Beijing, the main issue turned out to be Taiwan, as Zhou demanded the United States recognize that Taiwan was a legitimate



Kissinger being sworn in as Secretary of State by Chief Justice Warren Burger, September 22, 1973. Kissinger's mother, Paula, holds the Bible as President Nixon looks on.



Kissinger, shown here with Zhou Enlai and Mao Zedong, negotiated rapprochement with China.

part of China, pull U.S. forces out of Taiwan, and end military support for the Kuomintang regime.^[50] Kissinger gave way by promising to pull U.S. forces out of Taiwan, saying two-thirds would be pulled out when the Vietnam war ended and the rest to be pulled out as Sino-American relations improved.^[51]

In October 1971, as Kissinger was making his second trip to the People's Republic, the issue of which Chinese government deserved to be represented in the United Nations came up again.^[52] Out of concern to not be seen abandoning an ally, the United States tried to promote a compromise under which both Chinese regimes would be UN members, although Kissinger called it "an essentially doomed rearguard action".^[53] While American ambassador to the UN George H. W. Bush was lobbying for the "two Chinas" formula, Kissinger

was removing favorable references to Taiwan from a speech that Rogers was preparing, as he expected China to be expelled from the UN.^[54] During his second visit to Beijing, Kissinger told Zhou that according to a public opinion poll 62% of Americans wanted Taiwan to remain a UN member, and asked him to consider the "two Chinas" compromise to avoid offending American public opinion.^[55] Zhou responded with his claim that the People's Republic was the legitimate government of all China and no compromise was possible with the Taiwan issue.^[51] Kissinger said that the United States could not totally sever ties with Chiang, who had been an ally in World War II. Kissinger told Nixon that Bush was "too soft and not sophisticated" enough to properly represent the United States at the UN, and expressed no anger when the UN General Assembly voted to expel Taiwan and give China's seat on the UN Security Council to the People's Republic.^[51]

His trips paved the way for the groundbreaking 1972 summit between Nixon, Zhou, and Communist Party of China Chairman Mao Zedong, as well as the formalization of relations between the two countries, ending 23 years of diplomatic isolation and mutual hostility. The result was the formation of a tacit strategic anti-Soviet alliance between China and the United States. Kissinger's diplomacy led to economic and cultural exchanges between the two sides and the establishment of "liaison offices" in the Chinese and American capitals, though full normalization of relations with China would not occur until 1979.

Vietnam War

Kissinger's involvement in Indochina started prior to his appointment as National Security Adviser to Nixon. While still at Harvard, he had worked as a consultant on foreign policy to both the White House and State Department. In a 1967 peace initiative, he would mediate between Washington and Hanoi.

When he came into office in 1969, Kissinger favored a negotiating strategy under which the United States and North Vietnam would sign an armistice and agreed to pull their troops out of South Vietnam while the South Vietnamese government and the Viet Cong were to agree to a coalition government.^[56] Kissinger had doubts about Nixon's theory of "linkage", believing that this would give the Soviet Union leverage over the United States and unlike Nixon was less concerned about the ultimate fate of South Vietnam.^[57] Though Kissinger did not regard South Vietnam as important in its own right, he believed it was necessary to support South Vietnam to maintain the United States as a global power, believing that none of America's allies would trust the United States if South Vietnam were abandoned too quickly.^[58]



Kissinger and President Richard Nixon discussing the Vietnam situation in Camp David, 1972.

In early 1969, Kissinger was opposed to the plans for Operation Menu, the bombing of Cambodia, fearing that Nixon was acting rashly with no plans for the diplomatic fall-out, but on March 16, 1969, Nixon announced the bombing would start the next day.^[59] As he saw the president was committed, he became more and more supportive.^[60] Kissinger would play a key role in bombing Cambodia to disrupt raids into South Vietnam from Cambodia, as well as the 1970 Cambodian Incursion and subsequent widespread bombing of Khmer Rouge targets in Cambodia.

The Paris peace talks had become stalemated by late 1969 owing to the obstructionism of the South Vietnamese delegation.^[61] The South Vietnamese President Nguyễn Văn Thiệu did not want the United States to withdraw from Vietnam, and out of frustration with him, Kissinger decided to begin secret peace talks with Tho in Paris parallel to the official talks that the South Vietnamese were unaware of.^[62]

In June 1971, Kissinger supported Nixon's effort to ban the Pentagon Papers saying the "hemorrhage of state secrets" to the media was making diplomacy impossible.^[63]

On August 1, 1972, Kissinger met Tho again in Paris, and for first time, he seemed willing to compromise, saying that political and military terms of an armistice could be treated separately and hinted that his government was no longer willing to make the overthrow of Thiệu a precondition.^[64]

On the evening of October 8, 1972, at a secret meeting of Kissinger and Tho in Paris came the decisive breakthrough in the talks.^[65] Tho began with "a very realistic and very simple proposal" for a ceasefire that would see the Americans pull all their forces out of Vietnam in exchange for the release of all the POWs in North Vietnam.^[66] Kissinger accepted Tho's offer as the best deal possible, saying that the "mutual withdrawal formula" had to be abandoned as it been "unobtainable through ten years of war ... We could not make it a condition for a final settlement. We had long passed that threshold".^[66]

In the fall of 1972, both Kissinger and Nixon were frustrated with Thiệu's refusal to accept any sort of peace deal calling for withdrawal of American forces.^[67] On October 21 Kissinger and the American ambassador Ellsworth Bunker arrived in Saigon to show Thiệu the peace agreement.^[67] Thiệu refused to sign the peace agreement and demanded very extensive amendments that Kissinger reported to Nixon "verge on insanity".^[67]

Though Nixon had initially supported Kissinger against Thiệu, H.R. Haldeman and John Ehrlichman urged him to reconsider, arguing that Thiệu's objections had merit.^[68] Nixon wanted 69 amendments to the draft peace agreement included in the final treaty, and ordered Kissinger back to Paris to force Tho to accept them.^[68] Kissinger regarded Nixon's 69 amendments as "preposterous" as he knew Tho would never accept them.^[68] As expected, Tho refused to consider any of the 69 amendments, and on December 13, 1972, left Paris for Hanoi.^[69] Kissinger by this stage was worked up into a state of fury after Tho walked out of the Paris talks and told Nixon: "They're just a bunch of shits. Tawdry, filthy shits".^[69]

On January 8, 1973, Kissinger and Tho met again in Paris and the next day reached an agreement, which in main points was essentially the same as the one Nixon had rejected in October with only cosmetic concessions to the Americans.^[70] Thiệu once again rejected the peace agreement, only to receive an ultimatum from Nixon which caused Thiệu to reluctantly accept the peace agreement.^[71] On January 27, 1973, Kissinger and Tho signed a peace agreement that called for the complete withdrawal of all U.S forces from Vietnam by March in exchange for North Vietnam freeing all the U.S POWs.^[71]

Along with Le Duc Tho, Kissinger was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize on December 10, 1973, for their work in negotiating the ceasefires contained in the Paris Peace Accords on "Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Vietnam", signed the previous January.^[45] According to Irwin Abrams, this prize was the most controversial to date. For the first time in the history of the Peace Prize, two members left the Nobel Committee in protest.^{[4][72]} Tho rejected the award, telling Kissinger that peace had not been restored in South Vietnam.^[73]

Kissinger wrote to the Nobel Committee that he accepted the award "with humility,"^{[74][75]} and "donated the entire proceeds to the children of American servicemen killed or missing in action in Indochina."^[76] After the Fall of Saigon in 1975, Kissinger attempted to return the award.^{[76][77]}

By the summer of 1974, the U.S. embassy reported that morale in the ARVN had fallen to dangerously low levels and it was uncertain how much longer South Vietnam would last.^[78] In August 1974, Congress passed a bill limiting American aid to South Vietnam to \$700 million annually.^[79] By November 1974, Kissinger lobbied Brezhnev to end Soviet military aid to North Vietnam.^[80] The same month, he also lobbied Mao and Zhou to end Chinese military aid to North Vietnam.^[80] On April 15, 1975, Kissinger testified before the Senate Appropriations Committee, urging Congress to increase the military aid budget to South Vietnam by another \$700 million to save the ARVN as the PAVN was rapidly advancing on Saigon, which was refused.^[81] Kissinger maintained at the time, and still maintains, that if only Congress had approved of his request for another \$700 million South Vietnam would have been saved.^[82]

Bangladesh Liberation War

Nixon supported Pakistan's strongman, General Yahya Khan, in the Bangladesh Liberation War in 1971. Kissinger sneered at people who "bleed" for "the dying Bengalis" and ignored the first telegram from the United States consul general in East Pakistan, Archer K. Blood, and 20 members of his staff, which informed the US that their allies West Pakistan were undertaking, in Blood's words, "a selective genocide" targeting the Bengali intelligentsia, supporters of independence for East Pakistan, and the Hindu minority.^[83] In the second, more famous, Blood Telegram the word genocide was again used to describe the events, and further that with its continuing support for West Pakistan the US government had "evidenced [...] moral bankruptcy".^[84] As a direct response to the dissent against US policy Kissinger and Nixon ended Archer Blood's tenure as United States consul general in East Pakistan and put him to work in the State Department's Personnel Office.^{[85][86]} Christopher Clary argues that Nixon and Kissinger were unconsciously biased, leading them to overestimate the likelihood of Pakistani victory against Bengali rebels.^[87]



Kissinger in the West Wing as National Security Adviser

Kissinger was particularly concerned about the expansion of Soviet influence in the Indian Subcontinent as a result of a treaty of friendship recently signed by India and the USSR, and sought to demonstrate to the People's Republic of China (Pakistan's ally and an enemy of both India and the USSR) the value of a tacit alliance with the United States.^{[88][89][90]}

Kissinger had also come under fire for private comments he made to Nixon during the Bangladesh–Pakistan War in which he described Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi as a "bitch" and a "witch". He also said "The Indians are bastards", shortly before the war.^[91] Kissinger has since expressed his regret over the comments.^[92]

Europe

As National Security Adviser under Nixon, Kissinger pioneered the policy of détente with the Soviet Union, seeking a relaxation in tensions between the two superpowers. As a part of this strategy, he negotiated the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (culminating in the SALT I treaty) and the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty with Leonid Brezhnev, General Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party. Negotiations about strategic disarmament were originally supposed to start under the Johnson Administration but were postponed in protest upon the invasion by Warsaw Pact troops of Czechoslovakia in August 1968.

Nixon felt his administration had neglected relations with the Western European states in his first term and in September 1972 decided that if he was reelected that 1973 would be the "Year of Europe" as the United States would focus on relations with the states of the European Economic Community (EEC) which had emerged as a serious economic rival by 1970.^[93] Applying his favorite "linkage" concept, Nixon intended henceforward economic relations with Europe would not be severed from security relations, and if the EEC states wanted changes in American tariff and monetary policies, the price would be defense spending on their part.^[94] Kissinger in particular as part of the "Year of Europe" wanted to "revitalize" NATO, which he called a "decaying" alliance as he believed that there was nothing at present to stop the Red Army from overrunning Western Europe in a conventional forces conflict.^[95] The "linkage" concept more applied to the question of security as Kissinger noted that the United States was going to sacrifice NATO for the sake of "citrus fruits".^[96]

Israeli policy and Soviet Jewry

According to notes taken by H.R. Haldeman, Nixon "ordered his aides to exclude all Jewish-Americans from policy-making on Israel", including Kissinger.^[97] One note quotes Nixon as saying "get K. [Kissinger] out of the play—Haig handle it".^[97]

In 1973, Kissinger did not feel that pressing the Soviet Union concerning the plight of Jews being persecuted there was in the interest of U.S. foreign policy. In conversation with Nixon shortly after a meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir on March 1, 1973, Kissinger stated, "The emigration of Jews from the Soviet Union is not an objective of American foreign policy, and if they put Jews into gas chambers in the Soviet Union, it is not an American concern. Maybe a humanitarian concern."^[98]



Kissinger sits in the Oval Office with President Nixon and Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir, 1973

The Arab-Israeli dispute

In September 1973, Nixon fired Rogers as Secretary of State and replaced him with Kissinger. He would later state he had not been given enough time to know the Middle East as he settled into the State Department.^[99] Kissinger later admitted that he was so engrossed with the Paris peace talks to end the Vietnam war that he and others in Washington missed the significance of the Egyptian-Saudi alliance. Sadat expected as a reward that the United States would respond by pressuring Israel to return the Sinai to Egypt, but after receiving no response from the United States, by November 1972 Sadat moved again closer to the Soviet Union, buying a massive amount of Soviet arms for a war he planned to launch against Israel in 1973.

Kissinger delayed telling President Richard Nixon about the start of the Yom Kippur War in 1973 to keep him from interfering. On October 6, 1973, the Israelis informed Kissinger about the attack at 6 am; Kissinger waited nearly 3 and a half hours before he informed Nixon.^[100] According to Kissinger, he was notified at 6:30 a.m. (12:30 pm. Israel time) that war was imminent, and his urgent calls to the Soviets and Egyptians were ineffective. On October 12, under Nixon's direction, and against Kissinger's initial advice,^[101] while Kissinger was on his way to Moscow to discuss conditions for a cease-fire, Nixon sent a message to Brezhnev giving Kissinger full negotiating authority.^[102] Kissinger wanted to stall a ceasefire to gain more time for Israel to push across the Suez Canal to the African side, and wanted to be perceived as a mere presidential emissary who needed to consult the White House all the time as a stalling tactic.^[102]

Kissinger promised the Israeli Prime Minister Golda Meir that the United States would replace its losses in equipment after the war, but sought initially to delay arm shipments to Israel, as he believed it would improve the odds of making peace along the lines of United Nations Security Council Resolution 242.^[103] In 1973, Meir requested \$850 million worth of American arms and equipment to replace its material losses.^[104] Nixon instead sent some \$2 billion worth.^[105] The arms lift enraged King Faisal of Saudi Arabia, and he retaliated on October 20, 1973, by placing a total embargo on oil shipments to the United States, to be joined by all of the other oil-producing Arab states except Iraq and Libya.^[106]

On November 7, 1973, Kissinger flew to Riyadh to meet King Faisal and to ask him to end the oil embargo in exchange for promising to be "even handed" in the Arab-Israeli dispute.^[107] Despite all of Kissinger's efforts to charm him, Faisal refused to end the oil embargo.^[108] Only on March 19, 1974, did the king end the oil embargo, after Sadat reported to him that the United States was being more "even handed" and after Kissinger had promised to sell Saudi Arabia weapons that it had previously denied under the grounds that they might be used against Israel.^[109]

Kissinger pressured the Israelis to cede some of the newly captured land back to its Arab neighbors, contributing to the first phases of Israeli–Egyptian non-aggression. In 1973–74, Kissinger engaged in "shuttle diplomacy" flying between Tel Aviv, Cairo, and Damascus in a bid to make the armistice the basis of a preferment peace. Kissinger's first meeting with Hafez al-Assad lasted 6 hours and 30 minutes, causing the press to believe for a moment that he had been kidnapped by the Syrians.^[110] In his memoirs, Kissinger described how, during the course of his 28 meetings in Damascus in 1973–74, Assad "negotiated tenaciously and daringly like a riverboat gambler to make sure he had exacted the last sliver of available concessions".^[110]

In contrast, Kissinger's negotiations with Sadat, through not without difficulties, were more fruitful. The move saw a warming in U.S.–Egyptian relations, bitter since the 1950s, as the country moved away from its former independent stance and into a close partnership with the United States.

The Persian Gulf

A major concern for Kissinger was the possibility of Soviet influence in the Persian Gulf. In April 1969, Iraq came into conflict with Iran when Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi renounced the 1937 treaty governing the Shatt-al-Arab river. After two years of skirmishes along the border, President Ahmed Hassan al-Bakr broke off diplomatic relations with Iran on December 1, 1971.^[111] In May 1972, Nixon and Kissinger visited Tehran to tell the Shah that there would be no "second-guessing of his requests" to buy American weapons.^[111] At the same time, Nixon and Kissinger agreed a plan of the Shah's that the United States together with Iran and Israel would support the Kurdish *peshmerga* guerrillas fighting for independence from Iraq.^[111] Kissinger later wrote that after Vietnam, there was no possibility of deploying American forces in the Middle East, and henceforward Iran was to act as America's surrogate in the Persian Gulf.^[112] Kissinger described the Baathist regime in Iraq as a potential threat to the United States and believed that building up Iran and supporting the *peshmerga* was the best counterweight.^[112]

Turkish invasion of Cyprus



On October 31, 1973, Egyptian Foreign Minister Ismail Fahmi (left) meets with Richard Nixon (middle) and Henry Kissinger (right), about a week after the end of fighting in the Yom Kippur War.

Following a period of steady relations between the U.S. Government and the Greek military regime after 1967, Secretary of State Kissinger was faced with the coup by the Greek junta and the Turkish invasion of Cyprus in July and August 1974. In an August 1974 edition of The New York Times, it was revealed that Kissinger and State Department were informed in advance of the impending coup by the Greek junta in Cyprus. Indeed, according to the journalist,^[113] the official version of events as told by the State Department was that it felt it had to warn the Greek military regime not to carry out the coup. Kissinger was a target of anti-American sentiment which was a significant feature of Greek public opinion at the time—particularly among young people—viewing the U.S. role in Cyprus as negative. In a demonstration by students in Heraklion, Crete,^{[114][115]} soon after the second phase of the Turkish invasion in August 1974, slogans such as "Kissinger, murderer", "Americans get out", "No to Partition" and "Cyprus is no Vietnam" were heard. Some years later, Kissinger expressed the opinion that the Cyprus issue was resolved in 1974.^[116]

Latin American policy



Ford and Kissinger conversing on the White House grounds, August 1974

The United States continued to recognize and maintain relationships with non-left-wing governments, democratic and authoritarian alike. John F. Kennedy's Alliance for Progress was ended in 1973. In 1974, negotiations over a new settlement for the Panama Canal began, and they eventually led to the Torrijos–Carter Treaties and the handing over of the Canal to Panamanian control.

Kissinger initially supported the normalization of United States-Cuba relations, broken since 1961 (all U.S.–Cuban trade was blocked in February 1962, a few weeks after the exclusion of Cuba from the Organization of American States because of U.S. pressure). However, he quickly changed his mind and followed Kennedy's policy. After

the involvement of the Cuban Revolutionary Armed Forces in the independence struggles in Angola and Mozambique, Kissinger said that unless Cuba withdrew its forces relations would not be normalized. Cuba refused.

Intervention in Chile

Chilean Socialist Party presidential candidate Salvador Allende was elected by a plurality of 36.2 percent in 1970, causing serious concern in Washington, D.C., due to his openly socialist and pro-Cuban politics. The Nixon administration, with Kissinger's input, authorized the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to encourage a military coup that would prevent Allende's inauguration, but the plan was not successful.^{[117][118][119]:115[119]:495[120]:177}

On September 11, 1973, Allende died during a military coup launched by Army Commander-in-Chief Augusto Pinochet, who became president.^[121] In September 1976, Orlando Letelier, a Chilean opponent of the new Pinochet regime, was assassinated in Washington, D.C. with a car bomb. Previously, Kissinger had helped secure his release from prison,^[122] and had chosen to cancel a letter to Chile warning them against carrying out any political assassinations.^[123] This murder was part of Operation Condor, a covert program of political repression and assassination carried out by Southern Cone nations that Kissinger has been accused of being involved in.^{[124][125]}

On September 10, 2001, the family of Chilean general René Schneider filed a suit against Kissinger, accusing him of collaborating in arranging Schneider's kidnapping which resulted in his death.^[126] The case was later dismissed by a U.S. District Court, citing separation of powers: "The decision to support a coup of the Chilean government to prevent Dr. Allende from coming to power, and the means by which the United States Government sought to effect that goal, implicate policy makers in the murky realm of foreign affairs and

national security best left to the political branches."^[127] Decades later, the CIA admitted its involvement in the kidnapping of General Schneider, but not his murder, and subsequently paid the group responsible for his death \$35,000 "to keep the prior contact secret, maintain the goodwill of the group, and for humanitarian reasons."^{[128][129]}

Argentina

Kissinger took a similar line as he had toward Chile when the Argentine Armed Forces, led by Jorge Videla, toppled the elected government of Isabel Perón in 1976 with a process called the National Reorganization Process by the military, with which they consolidated power, launching brutal reprisals and "disappearances" against political opponents. An October 1987 investigative report in The Nation broke the story of how, in a June 1976 meeting in the Hotel Carrera in Santiago, Kissinger gave the military junta in neighboring Argentina the "green light" for their own clandestine repression against leftwing guerrillas and other dissidents, thousands of whom were kept in more than 400 secret concentration camps before they were executed. During a meeting with Argentine foreign minister César Augusto Guzzetti, Kissinger assured him that the United States was an ally, but urged him to "get back to normal procedures" quickly before the U.S. Congress reconvened and had a chance to consider sanctions.^{[130][131][132][133]}

As the article published in The Nation noted, as the state-sponsored terror mounted, conservative Republican U.S. Ambassador to Buenos Aires Robert C. Hill "'was shaken, he became very disturbed, by the case of the son of a thirty-year embassy employee, a student who was arrested, never to be seen again,' recalled former New York Times reporter Juan de Onis.^[134] 'Hill took a personal interest.' He went to the Interior Minister, a general with whom he had worked on drug cases, saying, 'Hey, what about this? We're interested in this case.' He questioned (Foreign Minister Cesar) Guzzetti and, finally, President Jorge R. Videla himself. 'All he got was stonewalling; he got nowhere.' de Onis said. 'His last year was marked by increasing disillusionment and dismay, and he backed his staff on human rights right to the hilt.'^[135]

In a letter to The Nation editor Victor Navasky, protesting publication of the article, Kissinger claimed that: "At any rate, the notion of Hill as a passionate human rights advocate is news to all his former associates." Yet Kissinger aide Harry W. Shlaudeman later disagreed with Kissinger, telling the oral historian William E. Knight of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project: "It really came to a head when I was Assistant Secretary, or it began to come to a head, in the case of Argentina where the dirty war was in full flower. Bob Hill, who was Ambassador then in Buenos Aires, a very conservative Republican politician—by no means liberal or anything of the kind, began to report quite effectively about what was going on, this slaughter of innocent civilians, supposedly innocent civilians—this vicious war that they were conducting, underground war. He, at one time in fact, sent me a back-channel telegram saying that the Foreign Minister, who had just come for a visit to Washington and had returned to Buenos Aires, had gloated to him that Kissinger had said nothing to him about human rights. I don't know—I wasn't present at the interview."^[136]

Navasky later wrote in his book about being confronted by Kissinger, "'Tell me, Mr. Navasky,' [Kissinger] said in his famous guttural tones, 'how is it that a short article in a obscure journal such as yours about a conversation that was supposed to have taken place years ago about something that did or didn't happen in Argentina resulted in sixty people holding placards denouncing me a few months ago at the airport when I got off the plane in Copenhagen?'"^[137]

According to declassified state department files, Kissinger also hindered Carter Administration's efforts to halt the mass killings by the 1976–83 military dictatorship by visiting the country and praising the regime.^[138]

Rhodesia

In September 1976, Kissinger was actively involved in negotiations regarding the Rhodesian Bush War. Kissinger, along with South Africa's Prime Minister John Vorster, pressured Rhodesian Prime Minister Ian Smith to hasten the transition to black majority rule in Rhodesia. With FRELIMO in control of Mozambique and even the apartheid regime of South Africa withdrawing its support, Rhodesia's isolation was nearly complete. According to Smith's autobiography, Kissinger told Smith of Mrs. Kissinger's admiration for him, but Smith stated that he thought Kissinger was asking him to sign Rhodesia's "death certificate". Kissinger, bringing the weight of the United States, and corraling other relevant parties to put pressure on Rhodesia, hastened the end of minority-rule.^[139]

East Timor

The Portuguese decolonization process brought U.S. attention to the former Portuguese colony of East Timor, which declared its independence in 1975. Indonesian president Suharto regarded East Timor as rightfully part of Indonesia. In December 1975, Suharto discussed invasion plans during a meeting with Kissinger and President Ford in the Indonesian capital of Jakarta. Both Ford and Kissinger made clear that U.S. relations with Indonesia would remain strong and that it would not object to the proposed annexation.^[140] They only wanted it done "fast" and proposed that it be delayed until after they had returned to Washington.^[141] Accordingly, Suharto delayed the operation for one day. Finally on December 7 Indonesian forces invaded the former Portuguese colony. U.S. arms sales to Indonesia continued, and Suharto went ahead with the annexation plan. According to Ben Kiernan, the invasion and occupation resulted in the deaths of nearly a quarter of the Timorese population from 1975 to 1981.^[142]



Suharto with Gerald Ford and Kissinger in Jakarta on December 6, 1975, one day before the Indonesian invasion of East Timor.

Cuba

In February 1976, Kissinger considered launching air strikes against ports and military installations in Cuba, as well as deploying Marine battalions based at the US Navy base at Guantanamo Bay, in retaliation for Cuban President Fidel Castro's decision in late 1975 to send troops to newly independent Angola to help the MPLA in its fight against UNITA and South Africa during the start of the Angolan Civil War.^[143]

Western Sahara

The Kissingerian doctrine endorsed the forced concession of Spanish Sahara to Morocco.^[144] At the height of the 1975 Sahara crisis, Kissinger misled Gerald Ford into thinking the International Court of Justice had ruled in favor of Morocco.^[145] Kissinger was aware in advance of the Moroccan plans for the invasion of the territory, materialized on November 6, 1975, in the so-called Green March.^[145]

Later roles

Kissinger left office when Democrat Jimmy Carter defeated Republican Gerald Ford in the 1976 presidential elections. Kissinger continued to participate in policy groups, such as the Trilateral Commission, and to maintain political consulting, speaking, and writing engagements.

After Kissinger left office in 1977, he was offered an endowed chair at Columbia University. There was student opposition to the appointment, which became a subject of media commentary.^{[146][147]} Columbia canceled the appointment as a result.

Kissinger was then appointed to Georgetown University's Center for Strategic and International Studies.^[148] He taught at Georgetown's Edmund Walsh School of Foreign Service for several years in the late 1970s. In 1982, with the help of a loan from the international banking firm of E.M. Warburg, Pincus and Company,^[38] Kissinger founded a consulting firm, Kissinger Associates, and is a partner in affiliate Kissinger McLarty Associates with Mack McLarty, former chief of staff to President Bill Clinton.^[149] He also serves on the board of directors of Hollinger International, a Chicago-based newspaper group,^[150] and as of March 1999, was a director of Gulfstream Aerospace.^[151]



Kissinger meeting with President Ronald Reagan in the White House family quarters, 1981

In September 1989, the *Wall Street Journal's* John Fialka disclosed that Kissinger took a direct economic interest in US-China relations in March 1989 with the establishment of China Ventures, Inc., a Delaware limited partnership, of which he was chairman of the board and chief executive officer. A US\$75 million investment in a joint venture with the Communist Party government's primary commercial vehicle at the time, China International Trust & Investment Corporation (CITIC), was its purpose. Board members were major clients of Kissinger Associates. Kissinger was criticised for not disclosing his role in the venture when called upon by ABC's Peter Jennings to comment the morning after the June 4, 1989, Tiananmen Square massacre. Kissinger's position was generally supportive of Deng Xiaoping's decision to use the military against the demonstrating students and he opposed economic sanctions.^[152]

From 1995 to 2001, Kissinger served on the board of directors for Freeport-McMoRan, a multinational copper and gold producer with significant mining and milling operations in Papua, Indonesia.^[153] In February 2000, then-president of Indonesia Abdurrahman Wahid appointed Kissinger as a political advisor. He also serves as an honorary advisor to the United States-Azerbaijan Chamber of Commerce.

In 1998, in response to the 2002 Winter Olympic bid scandal, the International Olympic Committee formed a commission, called the "2000 Commission," to recommend reforms, which Kissinger served on. This service led in 2000 to his appointment as one of five IOC "honor members," a category the organization described as granted to "eminent personalities from outside the IOC who have rendered particularly outstanding services to it."^[154]

From 2000 to 2006, Kissinger served as chairman of the board of trustees of Eisenhower Fellowships. In 2006, upon his departure from Eisenhower Fellowships, he received the Dwight D. Eisenhower Medal for Leadership and Service.^[155]

In November 2002, he was appointed by President George W. Bush to chair the newly established National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States to investigate the September 11 attacks.^[156] Kissinger stepped down as chairman on December 13, 2002, rather than reveal his business client list, when queried about potential conflicts of interest.^[157]

In the Rio Tinto espionage case of 2009–2010, Kissinger was paid \$5 million to advise the multinational mining company how to distance itself from an employee who had been arrested in China for bribery.^[158]

Kissinger—along with William Perry, Sam Nunn, and George Shultz—has called upon governments to embrace the vision of a world free of nuclear weapons, and in three *Wall Street Journal* op-eds proposed an ambitious program of urgent steps to that end. The four have created the Nuclear Threat Initiative to advance this agenda. In 2010, the four were featured in a documentary film entitled Nuclear Tipping Point. The film is



President Donald Trump meeting with Kissinger on May 10, 2017

a visual and historical depiction of the ideas laid forth in the *Wall Street Journal* op-eds and reinforces their commitment to a world without nuclear weapons and the steps that can be taken to reach that goal.

In December 2008, Kissinger was given the American Patriot Award by the National Defense University Foundation "in recognition for his distinguished career in public service."^[135]

On November 17, 2016, Kissinger met with then President-elect Donald Trump during which they discussed global affairs.^[159] Kissinger also met with President Trump at the White House in May 2017.^[160]

In an interview with Charlie Rose on August 17, 2017, Kissinger said about President Trump: "I'm hoping for an Augustinian moment, for St. Augustine ... who in his early life followed a pattern that was quite incompatible with later on when he had a vision, and rose to sainthood. One does not expect the president to become that, but it's conceivable ...".^[161] Kissinger also argued that Russian President Vladimir Putin wanted to weaken Hillary Clinton, not elect Donald Trump. Kissinger said that Putin "thought—wrongly incidentally—that she would be extremely confrontational ... I think he tried to weaken the incoming president [Clinton]".^[162]

Views on U.S. foreign policy

Yugoslav wars

In several articles of his and interviews that he gave during the Yugoslav wars, he criticized the United States' policies in Southeast Europe, among other things for the recognition of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a sovereign state, which he described as a foolish act.^[163] Most importantly he dismissed the notion of Serbs and Croats being aggressors or separatist, saying that "they can't be separating from something that has never existed".^[164] In addition, he repeatedly warned the West against inserting itself into a conflict that has its roots at least hundreds of years back in time, and said that the West would do better if it allowed the Serbs and Croats to join their respective countries.^[164] Kissinger shared similarly critical views on Western involvement in Kosovo. In particular, he held a disparaging view of the Rambouillet Agreement:



President Barack Obama discussing the New START Treaty between the U.S. and Russia, 2010

The Rambouillet text, which called on Serbia to admit NATO troops throughout Yugoslavia, was a provocation, an excuse to start bombing. Rambouillet is not a document that any Serb could have accepted. It was a terrible diplomatic document that should never have been presented in that form.

— Henry Kissinger, *Daily Telegraph*, June 28, 1999

However, as the Serbs did not accept the Rambouillet text and NATO bombings started, he opted for a continuation of the bombing as NATO's credibility was now at stake, but dismissed the use of ground forces, claiming that it was not worth it.^[165]

Iraq

In 2006, it was reported in the book *State of Denial* by Bob Woodward that Kissinger met regularly with President George W. Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney to offer advice on the Iraq War.^[166] Kissinger confirmed in recorded interviews with Woodward^[167] that the advice was the same as he had given in a column in *The Washington Post* on August 12, 2005: "Victory over the insurgency is the only meaningful exit strategy."^[168]

In an interview on the BBC's *Sunday AM* on November 19, 2006, Kissinger was asked whether there is any hope left for a clear military victory in Iraq and responded, "If you mean by 'military victory' an Iraqi government that can be established and whose writ runs across the whole country, that gets the civil war under control and sectarian violence under control in a time period that the political processes of the democracies will support, I don't believe that is possible. ... I think we have to redefine the course. But I don't believe that the alternative is between military victory as it had been defined previously, or total withdrawal."^[169]

In an interview with Peter Robinson of the Hoover Institution on April 3, 2008, Kissinger reiterated that even though he supported the 2003 invasion of Iraq,^[170] he thought that the George W. Bush administration rested too much of its case for war on Saddam's supposed weapons of mass destruction. Robinson noted that Kissinger had criticized the administration for invading with too few troops, for disbanding the Iraqi Army, and for mishandling relations with certain allies.^[171]

India

Kissinger said in April 2008 that "India has parallel objectives to the United States," and he called it an ally of the U.S.^[171]

China

Kissinger was present at the opening ceremony of the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics.^[172] A few months before the Games opened, as controversy over China's human rights record was intensifying due to criticism by Amnesty International and other groups of the widespread use of the death penalty and other issues, Kissinger told the PRC's official press agency Xinhua: "I think one should separate Olympics as a sporting event from whatever political disagreements people may have had with China. I expect that the games will proceed in the spirit for which they were designed, which is friendship among nations, and that other issues are discussed in other forums." He said China had made huge efforts to stage the Games. "Friends of China should not use the Olympics to pressure China now." He added that he would bring two of his grandchildren to watch the Games and planned to attend the opening ceremony.^[173] During the Games, he participated with Australian swimmer Ian Thorpe, film star Jackie Chan, and former British PM Tony Blair at a Peking University forum on the qualities that make a champion.^[174] He sat with his wife Nancy Kissinger, President George W. Bush, former President George H. W. Bush, and Foreign Minister Yang Jiechi at the men's basketball game between China and the U.S.^[175]



Kissinger speaking during Gerald Ford's funeral in January 2007



Angela Merkel and Kissinger were at the state funeral for former German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt, November 23, 2015

In 2011, Kissinger published *On China*, chronicling the evolution of Sino-American relations and laying out the challenges to a partnership of 'genuine strategic trust' between the U.S. and China.^[176]

In his 2011 book *On China*, his 2014 book *World Order* and in a 2018 interview with *Financial Times*, Kissinger stated that he believes China wants to restore its historic role as the Middle Kingdom and be "the principal adviser to all humanity".^{[177][178][179]}

In 2020, during a period of worsening Sino-American relations caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Hong Kong protests, and the U.S.–China trade war, Kissinger expressed concerns that the United States and China are entering a Second Cold War and will eventually become embroiled in a military conflict similar to World War I. He called for Chinese President Xi Jinping and the incoming U.S. President-elect Joe Biden to take a less confrontational foreign policy.^[180] Kissinger previously said that a potential war between China and the United States would be "worse than the world wars that ruined European civilization."^[181]

Iran

Kissinger's position on this issue of U.S.–Iran talks was reported by the *Tehran Times* to be that "Any direct talks between the U.S. and Iran on issues such as the nuclear dispute would be most likely to succeed if they first involved only diplomatic staff and progressed to the level of secretary of state before the heads of state meet."^[182] In 2016, Kissinger said that the biggest challenge facing the Middle East is the "potential domination of the region by an Iran that is both imperial and jihadist." He further wrote in August 2017 that if the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps of Iran and its Shiite allies were allowed to fill the territorial vacuum left by a militarily defeated Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, the region would be left with a land corridor extending from Iran to the Levant "which could mark the emergence of an Iranian radical empire."^[183] Commenting on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, Kissinger said that he wouldn't have agreed to it, but that Trump's plan to end the agreement after it was signed would "enable the Iranians to do more than us."^[184]

2014 Ukrainian crisis

On March 5, 2014, *The Washington Post* published an op-ed piece by Kissinger, 11 days before the Crimean referendum on whether Autonomous Republic of Crimea should officially rejoin Ukraine or join neighboring Russia.^[185] In it, he attempted to balance the Ukrainian, Russian and Western desires for a functional state. He made four main points:

1. Ukraine should have the right to choose freely its economic and political associations, including with Europe;
2. Ukraine should not join NATO, a repetition of the position he took seven years before;
3. Ukraine should be free to create any government compatible with the expressed will of its people. Wise Ukrainian leaders would then opt for a policy of reconciliation between the various parts of their country. He imagined an international position for Ukraine like that of Finland.
4. Ukraine should maintain sovereignty over Crimea.

Kissinger also wrote: "The west speaks Ukrainian; the east speaks mostly Russian. Any attempt by one wing of Ukraine to dominate the other—as has been the pattern—would lead eventually to civil war or break up."^[185]



Henry Kissinger on April 26, 2016

Following the publication of his book titled World Order, Kissinger participated in an interview with Charlie Rose and updated his position on Ukraine, which he sees as a possible geographical mediator between Russia and the West.^[186] In a question he posed to himself for illustration regarding re-conceiving policy regarding Ukraine, Kissinger stated: "If Ukraine is considered an outpost, then the situation is that its eastern border is the NATO strategic line, and NATO will be within 200 miles (320 km) of Volgograd. That will never be accepted by Russia. On the other hand, if the Russian western line is at the border of Poland, Europe will be permanently disquieted. The Strategic objective should have been to see whether one can build Ukraine as a bridge between East and West, and whether one can do it as a kind of a joint effort."^[187]

In December 2016, Kissinger advised then President-elect Donald Trump to accept "Crimea as a part of Russia" in an attempt to secure a rapprochement between the United States and Russia, whose relations soured as a result of the Crimean crisis.^[188] When asked if he explicitly considered Russia's sovereignty over Crimea legitimate, Kissinger answered in the affirmative, reversing the position he took in his *Washington Post* op-ed.^[189]

Computers and nuclear weapons

In 2019, Kissinger wrote about the increasing tendency to give control of nuclear weapons to computers operating with Artificial Intelligence (AI) that: "Adversaries' ignorance of AI-developed configurations will become a strategic advantage".^[190] Kissinger argued that giving power to launch nuclear weapons to computers using algorithms to make decisions would eliminate the human factor and give the advantage to the state that had the most effective AI system as a computer can make decisions about war and peace far faster than any human ever could.^[190] Just as an AI-enhanced computer can win chess games by anticipating human decision-making, an AI-enhanced computer could be useful in a crisis as in a nuclear war, the side that strikes first would have the advantage by destroying the opponent's nuclear capacity. Kissinger also noted there was always the danger that a computer would make a decision to start a nuclear war that before diplomacy had been exhausted or the algorithm controlling the AI might make a decision to start a nuclear war that would be not understandable to the operators.^[191] Kissinger also warned the use of AI to control nuclear weapons would impose "opacity" on the decision-making process as the algorithms that control the AI system are not readily understandable, destabilizing the decision-making process:

... grand strategy requires an understanding of the capabilities and military deployments of potential adversaries. But if more and more intelligence becomes opaque, how will policy makers understand the views and abilities of their adversaries and perhaps even allies? Will many different internets emerge or, in the end, only one? What will be the implications for cooperation? For confrontation? As AI becomes ubiquitous, new concepts for its security need to emerge.^[191]

COVID-19 pandemic

On April 3, 2020, Kissinger shared his diagnostic view of the COVID-19 pandemic, saying that it threatens the "liberal world order". Kissinger added that the virus does not know borders although global leaders are trying to address the crisis on a mainly national basis. He stressed that the key is not a purely national effort but greater international cooperation.^[1]

Public perception

At the height of Kissinger's prominence, many commented on his wit. In February 1972, at the Washington Press Club annual congressional dinner, "Kissinger mocked his reputation as a secret swinger."^[192] The insight, "Power is the ultimate aphrodisiac", is widely attributed to him, although Kissinger was paraphrasing

Napoleon Bonaparte.^[193] Four scholars at the College of William & Mary ranked Kissinger as the most effective U.S. Secretary of State in the 50 years to 2015.^[9] A number of activists and human rights lawyers, however, have sought his prosecution for alleged war crimes.^{[7][124]} According to historian and Kissinger biographer Niall Ferguson, however, accusing Kissinger alone of war crimes "requires a double standard" because "nearly all the secretaries of state ... and nearly all the presidents" have taken similar actions. But Ferguson continues "this is not to say that it's all OK."^[194]

Some have blamed Kissinger for injustices in American foreign policy during his tenure in government. In September 2001, relatives and survivors of General Rene Schneider (former head of the Chilean general staff) filed civil proceedings in Federal Court in Washington, DC, and, in April 2002, a petition for Kissinger's arrest was filed in the High Court in London by human rights campaigner Peter Tatchell,^[195] citing the destruction of civilian populations and the environment in Indochina during the years 1969–75.^[196] British-American journalist and author Christopher Hitchens authored *The Trial of Henry Kissinger*, in which Hitchens calls for the prosecution of Kissinger "for war crimes, for crimes against humanity, and for offenses against common or customary or international law, including conspiracy to commit murder, kidnap, and torture".^{[197][198][199][200]} Critics on the right, such as Ray Takeyh, have faulted Kissinger for his role in the Nixon administration's opening to China and secret negotiations with North Vietnam. Takeyh writes that while rapprochement with China was a worthy goal, the Nixon administration failed to achieve any meaningful concessions from Chinese officials in return, as China continued to support North Vietnam and various "revolutionary forces throughout the Third World," "nor does there appear to be even a remote, indirect connection between Nixon and Kissinger's diplomacy and the communist leadership's decision, after Mao's bloody rule, to move away from a communist economy towards state capitalism."^[77]

Historian Jeffrey Kimball developed the theory that Kissinger and the Nixon administration accepted a South Vietnamese collapse provided a face-saving decent interval passed between American withdrawal and defeat.^[201] In his first meeting with Zhou Enlai in 1971, Kissinger "laid out in detail the settlement terms that would produce such a delayed defeat: total American withdrawal, return of all American POWs, and a ceasefire-in-place for '18 months or some period'", in the words of historian Ken Hughes.^[202] On October 6, 1972, Kissinger told Nixon twice that the terms of the Paris Peace Accords would probably destroy South Vietnam: "I also think that Thieu is right, that our terms will eventually destroy him."^{[203][204]} However, Kissinger denied using a "decent interval" strategy, writing "All of us who negotiated the agreement of October 12 were convinced that we had vindicated the anguish of a decade not by a 'decent interval' but by a decent settlement."^[205] Johannes Kadura offers a positive assessment of Nixon and Kissinger's strategy, arguing that the two men "simultaneously maintained a Plan A of further supporting Saigon and a Plan B of shielding Washington should their maneuvers prove futile." According to Kadura, the "decent interval" concept has been "largely misrepresented," in that Nixon and Kissinger "sought to gain time, make the North turn inward, and create a perpetual equilibrium" rather than acquiescing in the collapse of South Vietnam.^[206]

Kissinger's record was brought up during the 2016 Democratic Party presidential primaries. Hillary Clinton had cultivated a close relationship with Kissinger, describing him as a "friend" and a source of "counsel."^[207] During the Democratic Primary Debates, Clinton touted^[208] Kissinger's praise for her record as Secretary of State.^[209] In response, candidate Bernie Sanders issued a critique of Kissinger's foreign policy, declaring, "I am proud to say that Henry Kissinger is not my friend. I will not take advice from Henry Kissinger."^[210]



Colin Powell, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, Secretary of State John Kerry, and Kissinger in March 2016

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Nixon's and Kissinger's conversation on October 6, 1972

Family and personal life



Nancy and Henry Kissinger in their New York apartment with their dog Tyler, 1978

Kissinger married Ann Fleischer on February 6, 1949. They had two children, Elizabeth and David, and divorced in 1964. On March 30, 1974, he married Nancy Maginnes.^{[211][212]} They now live in Kent, Connecticut, and in New York City. Kissinger's son David Kissinger served as an executive with NBCUniversal before becoming head of Conaco, Conan O'Brien's production company.^[213] In February 1982, at the age of 58, Henry Kissinger underwent coronary bypass surgery.



Henry and Nancy Kissinger at the Metropolitan Opera opening in 2008

Kissinger described *Diplomacy* as his favorite game in a 1973 interview.^[214]

Soccer

Daryl Grove characterised Kissinger as one of the most influential people in the growth of soccer in the United States.^[215] Kissinger was named chairman of the North American Soccer League board of directors in 1978.^[216]

Since his childhood, Kissinger has been a fan of his hometown's soccer club, SpVgg Greuther Fürth. Even during his time in office, the German Embassy informed him about the team's results every Monday morning. He is an honorary member^[217] with lifetime season-tickets.^[218] In September 2012 Kissinger attended a home game in which SpVgg Greuther Fürth lost, 0–2, against Schalke, after promising years ago he would attend a Greuther Fürth home game if they were promoted to the Bundesliga, the top football league in Germany, from the 2. Bundesliga.^[219]

Awards, honors, and associations

- Kissinger and Le Duc Tho were jointly offered the 1973 Nobel Peace Prize for their work on the Paris Peace Accords which prompted the withdrawal of American forces from the Vietnam war. (Le Duc Tho declined to accept the award on the grounds that such "bourgeois sentimentalities" were not for him^[40] and that peace had not actually been achieved in Vietnam.) Kissinger donated his prize money to charity, did not attend the award ceremony and later offered to return his prize medal after the fall of South Vietnam to North Vietnamese forces 18 months later.^[40]
- In 1973, Kissinger received the U.S. Senator John Heinz Award for Greatest Public Service by an Elected or Appointed Official, an award given out annually by Jefferson Awards.^[220]
- In 1976, Kissinger became the first honorary member of the Harlem Globetrotters.^{[221][222]}
- On January 13, 1977, Kissinger received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Gerald Ford.
- In 1980, Kissinger won the National Book Award in History^[a] for the first volume of his memoirs, *The White House Years*.^[223]

- In 1986, Kissinger was one of twelve recipients of the Medal of Liberty.
- In 1995, he was made an honorary Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of St Michael and St George.^[224]
- In 2000, Kissinger received the Sylvanus Thayer Award at United States Military Academy at West Point.^[225]
- In 2002, Kissinger became an honorary member of the International Olympic Committee.^[226]
- On March 1, 2012, Kissinger was awarded Israel's President's Medal.
- In October 2013, Kissinger was awarded the Henry A. Grunwald Award for Public Service by Lighthouse International
- Kissinger was a member of the Founding Council of the Rothermere American Institute, University of Oxford.^[227]
- Kissinger is a member of the following groups:
 - Aspen Institute^[228]
 - Atlantic Council^[229]
 - Bilderberg Group^{[230][231]}
 - Bohemian Club^[232]
 - Council on Foreign Relations^[233]
 - Center for Strategic and International Studies^[234]
 - World.Minds^{[235][236]}
- Kissinger served on the board of Theranos, a health technology company,^[237] from 2014 to 2017.^[238]
- He received the Theodore Roosevelt American Experience Award from the Union League Club of New York in 2009.
- He became the Honorary Chair of the Advisory Board for the Bloomberg New Economy Forum^[239] in 2018.



Kissinger at the LBJ Library in 2016



President Ford, General Secretary Leonid Brezhnev, and Kissinger speaking informally at the Vladivostok Summit in 1974

Writings: major books

Memoirs

- 1979. *The White House Years*. ISBN 0316496618 (National Book Award, History Hardcover)^{[223][a]}
- 1982. *Years of Upheaval*. ISBN 0316285919
- 1999. *Years of Renewal*. ISBN 0684855712

Public policy

- 1957. *A World Restored: Metternich, Castlereagh and the Problems of Peace, 1812–22*. ISBN 0395172292
- 1957. *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy*. ISBN 0865317453 (1984 edition)

- 1961. *The Necessity for Choice: Prospects of American Foreign Policy*. ISBN 0060124105
- 1965. *The Troubled Partnership: A Re-Appraisal of the Atlantic Alliance*. ISBN 0070348952
- 1969. *American Foreign Policy: Three Essays*. ISBN 0297179330
- 1981. *For the Record: Selected Statements 1977–1980*. ISBN 0316496634
- 1985. *Observations: Selected Speeches and Essays 1982–1984*. ISBN 0316496642
- 1994. *Diplomacy*. ISBN 067165991X
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See also

- List of foreign-born United States Cabinet Secretaries

Notes

- a. This was the 1980 award for hardcover History. From 1980 to 1983 there were dual hardcover and paperback awards in most categories, and multiple nonfiction subcategories. Most of the paperback award-winners were reprints, including Kissinger's.

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External links

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- [Henry Kissinger \(https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0457425/\)](https://www.imdb.com/name/nm0457425/) at IMDb
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- [Henry Kissinger \(https://www.nobelprize.org/laureate/530\)](https://www.nobelprize.org/laureate/530) on Nobelprize.org

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Preceded by Walt Rostow	United States National Security Advisor 1969–1975	Succeeded by Brent Scowcroft
Preceded by William Rogers	United States Secretary of State 1973–1977	Succeeded by Cyrus Vance
Academic offices		
Preceded by Margaret Thatcher	Chancellor of the College of William & Mary 2000–2005	Succeeded by Sandra Day O'Connor

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Ted Cruz

Rafael Edward Cruz (/kruːz/; born December 22, 1970) is an American politician and attorney serving as the junior United States Senator for Texas since 2013. A member of the Republican Party, Cruz served as Solicitor General of Texas from 2003 to 2008.

After graduating from Princeton University and Harvard Law School, Cruz pursued a career in government. He worked as a policy advisor in the George W. Bush administration before serving as Solicitor General of Texas from 2003 to 2008. In 2012, Cruz was elected to the U.S. Senate, becoming the first Hispanic American to serve as a U.S. senator from Texas. In the Senate, Cruz has taken consistently conservative positions on economic and social policy; he played a leading role in the 2013 United States federal government shutdown, seeking to force Congress and President Barack Obama to defund the Affordable Care Act. He was reelected in an unusually close Senate race in 2018 against Democratic candidate Beto O'Rourke.

In 2016, Cruz ran for President of the United States, placing second behind Donald Trump in the Republican primaries. The competition for the Republican presidential nomination between Trump and Cruz was deeply acrimonious and characterized by a series of public personal attacks. While Cruz initially declined to endorse Trump's campaign once he won the nomination, he later became a staunch Trump supporter during the latter's presidency.

In January 2021, Cruz provoked a widespread political and popular backlash after filing objections to the certification of Joe Biden's victory over Trump in the 2020 presidential election; he was criticized for giving credence to the baseless conspiracy theory that the election was stolen from Trump. After a violent mob of Trump supporters, motivated by the beliefs Cruz and others promoted, stormed the United States Capitol, figures from across the political spectrum condemned him and argued that he bore responsibility for the riot.^[1]

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Ted Cruz



Official portrait, 2019

United States Senator from Texas

Incumbent

Assumed office

January 3, 2013

Serving with John Cornyn

Preceded by Kay Bailey Hutchison

3rd Solicitor General of Texas

In office

January 9, 2003 – May 12, 2008

Attorney General

Greg Abbott

Preceded by Julie Parsley

Succeeded by James C. Ho

Personal details

Born Rafael Edward Cruz
December 22, 1970
Calgary, Alberta,
Canada

Citizenship American

Political party Republican

Spouse(s) Heidi Nelson (m.. 2001)

Children 2

[Bush administration](#)
[Texas Solicitor General](#)
[Return to private practice](#)

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Podcast

Personal life

Electoral history

Relatives	Rafael Cruz (father)
Education	Princeton University (AB) Harvard University (JD)
Occupation	Politician · broadcaster · lawyer · journalist
Signature	
Website	Senate website (http://cruz.senate.gov)

[See also](#)

[References](#)

[External links](#)

Early life and family

Rafael Edward Cruz was born on December 22, 1970,^{[2][3]} at Foothills Medical Centre^{[4][5]} in Calgary, Canada, to Eleanor Elizabeth (née Darragh) Wilson and Rafael Cruz.^{[6][7][8][9]} Eleanor Wilson was born in Wilmington, Delaware. She is of three-quarters Irish and one-quarter Italian descent, and earned an undergraduate degree in mathematics from Rice University in the 1950s.^{[10][11]}

Cruz's father was born and raised in Cuba, the son of a Canary Islander who immigrated to Cuba as child.^[12] As a teenager in the 1950s, he was beaten by agents of Fulgencio Batista for opposing the Batista regime.^[13] He left Cuba in 1957 to attend the University of Texas at Austin and obtained political asylum in the United States after his four-year student visa expired.^[14] He earned Canadian citizenship in 1973^[4] and became a naturalized United States citizen in 2005.^{[8][15][16]}

At the time of his birth, Ted Cruz's parents had lived in Calgary for three years and were working in the oil business as owners of a seismic-data processing firm for oil drilling.^{[8][17][18][19][20]} Cruz has said that he is the son of "two mathematicians/computer programmers."^[21] In 1974, Cruz's father left the family and moved to Texas.^[22] Later that year, Cruz's parents reconciled and relocated the family to Houston.^[4] They divorced in 1997.^[23] Cruz has two older half-sisters, Miriam Ceferina Cruz and Roxana Lourdes Cruz, from his father's first marriage. Miriam died in 2011.^{[23][24][25]}

Cruz began going by Ted at age 13.^[26]

Education

Cruz attended two private high schools: Faith West Academy, near Katy, Texas,^[27] and Second Baptist High School in Houston, from which he graduated as valedictorian in 1988.^{[15][28][29]} During high school, Cruz participated in a Houston-based group known at the time as the Free Market Education Foundation, a program that taught high school students the philosophies of economists such as Milton Friedman and Frédéric Bastiat.^{[20][30]}

Cruz graduated *cum laude* from Princeton University in 1992 with a Bachelor of Arts in public policy^[31] from the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs.^{[2][32]} While at Princeton, he competed for the American Whig-Clisophic Society's Debate Panel and won the top speaker award at both the 1992 U.S. National Debating Championship and the 1992 North American Debating Championship.^[33] In 1992, he was named U.S. National Speaker of the Year and, with his debate partner David Panton, Team of the Year by the American Parliamentary Debate Association.^[33] Cruz and Panton later represented Harvard Law School at the 1995 World Debating Championship, losing in the semifinals to a team from Australia.^{[34][35][36]} Princeton's debate team named their annual novice championship after Cruz.^[36] At Princeton, Cruz was a member of Colonial Club.^[37]

Cruz's 115-page senior thesis at Princeton investigated the separation of powers; its title, *Clipping the Wings of Angels: The History and Theory behind the Ninth and Tenth Amendments of the United States Constitution*, was inspired by a passage attributed to James Madison: "If angels were to govern men, neither external nor

internal controls on government would be necessary." Cruz argued that the drafters of the Constitution intended to protect their constituents' rights, and that the last two items in the Bill of Rights offer an explicit stop against an all-powerful state.^{[10][38]}

After graduating from Princeton, Cruz attended Harvard Law School, graduating *magna cum laude* in 1995 with a Juris Doctor degree.^{[2][39]} While at Harvard Law, he was a primary editor of the Harvard Law Review, an executive editor of the Harvard Journal of Law and Public Policy, and a founding editor of the Harvard Latino Law Review.^[32] Referring to Cruz's time as a student at Harvard Law, Professor Alan Dershowitz said: "Cruz was off-the-charts brilliant."^{[40][41][42][43]} At Harvard Law, Cruz was a John M. Olin Fellow in Law and Economics.^[44]

Cruz serves on the Board of Advisors of the Texas Review of Law and Politics.^[45]

Legal career

Clerkships

Cruz served as a law clerk to J. Michael Luttig of the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit in 1995^{[44][46]} and to William Rehnquist, Chief Justice of the United States, in 1996.^[2]

Private practice

After Cruz finished his clerkships, he took a position with Cooper, Carvin & Rosenthal, now known as Cooper & Kirk, PLLC, from 1997 to 1998.^[47] At the firm, Cruz worked on matters relating to the National Rifle Association and helped prepare testimony for the impeachment proceedings against President Bill Clinton.^[48] In 1998, Cruz was briefly one of the attorneys who represented Representative John Boehner during his litigation against Representative Jim McDermott over the alleged leak of an illegal recording of a phone conversation whose participants included Boehner.^{[49][50]}

Bush administration

Cruz joined the George W. Bush presidential campaign in 1999 as a domestic policy adviser, advising then-Governor Bush on a wide range of policy and legal matters, including civil justice, criminal justice, constitutional law, immigration, and government reform.^[47] During the 2000 Florida presidential recounts, he assisted in assembling the Bush legal team, devising strategy, and drafting pleadings for filing with the Supreme Court of Florida and U.S. Supreme Court in the case Bush v. Gore.^{[44][51]} Cruz recruited future Chief Justice John Roberts and noted attorney Mike Carvin to Bush's legal team.^[48]

After Bush took office, Cruz served as an Associate Deputy Attorney General in the U.S. Justice Department^{[2][51]} and as the director of policy planning at the U.S. Federal Trade Commission.^{[2][40][51]}

Texas Solicitor General

Appointed to the office of Solicitor General of Texas by Texas Attorney General Greg Abbott,^{[46][52]} Cruz served in that position from 2003 to 2008.^{[30][44]} The office was established in 1999 to handle appeals involving the state, but Abbott hired Cruz with the idea that Cruz would take a "leadership role in the United States in articulating a vision of strict constructionism". As Solicitor General, Cruz argued before the Supreme Court of the United States nine times, winning five cases and losing four.^[48]

Cruz authored 70 U.S. Supreme Court briefs and presented 43 oral arguments.^{[40][46][53]} His nine appearances before the Supreme Court are the most by any practicing lawyer in Texas or current member of Congress.^[54] Cruz has said, "We ended up year after year arguing some of the biggest cases in the country. There was a degree of serendipity in that, but there was also a concerted effort to seek out and lead conservative fights."^[54]

In 2003, while Cruz was Texas Solicitor General, the Texas Attorney General's office declined to defend Texas's sodomy law in *Lawrence v. Texas*, in which the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that state laws banning homosexual sex were unconstitutional.^[55]

In the landmark case of *District of Columbia v. Heller*, Cruz drafted the amicus brief signed by the attorneys general of 31 states arguing that the Washington, D.C. handgun ban should be struck down as infringing upon the Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms.^{[53][56]} He also presented oral argument for the amici states in the companion case to *Heller* before the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit.^{[53][57]}



Cruz at the Values Voter Summit in October 2011

Cruz successfully defended the constitutionality of the Ten Commandments monument on the Texas State Capitol grounds before the Fifth Circuit and the U.S. Supreme Court, winning 5–4 in *Van Orden v. Perry*.^{[40][44][53]}

In 2004, Cruz was involved in the high-profile case surrounding a challenge to the constitutionality of public schools' requiring students to recite the Pledge of Allegiance (including the words "under God", legally a part of the Pledge since 1954), *Elk Grove Unified School District v. Newdow*.^{[40][44]} He wrote a brief on behalf of all 50 states that argued that the plaintiff, a non-custodial parent, did not have standing to file suit on his daughter's behalf.^[58] The Supreme Court

upheld the position of Cruz's brief.^[59]

Cruz served as lead counsel for the state and successfully defended the multiple litigation challenges to the 2003 Texas congressional redistricting plan in state and federal district courts and before the U.S. Supreme Court, which was decided 5–4 in his favor in *League of United Latin American Citizens v. Perry*.^{[44][60]}

In *Medellin v. Texas*, Cruz successfully defended Texas against an attempt to reopen the cases of 51 Mexican nationals, all of whom were convicted of murder in the United States and on death row.^{[40][44][46][53]} With the support of the George W. Bush Administration, the petitioners argued that the United States had violated the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations by failing to notify the convicted nationals of their opportunity to receive legal aid from the Mexican consulate.^{[48][61]} They based their case on a decision of the International Court of Justice in the *Avena* case, which ruled that by failing to allow access to the Mexican consulate, the United States had breached its obligations under the Convention.^[62] Texas won the case in a 6–3 decision, the Supreme Court holding that ICJ decisions were not binding in domestic law and that the President had no power to enforce them.^{[48][61]}

Michael Wayne Haley was arrested for stealing a calculator from Walmart in 1997.^[63] Because of Haley's previous criminal convictions, he was sentenced to 16-and-a-half years in prison under the Texas habitual offender law. After Haley had exhausted his appeals, it became known that Haley's robbery offense occurred three days before one of his other convictions was finalized; this raised a question about the applicability of the habitual offender statute in his case. As Solicitor General, Cruz declined to vacate Haley's sentence, saying "I think justice is being done because he had a full and fair trial and an opportunity to raise his errors."^[64] The Supreme Court later remanded the case to lower courts based on Haley's ineffective assistance of counsel claim. During oral argument, Cruz conceded that Haley had a very strong argument for ineffective assistance

of counsel since Haley's attorney failed to recognize the sentencing error and that he would not move to have Haley re-incarcerated during the appeal process.^[64] After remand, Haley was re-sentenced to "time served".^[65]

In 2008 *American Lawyer* magazine named Cruz one of the 50 Best Litigators under 45 in America,^{[52][66]} and *The National Law Journal* named him one of the 50 Most Influential Minority Lawyers in America.^{[67][68]} In 2010 *Texas Lawyer* named him one of the 25 Greatest Texas Lawyers of the Past Quarter Century.^{[69][70]}

Return to private practice

After leaving the Solicitor General position in 2008, Cruz worked in a private law firm in Houston, Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP, often representing corporate clients, until he was sworn in as U.S. senator from Texas in 2013.^{[10][44][71]} At Morgan Lewis, he led the firm's U.S. Supreme Court and national appellate litigation practice.^[71] In 2010, he abandoned a bid for state attorney general when incumbent Attorney General Greg Abbott, who hired Cruz as Solicitor General, decided to run for reelection.^[15]

At Morgan, Lewis & Bockius, Cruz represented Pfizer in a lawsuit brought by a group of public hospitals and community health centers, who accused Pfizer of overcharging.^[72] Shandong Linglong Rubber Company was found guilty of marketing versions of tires that were based on blueprints stolen by a former employee of a Florida businessman and ordered to pay \$26 million to the Floridian. Cruz worked on the Chinese company's appellant brief. The appeals court denied the appeal and affirmed the jury's award.^[73] Cruz represented drug manufacturer B. Braun Medical Inc. in front of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 6th Circuit after the company was found guilty of wrongfully discharging a former employee. Cruz asserted that she had failed to prove that B. Braun had directed her to violate the law and that she had not presented sufficient evidence that her refusal to violate the law was why she had been fired. The appeals court rejected Cruz's argument and affirmed the \$880,000 award.^[73] Cruz represented Toyota in an appeal to the Texas Supreme Court in a statute of limitations case, where a judge wanted to investigate Toyota for contempt after a former Toyota in-house lawyer accused Toyota of unlawfully withholding documents in a product liability case.^[74] Cruz unsuccessfully argued the judge's jurisdiction expired 30 days after the case was dismissed following an out-of-court settlement, but later won a second appeal using the same argument.^[75]

Cruz defended two record-setting \$54-million personal injury awards in New Mexico at the appellate level, including one that had been thrown out by a lower court.^[76] He represented a mentally disabled man who was allegedly raped by an employee of the facility where he lived, and the family of a 78-year-old resident of an Albuquerque nursing home who died of internal bleeding.^{[76][77]} The settlements were sealed in both cases.^{[76][77]}

U.S. Senate (2013–present)

2012 election

Cruz ran as a Tea Party candidate in the 2012 Republican primary,^{[78][79][80]} and *The Washington Post* called his victory "the biggest upset of 2012 ... a true grassroots victory against very long odds".^[81]

On January 19, 2011, after U.S. Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison said she would not seek reelection, Cruz launched his campaign via a blogger conference call.^[82] In the Republican primary, he ran against sitting Lieutenant Governor David Dewhurst. Cruz was endorsed first by former Alaska Governor Sarah Palin^[83] and then by the Club for Growth, a fiscally conservative political action committee,^[84] Erick Erickson, former

editor of prominent conservative blog RedState;^[85] the FreedomWorks for America super PAC;^[86] nationally syndicated radio host Mark Levin;^[87] Tea Party Express;^[88] Young Conservatives of Texas;^[89] and U.S. Senators Tom Coburn, Jim DeMint,^[90] Mike Lee,^[91] Rand Paul^[92] and Pat Toomey.^[93] He was also endorsed by former Texas Congressman Ron Paul,^[94] George P. Bush,^[51] and former U.S. senator from Pennsylvania Rick Santorum.^[95] Former Attorney General Ed Meese served as national chairman of Cruz's campaign.^[51]

Cruz won the runoff for the Republican nomination by a 14-point margin over Dewhurst, support for Dewhurst having plummeted while Cruz's vote total dramatically increased from the first round.^[96] Cruz won despite being outspent by Dewhurst, who held a statewide elected office,^[97] \$19 million to \$7 million.^{[97][98]}

In the November 6 general election, Cruz faced Democratic nominee Paul Sadler, an attorney and a former state representative from Henderson, in east Texas. Cruz won with 4.5 million votes (56.4%) to Sadler's 3.2 million (40.6%). Two minor candidates garnered the remaining 3% of the vote.^[99] According to a poll by Cruz's pollster Wilson Perkins Allen Opinion Research, Cruz received 40% of the Hispanic vote, outperforming Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney among Hispanics in Texas.^{[100][101]}

After Time magazine reported that Cruz might have violated ethics rules by failing to publicly disclose his financial relationship with Caribbean Equity Partners Investment Holdings during the 2012 campaign, he said his failure to disclose the connection was inadvertent.^[102]

In January 2016, The New York Times reported that Cruz and his wife had taken out nearly \$1 million in low-interest loans from Goldman Sachs (where she worked) and Citibank, and failed to report them on Federal Election Commission disclosure statements as required by law.^[103] Cruz disclosed the loans on his Senate financial disclosure forms in July 2012, but not on the FEC form.^[104] There is no indication that Cruz's wife had any role in providing any of the loans, or that the banks did anything wrong.^[104] The loans were largely repaid by later campaign fundraising. A spokesperson for Cruz said his failure to report the loans to the FEC was "inadvertent" and that he would file supplementary paperwork.^[103]

Legislation

As of November 2018, Cruz has sponsored 105 bills of his own, including:^[105]

- S.177, a bill to repeal the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and the health-care related provisions of the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010, introduced January 29, 2013
- S.505, a bill to prohibit the use of drones to kill citizens of the United States within the United States, introduced March 7, 2013
- S.729 and S. 730, bills to investigate and prosecute felons and fugitives who illegally purchase firearms, and to prevent criminals from obtaining firearms through straw purchases and trafficking, introduced March 15, 2013
- S.1336, a bill to permit States to require proof of citizenship for registering to vote in federal elections, introduced July 17, 2013



Cruz in 2012 with his predecessor-to-be (Sen. Hutchison at right) and his future fellow senator from Texas (Sen. Cornyn at left)

- S.2170, a bill to increase coal, natural gas, and crude oil exports, to approve the construction of the Keystone XL Pipeline, to expand oil drilling offshore, onshore, in the National Petroleum Reserve–Alaska, and in Indian reservations, to give states the sole power of regulating hydraulic fracturing, to repeal the Renewable Fuel Standard, to prohibit the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) from regulating greenhouse gases, to require the EPA to assess how new regulations will affect employment, and to earmark natural resource revenue to paying off the federal government's debt, introduced March 27, 2014
- S.2415, a bill to amend the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to eliminate all limits on direct campaign contributions to candidates for public office, introduced June 3, 2014



Cruz presents a U.S. flag to World War II veteran Richard Arvin Overton during opening ceremony for outpatient clinic in Austin on August 22, 2013

Government shutdown of 2013

Cruz had a leading role in the October 2013 government shutdown.^{[106][107][108][109][110]} Cruz gave a 21-hour Senate speech in an effort to hold up a federal budget bill and thereby defund the Affordable Care Act.^{[109][111][112]} Cruz persuaded the House of Representatives and House Speaker John Boehner to include an ACA defunding provision in the bill.^[110] In the U.S. Senate, former Majority Leader Harry Reid blocked the filibuster attempt because only 18 Republican Senators supported the filibuster.^[110] During the filibuster he read *Green Eggs and Ham* by Dr. Seuss.^[113] To supporters, the move "signaled the depth of Cruz's commitment to rein in government".^[109] This move was extremely popular among Cruz supporters, with Rick Manning of Americans for Limited Government naming Cruz "2013 Person of the Year" in an op-ed in *The Hill*, primarily for his filibuster against the Affordable Care Act.^[114] Cruz was also named "2013 Man of the Year" by conservative publications TheBlaze,^[115] and *The American Spectator*,^[116] "2013 Conservative of the Year" by Townhall.com,^[117] and "2013 Statesman of the Year" by the Republican Party of Sarasota County, Florida.^{[118][119]} He was a finalist for *Time* magazine's "Person of the Year" in 2013.^[120] To critics, including some Republican colleagues^[110] such as Senator Lindsey Graham, the move was ineffective.^[109]

Cruz has consistently denied any involvement in the 2013 government shutdown, even though he cast several votes to prolong it and was blamed by many within his own party for prompting it.^{[121][122]}

S. 2195

On April 1, 2014, Cruz introduced S. 2195, a bill that would allow the President of the United States to deny visas to any ambassador to the United Nations who has been found to have been engaged in espionage or terrorist activity against the United States or its allies and may pose a threat to U.S. national security interests.^[123] The bill was written in response to Iran's choice of Hamid Aboutalebi as its ambassador to the UN.^[124] Aboutalebi was involved in the Iran hostage crisis, in which of a number of American diplomats from the US embassy in Tehran were held captive in 1979.^{[124][125][126]}

Under the headline "A bipartisan message to Iran", Cruz thanked President Barack Obama for signing S. 2195 into law. The letter, published in the magazine *Politico* on April 18, 2014, starts with "Thanks to President Obama for joining a unanimous Congress and signing S. 2195 into law". Cruz also thanked senators from both political parties for "swiftly passing this legislation and sending it to the White House".^{[127][128][129]}

Committee assignments

In his first two years in the Senate, Cruz attended 17 of 50 public Armed Services Committee hearings, 3 of 25 Commerce Committee hearings, and 4 of the 12 Judiciary Committee hearings, and he missed 21 of 135 roll call votes during the first three months of 2015.^[130]

Current

- Committee on Foreign Relations
 - Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health Policy
 - Subcommittee on Near East, South Asia, Central Asia, and Counterterrorism
 - Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere, Transnational Crime, Civilian Security, Democracy, Human Rights, and Global Women's Issues
- Committee on the Judiciary
 - Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights and Human Rights (Ranking member)
 - Subcommittee on Oversight, Federal Rights and Agency Activities
 - Subcommittee on Immigration, Refugees and Border Security
- Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation
 - Subcommittee on Aviation Operations, Safety, and Security
 - Subcommittee on Science and Space
- Committee on Rules and Administration
- Joint Economic Committee



Cruz with Venezuelan Chargé d'Affaires Carlos Vecchio

Previous

- Committee on Armed Services (2013-2019)
- Special Committee on Aging (2013-2015)

Comments on President Obama

In a November 2014 Senate speech, Cruz accused the president of being "openly desirous to destroy the Constitution and this Republic".^[131] In the same speech, Cruz invoked the speeches of the ancient Roman senator Cicero against Catiline to denounce Obama's planned executive actions on immigration reform.^[131] Classics Professor Jesse Weiner, writing in *The Atlantic*, said that Cruz's analogy was "deeply disquieting" because "In casting Obama in the role of Catiline, Cruz unsubtly suggests that the sitting president was not lawfully elected and is the perpetrator of a violent insurrection to overthrow the government ... In effect, he accuses the president of high treason. Regardless of one's views on immigration reform and the Obama administration at large, this is dangerous rhetoric."^[131]

Cruz has repeatedly said that the 2015 international nuclear agreement with Iran "will make the Obama administration the world's leading financier of radical Islamic terrorism".^[132] In response, Obama called Cruz's statements an example of "outrageous attacks" from Republican critics that crossed the line of

responsible discourse: "We've had a sitting senator, who also happens to be running for President, suggest that I'm the leading state sponsor of terrorism. Maybe this is just an effort to push Mr. Trump out of the headlines, but it's not the kind of leadership that is needed for America right now."^[132] Former Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney also criticized Cruz's remarks, writing that although he, too, opposed the Iran agreement, Cruz's statement connecting Obama to terrorism was "way over the line" and "hurts the cause".^{[133][134]}

After the death of Associate Justice Antonin Scalia, Cruz said that the winner of the 2016 U.S. presidential election, rather than Obama, should appoint a new Justice.^[135] In June 2016, Cruz blamed the Obama administration for the Orlando nightclub shooting, reasoning that it did not track the perpetrator Omar Mateen properly while he was on the terrorist watch-list.^[136] Following the terrorist attack on Nice, France, Cruz said in a statement that the country was at risk as a result of the Obama administration having a "willful blindness" to radical Islamists.^[137] With the passing of Fidel Castro in November, Cruz charged Obama with celebrating and lionizing Castro in public statements he made addressing the death.^[138] On December 28, after Secretary of State John Kerry gave a speech defending the U.S.'s decision to allow a U.N. resolution to pass that condemned Israeli settlements "on land meant to be part of a future Palestinian state", Cruz denounced the speech as "disgraceful", and said that history would remember Obama and Kerry as "relentless enemies of Israel". Cruz also accused the Obama administration of having a "radical anti-Israel agenda".^[139]

Relationship with Donald Trump

Cruz was one of Donald Trump's most vocal critics during the 2016 presidential campaign, with the two often exchanging heated comments directed at each other, and Cruz's family.^[140] But he became an important ally of Trump's in the Senate.^{[141][142]}

In late January 2017, Cruz praised Supreme Court nominee Neil Gorsuch as "brilliant and immensely talented" in a written statement.^[143] On February 23, while speaking at the 2017 CPAC, Cruz showed interest in Trump's nomination of a young justices in the mold of Scalia and Clarence Thomas.^[144] On March 1, he called Trump's joint address to Congress the previous day "positive" and "unifying".^[145] Cruz said that during his visit to the Mar-a-Lago estate on March 18, he spoke with affiliates of Trump while negotiating the American Health Care Act.^[146] On April 6, shortly after the Shayrat missile strike, he released a statement displaying his interest in having Trump appeal to Congress to take "military action in Syria" to prevent Islamic terrorists from acquiring weapons stored in Syria.^[147]



Cruz and then-President Donald Trump in 2019

In April 2018, in the copy accompanying Trump's entry on the Time 100 most influential people of 2017, Cruz wrote, "President Trump is doing what he was elected to do: disrupt the status quo."^[148] Cruz's authorship was criticized by Charles Pierce of Esquire,^[149] Jay Willis of GQ,^[150] and CNN's Chris Cillizza.^[148]

Friction with fellow Republican members of Congress

Cruz has used harsh rhetoric against fellow Republican politicians, and his relationships with various Republican members of Congress have been strained.^{[151][152]} In 2013, he called Republicans he considered insufficiently resistant to Obama's proposals a "surrender caucus".^[151] He also called fellow Republicans "squishes" on gun-control issues during a Tea Party rally.^[151] Cruz's role in the United States federal government shutdown of 2013 in particular attracted criticism from a number of Republican colleagues.^[152]

Republican Senator John McCain was reported to have particularly disliked Cruz; in a Senate floor speech in 2013, McCain denounced Cruz's reference to Nazis when discussing the Affordable Care Act.^[152] In March 2013, McCain also called Cruz and others "wacko birds" whose beliefs are not "reflective of the views of the majority of Republicans".^[152] During the 2016 Republican presidential primaries, John Boehner described Cruz as "Lucifer in the flesh";^[153] in an interview, Lindsey Graham said, "If you killed Ted Cruz on the floor of the Senate, and the trial was in the Senate, nobody would convict you."^[154]

In a heated Senate floor speech in July 2015, Cruz accused Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell of telling "a flat-out lie" over his intentions to reauthorize the Export-Import Bank of the United States, which Cruz opposes. "What we just saw today was an absolute demonstration that not only what he told every Republican senator, but what he told the press over and over and over again was a simple lie", Cruz said.^[155] His "incendiary outburst" was "unusual in the cordial atmosphere of the Senate", according to Reuters.^{[155][156]} In the same speech, Cruz assailed the "Republican majority in both houses of Congresses" for what he called an insufficiently conservative record.^[156] His speech, and especially his accusation against McConnell, was condemned by various senior Republican senators, with McCain saying that the speech was "outside the realm of Senate behavior" and "a very wrong thing to do".^[157] Orrin Hatch expressed a similar opinion: "I don't condone the use of that kind of language against another senator unless they can show definitive proof that there was a lie ... And I know the leader didn't lie."^[158] Cruz alleged that McConnell scheduled a vote on the Ex-Im Bank as part of a deal to persuade Democrats like Maria Cantwell to stop blocking a trade bill; McConnell denied there was any "deal", and that denial was what Cruz called a "lie". Hatch said McConnell did pledge to help Cantwell get a vote on the Ex-Im Bank.^[159]

Among Cruz's few close allies in the Senate is Mike Lee of Utah.^{[160][161]} Cruz has expressed pride in his reputation for having few allies, saying in June 2015 that he has been vilified for fighting "the Washington cartel".^[162]

When Boehner resigned from the House in September 2015, Cruz expressed his concern that before resigning Boehner might have "cut a deal with Nancy Pelosi to fund the Obama administration for the rest of its tenure".^[163] The next month, the budget agreement passed in the House by a vote of 266 to 187, with unanimous support from Democrats and Boehner, lifting the debt ceiling through March 2017. Cruz called the agreement "complete and utter surrender".^[164]

Cruz is one of the Senate Republicans in favor of the "nuclear option", "to speed up consideration of President Trump's nominees". Changing the Senate's rules to a simple majority vote would "ensure a quicker pace on Trump's court picks".^[165]

2018 election

Cruz ran for reelection to a second term in 2018.^[166] The primary elections for both parties were held on March 6, 2018,^[167] and he easily won the Republican nomination with over 80% of the vote.

Cruz faced the Democratic nominee, U.S. Representative Beto O'Rourke, in the general election.^[168] The contest was unusually competitive for an election in Texas, with most polls showing Cruz only slightly ahead. The race received significant media attention^[169] and became the most expensive U.S. Senate election in history up to that point^[170] (until the 2020–21 Georgia special election between incumbent Kelly Loeffler and Raphael Warnock). On November 6, 2018, Cruz defeated O'Rourke by a slim margin, 50.9% to 48.3%.^[171]

U.S. Supreme Court

In September 2020, Trump included Cruz on a shortlist, alongside fellow Senators Tom Cotton and Josh Hawley, for possible appointment to the Supreme Court. Cruz declined consideration for the position.^[172]

2020 presidential election

Cruz backed a failed appeal to the United States Supreme Court attempting to overturn or nullify the 2020 presidential election in Pennsylvania filed by U.S. Representative Mike Kelly, which argued that the Pennsylvania Constitution requires in-person voting except in narrow and defined circumstances; the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania had already rejected this argument.^{[173][174][175]} The U.S. Supreme Court declined to take up the case or issue an injunction and Pennsylvania's Electoral College votes were cast for Joe Biden.^[176] Cruz later led an effort by a group of Republican senators to refuse to count Pennsylvania's Electoral College votes,^{[177][178]} citing baseless allegations of fraud.^[179]

Electoral College vote count and storming of the United States Capitol

On January 6, 2021, during the debate about whether Congress should accept Arizona's electoral votes, Cruz said that 39 percent of Americans believed the 2020 presidential election was rigged, but that "I am not arguing for setting aside the result of this election".^[180] Some observers think Cruz knew claims about fraud in the election were inaccurate and that this speech and his earlier statements were attempts to mislead for political gain.^[180] (There are also concerns that he misrepresented the percentage of those concerned about rigging, with the correct proportion being 28%.)^{[181][182]}

Congress's counting of the Electoral College votes was interrupted by an insurrectionist mob that stormed the United States Capitol after a rally near the White House. The attack on the Capitol resulted in the deaths of five people, including a police officer.^[183]

When Congress reconvened that evening to continue the count, Cruz voted in support of the objections to Arizona's and Pennsylvania's electoral votes.^[184] The Senate rejected these objections by 93–6 and 92–7, respectively.^[185] The Texas Democratic Party called on Cruz to resign, saying that his efforts to block Joe Biden's lawful victory empowered the Trump supporters who stormed the Capitol.^[186] The Texas Democratic Party also called on the U.S. Department of Justice to open an official investigation into Cruz for inciting sedition and treason.^{[187][188][189]} The Houston Chronicle called for Cruz to resign.^[190] The San Antonio Express News called for Cruz to be expelled from the Senate.^[191] Thousands of lawyers and law students called for him to be disbarred for inciting the insurrection.^[192] President-elect Joe Biden and Republican senator Pat Toomey both said Cruz was complicit in the 'big lie' of Trump's allegations of voter fraud.^[193] Republican operative Chad Sweet, the chair of Cruz's 2016 presidential campaign, denounced Cruz for "assault on our democracy."^[194] Several corporations halted donations to Cruz and other Republicans who voted to overturn the election based on Trump's false claims.^{[195][196][1]} Lauren Blair Bianchi, Cruz's communications director, resigned.^[197]

On May 28, 2021, Cruz voted against creating an independent commission to investigate the riot.^[198]

Cancún controversy

In February 2021, during a historic winter storm, up to 4.3 million Texas residents were left without power and millions of others without drinking water, including Cruz and his family. In the middle of the storm, Cruz and his family were spotted on a plane heading to Cancún, Mexico, where they planned to stay at the luxury Ritz Carlton hotel and escape their home, which Heidi Cruz called in a text message "FREEZING".^{[199][200][201]} Cruz requested that the Houston police escort him and his family through the airport.^[202]

Cruz left the family poodle Snowflake alone inside the house without heat; reporters saw the dog through the window of the front door of the dark and empty house.^[203] Later, a self-identified security guard told a reporter he was caring for the dog.^[204]

Cruz's political allies and rivals condemned him for leaving Texas during a crisis and traveling internationally during the COVID-19 pandemic.^[199] Cruz initially said he was taking his daughters on a weeklong vacation from school at their request, in an attempt to be a "good dad".^[205] Later that day, he returned to Texas, after allowing his family to stay in Mexico, saying that the vacation was a mistake.^[206] Protesters calling for his resignation greeted him in front of his house upon his return.^[207] After returning from Cancún, Cruz volunteered in Houston to help with recovery efforts.^[208]

2016 presidential campaign

As early as 2013, Cruz was widely expected to run for the presidency in 2016.^{[209][210][211]} On March 14, 2013, he gave the keynote speech at the annual Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) in Washington DC.^[212] He tied for 7th place in the 2013 CPAC straw poll on March 16, winning 4% of the votes cast.^[213] In October 2013, Cruz won the Values Voter Summit presidential straw poll with 42% of the vote.^[214] Cruz finished first in two presidential straw polls conducted in 2014 with 30.33% of the vote at the Republican Leadership Conference^[215] and 43% of the vote at the Republican Party of Texas state convention.^[216]



Cruz speaking at the 2014 Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) in National Harbor, Maryland

Cruz did speaking events in mid-2013 across Iowa, New Hampshire, and South Carolina, all early primary states, leading to speculation that he was laying the groundwork for a run for President in 2016.^[217] Legal analyst Jeffrey Toobin described Cruz as the first potential presidential candidate to emphasize originalism as a major national issue.^[48]

On April 12, 2014, Cruz spoke at the Freedom Summit, an event organized by Americans for Prosperity and Citizens United.^[218] The event was attended by several potential presidential candidates.^[219] In his speech, Cruz mentioned that Latinos, young people and single mothers are the people most affected by the recession, and that the Republican Party should make outreach efforts to these constituents. He also said that the words "growth and opportunity" should be tattooed on the hands of every Republican politician.^[218]

Cruz delivered one of many State of the Union responses in January 2015.^[220]

On March 23, 2015, Cruz started his 2016 presidential campaign for the Republican primaries and caucuses, in a morning speech delivered at Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia.^[221] Also, at the same hour, he posted on his Twitter page: "I'm running for President and I hope to earn your support!"^[222] He was the first major Republican presidential candidate for the 2016 campaign.^{[223][224]} During the primary campaign, his base of support was mainly among social conservatives, though he had crossover appeal to other factions within his party, including in particular libertarian conservatives.^{[225][226]}

HarperCollins published Cruz's book *A Time for Truth: Reigniting the Promise of America* on June 30, 2015.^[227] The book reached the bestseller list of several organizations in its first week of release.^{[228][229]}

Primary wins

In the 2016 Republican presidential primaries, Cruz received over 7.8 million votes,^{[230][231]} won 12 states, and earned 559 delegates.^[232] He raised nearly \$92 million, a record for a Republican primary candidate, much of it from small online donors. The Cruz campaign had more than 325,000 volunteers.^[233]

On February 1, 2016, Cruz won the Iowa caucuses.^[234] The Iowa win made him the first Hispanic to win either a presidential primary election or caucus.^{[234][235][236]} He received 28% of the vote.^[236] On February 10, 2016, Cruz placed third in the New Hampshire primary, with about 12% of the vote.^[237] On February 21, 2016, he placed third in the South Carolina Republican primary with about 22.3% of the vote.^[238]

On March 1, 2016, Super Tuesday, Cruz won Texas by 17%, along with Alaska and Oklahoma, providing him with four state primary victories total.^[239] In the Texas primary, he received the most votes in all but six of the state's 254 counties.^[240] On March 5, 2016, Cruz won the Kansas and Maine caucuses, giving him six statewide wins.^{[241][242][243]}

Cruz won his widest margin up to that point in Kansas, where he beat frontrunner Donald Trump by 25 points.^[244] With his victories over Trump in Texas, Kansas, and Maine, he established himself as the candidate with the best opportunity to defeat Trump, the leading contender for the nomination.^{[245][246]}

On March 8, 2016, Cruz won the Idaho primary with 45% of vote—defeating Trump by 17% and earning his seventh statewide victory.^[247] He placed second in Michigan, Mississippi, and Hawaii.^[247] On March 12, 2016, Cruz won the Wyoming county conventions with 67% of the vote and 9 delegates, giving him his eighth statewide win.^[248] On March 22, Cruz won the Utah Caucus with 69.2% of the vote, versus John Kasich with 16.8% and Trump with 14%.^[249] Because he surpassed the 50% winner-take-all threshold, he won all 40 of Utah's delegates. This win was his ninth. On April 3, 2016, North Dakota elected a slate of delegates dominated by pro-Cruz delegates. Cruz received the support of the majority of the delegates.^[250]

On April 6, 2016, Cruz won the Wisconsin primary with 48.2% of the vote to Trump's 35.1%. It was Cruz's tenth statewide win. He won 36 of the 42 delegates available in Wisconsin. Trump received the other six. On April 2 and 7–9, 2016, Cruz swept the Colorado congressional district and state conventions, taking all 34 delegates.^{[251][252][253][254]} This gave Cruz his eleventh state win. On April 16, 2016, Cruz won all 14 of Wyoming's at-large delegates in the state convention. This secured the majority of state delegates, giving Cruz his twelfth state win.^[255] On April 27, 2016, Cruz said that, if he were selected as the party's nominee, he would choose former CEO of HP and fellow 2016 Republican presidential candidate Carly Fiorina as his vice-presidential running mate.^[256] Shortly after losing overwhelmingly to Trump in the Indiana primary on May 3, 2016, Cruz officially suspended his campaign.^[257]

Citizenship

Cruz has said that when he was a child, his mother told him that she would have to make an affirmative act to claim Canadian citizenship for him, so his family assumed that he did not hold Canadian citizenship.^[258] In August 2013, after the *Dallas Morning News* pointed out that he had dual Canadian-American citizenship,^{[259][260]} he applied to formally renounce his Canadian citizenship and ceased being a citizen of Canada on May 14, 2014.^{[258][261]}



Ted Cruz in Nashua, New Hampshire, on April 17, 2015

Several lawsuits and ballot challenges asserting that Cruz is ineligible to become U.S. president have been filed.^{[262][263][264][265][266][267][268]} No lawsuit or challenge has been successful, and in February 2016, the Illinois Board of Elections ruled in Cruz's favor, stating, "The candidate is a natural born citizen by virtue of being born in Canada to his mother who was a U.S. citizen at the time of his birth."^[269]

After candidacy

Shortly after the campaign's end, Cruz indicated that he would restart the bid if successful in the Nebraska primary,^[270] which Trump instead won.^[271]

In the months following, several publications noted that Cruz still had not endorsed Trump,^{[272][273]} Cruz explaining in June that he was "watching and assessing" to determine if he would support him in the forthcoming general election.^[274] On July 7, after a meeting with Trump, he confirmed that he would speak at the 2016 Republican National Convention.^[275]



Cruz at the 2016 Republican National Convention, July 20, 2016

In his speech on July 20, the third day of the convention, Cruz congratulated Trump but did not endorse him. He instead told listeners to "vote your conscience, vote for candidates up and down the ticket who you trust to defend our freedom and to be faithful to the Constitution". The speech was met with boos and a negative reception among the crowd.^[276] The following day at the Texas Republican delegation breakfast, Cruz defended his choice to not endorse Trump: "I am not in the habit of supporting people who attack my wife and attack my father. That pledge was not a blanket commitment that if you go and slander and attack Heidi, that I'm going to nonetheless come like a servile puppy dog and say, 'Thank you very much for maligning my wife and maligning my father.'"^{[277][278]} On September 23, 2016, he publicly endorsed Trump for president.^[279]

On October 10, following the 2005 audio recording of Trump being released and several Republicans retracting their endorsements, Cruz reaffirmed his support, calling Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton "manifestly unfit to be president".^[280] On November 15, he met with President-elect Trump at Trump Tower in New York City. It had been reported that Trump was considering Cruz for the position of U.S. Attorney General, but the position went to Alabama Senator Jeff Sessions.^[281] On November 28, in light of Trump showing a softer tone on his campaign promises, Cruz warned that justified backlash could ensue if he strayed from them.^[282]

Cruz has been backed by the billionaire Mercer family, including Robert and his daughter Rebekah.^[283]

Political positions

According to the Dutch political scientist Cas Mudde, Cruz is part of the "radical right" on the US political spectrum.^[79] He has been characterized as staunchly conservative, a religious conservative, and anti-establishmentarian.^{[284][285][286]}

Communism

Cruz is a critic of the rapprochement between Cuba and the United States, saying on Fox News in December 2014 that the thaw in relations was a "manifestation of the failures of the Obama-Clinton-Kerry foreign policy" that "will be remembered as a tragic mistake".^[287]

In July 2018, Cruz spoke at the Rally for Religious Freedom in Asia. He said, "It is a pleasure to be here and stand in solidarity for the men and women across this globe who have been persecuted by communists... We must stand united, in shining light, in highlighting heroism, in highlighting courage, in speaking out for those like my family, like so many millions across the globe who've seen the jackboot of communism firsthand."^[288]

Crime, guns, and drug policy

Cruz has called for an end to "overcriminalization, harsh mandatory minimum sentences, and the demise of jury trials".^[289] He supports the death penalty.^[290] In his 2012 Senate campaign, Cruz frequently mentioned his role as counsel for the State of Texas in Medellín v. Texas, a 2008 case in which the U.S. Supreme Court held that Texas has the right to ignore an order from the International Court of Justice directing the U.S. to review the convictions and sentences of dozens of Mexican nationals on death row.^[291] He has called Medellín the most important case of his tenure as Texas solicitor general.^[291]



Ted Cruz and Judge Brett Kavanaugh in July 2018

Cruz is a gun rights supporter,^[292] and opposes expanding gun control regulations.^[293]

In an interview with radio host Hugh Hewitt discussing the attack that killed three people at a Planned Parenthood clinic in Colorado Springs, Cruz said that "the simple and undeniable fact is the overwhelming majority of violent criminals are Democrats", and claimed that Democrats are "soft on crime" because "convicted felons tend to vote Democratic."^[294]

In August 2015, in the wake of the ambush death of a Texas police officer who was gunned down while filling up at a gas station, Cruz said that police are "feeling the assault from the President, from the top on down, as we see—whether it's in Ferguson or Baltimore, the response from senior officials, the President or the Attorney General, is to vilify law enforcement. That's wrong. It's fundamentally wrong. It's endangering all of our safety and security."^[295]

Cruz opposes the legalization of marijuana, but believes it should be decided at the state level.^[296] After Colorado legalized marijuana, he said, "If the citizens of Colorado decide they want to go down that road, that's their prerogative. I personally don't agree with it, but that's their right."^[297]

Cruz met with Alyssa Milano and Fred Guttenberg to discuss gun violence in the United States. Guttenberg said this was "a really important day."^[298]



Cruz and President Donald Trump, after signing the NASA Transition Authorization Act of 2017

Economy

Cruz has been described by the Cato Institute's Center for Trade Policy Studies as a "free trader"^[299] and as a "free-trade advocate" by The Wall Street Journal.^[300] In 2013, he proposed the abolition of the IRS and the implementation of a flat tax "where the average American can fill out taxes on a postcard".^[301] Cruz is "adamantly opposed to a higher minimum wage".^[302]

Cruz wants to decrease the size of the government significantly. In addition to eliminating the IRS as described above, he has promised to eliminate four other cabinet-level agencies: the Department of Energy, Department of Education, Department of Commerce, and Department of Housing and Urban Development.^[303]

Education

Cruz is a proponent of school choice^[304] and opposes the Common Core State Standards Initiative.^[305]

Energy and environment

Cruz rejects the scientific consensus on climate change.^{[306][307]} In March 2015, he said that some people are "global warming alarmists" and, citing satellite temperature measurements, said, contrary to NASA's analysis, that there had been no significant warming in 18 years.^{[307][308][309]}

Cruz voted against the Water Resources Development Act of 2013 that would have created the National Endowment for the Oceans and authorized more than \$26 billion in projects to be built by the Army Corps of Engineers, at least \$16 billion of which would have come from federal taxpayers.^{[310][311]} He voted against the bill because it neglected "to reduce a substantial backlog of projects, to the detriment of projects with national implications, such as the Sabine–Neches Waterway".^[312] Cruz said the Corps' responsibilities were expanded without providing adequate measures for state participation.^[312] Proponents of the bill argued that it would provide steady funding to support research and restoration projects, funded primarily by dedicating 12.5% of revenues from offshore energy development, including oil, gas, and renewable energy, through offshore lease sales and production based royalty payments, distributed through a competitive grant program.^[313]

In 2017, Cruz was one of 22 senators to sign a letter^[314] addressed to Trump urging him to withdraw from the Paris Agreement. According to the Center for Responsive Politics, Cruz has received more than \$2.5 million in campaign contributions from oil, gas and coal interests since 2012.^[315] He has a lifetime score of 3% on the National Environmental Scorecard of the League of Conservation Voters.^[316]

Cruz is a supporter of TransCanada's Keystone XL Pipeline,^[317] and following the Republican senate whip, was a cosponsor of legislation in support of the pipeline.^[318]

Federal Reserve

In a 2014 opinion editorial in USA Today, Cruz wrote that auditing the Federal Reserve System was a top Republican priority in 2015 and that he supported legislation that would allow the Government Accountability Office to evaluate the Federal Reserve's monetary policy. Federal Reserve chairwoman Janet Yellen, whose confirmation Cruz tried to prevent, said in her confirmation hearing that she opposed any audit of the Federal Reserve and that "for 50 years Congress has recognized that there should be an exception to GAO ability to audit the Fed to avoid any political interference in monetary policy."^{[319][320]}

Foreign affairs

In 2015, Cruz voted for the USA Freedom Act, which reauthorized the USA Patriot Act but reformed some of its provisions.^{[321][322]}

Cruz has been an adamant opponent of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, a 2015 international nuclear agreement with Iran negotiated by the U.S. and other world powers, calling it "catastrophic" and "disastrous".^{[323][324]}

In 2013, Cruz said that the U.S. had no "dog in the fight" during the Syrian Civil War and that its armed forces should not serve as "al-Qaeda's air force".^[325] In 2014, he criticized the Obama administration: "The president's foreign policy team utterly missed the threat of ISIS, indeed, was working to arm Syrian rebels that were fighting side by side with ISIS", calling ISIS "the face of evil". In a statement opposing U.S. intervention for regime change in Syria, Cruz said, "If President Obama and Hillary Clinton and Sen. Rubio succeed in toppling [Syrian President Bashar] Assad, the result will be the radical Islamic terrorists will take over Syria, that Syria will be controlled by ISIS, and that is materially worse for U.S. national security interests."^[326]



Cruz attended the opening of the US Embassy to Israel in Jerusalem in May 2018

In September 2016, Cruz backed the Obama administration's plan to sell more than \$1.15 billion worth of weapons to Saudi Arabia.^[327]

In early January 2017, Cruz, Texas governor Greg Abbott and some others met with Taiwanese president Tsai Ing-wen. Cruz criticized the People's Republic of China after it reportedly made a statement asking members of Congress not to meet with Tsai.^{[328][329][330]}

On January 5, 2017, Cruz voted in favor of a House resolution condemning UN Security Council Resolution 2334, which condemned Israeli settlement building in the occupied Palestinian territories as a violation of international law.^[331]

In June 2017, Cruz co-sponsored the Israel Anti-Boycott Act (s. 720), which would make it a federal crime for Americans to encourage or participate in boycotts against Israel and Israeli settlements in the West Bank if protesting actions by the Israeli government.^{[332][333]}

In August 2018, Cruz and 16 other lawmakers urged the Trump administration to impose sanctions under the Global Magnitsky Act against Chinese officials responsible for human rights abuses against the Uyghur Muslim minority in western China's Xinjiang region.^[334] They wrote, "The detention of as many as a million or more Uyghurs and other predominantly Muslim ethnic minorities in 'political reeducation' centers or camps requires a tough, targeted, and global response."^[335]



Cruz with President Trump and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi in September 2019

On December 18, 2018, Cruz and Senator Tom Cotton put forth a resolution in the U.S. Senate urging the United States to affirm Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights.^[336]

Cruz has called the Nord Stream II natural gas pipeline a threat to the security of Europe and the U.S. In December 2019 he and Senator Ron Johnson wrote a letter to Edward Heerema, the owner of the offshore pipe layer Allseas, to warn him of sanctions if Allseas did not suspend its work on the pipeline, which would deliver natural gas from Russia to Germany.^[337] A few days later Allseas suspended the work.^[338]

Cruz, a co-sponsor of the resolution to commemorate the Armenian genocide, said that while Turkey is a NATO ally, "We should never be afraid to tell the truth, and alliances grounded in lies are themselves unsustainable."^[339]

American video game company Activision Blizzard punished a Hong Kong-based professional gamer for supporting pro-democracy Hong Kong protests. Cruz accused Blizzard and Apple of censorship.^[340] He co-signed a letter to Activision Blizzard CEO Bobby Kotick that read, "As China amplifies its campaign of intimidation, you and your company must decide whether to look beyond the bottom line and promote American values—like freedom of speech and thought—or to give in to Beijing's demands in order to preserve market access."^[341]

Beginning during his time as a Dublin, California, city councilman, Eric Swalwell was targeted by a Chinese woman believed to be a clandestine officer of China's Ministry of State Security. Swalwell's general relationship with a suspected Chinese agent, Christine Fang, has been characterized as problematic, particularly given his high-profile role as a member of the House Intelligence Committee.^[342] Cruz tweeted, "More than once, I've said 'screw the Chinese communists'. Little did I know how closely Swalwell was listening."^[343]

Hate crimes

Cruz was one of six Republican senators to vote against expanding the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act, which would allow the U.S. Justice Department to review hate crimes related to COVID-19 and establish an online database.^{[344][345]}

Health care

Cruz was a vocal critic of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act passed under President Obama in 2010. During the first year of Trump's presidency, Cruz sponsored legislation to repeal the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010, and was part of the group of 13 senators that drafted the unsuccessful 2017 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act replacement proposals of the AHCA.^{[346][347][348][349]}



Cruz questions US Customs and Border Protection leaders on COVID-19 preparedness in March 2020

Hurricane aid

In 2013, Cruz voted against a bill to provide a package of federal aid to the Northern East Coast for recovery from Hurricane Sandy.^[350] because, he said, the bill was "filled with unrelated pork" and "two-thirds of that bill had nothing to do with Sandy". *The Washington Post* disputed this, writing that "the bill was largely aimed at dealing with Sandy, along with relatively minor items to address other or future disasters."^[351] *The New York Times* wrote that "of 23 examples of extraneous spending that a spokesman for Mr. Cruz provided, all but one—\$195 million in discretionary funds for the secretary of health and human services—were Sandy-related or sought to mitigate future storms, as the law required."^[352]

In 2015, in the wake of severe flooding in Texas, Cruz supported federal aid funding; and in 2017, called for federal intervention as Hurricane Harvey approached the coast of Texas.^[353]

Immigration

Cruz took a "hard-line stance" on immigration issues during the 2014 border crisis.^[354] and opposes comprehensive immigration reform.^{[48][354]} He advocates an increase from 65,000 to 325,000 annually in skilled foreign workers entering the United States using H-1B visas.^[355] According to McClatchy, Cruz staked out "hard-right immigration stances" during his 2016 presidential campaign.^[356]

Cruz opposes paths to citizenship for undocumented immigrants brought to the United States as children (so-called DREAMers).^[357] In February 2018, he was the sole senator to oppose a Republican motion to begin debate on legislation intended to resolve the question of what to do with DREAMers.^[358] He has called for the repeal of the clause of the 14th amendment that grants citizenship to those born in the United States.^[359] He defends the Trump administration's policy of separating migrant children from their parents,^{[360][361]} blaming the migrant parents for crossing the U.S. border to seek asylum and claiming that the Obama administration maintained a similar policy.^{[360][361]}

In December 2020, Cruz blocked the Hong Kong People's Freedom and Choice Act, which would give Hong Kongers refugee status, citing the threat of spying by China. He said the law was an attempt by Democrats "to advance their long-standing goals on changing immigration laws".^[362]

During a May 2021 Senate Rules Committee hearing, Cruz falsely asserted that House Democrats had "designed" the For The People Act such that it "directs" people "to break the law and register millions of people to vote who are not eligible to vote because they are not United States citizens" and "automatically registers to vote anyone who interacts with the government" regardless of their immigration status. The bill repeatedly states only U.S. citizens would be permitted to register.^[363]

Judiciary

In March 2016, about seven months before the forthcoming presidential election, Cruz argued the Senate should not consider Obama's nominee to the Supreme Court on the grounds that "this should be a decision for the people. Let the election decide. If the Democrats want to replace this nominee, they need to win the election". In September 2020, less than two months before the next presidential election, Cruz supported an immediate vote on Trump's nominee to fill the Supreme Court vacancy caused by Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg's death.^[364]

Military

Cruz has criticized the U.S. military for becoming "emasculated" by its recruiting efforts, comparing those efforts unfavorably to the Russian military's.^{[365][366]} He accused Democratic politicians of trying to transform "the greatest military on earth" into "pansies".^[365] He has claimed the military is debilitated and its "ability to project power and obtain air superiority is tragically anemic".^[367] Blaming "bloated bureaucracy and social experiments", Cruz has proposed reducing the size of the active duty military while increasing spending.^[368]

Net neutrality

Cruz opposes net neutrality—which prevents Internet service providers from deliberately blocking or slowing particular websites—arguing that the Internet economy has flourished in the United States simply because it has remained largely free from government regulation.^[369] He has argued that net neutrality is the "Obamacare for the internet".^{[370][371]} Cruz said that the Obama-era implementation of the principle of net neutrality had the "end result" of "less broadband, less innovation, and less freedom for the American consumer".^[371] In December 2017, after the Republican-controlled Federal Communications Commission repealed net neutrality, he mocked supporters of net neutrality as "snowflakes" who were misled by "online propaganda".^[372]

Social issues

Cruz is strongly anti-abortion, but "would allow the procedure...when a pregnancy endangers the mother's life".^{[373][374]} He is in favor of cutting federal funding to Planned Parenthood.^[375]

Cruz opposes both same-sex marriage and civil unions.^[376] He believes that marriage should be legally defined as only "between one man and one woman",^[377] but believes that the legality of same-sex marriage should be left to each state to decide.^[378] Cruz called the Supreme Court's decision ruling same-sex marriage bans unconstitutional "among the darkest hours of our nation" and accused the court of judicial activism.^[379]

Cruz compared the vandalism and destruction of monuments and memorials in the United States to the 2001 destruction of the giant Buddhas of Bamiyan by the Taliban.^[380]

Podcast

Cruz and Michael J. Knowles started a podcast, *Verdict with Ted Cruz*, on January 21, 2020. The first episodes were summaries of the impeachment hearings of Donald Trump. After the hearings ended the podcast expanded its content to include other topics and interviews, including with Washington politicians such as U.S. Senators Tim Scott, Lindsey Graham, and Mike Lee, Trump administration officials including White House Chief of Staff Mark Meadows, then-U.S. Attorney General Bill Barr, U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos, and actors Jon Voight and Isaiah Washington.^[381]

Personal life

Cruz married Heidi Nelson on May 27, 2001,^[382] they have two daughters, Caroline and Catherine.^[383] The couple met when Cruz was working on George W. Bush's 2000 presidential campaign. Heidi took leave from her position as head of the Southwest Region in the Investment Management Division of Goldman, Sachs & Co. in 2016 to support Cruz's run for president.^[384] She previously worked in the White House for Condoleezza Rice and in New York as an investment banker.^[385] Cruz lives in River Oaks, Houston.^[386]

Cruz has joked, "I'm Cuban, Irish, and Italian, and yet somehow I ended up Southern Baptist."^[387] He loves to wear cowboy boots, but he refrained from doing so when arguing before the Rehnquist court.^[388]

In 2017, someone on Cruz's Twitter account "liked" a pornographic Twitter post. Shortly thereafter, a Cruz staffer undid the "like", but not before other Twitter users had taken screenshots of the post and circulated them widely online. Cruz said that the person who "liked" the post was a staffer of his.^[389]

On March 8, 2020, Cruz took a temporary leave of absence from his Senate office due to concerns about his contact with a person infected with COVID-19 at the ACU's Conservative Political Action Conference. Staying at his home in Texas,^[390] he avoided contact with colleagues and constituents for 14 days (believed to be the limit of the virus's incubation period). Cruz said he had been advised chances of his contracting the virus were very low.^[391]



Cruz with his wife, Heidi, at a rally in Houston, March 2015

Electoral history

2012

May 2012 Texas Republican U.S. Senate primary results^[392]

Party		Candidate	Votes	%
	<u>Republican</u>	<u>David Dewhurst</u>	627,731	44.63
	<u>Republican</u>	Ted Cruz	480,558	34.16
	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Tom Leppert</u>	187,900	13.36
	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Craig James</u>	50,569	3.60
	<u>Republican</u>	Glenn Addison	23,177	1.65
	<u>Republican</u>	Lela Pittenger	18,143	1.29
	<u>Republican</u>	Ben Gambini	7,225	0.51
	<u>Republican</u>	Curt Cleaver	6,671	0.47
	<u>Republican</u>	Joe Argis	4,674	0.33
Total votes			1,406,648	100

July 2012 Texas Republican U.S. Senate runoff results^[393]

Party		Candidate	Votes	%
	<u>Republican</u>	Ted Cruz	631,812	56.82
	<u>Republican</u>	<u>David Dewhurst</u>	480,126	43.18
Total votes			1,111,938	100

November 2012 United States Senate election in Texas^[394]

Party		Candidate	Votes	%	±%
	<u>Republican</u>	Ted Cruz	4,440,137	56.46%	-5.23%
	<u>Democratic</u>	<u>Paul Sadler</u>	3,194,927	40.62%	+4.58%
	<u>Libertarian</u>	John Jay Myers	162,354	2.06%	-0.20%
	<u>Green</u>	David Collins	67,404	0.86%	N/A
Total votes			7,864,822	100.0%	N/A

Cumulative results of the 2016 Republican Party presidential primaries

Party	Candidate	Votes	%
<u>Republican</u>	<u>Donald Trump</u>	14,015,993	44.95%
<u>Republican</u>	Ted Cruz	7,822,100	25.08%
<u>Republican</u>	<u>John Kasich</u>	4,290,448	13.76%
<u>Republican</u>	<u>Marco Rubio</u>	3,515,576	11.27%
<u>Republican</u>	<u>Ben Carson</u>	857,039	2.75%
<u>Republican</u>	<u>Jeb Bush</u>	286,694	0.92%
<u>Republican</u>	<u>Rand Paul</u>	66,788	0.21%
<u>Republican</u>	<u>Mike Huckabee</u>	51,450	0.16%
<u>Republican</u>	<u>Carly Fiorina</u>	40,666	0.13%
<u>Republican</u>	<u>Chris Christie</u>	57,637	0.18%
<u>Republican</u>	<u>Jim Gilmore</u>	18,369	0.06%
<u>Republican</u>	<u>Rick Santorum</u>	16,627	0.05%

2016 Republican National Convention delegate count

Party	Candidate	Votes	%
<u>Republican</u>	<u>Donald Trump</u>	1,441	58.3%
<u>Republican</u>	Ted Cruz	551	22.3%
<u>Republican</u>	<u>Marco Rubio</u>	173	7.0%
<u>Republican</u>	<u>John Kasich</u>	161	6.5%
<u>Republican</u>	<u>Ben Carson</u>	9	0.4%
<u>Republican</u>	<u>Jeb Bush</u>	4	0.2%
<u>Republican</u>	<u>Rand Paul</u>	1	<0.01%
<u>Republican</u>	<u>Mike Huckabee</u>	1	<0.01%
<u>Republican</u>	<u>Carly Fiorina</u>	1	<0.01%

2018

March 2018 Texas Republican U.S. Senate primary results ^[395]				
Party		Candidate	Votes	%
	<u>Republican</u>	Ted Cruz (incumbent)	1,322,724	85.36%
	<u>Republican</u>	Mary Miller	94,715	6.11%
	<u>Republican</u>	Bruce Jacobson, Jr.	64,791	4.18%
	<u>Republican</u>	Stefano de Stefano	44,456	2.87%
	<u>Republican</u>	Geraldine Sam	22,887	1.48%
Total votes			1,549,573	100%

November 2018 United States Senate election in Texas ^[396]					
Party		Candidate	Votes	%	±%
	<u>Republican</u>	Ted Cruz (incumbent)	4,260,553	50.89%	-5.57%
	<u>Democratic</u>	Beto O'Rourke	4,045,632	48.33%	+7.71%
	<u>Libertarian</u>	Neal Dikeman	65,470	0.78%	-1.28%
Total votes			8,371,655	100%	N/A

See also

- Conspiracy theories related to the Trump–Ukraine scandal
- List of foreign-born United States politicians
- Legal challenges to the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act
- List of Hispanic and Latino Americans in the United States Congress
- List of law clerks of the Supreme Court of the United States
- List of United States senators born outside the United States
- Donald Trump Supreme Court candidates

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- [Campaign website \(https://www.tedcruz.org/\)](https://www.tedcruz.org/)
- [Appearances at the U.S. Supreme Court \(https://www.oyez.org/advocates/r_ted_cruz\)](https://www.oyez.org/advocates/r_ted_cruz) from the [Oyez Project](#)
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- [Profile \(https://www.votesmart.org/candidate/135705\)](https://www.votesmart.org/candidate/135705) at [Vote Smart](#)
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- [Legislation sponsored \(https://www.congress.gov/member/ted-cruz/2175\)](https://www.congress.gov/member/ted-cruz/2175) at the [Library of Congress](#)
- [Verdict with Ted Cruz \(https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/verdict-with-ted-cruz/id1495601614\)](https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/verdict-with-ted-cruz/id1495601614) Ted Cruz podcast with co-host Michael Knowles
- [Ted Cruz \(https://www.imdb.com/name/nm5563034/\)](https://www.imdb.com/name/nm5563034/) at [IMDb](#)

Legal offices		
Preceded by <u>Julie Parsley</u>	<u>Solicitor General of Texas</u> 2003–2008	Succeeded by <u>James C. Ho</u>
Party political offices		
Preceded by <u>Kay Bailey Hutchison</u>	<u>Republican nominee for U.S. Senator from Texas (Class 1)</u> 2012, 2018	Most recent
U.S. Senate		
Preceded by <u>Kay Bailey Hutchison</u>	<u>U.S. senator (Class 1) from Texas</u> 2013–present Served alongside: <u>John Cornyn</u>	Incumbent
U.S. order of precedence (ceremonial)		
Preceded by <u>Tim Kaine</u>	<u>United States senators by seniority</u> 59th	Succeeded by <u>Elizabeth Warren</u>

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Mitt Romney

Willard Mitt Romney (born March 12, 1947) is an American politician and businessman who has served as the junior United States senator from Utah since January 2019, succeeding Orrin Hatch. He served as the 70th governor of Massachusetts from 2003 to 2007 and was the Republican Party's nominee for president of the United States in the 2012 election, losing to incumbent president Barack Obama.


Raised in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan by George and Lenore Romney, he spent over two years in France as a Mormon missionary. He married Ann Davies in 1969; they have five sons. By 1971, he had participated in the political campaigns of both his parents. In 1971 Romney graduated as a Bachelor of Arts in English from Brigham Young University (BYU) and in 1975 he received a JD–MBA degree from Harvard.^[2] He became a management consultant and in 1977 joined Bain & Company in Boston. As Bain's chief executive officer (CEO), he helped lead the company out of a financial crisis. In 1984, he co-founded and led the spin-off company Bain Capital, a private equity investment firm that became one of the largest of its kind in the nation. Active in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS Church) throughout his adult life, Romney served as bishop of his ward and later as a stake president for an area covering Boston and many of its suburbs.

After stepping down from Bain Capital and his local leadership role in the LDS Church, Romney was the Republican nominee in the 1994 United States Senate election in Massachusetts. After losing to five-term incumbent Ted Kennedy, he resumed his position at Bain Capital. Years later, a successful stint as president and CEO of the then-struggling Salt Lake Organizing Committee for the 2002 Winter Olympics led to a relaunch of his political career. Elected governor of Massachusetts in 2002, Romney helped develop and later signed a health care reform law (commonly called "Romneycare") that provided near-universal health insurance access through state-level subsidies and individual mandates to purchase insurance. He also presided over the elimination of a projected \$1.2–1.5 billion deficit through a combination of spending cuts, increased fees and closing corporate tax loopholes. He did not seek reelection in 2006, instead focusing on his campaign for the Republican nomination in the 2008 U.S. presidential election. Though he won several primaries and caucuses, Romney ultimately lost the nomination to Senator John McCain. Romney's considerable net worth, estimated in 2012 at \$190–250 million, helped finance his political campaigns before 2012, when he again ran for and won the Republican presidential nomination, becoming the first Mormon to be a major party's

Mitt Romney	
 <div></div>	
<u>United States Senator from Utah</u>	
Incumbent	
Assumed office	January 3, 2019
	Serving with <u>Mike Lee</u>
Preceded by	<u>Orrin Hatch</u>
<u>70th Governor of Massachusetts</u>	
In office	January 2, 2003 – January 4, 2007
Lieutenant	<u>Kerry Healey</u>
Preceded by	<u>Jane Swift</u> (acting)
Succeeded by	<u>Deval Patrick</u>
Personal details	
Born	Willard Mitt Romney <div>March 12, 1947</div> Detroit, Michigan, U.S.
Political party	<u>Republican</u> (1993–present)
Other political affiliations	<u>Independent</u> (before 1993)
Spouse(s)	<u>Ann Davies</u> (m.. 1969)
Children	5, including <u>Tagg</u>

presidential nominee. He lost the election to incumbent Democratic President [Barack Obama](#), losing the [Electoral College](#) by a margin of 206–332 and the popular vote by 47%–51%.

After reestablishing residency in Utah, Romney announced his campaign for the [U.S. Senate](#) seat held by the retiring [Orrin Hatch](#) in the [2018 election](#); he defeated state representative [Mike Kennedy](#) in the Republican primary and Democratic nominee [Jenny Wilson](#) in the general election. In doing so, he became only the third person ever to be elected governor of one state and U.S. senator for another state (the others are [Sam Houston](#) and [William Bibb](#)). Romney was sworn in on January 3, 2019. In the [first impeachment trial of Donald Trump](#), he voted to convict Trump, becoming the first senator in U.S. history to vote to convict a president of his own party.^[3] Romney voted to convict Trump a second time during his [second impeachment trial](#), following the [attack on the Capitol](#) on January 6, 2021, for which he received the [Profiles in Courage Award](#).^[4]

Parents	George W. Romney Lenore LaFount
Relatives	Romney family
Residence	Holladay, Utah, U.S. ^[1]
Education	Brigham Young University (BA) Harvard University (JD/MBA)
Occupation	Politician · businessman
Awards	List of honors and awards
Signature	
Website	Senate website (http://romney.senate.gov)

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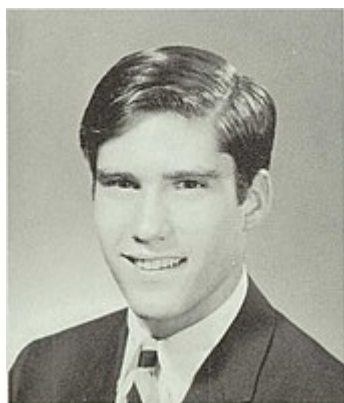
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Early life and education

Heritage and youth

Willard Mitt Romney^[5] was born on March 12, 1947, at Harper University Hospital in Detroit, Michigan,^[6] one of four children born to automobile executive George W. Romney and former actress and homemaker Lenore Romney (née LaFount).^[7] His mother was a native of Logan, Utah, and his father was born to American parents in a Mormon colony in Chihuahua, Mexico.^{[8][9]} Of primarily English descent, he also has Scottish and German ancestry.^{[10][11][12]} A fifth-generation member of the LDS Church, he is a great-grandson of Miles Park Romney and a great-great-grandson of Miles Romney, who converted to the faith in its first decade. Another great-great-grandfather, Parley P. Pratt, helped lead the early church.^{[13][14]}

Romney has three older siblings, Margo, Jane, and Scott. Mitt was the youngest by nearly six years.^[15] His parents named him after a family friend, businessman J. Willard Marriott, and his father's cousin, Milton "Mitt" Romney, a former quarterback for the Chicago Bears.^[16] Romney was called "Billy" until kindergarten, when he expressed a preference for "Mitt."^[17] In 1953, the family moved from Detroit to the affluent suburb of Bloomfield Hills and his father became the chairman and CEO of American Motors the following year and helped the company avoid bankruptcy and return to profitability.^[18] By 1959, his father had become a nationally known figure in print and on television,^[19] and Mitt idolized him.^[20]



Romney in Cranbrook School's 1965 yearbook.

Romney attended public elementary schools until seventh grade, when he enrolled as one of only a few Mormon students at Cranbrook School, a private upscale boys' preparatory school a few miles from his home.^{[17][21]} Many students there came from backgrounds even more privileged than his.^[22] Not particularly athletic, he also did not distinguish himself academically.^[20] He participated in his father's successful 1962 Michigan gubernatorial campaign,^[23] and later worked as an intern in the governor's office.^{[20][24]} Romney took up residence at Cranbrook when his newly elected father began spending most of his time at the state capitol.^[21]



Romney began attending Cranbrook School in 1959.

At Cranbrook, Romney helped manage the ice hockey team, and joined the pep squad.^[21] During his senior year, he joined the cross country running team.^[17] He belonged to 11 school organizations and school clubs, including the Blue Key Club, a booster group he had started.^[21] During his final year there, his academic record improved but fell short of excellence.^{[20][22]} Romney was involved in several pranks while attending Cranbrook. He has since apologized for them, stating that some of them may have gone too far.^[nb 1] In March of his senior year, he began dating Ann Davies; she attended the private Kingswood School, Cranbrook's sister school.^{[22][29]} The two became informally engaged around the time he graduated from high school in June 1965.^{[20][25]}

College, France mission, marriage, and children

Romney attended Stanford University during the 1965–66 academic year.^[20] He was not part of the counterculture of the 1960s then taking form in the San Francisco Bay Area.^[20] As opposition to United States involvement in the Vietnam War grew, a group staged a May 1966 sit-in at Stanford's administration building to demonstrate against draft status tests; Romney joined a counterprotest against that group.^{[20][30]} He continued to enjoy occasional pranks.^[nb 2]

In July 1966, he began a 30-month stint in France as a Mormon missionary,^{[20][33]} a traditional rite of passage in his family.^[nb 3] He arrived in Le Havre, where he shared cramped quarters under meager conditions.^{[13][35]} Rules against drinking, smoking, and dating were strictly enforced.^[13] On average, individual Mormon missionaries do not gain many converts^[nb 4] and Romney was no exception:^[35] he later estimated 10 to 20 for his entire mission.^{[40][nb 5]} He initially became demoralized and later recalled it as the only time when "most of what I was trying to do was rejected."^[35] He soon gained recognition within the mission for the many homes he called on and the repeat visits he was granted.^[13] He became a zone leader in Bordeaux in early 1968, and soon thereafter became an assistant to



Mitt Romney and Ann Romney with George Romney and Lenore Romney at the White House in 1969

the mission president in Paris.^{[13][35][42]} Residing at the Mission Home for several months, he enjoyed a mansion far more comfortable than the accommodations he had had elsewhere in the country.^[42] When the French expressed opposition to the U.S. role in the Vietnam War, Romney debated them. Those who yelled at him and slammed their doors in his face merely reinforced his resolve.^{[13][35]}

In June 1968, he was in southern France and driving an automobile that was hit by another vehicle, which seriously injured him and killed one of his passengers, the wife of the mission president.^[nb 6] Romney then became co-president of a mission that had become demoralized and disorganized after the May 1968 general strike and student uprisings and the car accident.^[43] With Romney rallying the others, the mission met its goal of 200 baptisms for the year, the most in a decade.^[43] By the end of his stint in December 1968, he was overseeing the work of 175 others.^{[35][44]} As a result of his experience there, Romney developed a lifelong affection for France and its people and has remained fluent in French.^[46]

At their first meeting following his return, Romney and Ann Davies reconnected and decided to get married.^[47] Before their wedding, Romney moved to Utah and enrolled at Brigham Young University, where Ann had been studying.^[48] They married on March 21, 1969, in a civil ceremony in Bloomfield Hills and the next day, they flew to Utah for a Mormon wedding ceremony at the Salt Lake Temple; Ann had converted to the faith while he was away.^{[49][50]}

Romney had missed much of the tumultuous anti-Vietnam War movement in America while in France. Upon his return, he was surprised to learn that his father had joined that movement during his unsuccessful 1968 presidential campaign.^[35] George was now serving in President Richard Nixon's cabinet as United States Secretary of Housing and Urban Development. In a June 1970 newspaper profile of children of cabinet members, Mitt said that U.S. involvement in the war had been misguided – "If it wasn't a political blunder to move into Vietnam, I don't know what is" – but supported Nixon's ongoing Cambodian Incursion as a sincere attempt to end the war.^[51] During the U.S. military draft for the Vietnam War, Romney sought and received two 2-S student deferments, then a 4-D ministerial deferment while living in France as a missionary. He later sought and received two additional student deferments.^{[30][52]} When those ran out, he drew number 300 in the December 1969 draft lottery, ensuring he would not be drafted.^{[30][52][53]}

At culturally conservative BYU, Romney remained separated from much of the upheaval of that era.^{[35][48]} He became president of the Cougar Club booster organization and showed a newfound discipline in his studies.^{[35][48]} During his senior year, he took a leave of absence to work as driver and advance man for his mother's unsuccessful U.S. Senate campaign;^{[25][49]} together, they visited all 83 Michigan counties.^{[54][55]} Romney graduated from BYU in 1971 with a Bachelor of Arts degree in English and a 3.97 GPA.^[48] He gave commencement addresses to both the College of Humanities and the whole of BYU.^[nb 7]

The Romneys' first son, Taggart, was born in 1970^[37] while they were undergraduates at BYU and living in a basement apartment.^[48] Their son Matthew was born in 1971 and Joshua in 1975. Benjamin (1978) and Craig (1981) were born after Romney had begun his career.^[37]



Mitt's father George (pictured here in a 1968 poster) lost the Republican presidential nomination to Richard M. Nixon and later was appointed to the Nixon cabinet.



Mitt's mother Lenore, promoted here on a button, lost a Senate race in 1970. Mitt worked for her campaign.

Romney wanted to pursue a business career, but his father advised him that a law degree would be valuable to his career even if he never practiced law.^{[58][59]} As a result, he enrolled in the recently created four-year joint Juris Doctor/Master of Business Administration program coordinated between Harvard Law School and Harvard Business School.^[60] He readily adapted to the business school's pragmatic, data-driven case study method of teaching.^[59] Living in a Belmont, Massachusetts, house with Ann and their two children, his social experience differed from that of most of his classmates.^{[49][59]} He was nonideological and did not involve himself in the political issues of the day.^{[49][59]} He graduated in 1975 cum laude from the law school, in the top third of that class, and was named a Baker Scholar for graduating in the top five percent of his business school class.^{[56][60]}

Business career

Management consulting

After receiving his JD/MBA from Harvard, Romney passed the Michigan bar exam but decided to pursue a career in business rather than law.^[61] He was recruited by several large companies but joined the Boston Consulting Group (BCG), reasoning that working as a management consultant for a variety of companies would better prepare him for a future position as a chief executive.^{[58][62]} Part of a 1970s wave of top graduates who chose to go into consulting rather than join a large company directly,^[63] he found his legal and business education useful in his job.^[58] He applied BCG principles such as the growth-share matrix,^[64] and executives viewed him as having a bright future there.^{[58][65]} At BCG, he was a colleague of Benjamin Netanyahu, with whom he formed a friendship that has lasted for more than 40 years.^[66]

In 1977, he was hired by Bain & Company, a management consulting firm in Boston formed a few years earlier by Bill Bain and several other ex-BCG employees.^{[58][64][67]} Bain later said of the 30-year-old Romney, "He had the appearance of confidence of a guy who was maybe ten years older."^[68] Unlike other consulting firms, which issued recommendations and then departed, Bain & Company immersed itself in a client's businesses and worked with them until changes were implemented.^{[58][64]} Romney became a vice president of the firm in 1978,^[17] working with such clients as the Monsanto Company, Outboard Marine Corporation, Burlington Industries, and Corning Incorporated.^[62] Within a few years, the firm considered him one of its best consultants. In fact, clients sometimes preferred to use him rather than more-senior partners.^{[58][69]}

Minor political issues

Two family incidents during this time later surfaced during Romney's political campaigns.^{[70][71]} A state park ranger in 1981 told Romney his motorboat had an insufficiently visible license number and that he would face a \$50 fine if he took the boat onto the lake. Disagreeing about the license and wanting to continue a family outing, Romney took it out anyway, saying he would pay the fine. The ranger arrested him for disorderly conduct. The charges were dropped several days later.^[72] In 1983, on a 12-hour family road trip, he placed the family's dog in a windshield-equipped carrier on the roof of their car, and then washed the car and carrier after the dog suffered a bout of diarrhea.^[49] The dog incident in particular later became fodder for Romney's critics and political opponents.^{[71][73]}

Private equity

In 1984, Romney left Bain & Company to co-found and lead the spin-off private equity investment firm Bain Capital.^[74] He initially refrained from accepting Bill Bain's offer to head the new venture until Bain rearranged the terms in a complicated partnership structure so that there was no financial or professional risk to Romney.^{[58][68][75]} Bain and Romney raised the \$37 million needed to start the new operation, which had seven employees.^{[62][76]} Romney held the titles of president^[77] and managing general partner.^{[78][79]} Though he was the sole shareholder of the firm, publications also called him managing director or CEO.^{[80][81][82]}

Initially, Bain Capital focused on venture capital investments. Romney set up a system in which any partner could veto one of these potential opportunities, and he personally saw so many weaknesses that few venture capital investments were approved in the initial two years.^[58] The firm's first significant success was a 1986 investment to help start Staples Inc., after founder Thomas G. Stemberg convinced Romney of the market size for office supplies and Romney convinced others; Bain Capital eventually reaped a nearly sevenfold return on its investment, and Romney sat on Staples's board of directors for over a decade.^{[58][76][83]}

Romney soon switched Bain Capital's focus from startups to the relatively new business of leveraged buyouts: buying existing companies with money mostly borrowed from banking institutions using the newly bought companies' assets as collateral, taking steps to improve the companies' value, and then selling those companies when their value peaked, usually within a few years.^{[58][68]} Bain Capital lost money in many of its early leveraged buyouts, but then found deals that made large returns.^[58] The firm invested in or acquired Accuride Corporation, Brookstone, Domino's Pizza, Sealy Corporation, Sports Authority, and Artisan Entertainment, as well as some lesser-known companies in the industrial and medical sectors.^{[58][68][84]} Much of the firm's profit was earned from a relatively small number of deals; Bain Capital's overall success-to-failure ratio was about even.^[nb 8]

Romney discovered few investment opportunities himself (and those that he did often failed to make money for the firm).^[86] Instead, he focused on analyzing the merits of possible deals that others brought forward and on recruiting investors to participate in them once approved.^[86] At Bain Capital, Romney spread profits from deals widely within the firm to keep people motivated, often keeping less than 10% for himself.^[87] Data-driven, he often played the role of a devil's advocate during exhaustive analysis of whether to go forward with a deal.^{[58][83]} He wanted to drop a Bain Capital hedge fund that initially lost money, but other partners disagreed with him and it eventually made billions.^[58] He opted out of the Artisan Entertainment deal, not wanting to profit from a studio that produced R-rated films.^[58] Romney served on the board of directors of Damon Corporation, a medical testing company later found guilty of defrauding the government; Bain Capital tripled its investment before selling off the company, and the fraud was discovered by the new owners (Romney was never implicated).^[58] In some cases, Romney had little involvement with a company once Bain Capital acquired it.^[76]

Bain Capital's leveraged buyouts sometimes led to layoffs, either soon after acquisition or later after the firm had concluded its role.^{[64][75][76]} Exactly how many jobs Bain Capital added compared to those lost because of these investments and buyouts is unknown, owing to a lack of records and Bain Capital's penchant for privacy for itself and its investors.^{[88][89][90]} Maximizing the value of acquired companies and the return to Bain's investors, not job creation, was the firm's primary investment goal.^{[76][91]} Bain Capital's acquisition of Ampad exemplified a deal where it profited handsomely from early payments and management fees, even though the subject company itself later went into bankruptcy.^{[58][83][91]} Dade Behring was another case where Bain Capital received an eightfold return on its investment but the company itself was saddled with debt and laid off over a thousand employees before Bain Capital exited (the company subsequently went into bankruptcy, with more layoffs, before recovering and prospering).^[88] Referring to the layoffs that sometimes occurred, Romney said in 2007: "Sometimes the medicine is a little bitter but it is necessary to save the life of the patient. My job was to try and make the enterprise successful, and in my view the best security a family can have is that the business they work for is strong."^[75]

In 1990, facing financial collapse, Bain & Company asked Romney to return.^[74] Announced as its new CEO in January 1991,^{[78][79]} he drew a symbolic salary of one dollar^[74] (remaining managing general partner of Bain Capital during this time).^{[78][79]} He oversaw an effort to restructure Bain & Company's employee stock-ownership plan and real-estate deals, while rallying the firm's 1,000 employees, imposing a new governing structure that excluded Bain and the other founding partners from control, and increasing fiscal transparency.^{[58][62][74]} He got Bain and other initial owners who had removed excessive amounts of money from the firm to return substantial amounts, and persuaded creditors, including the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, to accept less than full payment.^[92] Within about a year, he led Bain & Company to a return to profitability.^[62] He then turned it over to new leadership and returned to Bain Capital in December 1992.^{[58][93][94]}

Romney took a leave of absence from Bain Capital from November 1993 to November 1994 to run for U.S. Senate.^{[49][95]} During that time, Ampad workers went on strike and asked Romney to intervene. Against the advice of Bain Capital lawyers, Romney met the strikers, but told them he had no position of active authority in the matter.^{[96][97]}

By 1999, Bain Capital was on its way to becoming one of the foremost private equity firms in the nation,^[75] having increased its number of partners from 5 to 18, with 115 employees and \$4 billion under management.^{[68][76]} The firm's average annual internal rate of return on realized investments was 113%^{[62][98]} and its average yearly return to investors was around 50%–80%.^[85]

Starting in February 1999, Romney took a paid leave of absence from Bain Capital in order to serve as the president and CEO of the 2002 Salt Lake City Olympic Games Organizing Committee.^{[99][100]} Billed in some public statements as keeping a part-time role,^{[99][101]} Romney remained the firm's sole shareholder, managing director, CEO, and president, signing corporate and legal documents, attending to his interests within the firm, and conducting prolonged negotiations for the terms of his departure.^{[99][102]} He did not involve himself in the firm's day-to-day operations or the investment decisions of its new private equity funds.^{[99][102]} He retained his position on several boards of directors during this time and regularly returned to Massachusetts to attend meetings.^[103]

In August 2001, Romney announced that he would not return to Bain Capital.^[104] His separation from the firm concluded in early 2002;^[99] he transferred his ownership to other partners and negotiated an agreement that allowed him to receive a share of the profits as a retired partner in some Bain Capital entities, including buyout and investment funds.^{[105][87]} The private equity business continued to thrive, earning him millions of dollars in annual income.^[87]

LDS Church service

During his business career, Romney held several positions in the local lay clergy. In the early 1970s, he served in a ward bishopric. He then served for a time as a seminary teacher and then as a member of the stake high council of the Boston Stake while Richard L. Bushman was stake president.^[106]

In 1977, he became a counselor to the president of the Boston Stake.^[106] He served as bishop of the ward at Belmont, Massachusetts, from 1981 to 1986.^{[107][108]} As such, in addition to home teaching, he also formulated Sunday services and classes using LDS scriptures to guide the congregation.^[109] After the destruction of the Belmont meetinghouse by a fire of suspicious origins in 1984, he forged links with other religious institutions, allowing the congregation to rotate its meetings to other houses of worship during the reconstruction of the Belmont building.^{[108][110]}

From 1986 to 1994, Romney was president of the Boston Stake, which included more than a dozen wards in eastern Massachusetts and almost 4,000 church members.^{[69][109][111]} He organized a team to handle financial and management issues, sought to counter anti-Mormon sentiment, and tried to solve social problems among poor Southeast Asian converts.^{[108][110]} An unpaid position, his local church leadership often took 30 or more hours a week of his time,^[109] and he became known for his considerable energy in the role.^[69] He also earned a reputation for avoiding any overnight travel that might interfere with his church responsibilities.^[109]

Romney took a hands-on role in the Boston Stake's matters, helping in domestic maintenance efforts, visiting the sick, and counseling burdened church members.^{[107][108][109]} A number of local church members later credited him with turning their lives around or helping them through difficult times.^{[108][109][110]} Others, rankled by his leadership style, desired a more consensus-based approach.^[108] Romney tried to balance the conservative directives from church leadership in Utah with the desire of some Massachusetts members to have a more flexible application of religious doctrine.^[69] He agreed with some requests from a liberal women's group that published *Exponent II* calling for changes in the way the church dealt with women, but he clashed with women he felt were departing too much from doctrine.^[69] In particular, he counseled women not to have abortions except in the rare cases allowed by LDS doctrine^[nb 9] and encouraged unmarried women facing unplanned pregnancies to give their babies up for adoption.^[69] Romney later said that the years spent as an LDS minister gave him direct exposure to people struggling financially and empathy for those with family problems.^[112]

1994 United States Senate campaign

For much of his business career, Romney did not take public political stances.^{[113][114]} He had kept abreast of national politics since college,^[35] and the circumstances of his father's presidential campaign loss had irked him for decades.^[25] He registered as an Independent^[49] and voted in the 1992 presidential primaries for the Democratic former senator from Massachusetts, Paul Tsongas.^{[113][115]}

By 1993, Romney had begun thinking about entering politics, partly on Ann's urging and partly to follow in his father's footsteps.^[49] He decided to challenge incumbent Democratic U.S. Senator Ted Kennedy, who was seeking reelection to a sixth term. Political pundits viewed Kennedy as vulnerable that year, in part because of the unpopularity of the Democratic Congress as a whole, and in part because this was Kennedy's first election since the William Kennedy Smith trial in Florida, in which Kennedy's reputation had suffered.^{[116][117][118]} Romney changed his affiliation to Republican in October 1993 and formally announced his candidacy in February 1994.^[49] In addition to his leave from Bain Capital, Romney also stepped down from his church leadership role in 1994.^[109]

Radio personality Janet Jeghelian took an early lead in polls among candidates for the Republican nomination for the Senate seat, but Romney proved the most effective fundraiser.^{[119][120]} He won 68% of the vote at the May 1994 Massachusetts Republican Party convention; businessman John Lakian finished a distant second, eliminating Jeghelian.^[121] Romney defeated Lakian in the September 1994 primary with more than 80% of the vote.^{[17][122]}

In the general election, Kennedy faced the first serious reelection challenge of his career.^[116] The younger, telegenic, and well-funded Romney ran as a businessman who said he had created 10,000 jobs and as a Washington outsider with a solid family image and moderate stances on social issues.^{[116][123]} When Kennedy



Campaigning for U.S. Senate in Holyoke, Massachusetts, 1994

tried to tie Romney's policies to those of Ronald Reagan and George H. W. Bush, Romney responded, "Look, I was an independent during the time of Reagan-Bush. I'm not trying to take us back to Reagan-Bush."^[124] Romney said, "Ultimately, this is a campaign about change."^[125]

Romney's campaign was effective in portraying Kennedy as soft on crime but had trouble establishing its own consistent positions.^[126] By mid-September 1994, polls showed the race about even.^{[116][127][128]} Kennedy responded with a series of ads that focused on Romney's seemingly shifting political views on issues such as abortion;^[129] Romney responded, "I believe that abortion should be safe and legal in this country."^[130] Other Kennedy ads centered on layoffs of workers at the Ampad plant owned by Bain Capital.^{[116][131]} The latter was effective in blunting Romney's momentum.^[83] Kennedy and Romney held a widely watched late October debate that had no clear winner, but by then, Kennedy had pulled ahead in polls and remained so.^[132] Romney spent \$3 million of his own money on the race and more than \$7 million overall.^{[133][nb 10]} Despite a disastrous showing for Democrats nationwide, Kennedy won the election with 58% of the vote to Romney's 41%,^[58] the smallest margin in any of Kennedy's reelection campaigns for the Senate.^[135]

The day after the election, Romney returned to Bain Capital, but the loss had a lasting effect; he told his brother, "I never want to run for something again unless I can win."^{[49][136]}

After election

When his father died in 1995, Mitt donated his inheritance to BYU's George W. Romney Institute of Public Management.^[57] He also became vice-chair of the Board of the Points of Light Foundation,^[104] which had embraced his father's National Volunteer Center. Romney felt restless as the decade neared a close; making more money held little attraction for him.^{[49][136]} Although no longer in a local leadership position in his church, he still taught Sunday School.^[107] During the long and controversial approval and construction process for the \$30-million Mormon temple in Belmont, he feared that, as a political figure who had opposed Kennedy, he would become a focal point for opposition to the structure.^[108] He thus kept to a limited, behind-the-scenes role in attempts to ease tensions between the church and local residents.^{[107][108][110]}

2002 Winter Olympics

In 1998, Ann Romney learned that she had multiple sclerosis; Mitt described watching her fail a series of neurological tests as the worst day of his life.^[49] After experiencing two years of severe difficulties with the disease, she found – while living in Park City, Utah, where the couple had built a vacation home – a combination of mainstream, alternative, and equestrian therapies that enabled her to lead a lifestyle mostly without limitations.^[137] When her husband received a job offer to take over the troubled organization responsible for the 2002 Winter Olympics and Paralympics, to be held in Salt Lake City in Utah, she urged him to accept it; eager for a new challenge, as well as another chance to prove himself in public life, he did.^{[136][138][139]} On February 11, 1999, the Salt Lake Organizing Committee for the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games of 2002 hired Romney as its president and CEO.^[140]

Before Romney took over, the event was \$379 million short of its revenue goals.^[140] Officials had made plans to scale back the Games to compensate for the fiscal crisis, and there were fears it might be moved away entirely.^[141] In addition, the Games' image had been damaged by allegations of bribery against top officials including prior committee president and CEO Frank Joklik. The Salt Lake Organizing Committee forced Joklik and committee vice president Dave Johnson to resign.^[142] Utah power brokers, including Governor Mike Leavitt, searched for someone with a scandal-free reputation to take charge of the Olympics. They chose Romney based on his business and legal expertise as well as his connections to both the LDS Church and the state.^{[139][143]} The appointment faced some initial criticism from both non-Mormons and Mormons that it

represented cronyism and made the Games seem too Mormon-dominated.^[41] Romney donated to charity the \$1.4 million in salary and severance payments he received for his three years as president and CEO, and also donated \$1 million to the Olympics.^[144]

Romney restructured the organization's leadership and policies. He reduced budgets and boosted fundraising, alleviating corporate sponsors' concerns while recruiting new ones.^{[136][139]} Romney worked to ensure the Games's safety after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks by coordinating a \$300 million security budget.^[138] He oversaw a \$1.32 billion budget, 700 employees, and 26,000 volunteers.^[140] The federal government provided approximately \$400 million^{[139][145][146]} to \$600 million^{[147][148]} of that budget, much of it a result of Romney's having aggressively lobbied Congress and federal agencies.^{[148][149]} It was a record level of federal funding for the staging of a U.S. Olympics.^{[146][149]} An additional \$1.1 billion of indirect federal funding came to the state in the form of highway and transit projects.^[150]



Romney, as president and CEO of the Salt Lake Organizing Committee for the 2002 Winter Olympics, speaking before a curling match

Romney emerged as the local public face of the Olympic effort, appearing in photographs, in news stories, on collectible Olympics pins depicting him wrapped by an American flag, and on buttons carrying phrases like "Hey, Mitt, we love you!"^{[136][139][151]} Organizing committee chair Robert H. Garff later said, "It was obvious that he had an agenda larger than just the Olympics",^[136] and that Romney wanted to use the Olympics to propel himself into the national spotlight and a political career.^{[139][152]} Garff believed the initial budget situation was not as bad as Romney portrayed, given there were still three years to reorganize.^[139] Utah Senator Bob Bennett said that much of the needed federal money was already in place.^[139] A Boston Globe analysis later found that the committee had nearly \$1 billion in committed revenues at that time.^[139] Olympics critic Steve Pace, who led Utahns for Responsible Public Spending, thought Romney exaggerated the initial fiscal state to lay the groundwork for a well-publicized rescue.^[152] Kenneth Bullock, another board member of the organizing committee and also head of the Utah League of Cities and Towns, often clashed with Romney at the time, and later said that Romney deserved some credit for the turnaround but not as much as he claimed.^[136] Bullock said: "He tried very hard to build an image of himself as a savior, the great white hope. He was very good at characterizing and castigating people and putting himself on a pedestal."^[139]

Despite the initial fiscal shortfall, the Games ended up with a surplus of \$100 million.^[153] President George W. Bush praised Romney's efforts and 87% of Utahns approved of his performance as Olympics head.^{[26][154]} It solidified his reputation as a "turnaround artist",^{[139][155][156]} and Harvard Business School taught a case study based around his actions.^[64] U.S. Olympic Committee head William Hybl credited Romney with an extraordinary effort in overcoming a difficult time for the Olympics, culminating in "the greatest Winter Games I have ever seen."^[139] Romney wrote a book about his experience, Turnaround: Crisis, Leadership, and the Olympic Games, published in 2004. The role gave him experience in dealing with federal, state, and local entities, a public persona he had previously lacked, and the chance to relaunch his political aspirations.^[136]

Governor of Massachusetts (2003–2007)

Elections

2002

In 2002, plagued by political missteps and personal scandals, the administration of Republican Acting Governor of Massachusetts Jane Swift appeared vulnerable, and many Republicans viewed her as unable to win a general election.^{[154][157]} Prominent party figures – as well as the White House – wanted Romney to run for governor.^{[158][159]} and the opportunity appealed to him for reasons including its national visibility.^[160] A *Boston Herald* poll showed Republicans favoring Romney over Swift by more than 50 percentage points.^[161] On March 19, 2002, Swift announced she would not seek her party's nomination, and hours later Romney declared his candidacy,^[161] for which he would face no opposition in the primary.^[162] In June 2002, the Massachusetts Democratic Party challenged Romney's eligibility to run for governor, noting that state law required seven years' consecutive residence and that Romney had filed his state tax returns as a Utah resident in 1999 and 2000.^{[163][164]} In response, the bipartisan Massachusetts State Ballot Law Commission unanimously ruled that he had maintained sufficient financial and personal ties to Massachusetts to be an eligible candidate.^[165]



Romney's gubernatorial campaign logo from 2002

Romney again ran as a political outsider.^[154] He played down his party affiliation,^[166] saying he was "not a partisan Republican" but rather a "moderate" with "progressive" views.^[167] He said he would observe a moratorium on changes to the state's laws on abortion, but reiterated that he would "preserve and protect a woman's right to choose" and that his position was "unequivocal".^{[130][168]} He touted his private sector experience as qualifying him for addressing the state's fiscal problems^[162] and stressed his ability to obtain federal funds for the state, offering his Olympics record as evidence.^{[146][149]} He proposed to reorganize the state government while eliminating waste, fraud, and mismanagement.^{[166][169]} The campaign innovatively utilized microtargeting techniques, identifying like-minded groups of voters and reaching them with narrowly tailored messaging.^[170]

In an attempt to overcome the image that had damaged him in the 1994 Senate race – that of a wealthy corporate buyout specialist out of touch with the needs of regular people – the campaign staged a series of "work days", in which Romney performed blue-collar jobs such as herding cows and baling hay, unloading a fishing boat, and hauling garbage.^{[169][171][172]} Television ads highlighting the effort, as well as one portraying his family in gushing terms and showing him shirtless,^[171] received a poor public response and were a factor in his Democratic opponent, Massachusetts State Treasurer Shannon O'Brien, leading in the polls as late as mid-October.^{[169][172]} He responded with ads that accused O'Brien of being a failed watchdog for state pension fund losses in the stock market and that associated her husband, a former lobbyist, with the Enron scandal.^{[166][172]} These were effective in capturing independent voters.^[172] O'Brien said that Romney's budget plans were unrealistic; the two also differed on capital punishment and bilingual education, with Romney supporting the former and opposing the latter.^[173]

During the election, Romney contributed more than \$6 million – a state record at the time – to the nearly \$10 million raised for his campaign.^{[174][175]} On November 5, 2002, he won the election with 50% of the vote to O'Brien's 45%.^[176]

Tenure

Romney was sworn in as the 70th governor of Massachusetts on January 2, 2003.^[177] He faced a Massachusetts state legislature with large Democratic majorities in both houses, and had picked his cabinet and advisors based more on managerial abilities than partisan affiliation.^{[178][179]} He declined a governor's salary of \$135,000 during his term.^[180] Upon entering office in the middle of a fiscal year, he faced an immediate \$650 million shortfall and a projected \$3 billion deficit for the next year.^[166] Unexpected revenue of \$1.0–1.3 billion from a previously enacted capital gains tax increase and \$500 million in new federal grants decreased the deficit to \$1.2–1.5 billion.^{[181][182]} Through a combination of spending cuts, increased fees, and removal

of corporate tax loopholes,^[181] the state achieved surpluses of around \$600–700 million during Romney's last two full fiscal years in office, although it began running deficits again after that.^[nb 11]



Massachusetts State House portrait by Richard Whitney

Romney supported raising various fees, including those for drivers' licenses and gun licenses, to raise more than \$300 million.^{[166][181]} He increased a special gasoline retailer fee by \$0.02 per US gallon (\$0.0053/l), generating about \$60 million per year in additional revenue.^{[166][181]} Opponents said the reliance on fees sometimes imposed a hardship on those who could least afford them.^[181] Romney also closed tax loopholes that brought in another \$181 million from businesses over the next two years and over \$300 million for his term.^{[166][187][188]} He did so in the face of conservative and corporate critics who viewed these actions as tax increases.^{[187][188]}



Romney announcing a Save America's Treasures Historic Preservation grant for the Old North Church in Boston, 2003

The state legislature, with the governor's support, cut spending by \$1.6 billion, including \$700 million in reductions in state aid to cities and towns.^[189] The cuts also included a \$140 million reduction in state funding for higher education, which led state-run colleges and universities to increase fees by 63% over four years.^{[166][181]} Romney sought additional cuts in his last year as governor by vetoing nearly 250 items in the state budget; the legislature overrode all the vetoes.^[190]

The cuts in state spending put added pressure on localities to reduce services or raise property taxes, and the share of town and city revenues coming from property taxes rose from 49% to 53%.^{[166][181]} The combined state and local tax burden in Massachusetts increased during Romney's governorship.^[166] He did propose a reduction in the state income tax rate, but the legislature rejected it.^[191]

Romney sought to bring near-universal health insurance coverage to the state. This came after Staples founder Tom Stemberg told him at the start of his term that doing so would be the best way he could help people.^[192] Another factor was that the federal government, owing to the rules of Medicaid funding, threatened to cut \$385 million in those payments to Massachusetts if the state did not reduce the number of uninsured recipients of health care services.^{[168][193]} Although the idea of universal health insurance had not come to the fore during the campaign, Romney decided that because people without insurance still received expensive health care, the money spent by the state for such care could be better used to subsidize insurance for the poor.^[192]

Determined that a new Massachusetts health insurance measure not raise taxes or resemble the previous decade's failed "Hillarycare" proposal at the federal level, Romney formed a team of consultants from diverse political backgrounds to apply those principles. Beginning in late 2004, they devised a set of proposals that were more ambitious than an incremental one from the Massachusetts Senate and more acceptable to him than one from the Massachusetts House of Representatives that incorporated a new payroll tax.^{[168][179][193]} In particular, Romney pushed for incorporating an individual mandate at the state level.^[23] Past rival Ted Kennedy, who had made universal health coverage his life's work and who, over time, had developed a warm relationship with Romney,^[194] gave the plan a positive reception, which encouraged Democratic legislators to cooperate.^{[168][193]} The effort eventually gained the support of all major stakeholders within the state, and Romney helped break a logjam between rival Democratic leaders in the legislature.^{[168][193]}

On April 12, 2006, Romney signed the resulting Massachusetts health reform law, commonly called "Romneycare", which requires nearly all Massachusetts residents to buy health insurance coverage or face escalating tax penalties, such as the loss of their personal income tax exemption.^[195] The bill also established means-tested state subsidies for people who lacked adequate employer insurance and whose income was below a threshold, using funds that had covered the health costs of the uninsured.^{[196][197]} He vetoed eight sections of the health care legislation, including a controversial \$295-per-employee assessment on businesses that do not offer health insurance and provisions guaranteeing dental benefits to Medicaid recipients.^{[195][198]} The legislature overrode all eight vetoes, but the governor's office said the differences were not essential.^[198] The law was the first of its kind in the nation and became the signature achievement of Romney's term in office.^{[168][nb 12]}



Governor Romney received a tour of the aircraft carrier USS John F. Kennedy on May 20, 2005 as part of celebrating Armed Forces Day

At the beginning of his governorship, Romney opposed same-sex marriage and civil unions but advocated tolerance and supported some domestic partnership benefits.^{[168][200][201]} A November 2003 Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court decision, *Goodridge v. Department of Public Health*, required the state to recognize same-sex marriages.^[202] Romney reluctantly backed a state constitutional amendment in February 2004 that would have banned those marriages but still allowed civil unions, viewing it as the only feasible way to comply with the court's ruling.^[202] In May 2004 and per the court decision, he instructed town clerks to begin issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples. But citing a 1913 law that barred out-of-state residents from getting married in Massachusetts if their union would be illegal in their home state, he said no marriage licenses were to be issued to people not planning to move to Massachusetts.^{[200][203]} In June 2005, Romney abandoned his support for the compromise amendment, stating that it confused voters who opposed both same-sex marriage and civil unions.^[200] Instead, he endorsed a ballot initiative led by the Coalition for Marriage and Family (an alliance of socially conservative organizations) that would have banned same-sex marriage and made no provisions for civil unions.^[200] In 2004 and 2006, he urged the U.S. Senate to vote for the Federal Marriage Amendment.^{[204][205]}

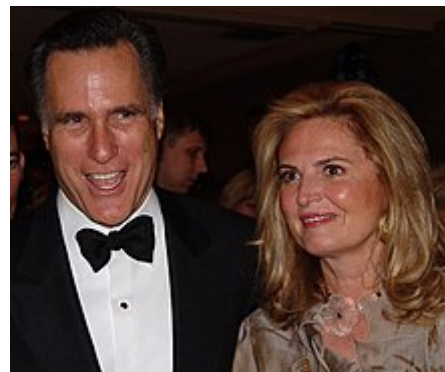
In 2005, Romney revealed a change of view regarding abortion, moving from the abortion rights positions expressed during his 1994 and 2002 campaigns to an anti-abortion one in opposition to *Roe v. Wade*.^[168] He attributed his conversion to an interaction with Harvard University biologist Douglas Melton, an expert on embryonic stem cell biology, although Melton vehemently disputed Romney's recollection of their conversation.^[206] Romney subsequently vetoed a bill on pro-life grounds that expanded access to emergency contraception in hospitals and pharmacies; the legislature overrode the veto.^[207] He also amended his position on embryonic stem cell research.^[nb 13]

Romney used a bully pulpit approach towards promoting his agenda, staging well-organized media events to appeal directly to the public rather than pushing his proposals in behind-doors sessions with the state legislature.^[168] He dealt with a public crisis of confidence in Boston's Big Dig project after a fatal ceiling collapse in 2006 by wresting control of the project from the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority.^[168] After two years of negotiating the state's participation in the landmark Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative that instituted a cap-and-trade arrangement for power plant emissions in the Northeast, Romney pulled Massachusetts out of the initiative shortly before its signing in December 2005, citing a lack of cost limits for industry.^[208]

In 2004, Romney spent considerable effort trying to bolster the state Republican Party, but it failed to gain any seats in the legislative elections that year.^{[166][209]} Given a prime-time appearance at the 2004 Republican National Convention, he began to be discussed as a potential 2008 presidential candidate.^[210] Midway through his term, Romney decided that he wanted to stage a full-time run for president,^[211] and on December 14, 2005, he announced that he would not seek reelection as governor.^[212] As chair of the Republican

Governors Association, Romney traveled around the country, meeting prominent Republicans and building a national political network;^[211] he spent more than 200 days out of state in 2006, preparing for his run.^[213]

Romney had a 61% job approval rating after his initial fiscal actions in 2003, but it subsequently declined,^[214] driven in part by his frequent out-of-state travel.^{[214][215]} It stood at 34% in November 2006, ranking 48th of the 50 U.S. governors.^[216] In the 2006 Massachusetts gubernatorial election, Democratic nominee Deval Patrick beat Romney's lieutenant governor, Kerry Healey, by 20 points, with the win partially due to dissatisfaction with Romney's administration and the weak condition of the state Republican party.^{[215][217]}

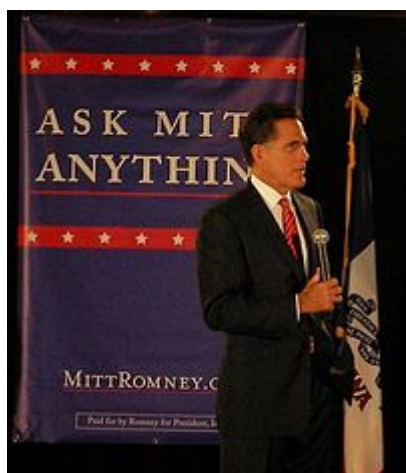


Mitt and Ann Romney at the White House Correspondents Dinner, 2005

Romney filed to register a presidential campaign committee with the Federal Election Commission on his penultimate day in office as governor. His term ended on January 4, 2007.^[218]

2008 presidential campaign

Romney formally announced his candidacy for the 2008 Republican nomination for president on February 13, 2007, in Dearborn, Michigan.^[219] Again casting himself as a political outsider,^[220] his speech frequently invoked his father and his family, and stressed experiences in the private, public, and voluntary sectors that had brought him to this point.^{[219][221]}



Holding an "Ask Mitt Anything" session in Ames, Iowa, in May 2007

The campaign emphasized Romney's highly profitable career in the business world and his stewardship of the 2002 Olympics.^{[211][222][nb 14]} He also had political experience as a governor, together with a political pedigree courtesy of his father (as well as many biographical parallels with him).^[nb 15] Ann Romney, who had become an advocate for those with multiple sclerosis,^[228] was in remission and was an active participant in his campaign,^[229] helping to soften his political personality.^[230] Media stories called the 6-foot-2-inch (1.88 m) Romney handsome;^{[231][232][233][234]} a number of commentators noted that with his square jaw and ample hair graying at the temples, he matched a common image of what a president should look like.^{[74][235][236][237]}

Romney's liabilities included having run for senator and serving as governor in one of the nation's most liberal states and having taken positions in opposition to the party's conservative base during that time.^{[211][222][229]} Late during his term as governor, he had shifted positions and emphases to better align with traditional conservatives on social issues.^{[211][222][229]} Skeptics, including some Republicans, charged Romney with opportunism and a lack of core principles.^{[115][168][238]} As a Mormon, he faced suspicion and skepticism by some in the Evangelical wing of the party.^[238]

For his campaign, Romney assembled a veteran group of Republican staffers, consultants, and pollsters.^{[222][239]} But he was little-known nationally, and hovered around 10% support in Republican preference polls for the first half of 2007.^[211] He proved the most effective fundraiser of any of the Republican candidates and also partly financed his campaign with his own personal fortune.^{[222][240]} These

resources, combined with the mid-year near-collapse of nominal front-runner John McCain's campaign, made Romney a threat to win the nomination and the focus of the other candidates' attacks.^[241] Romney's staff suffered from internal strife; Romney himself was at times indecisive, often asking for more data before making a decision.^{[222][242]}

During all his political campaigns, Romney has avoided speaking publicly about Mormon doctrines, referring to the U.S. Constitution's prohibition of religious tests for public office.^[243] But persistent questions about the role of religion in his life, as well as Southern Baptist minister and former Governor of Arkansas Mike Huckabee's rise in the polls based on an explicitly Christian-themed campaign, led to Romney's December 6, 2007, "Faith in America" speech.^[244] In it, Romney declared, "I believe in my Mormon faith and endeavor to live by it. My faith is the faith of my fathers. I will be true to them and to my beliefs."^[14] He added that he should be neither elected nor rejected because of his religion,^[245] and echoed Senator John F. Kennedy's famous speech during his 1960 presidential campaign in saying, "I will put no doctrine of any church above the plain duties of the office and the sovereign authority of the law."^[244] Instead of discussing the specific tenets of his faith, he said he would be informed by it, saying: "Freedom requires religion just as religion requires freedom. Freedom and religion endure together, or perish alone."^{[244][245]} Academics later studied the role religion played in the campaign.^[nb 16]

The campaign's strategy called for winning the initial two contests – the January 3, 2008, Iowa Republican caucuses and the January 8 New Hampshire primary – to propel Romney nationally.^[248] But he took second place in both, losing Iowa to Huckabee, who received more than twice the evangelical Christian votes,^{[249][250]} and New Hampshire to the resurgent McCain.^[249] Huckabee and McCain criticized Romney's image as a flip-flopper^[249] and this label stuck to Romney through the campaign^[222] (one that Romney rejected as unfair and inaccurate, except for his acknowledged change of mind on abortion).^{[230][251]} Romney seemed to approach the campaign as a management consulting exercise, and showed a lack of personal warmth and political feel; journalist Evan Thomas wrote that Romney "came off as a phony, even when he was perfectly sincere."^{[230][252]} The fervor with which Romney adopted his new stances and attitudes contributed to the perception of inauthenticity that hampered the campaign.^{[64][253]} His staff concluded that competing as a candidate of social conservatism and ideological purity rather than of pragmatic competence had been a mistake.^[230]

McCain's win in South Carolina and Romney's in his childhood home Michigan set up a pivotal battle in the January 29 Florida primary.^{[254][255]} Romney campaigned intensively on economic issues and the burgeoning subprime mortgage crisis, while McCain attacked Romney on Iraq policy and benefited from endorsements from Florida officeholders.^{[254][255]} McCain won by five points.^{[254][255]} Although many Republican officials were now lining up behind McCain,^[255] Romney persisted through the nationwide Super Tuesday contests on February 5. There he won primaries or caucuses in several states, but McCain won in more and in larger-population ones.^[256] Trailing McCain in delegates by a more than two-to-one margin, Romney announced the end of his campaign on February 7.^[256]

Altogether, Romney had won 11 primaries and caucuses,^[257] receiving about 4.7 million votes^[258] and garnering about 280 delegates.^[259] He spent \$110 million during the campaign, including \$45 million of his own money.^[260]

Romney endorsed McCain for president a week later,^[259] and McCain had Romney on a short list for running mate, where his business experience would have balanced one of McCain's weaknesses.^[261] Behind in the polls, McCain opted instead for a high-risk, high-reward "game changer", Alaska Governor Sarah Palin.^[262] McCain lost the election to Democratic Senator Barack Obama.

Activity between presidential campaigns

Romney supported the Bush administration's Troubled Asset Relief Program in response to the late-2000s financial crisis, later saying that it prevented the U.S. financial system from collapsing.^{[263][264]} During the U.S. automotive industry crisis of 2008–10, he opposed a bailout of the industry in the form of direct government intervention, and argued that a managed bankruptcy of struggling automobile companies should instead be accompanied by federal guarantees for post-bankruptcy financing from the private sector.^[265]

After the 2008 election, Romney laid the groundwork for a 2012 presidential campaign by using his Free and Strong America political action committee (PAC) to raise money for other Republican candidates and pay his existing political staff's salaries and consulting fees.^{[266][267]} A network of former staff and supporters around the nation were eager for him to run again.^[268] He continued to give speeches and raise funds for Republicans,^[269] but fearing overexposure, turned down many potential media appearances.^[251] He also spoke before business, educational, and motivational groups.^[270] From 2009 to 2011, he served on the board of directors of Marriott International, founded by his namesake J. Willard Marriott.^[271] He had previously served on it from 1993 to 2002.^{[271][nb 17]}

In 2009, the Romneys sold their primary residence in Belmont and their ski chalet in Utah, leaving them an estate along Lake Winnepesaukee in Wolfeboro, New Hampshire, and an oceanfront home in the La Jolla district of San Diego, California, which they had bought the year before.^{[251][274][275]} The La Jolla home proved beneficial in location and climate for Ann Romney's multiple sclerosis therapies and for recovering from her late 2008 diagnosis of mammary ductal carcinoma in situ and subsequent lumpectomy.^{[274][276][277]} Both it and the New Hampshire estate were near some of their grandchildren.^[274] Romney maintained his voting registration in Massachusetts, however, and bought a smaller condominium in Belmont during 2010.^{[276][278]} In February 2010, Romney had a minor altercation with LMFAO member Skyler Gordy, known as Sky Blu, on an airplane flight.^[nb 18]



Romney signing copies of his new book *No Apology: The Case for American Greatness* for service members at Marine Corps Air Station Miramar in March 2010

Romney released his book, *No Apology: The Case for American Greatness*, in March 2010, and undertook an 18-state book tour to promote it.^[282] In the book, he writes of his belief in American exceptionalism,^[283] and presents his economic and geopolitical views rather than anecdotes about his personal or political life.^{[283][284]} It debuted atop The New York Times Best Seller list.^[285] Romney donated his earnings from the book to charity.^[286]

Immediately after the March 2010 passage of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, Romney attacked the landmark legislation as "an unconscionable abuse of power" and said it should be repealed.^[287] The antipathy Republicans felt for it created a potential problem for Romney, since the new federal law was in many ways similar to the Massachusetts health care reform passed during his gubernatorial tenure; as one Associated Press article stated, "Obamacare ... looks a lot like Romneycare."^[287] While acknowledging that his plan was an imperfect work in progress, Romney did not back away from it. He defended the state-level health insurance mandate that underpinned it, calling the bill the right answer to Massachusetts's problems at the time.^{[287][288][289]}

In nationwide opinion polling for the 2012 Republican presidential primaries, Romney led or placed in the top three with Palin and Huckabee. A January 2010 *National Journal* survey of political insiders found that a majority of Republican insiders and a plurality of Democratic insiders predicted Romney would be the party's 2012 nominee.^[290] Romney campaigned heavily for Republican candidates in the 2010 midterm elections,^[291] raising more money than the other prospective 2012 Republican presidential candidates.^[292] Beginning in early 2011, he presented a more relaxed image, including more casual attire.^{[253][293]}

2012 presidential campaign

Primary election

On April 11, 2011, Romney announced, in a video taped outdoors at the University of New Hampshire, that he had formed an exploratory committee for a run for the Republican presidential nomination.^{[294][295]} Quinnipiac University political science professor Scott McLean said, "We all knew that he was going to run. He's really been running for president ever since the day after the 2008 election."^[295]

Romney stood to benefit from the Republican electorate's tendency to nominate candidates who had previously run for president, and thus appeared to be next in line to be chosen.^{[268][296][297]} The early stages of the race found him as the apparent front-runner in a weak field, especially in terms of fundraising prowess and organization.^{[298][299][300]} Perhaps his greatest hurdle in gaining the Republican nomination was party opposition to the Massachusetts health care reform law that he had shepherded five years earlier.^{[293][295][297]} As many potential Republican candidates with star power and fundraising ability decided not to run (including Mike Pence, John Thune, Haley Barbour, Mike Huckabee, and Mitch Daniels), Republican party figures searched for plausible alternatives to Romney.^{[298][300]}

On June 2, 2011, Romney formally announced the start of his campaign. Speaking on a farm in Stratham, New Hampshire, he focused on the economy and criticized Obama's handling of it.^[301] He said, "In the campaign to come, the American ideals of economic freedom and opportunity need a clear and unapologetic defense, and I intend to make it – because I have lived it."^[297]

Romney raised \$56 million in 2011, more than double the amount raised by any of his Republican opponents,^[302] and refrained from spending his own money on the campaign.^[303] He initially pursued a low-key, low-profile strategy.^[304] Michele Bachmann staged a brief surge in polls, which preceded a poll surge in September 2011 by Rick Perry, who had entered the race the month before.^[305] Perry and Romney exchanged sharp criticisms of each other during a series of debates among the Republican candidates.^[306] The October 2011 decisions of Palin and Chris Christie not to run effectively settled the field of candidates.^{[307][308]} Perry faded after poor performances in those debates, while Herman Cain's "long-shot" bid gained popularity until allegations of sexual misconduct derailed it.^{[309][310]}

Romney continued to seek support from a wary Republican electorate; at this point in the race, his poll numbers were relatively flat and at a historically low level for a Republican front-runner.^{[307][311][312]} After the charges of flip-flopping that marked his 2008 campaign began to accumulate again, Romney said in November 2011: "I've been as consistent as human beings can be."^{[313][314][315]} In the month before voting began, Newt Gingrich experienced a significant surge – taking a solid lead in national polls and most of the early caucus and primary states^[316] – before settling back into parity or worse with Romney following a barrage of negative ads from Restore Our Future, a pro-Romney Super PAC.^[317]



Giving an interview at a supporters rally in Paradise Valley, Arizona



Romney campaign event in Toledo, Ohio

In the initial contest, the Iowa caucuses of January 3, election officials announced Romney as ahead with 25% of the vote, edging out a late-gaining Rick Santorum by eight votes (Ron Paul finished third).^[318] Sixteen days later, however, they certified Santorum as the winner by 34 votes.^[319] A week after the Iowa caucuses, Romney earned a decisive win in the New Hampshire primary with 39% of the vote; Paul finished second and Jon Huntsman Jr. third.^[320]

In the run-up to the South Carolina Republican primary, Gingrich launched ads criticizing Romney for causing job losses while at Bain Capital, Perry referred to Romney's role there as "vulture capitalism", and Palin pressed Romney to prove his claim that he created 100,000 jobs during that time.^{[321][322]} Many conservatives rallied in defense of Romney, rejecting what they took to be criticism of free-market capitalism.^[321] During two debates in the state, Romney fumbled questions about releasing his income tax returns, while Gingrich gained support with audience-rousing attacks on the debate moderators.^{[323][324]} Romney's double-digit lead in state polls evaporated; he lost the January 21 primary to Gingrich by 13 points.^[323] Combined with the delayed loss in Iowa, Romney's poor week represented a lost chance to end the race early, and he quickly decided to release two years of his tax returns.^{[323][325]} The race turned to the Florida primary, where in debates, appearances, and advertisements, Romney launched a sustained barrage against Gingrich's record, associations and electability.^{[326][327]} Romney enjoyed a large spending advantage from both his campaign and his aligned Super PAC, and after a record-breaking rate of negative ads from both sides, Romney won Florida on January 31, with 46% of the vote to Gingrich's 32%.^[328]

Several caucuses and primaries took place during February, and Santorum won three in a single night early in the month, propelling him into the lead in national and some state polls and positioning him as Romney's chief rival.^[329] Days later, Romney told the Conservative Political Action Conference that he had been a "severely conservative governor"^[330] (while in 2005 he had maintained that his positions were moderate and characterized reports that he was shifting to the right to attract conservative votes as a media distortion).^[331] Romney won the other five February contests, including a closely fought one in Michigan at the end of the month.^{[332][333]} In the Super Tuesday primaries and caucuses of March 6, Romney won six of ten contests, including a narrow victory in Ohio over a vastly outspent Santorum. Although his victories were not enough to end the race, they were enough to establish a two-to-one delegate lead over Santorum.^[334] Romney maintained his delegate margin through subsequent contests,^[335] and Santorum suspended his campaign on April 10.^[336] Following a sweep of five more contests on April 24, the Republican National Committee put its resources to work for Romney as the party's presumptive nominee.^[337] Romney clinched a majority of the delegates with a win in the Texas primary on May 29.



With running mate Paul Ryan in Norfolk, Virginia, during the vice presidential selection announcement on August 11, 2012

General election

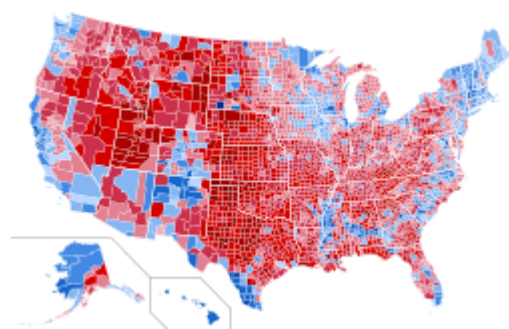
Polls consistently indicated a tight race for the November general election.^[338] Negative ads from both sides dominated the campaign, with Obama's proclaiming that Romney shipped jobs overseas while at Bain Capital and kept money in offshore tax havens and Swiss bank accounts.^[339] A related issue dealt with Romney's purported responsibility for actions at Bain Capital after taking the Olympics post.^{[100][102]} Romney faced demands from Democrats to release additional years of his tax returns, an action a number of Republicans also felt would be wise; after being adamant that he would not do that, he released summaries of them in late September.^{[340][341]} During May and June, the Obama campaign spent heavily and was able to paint a negative image of Romney in voters' minds before the Romney campaign could construct a positive one.^[342]

In July 2012, Romney visited the United Kingdom, Israel, and Poland, meeting leaders in an effort to raise his credibility as a world statesman.^[343] Comments he made about the readiness of the 2012 Summer Olympics were perceived as undiplomatic by the British press.^{[344][345]} Israeli Prime Minister (and former BCG colleague) Benjamin Netanyahu embraced Romney, though some Palestinians criticized him for suggesting that Israel's culture led to their greater economic success.^[346]

On August 11, 2012, the Romney campaign announced Representative Paul Ryan of Wisconsin as his running mate.^[347] On August 28, 2012, the 2012 Republican National Convention in Tampa, Florida, officially nominated Romney for president.^[348] Romney became the first LDS Church member to be a major-party presidential nominee.^[349]

In mid-September, a video surfaced of Romney speaking before a group of supporters in which he said that 47% of the nation pays no income tax, are dependent on the federal government, see themselves as victims, and will support Obama unconditionally. He went on to say, "And so my job is not to worry about those people. I'll never convince them that they should take personal responsibility and care for their lives."^{[350][351][352]} After facing criticism about the tone and accuracy of these comments, he at first characterized them as "inelegantly stated", then a couple of weeks later commented: "I said something that's just completely wrong."^[353] Exit polls published following the election showed that voters never saw Romney as someone who cared about people like them.^[342]

In an interview on CNN with Wolf Blitzer, Romney called Russia "our number one geopolitical foe."^{[354][355]} At the time an innocuous response to a foreign policy question, it became a focal point for Democratic attacks on Romney during the campaign.^{[356][357][358]} Hillary Clinton, then Secretary of State, called Romney's position "dated" and said Russia had been an ally in solving problems,^[359] while Joe Biden, then vice president, accused Romney of having a "Cold War mentality" and being "uninformed" on foreign policy.^{[360][361]} John Kerry, then a senator, called Romney's comments "breathtakingly off target"^[362] and reiterated that position at the Democratic National Convention, saying, "He's even blurted out the preposterous notion that Russia is our number one political geopolitical foe."^[363] Romney defended his remarks, saying, "The nation which consistently opposes our actions at the United Nations has been Russia...Russia is a geopolitical foe in that regard,"^[364] and continued to defend his position in the presidential debates.^[365]



County-by-county results of the election, shaded by percentage won: Obama in blue, Romney in red

The first of three 2012 presidential election debates took place on October 3, in Denver. Media figures and political analysts widely viewed Romney as having delivered a stronger and more focused presentation than Obama.^{[353][366]} That debate overshadowed Obama's improved presentation in the next two debates later in October, and Romney maintained a small advantage in the debates when seen as a whole.^[367]

The election took place on November 6, and Obama was projected the winner at about 11:14 pm Eastern Standard Time.^[368] He won 332 electoral votes to Romney's 206. Romney lost all but one of nine battleground states and received 47% of the popular vote to Obama's 51%.^{[369][370]} Media accounts described Romney as "shellshocked" by the result.^[371]

He and his senior campaign staff had disbelieved public polls showing Obama narrowly ahead and had thought they were going to win until the vote tallies began to be reported on election night.^[371] But Romney's get out the vote operation had been inferior to Obama's, both in person-to-person organization and in voter modeling and outreach technology^[372] (the latter exemplified by the failure of the Project Orca application).^[342] In his concession speech to his supporters, he said, "Like so many of you, Paul and I have left everything on the field. We have given our all to this campaign. I so wish that I had been able to fulfill your hopes to lead this country in a different direction, but the nation chose another leader."^[373] Reflecting on

his defeat during a conference call to hundreds of fundraisers and donors a week after the election, Romney attributed the outcome to Obama's having secured the votes of specific interest groups, including African Americans, Hispanic Americans, young people, and women, by offering them what Romney called "extraordinary financial gifts."^{[374][375][376]} The remark drew heavy criticism from prominent members of the Republican party.^{[377][378]}

Subsequent activities

During the first year after his defeat, Romney generally kept a low profile,^[379] with his ordinary daily activities around San Diego captured via social media glimpses.^[380] In December 2012, he joined the board of Marriott International for a third stint as a director.^[381] In March 2013, Romney gave a reflective interview on *Fox News Sunday*, saying, "It kills me not to be there, not to be in the White House doing what needs to be done." He again expressed regret at the "47 percent" remark, saying "There's no question that hurt and did real damage to my campaign."^{[382][383]} (He echoed both those sentiments a year later.^[384]) Romney began working as executive partner group chairman for Solamere Capital, a private capital firm in Boston owned by his son Tagg.^[385] He was also involved in supporting several charitable causes.^[385]



Mitt and Ann Romney share a moment with his former running mate, Paul Ryan, as they witness the election and ascension of Ryan as the 54th Speaker of the House of Representatives on October 29, 2015

The Romneys bought a home in the Deer Valley area of Park City, Utah,^{[386][387]} and a property in Holladay, Utah, where they planned to tear down an existing house and build a new one.^[385] They also gained long-sought permission to replace their La Jolla home with a much bigger one, including a car elevator that had brought some derision during the 2012 campaign.^{[385][388]} Romney and his siblings continued to own a cottage in a gated community called Beach O' Pines south of Grand Bend, Ontario, which has been in the family for more than 60 years.^[389] With the new acquisitions the couple briefly had five homes, near each of their five sons and their families, and the couple continued to spend considerable time with their grandchildren, who by 2013 numbered 22.^{[385][388]} They then sold the condominium in Belmont and decided to make their main residence in Utah,^[384] switching their voter registration.^[387] The 2014 documentary film *Mitt* showed a behind-the-scenes, family-based perspective on both of Romney's presidential campaigns and received positive reviews for humanizing Romney and illustrating the toll campaigning takes.^{[384][390][391]}

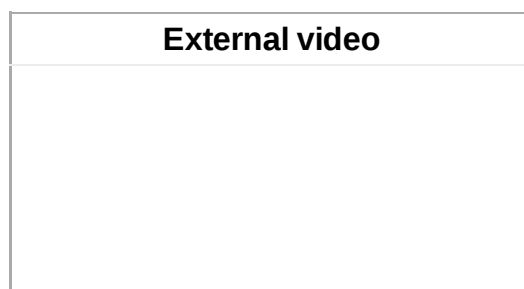
Romney thought he might be branded a "loser for life" and fade into an obscurity like Michael Dukakis^[384] (a similar figure with no obvious base of political support who had lost what his party considered a winnable presidential election)^[392] but, to the surprise of many political observers, that did not happen.^[393] Romney reemerged onto the political scene in the run-up to the 2014 U.S. midterm elections, endorsing, campaigning, and fundraising for a number of Republican candidates, especially those running for the U.S. Senate.^{[394][395]}

Romney was treated for prostate cancer in summer 2017.^[396]

2016 presidential election

By early 2014, the lack of a clear mainstream Republican candidate for the 2016 presidential election led some supporters, donors, and pollsters to suggest that Romney stage a third run.^[391] Regarding such a possibility, Romney at first responded, "Oh, no, no, no. No, no, no, no, no. No, no, no."^[391] Nevertheless, speculation continued: Obama's declining

External video



popularity led to remorse among some voters; the 2014 Russian military intervention in Ukraine made Romney's "number one geopolitical foe" remark look prescient; and an August 2014 poll of Iowa Republicans showed Romney with a large lead there over other potential 2016 candidates.^[398] A July 2014 CNN poll showed Romney with a 53% to 44% lead over Obama in a hypothetical election "redo".^{[399][400]}

By early 2015, Romney was considering the idea and contacting his network of supporters.^{[401][402]} In doing so he was positioning himself in the invisible primary – the preliminary jockeying for the backing of party leaders, donors, and political operatives – against former Florida governor Jeb Bush, who had already set a likely campaign in motion and would be a rival to Romney for establishment Republican support.^{[402][403]} Despite support in some quarters for a third bid for the presidency, there was a backlash from conservatives who wanted a fresher face without a history of presidential losses,^[404] and many of Romney's past donors were not willing to commit to him again.^[405] On January 30, 2015, Romney announced that he would not run for president in 2016, saying that while he thought he could win the nomination, "one of our next generation of Republican leaders" would be better positioned to win the general election.^{[406][407]}

Relationship with Donald Trump

As the presidential election went into primary season, Romney had not endorsed anyone but was one of the Republican establishment figures who were becoming increasingly concerned about the front-runner status of New York businessman Donald Trump.^[408] Romney publicly criticized Trump for not releasing his taxes, saying there might be a "bombshell" in them.^[409] Trump responded by calling Romney "one of the dumbest and worst candidates in the history of Republican politics."^[408] In a March 3, 2016, speech at the Hinckley Institute of Politics, Romney made a scathing attack on Trump's personal behavior, business performance, and domestic and foreign policy stances. He said Trump was "a phony, a fraud ... He's playing members of the American public for suckers" and that "if we Republicans choose Donald Trump as our nominee, the prospects for a safe and prosperous future are greatly diminished."^{[410][411]} In response, Trump dismissed Romney as a "choke artist."^[411] Romney's speech represented an unprecedented attack by a major U.S. party's most recent presidential nominee against the party's current front-runner for the nomination.^{[411][412][413]}

Romney encouraged Republicans to engage in tactical voting, by supporting whichever of the remaining rivals had the best chance to beat Trump in any given state.^[414] As such, Romney announced he was voting for, although not endorsing, Ted Cruz for president in the March 22 Utah caucus.^[415] As the race went on, there was some evidence that tactical voting was occurring, and some partial arrangements were formed among candidates,^{[416][417]} but by May 3, Trump had defeated all his opponents and became the party's presumptive nominee. Romney announced that he would not support Trump in the general election, saying, "I am dismayed at where we are now. I wish we had better choices."^[418]

In June, Romney said that he would not vote for Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton, saying: "It's a matter of personal conscience. I can't vote for either of those two people." He suggested that he might vote for a third-party candidate, or write in his wife's name, saying she would be "an ideal president." When pressed on which



[Watch Mitt Romney's full March 3 speech: 'Trump is a phony, a fraud' \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2iefXdC794I\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2iefXdC794I), 17:49, see 2:40–10:00, PBS Newshour^[397]

[Donald Trump responds to Romney's comments at Maine rally \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2WVLe9CHcNY\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2WVLe9CHcNY), 43:25, see 7:50–10:00, PBS Newshour

of Trump and Clinton was more qualified to be president, Romney quoted P. J. O'Rourke: "Hillary Clinton is wrong on every issue, but she's wrong within the normal parameters."^[419]

Romney considered voting for the Libertarian ticket of former Republican governors Gary Johnson and Bill Weld (the latter, like Romney, also a former governor of Massachusetts), saying that he would "get to know Gary Johnson better and see if he's someone who I could end up voting for," adding that "if Bill Weld were at the top of the ticket, it would be very easy for me to vote for Bill Weld for president."^[420] In September, he called for Johnson to be included in the presidential debates^[421] and in October it emerged that Independent candidate Evan McMullin was using an email list of 2.5 million Romney supporters to raise money.^[422] McMullin's chief strategist said that it was purchased from Romney for President and that "we'll let other folks discuss what that may mean and certainly never speak for [Romney]."^[422] A spokeswoman for Romney said that the list had been "rented by several political candidates in the presidential primary, and by countless other political and commercial users in the time since the 2012 campaign"^[422] and Romney made no public comment on McMullin's candidacy.^[423] Romney and his wife cast early ballots in Utah, but he declined to say who he voted for.^[423] In May 2018, Romney revealed that he had cast a write-in vote for his wife Ann.^[424]

After Trump won the election, Romney congratulated him by phone and on Twitter.^[425] On November 19, Romney met with him at the Trump National Golf Club in Bedminster, New Jersey, reportedly to discuss the position of Secretary of State,^{[426][427]} which ultimately went to Rex Tillerson.^[428] In February 2017, Romney said that Trump was "off to a very strong start" in fulfilling his campaign promises, although he had "no regrets" about his anti-Trump speech.^[429] The next year, Trump endorsed Romney's 2018 senate campaign.^[430]

U.S. Senate

Elections

2018



Romney being sworn in as Senator from Utah by Vice President Mike Pence

September and October 2017 press reports said that should U.S. Senator Orrin Hatch retire, Romney would run for that seat in 2018.^{[431][432]} On January 2, 2018, after Hatch announced that he would retire, Romney changed his Twitter location from Massachusetts to Holladay, Utah, contributing to speculation that he was considering a run for Senate.^[433] On February 16, 2018, Romney formally launched his campaign with a video message posted on Facebook and Twitter.^{[434][435][436]}

At the state Republican nominating convention held on April 21, 2018, Romney received 1,585 delegate votes (49.12%), finishing narrowly second to State Representative Mike Kennedy, with 1,642 delegate votes (50.88%). Since neither Romney nor Kennedy garnered 60% of delegate votes to claim the endorsement, the two candidates competed in a June 26 primary election.^[437] In the primary, Romney defeated Kennedy, 71.7%–28.3%.^[438]

Romney was elected U.S. Senator from Utah on November 6, winning 62.6% to 30.9% over Democratic nominee Jenny Wilson.^[439] The other 6.5% of the vote went to nominees of the Constitution, Libertarian, and Independent American parties.

With his election, Romney became the third person to have served as governor of one state and senator from another state.^[440] (The other two were William W. Bibb, who served as a U.S. senator from Georgia and then the first governor of Alabama, and Sam Houston, who was the sixth governor of Tennessee before becoming a U.S. Senator from Texas.^[440])

Tenure

Shortly before assuming office, Romney wrote a *Washington Post* editorial strongly criticizing Trump's character.^[441] Ronna McDaniel, Romney's niece and the chair of the Republican National Committee, called his comments "disappointing and unproductive," while Trump wrote that he "[w]ould much prefer that Mitt focus on Border Security and so many other things where he can be helpful."^[442] By November 9, 2019, Romney was just one of three Republican senators, along with Susan Collins of Maine and Lisa Murkowski of Alaska, who declined to co-sponsor a resolution opposing the impeachment inquiry process into Trump.^{[443][444]} He was one of two Republicans (with Collins) who joined all Democrats voting to allow impeachment witnesses.^[445]

Romney condemned the 2019 Sri Lanka Easter bombings, saying: "As we celebrate the miracle of Easter, we hold in our hearts the victims of the senseless violence in Sri Lanka and their loved ones."^[446]

First impeachment of Donald Trump (2019-2020)



[Play media](#)

'FULL REMARKS -- Senator Mitt Romney to vote to convict President Trump on Abuse of Power' - video from CSPAN

On February 5, 2020, after Romney read a prepared text on the Senate floor decrying "corrupting an election to keep oneself in office" as "perhaps the most abusive and destructive violation of one's oath of office that I can imagine,"^{[447][448]} he broke ranks with the Republican majority as the sole Republican senator to vote to convict Trump in his first impeachment trial,^[449] thereby becoming, according to press reports, the first U.S. senator in United States history to vote to convict a president of the same political party.^{[450][451][452]} Romney voted in favor of the first of the two

articles of impeachment, which charged Trump with abuse of power, but against convicting him on obstruction of Congress. He was the only Republican in the Senate to vote for any of the articles.

Fallout from the vote included Romney's being formally censured by various Republican organizations outside of Utah; in comparison, anger against Romney among Republicans within Utah was more muted, and his impeachment vote, according to opinion polling, was supported by Utah Democrats.^[453] Jason Perry, director of the University of Utah's Hinckley Institute of Politics, said, "Democrats in Utah were more excited about Mitt Romney's vote than [Utah] Republicans were disappointed."^[454] Republicans for the Rule of Law ran various ads thanking Romney.^{[455][456][457]} Romney was praised by many for voting not by his party allegiances, but by his belief about whether Trump abused his power.



Romney with President Donald Trump, Kellyanne Conway, and Alex Azar during a White House listening session on the youth vaping and electronic cigarette epidemic



Romney and other Republican Senators meet with President Joe Biden to discuss COVID-19 relief

March with Black Lives Matter

On June 7, 2020, in response to the murder of George Floyd and the worldwide protests against police brutality, Romney became the first Republican senator to participate in a protest alongside Black Lives Matter.^{[458][459]} He said, "We need many voices against racism and against brutality, and we need to make sure that people understand that Black Lives Matter."^[460] This act drew praise and admiration from the left and right, with some Republicans questioning why other congressional Republicans weren't showing support for the movement. On Twitter, Senator Kamala Harris praised Romney's actions, saying, "We need more of this."^[461] Trump attacked Romney, saying, "Tremendous sincerity, what a guy. Hard to believe, with this kind of political talent, his numbers would 'tank' so badly in Utah!"^[462]

2020 presidential election

Romney did not endorse Trump's 2020 reelection campaign and told reporters that he did not vote for him.^[463] In a Washington Post op-ed, Romney wrote that Trump "has not risen to the mantle of the office."^[464] After the victory of Joe Biden and his running mate, Kamala Harris, Romney was the first Republican senator to extend his congratulations to them.^[465]

2021 insurrection at the U.S. Capitol

On the morning of January 5, 2021, Romney was heckled and harassed at the airport on his way to Washington D.C. to certify Joe Biden's election win in the Senate.^[466] He was attacked by Trump supporters for not backing Trump's unverified conspiracy theories regarding inconsistencies in the election.^{[467][468]}

On the morning of January 6, protesters assembled at the "Save America" rally on the Ellipse, where Trump, Donald Trump Jr., Rudy Giuliani, and several members of Congress addressed the crowd fueling the conspiracy theories about election fraud.^{[469][470][471]} Trump said, "We will never give up, we will never concede. You don't concede when there's theft," and encouraged his supporters to "fight like hell" to "take back our country" and to march to the Capitol.^[472] Later that day, while the Senate was in session certifying the 2021 United States Electoral College vote count within the United States Capitol, hundreds of Trump supporters violently stormed the capitol, where they looted senators' offices and broke into the chamber of the United States Senate. Police evacuated the senators and Vice President Mike Pence to an undisclosed area. As they were evacuating Romney, he yelled at Ted Cruz and other Republican congressmen, "This is what you've gotten, guys."^[473] According to New York Times reporter Jonathan Martin, Romney told him with "fury in his voice," "This is what the president has caused today, this insurrection."^[474] Romney fully rebuked Trump, and condemned the actions of the domestic terrorists. Romney stated on the Senate floor later that night, when Congress had reconvened:

"We gather today due to a selfish man's injured pride and the outrage of his supporters whom he has deliberately misinformed for the past two months and stirred to action this very morning...Those who choose to continue to support his dangerous gambit by objecting to the results of a legitimate, democratic election will forever be seen as being complicit in an unprecedented attack against our democracy...They will be remembered for their role in this shameful episode in American history. That will be their legacy."^{[475][476]}

Second impeachment of Donald Trump (2021)

On January 13, 2021, the House voted to impeach Trump a second time for incitement of insurrection.^[477] On January 26, Republican Senator Rand Paul of Kentucky introduced a motion to dismiss the impeachment charge. The objection was defeated on a 55–45 vote; Romney was one of the five Republicans to vote against it, along with Susan Collins, Lisa Murkowski, Ben Sasse and Pat Toomey.^[478]

On February 10, 2021, new video was released during the Trump's second impeachment trial, which showed capitol police officer Eugene Goodman saving Romney from running into the Capitol rioters.^[479] During a break in the hearing, Romney said, "It was very troubling seeing the great violence the capitol police were subjected to. It tears at your heart and brings tears to your eyes. It was overwhelmingly distressing and emotional." Romney also stated he didn't know how close he was and he didn't know it was Goodman who diverted him away from the rioters but he looked forward to thanking Goodman.^[480]

On February 13, 2021, Romney and five other Republican senators voted to allow other witnesses in the impeachment trial. Republican Senator and Trump ally Ron Johnson, who was "visibly upset," got in a heated exchange with Romney for his vote, saying, "We never should've had this impeachment trial."^[481] Later that day Romney voted to convict Trump for the second time along with six of his Republican colleagues. The final vote was 57 to convict and 43 to acquit. He wrote a statement that read in part:

"President Trump attempted to corrupt the election by pressuring the Secretary of State of Georgia to falsify the election results in his state. President Trump incited the insurrection against Congress by using the power of his office to summon his supporters to Washington on January 6th and urging them to march on the Capitol during the counting of electoral votes. He did this despite the obvious and well known threats of violence that day. President Trump also violated his oath of office by failing to protect the Capitol, the Vice President, and others in the Capitol. Each and every one of these conclusions compels me to support conviction"^[482]

Commission to investigate attack on Capitol

On May 27, 2021, along with five other Republicans and all present Democrats, Romney voted to establish a bipartisan commission to investigate the January 6 storming of the U.S. Capitol. The vote failed for lack of 60 required "yes" votes.^[483]

Committee assignments

Current

- Committee on Foreign Relations
- Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
 - Subcommittee on Emerging Threats and Spending Oversight
 - Subcommittee on Governmental Operations and Border Management
- Committee on Budget (2021–present)
- Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
 - Subcommittee on Children and Families
 - Subcommittee on Employment and Workplace Safety

Source:^[484]

Previous

- Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship (2019-2021)

Political positions

In addition to calling for cuts in federal government spending to help reduce the national debt, Romney proposed measures intended to limit the growth of entitlement programs, such as introducing means testing and gradually raising the eligibility ages for receipt of Social Security and Medicare.^[485] He supported substantial increases in military spending and promised to invest more heavily in military weapons programs while increasing the number of active-duty military personnel.^{[486][487]} He was very supportive of the directions taken by the budget proposals of Paul Ryan, though he later proposed his own budget plan.^{[488][489]}



Romney meeting with President Obama after the 2012 presidential election.

Romney pledged to lead an effort to repeal the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act ("Obamacare") and replace it with a system that gives states more control over Medicaid and makes health insurance premiums tax-advantaged for individuals in the same way they are for businesses.^[490] He favored repeal of the Dodd–Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act and the Sarbanes–Oxley Act and intended to replace them with what he called a "streamlined, modern regulatory framework."^{[491][492]}

He also promised to seek income tax law changes that he said would help to lower federal deficits and would stimulate economic growth. These included reducing individual income tax rates across the board by 20%, maintaining the Bush administration-era tax rate of 15% on investment income from dividends and capital gains (and eliminating this tax entirely for those with annual incomes less than \$200,000), cutting the top tax rate on corporations from 35% to 25%, and eliminating the estate tax and the Alternative Minimum Tax.^{[493][494]} He promised that the loss of government revenue from these tax cuts would be offset by closing loopholes and placing limits on tax deductions and credits available to taxpayers with the highest incomes,^[494] but said that that aspect of the plan could not yet be evaluated because details would have to be worked out with Congress.^[495]

Romney opposed the use of mandatory limits on greenhouse gas emissions to deal with global warming.^[314] He stated that he believed climate change is occurring, but that he did not know how much of it could be linked to human activity.^[314] He was a proponent of increased domestic oil drilling, hydraulic fracturing ("fracking"), building more nuclear power plants, and reducing the regulatory authority of the Environmental Protection Agency.^{[496][497]} He believed North American energy independence could be achieved by 2020.^[498]

Romney called Russia America's "number one geopolitical foe",^[499] a position many ridiculed him for,^[358] including former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright,^[500] who later publicly apologized to him.^[501] He has asserted that preventing Iran from obtaining nuclear capability should be America's "highest national security priority."^[502] Romney stated his strong support for Israel.^[503] He planned to formally label China a currency manipulator and take associated counteractions unless China changed its trade practices.^[504] Romney supported the Patriot Act,^[505] the continued operation of the Guantanamo Bay detention camp, and use of enhanced interrogation techniques against suspected terrorists.^[505] He described same-sex marriage as a "state issue" while running for Senate in 1994 and opposed a constitutional ban on same-sex marriage in 2002.^[506] Romney opposed same-sex marriage and civil unions, but favored domestic partnership legislation that gives

certain legal rights to same-sex couples, such as hospital visitation.^[507] In 2011, he signed a pledge promising to seek passage of an amendment to the U.S. Constitution to define marriage as the union of one man and one woman.^[508]

Since 2005, Romney described himself as "pro-life."^[509] That year, he wrote: "I believe that abortion is the wrong choice except in cases of incest, rape, and to save the life of the mother."^{[510][nb 9][nb 13]} During his 1994 Senate campaign, Romney had said, "I believe that abortion should be safe and legal in this country", a stance he reiterated during his 2002 campaign for governor.^{[130][513]} While Romney would prefer to see passage of a constitutional amendment that would outlaw abortion, he did not believe the public would support such an amendment;^[514] as an alternative, he promised to nominate Supreme Court justices who would help overturn *Roe v. Wade*, allowing each state to decide on the legality of abortion.^[515] His earlier pro-abortion rights stance in particular and support for some gay rights and gun restrictions as governor of Massachusetts earned him the criticism of some conservatives; the conservative magazine *Human Events* labeled him one of the top ten RINOs in 2005.^[516]



Romney said he would support President Donald Trump's Supreme Court nominee Amy Coney Barrett

Romney said he would appoint federal judges in the mold of U.S. Supreme Court justices John Roberts, Clarence Thomas, Antonin Scalia, and Samuel Alito.^{[517][518]} He advocated judicial restraint and strict constructionism as judicial philosophies.^{[518][519]}

Romney declared his support for the Black Lives Matter international human rights movement by attending the rally,^[520] and then joining the *Faith Works*^[521] march, on June 7, 2020,^[522] from southeast Washington,^[521] past the Trump International Hotel,^[520] and Lincoln Memorial Reflecting Pool,^[520] over the murder of George Floyd.^{[522][520][521][523]}

In July 2020, Romney, along with Pat Toomey, was one of two Republican U.S. Senators who condemned Trump's decision to commute the sentence of Roger Stone, which Romney described as "Unprecedented, historic corruption: an American president commutes the sentence of a person convicted by a jury of lying to shield that very president."^[524]

Social media

In the October 2019 issue of *The Atlantic*, Romney revealed that he used a secret Twitter account to keep tabs on the political conversation, saying, "What do they call me, a lurker?"^[525] Shortly thereafter, *Slate* found a Twitter account with the name Pierre Delecto. The account was registered in July 2011, followed about 700 people and had eight followers at the time it was discovered. It had tweeted 10 times in total, and always in reply to other tweets. Romney later confirmed that the account belongs to him.^{[526][527]}

Electoral history

U.S. senator from Massachusetts

Massachusetts United States Senate Republican primary, 1994 ^[528]				
Party		Candidate	Votes	%
	<u>Republican</u>	Mitt Romney	188,280	82.04%
	<u>Republican</u>	<u>John Lakian</u>	40,898	17.82%
	<u>Write-in</u>		318	0.14%
Total votes			229,496	100.00%

United States Senate election in Massachusetts, 1994 ^[529]					
Party		Candidate	Votes	%	±%
	<u>Democratic</u>	Ted Kennedy (incumbent)	1,266,011	58.07%	−6.90%
	<u>Republican</u>	Mitt Romney	894,005	41.01%	+7.08%
	<u>Libertarian</u>	Lauraleigh Dozier	14,484	0.66%	+0.15%
	LaRouche Was Right	William A. Ferguson, Jr.	4,776	0.22%	+0.22%
	<u>Write-in</u>		688	0.03%	+0.02%
Total votes			2,179,964	100.00%	
	<u>Democratic hold</u>				

Governor of Massachusetts

Massachusetts gubernatorial election, 2002					
Party		Candidate	Votes	%	±%
	<u>Republican</u>	Mitt Romney (Kerry Healey)	1,091,988	49.77%	−1.04%
	<u>Democratic</u>	<u>Shannon O'Brien (Chris Gabrieli)</u>	985,981	44.94%	−2.44%
	<u>Green-Rainbow</u>	<u>Jill Stein (Tony Lorenzen)</u>	76,530	3.49%	+3.49%
	<u>Libertarian</u>	<u>Carla Howell (Rich Aucoin)</u>	23,044	1.05%	−0.64%
	<u>Independent</u>	Barbara C. Johnson (Joe Schebel)	15,335	0.70%	+0.70%
	<u>Write-in</u>		1,301	0.06%	−0.05%
Total votes			2,194,179	100.00%	+4.04%
		Blank	6,122		
Turnout			2,220,301		
Majority			106,007	4.83%	
	<u>Republican hold</u>		Swing	+1.40%	

2012 Republican nominee for President of the United States

2012 United States presidential election					
Party		Candidate		Votes	%
	<u>Democratic</u>	<u>Barack Obama / Joe Biden (inc.)</u>		65,915,795	51.06%
	<u>Republican</u>	Mitt Romney / <u>Paul Ryan</u>		60,933,504	47.20%
	<u>Libertarian</u>	<u>Gary Johnson / Jim Gray</u>		1,275,971	0.99%
	<u>Green</u>	<u>Jill Stein / Cheri Honkala</u>		469,627	0.36%
	<u>Constitution</u>	<u>Virgil Goode / James Clymer</u>		122,389	0.09%
	<u>Peace and Freedom</u>	<u>Roseanne Barr / Cindy Sheehan</u>		67,326	0.05%
	<u>Justice</u>	<u>Rocky Anderson / Luis J. Rodriguez</u>		43,018	0.03%
	<u>American Independent</u>	<u>Tom Hoefling / J.D. Ellis</u>		40,628	0.03%
	<u>Reform</u>	<u>Andre Barnett / Kenneth Cross</u>		956	0.00%
	<u>N/A</u>	Other		216,196	0.19%
Total votes				129,085,410	100.00%
	<u>Democratic hold</u>				

U.S. Senator from Utah

Utah State Republican Convention results, 2018				
Candidate	First ballot	Pct.	Second ballot	Pct.
<u>Mike Kennedy</u>	1,354	40.69%	1,642	50.88%
<u>Mitt Romney</u>	1,539	46.24%	1,585	49.12%
Loy Brunson	4	0.12%	<i>Eliminated</i>	
Alicia Colvin	29	0.87%	<i>Eliminated</i>	
Stoney Fonua	7	0.21%	<i>Eliminated</i>	
Chris Forbush	0	0%	<i>Eliminated</i>	
Timothy Jiminez	100	3.01%	<i>Eliminated</i>	
Joshua Lee	2	0.06%	<i>Eliminated</i>	
Larry Meyers	163	4.90%	<i>Eliminated</i>	
Gayle Painter	0	0%	<i>Eliminated</i>	
Samuel Parker	122	3.67%	<i>Eliminated</i>	
Total	3,328	100.00%	3,227	100.00%

Republican primary results, Utah 2018 ^[530]			
Party	Candidate	Votes	%
<u>Republican</u>	Mitt Romney	240,021	71.27%
<u>Republican</u>	<u>Mike Kennedy</u>	96,771	28.73%
Total votes		336,792	100.00%

United States Senate general election in Utah, 2018 ^[531]				
Party	Candidate	Votes	%	±%
<u>Republican</u>	Mitt Romney	665,215	62.59%	−2.72%
<u>Democratic</u>	<u>Jenny Wilson</u>	328,541	30.91%	+0.93%
<u>Constitution</u>	Tim Aalders	28,774	2.71%	−0.46%
<u>Libertarian</u>	Craig Bowden	27,607	2.60%	N/A
<u>Independent American</u>	Reed McCandless	12,708	1.20%	N/A
<u>Write-in</u>		52	0.00%	N/A
Total votes		1,062,897	100.00%	N/A
<u>Republican hold</u>				

Awards and honors

Honorary degrees

Date	School	Degree
1999	<u>University of Utah</u>	Doctorate of Business ^[532]
2002	<u>Bentley College</u>	Doctor of Law ^[533]
2004	<u>Suffolk University Law School</u>	Doctor of Public Administration ^[534]
2007	<u>Hillsdale College</u>	Doctorate in Public Service ^[535]
2012	<u>Liberty University</u>	Doctor of Humanities ^[536]
2013	<u>Southern Virginia University</u>	Honorary Doctorate ^[537]
2015	<u>Jacksonville University</u>	Honorary Doctorate ^[538]
2015	<u>Utah Valley University</u>	Doctorate of Business ^[539]
2015	<u>Saint Anselm College</u>	Honorary Doctorate ^[540]

Non-Academic Awards and Honors

People magazine included Romney in its 50 Most Beautiful People list for 2002,^[541] and in 2004, a foundation that promotes the Olympic truce gave him its inaugural Truce Ideal Award.^[542] The Cranbrook School gave him its Distinguished Alumni Award in 2005.^[21] In 2008, he shared with his wife Ann the

Canterbury Medal from The Becket Fund for Religious Liberty, for "refus[ing] to compromise their principles and faith" during the presidential campaign.^[543] In 2012, *Time* magazine included Romney in their List of The 100 Most Influential People in the World.^[544]

In 2021, Romney received the Profile in Courage Award.^[545]

Published works

- Romney, Mitt; Robinson, Timothy (2004). *Turnaround: Crisis, Leadership, and the Olympic Games*. Washington: Regnery Publishing. ISBN 978-0-89526-084-0.
- Romney, Mitt (2010). *No Apology: The Case for American Greatness*. New York: St. Martin's Press. ISBN 978-0-312-60980-1.



Receiving the 2006 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award on behalf of his state

See also

- List of governors of Massachusetts
- List of United States senators from Utah
- List of United States Republican Party presidential tickets
- President of the Organising Committee for the Olympic Games

Notes

1. Pranks conducted by Romney during his Cranbrook years included sliding down golf courses on large ice cubes, dressing as a police officer and tapping on the car windows of friends who were making out, and staging an elaborate formal dinner on the median of a busy street.^{[20][22]} The golf course escapade led to Romney and Ann Davies being detained by local police.^{[25][26]} In 2012, five former classmates described a 1965 episode where Romney, then a senior, took the lead in holding down a younger student while cutting his long, bleached-blond hair with scissors.^[21] Romney said that he does not recall the incident, though he acknowledged that he might have participated in some high school "hijinks and pranks" that went too far, and he apologized for any harm that resulted from them.^{[27][28]}
2. Pranks conducted by Romney during his Stanford years included dressing as a police officer and pretending to arrest people^[31] and pre-"Big Game" customs involving the Stanford Axe.^[32]
3. Mitt's great-grandfather, grandfather, father, and two uncles had been missionaries,^[34] as had his brother, Scott.^[35] He did briefly consider breaking with tradition and not going on a mission^[36] (and he had successfully been rushed by the Phi Kappa Sigma fraternity at Stanford, for sophomore year membership).^[30] But he did go, and all five of Mitt's sons later served as missionaries as well.^[37]
4. Based on figures from 1971 to 2010, the average Mormon gets only 4–8 baptism converts to the faith per year during a mission.^[38] The church succeeds in expanding by having huge numbers of missionaries, so that the small number of conversions from each one add up.^[39]
5. Romney's task was complicated by proselytizing for a religion that prohibits alcohol in a country known for it.^[13] He reflected upon this in 2002: "As you can imagine, it's quite an experience to go to Bordeaux and say, 'Give up your wine! I've got a great religion for you!'"^[41]

6. On June 16, 1968, Romney and five fellow Mormons were traveling on dangerous roads in southern France.^{[20][43][44]} As they drove through the village of **Bernos-Beaulac**, a **Mercedes** that was passing a truck missed a curve and swerved into the opposite lane hitting the **Citroën DS** Romney was driving **head-on**.^{[20][45]} Trapped between the steering wheel and door, the unconscious Romney had to be pried from the car; a French police officer mistakenly wrote *// est mort* in his passport.^{[20][25][44]} Besides killing the wife of the mission president, the other four passengers were seriously injured.^[44] George Romney relied on his friend **Sargent Shriver**, the **U.S. Ambassador to France**, to go to the local hospital and discover that his son had survived.^[25] Mitt Romney, who was not at fault in the accident,^{[35][44]} had suffered broken ribs, a fractured arm, a concussion, and facial injuries, but recovered quickly without needing surgery.^{[43][44]} The French police say that they have no records of the incident because such records are routinely destroyed after 10 years.^[44]
7. Some sources incorrectly report that Romney graduated first in his class at BYU. Romney himself has corrected this notion, saying that he didn't. While Romney believes he did have the highest grade point average for his on-campus BYU years in the College of Humanities, he did not if his Stanford record was factored in.^{[56][57]}
8. One study of 68 deals that Bain Capital made during Romney's time there found that the firm lost money or broke even on 33 of them.^[69] Another study that looked at the eight-year period following 77 deals during Romney's time found that in 17 cases the company went bankrupt or out of business, and in 6 cases Bain Capital lost all its investment. But 10 deals were very successful and represented 70 percent of the total profits.^[85]
9. Romney's cited exceptions regarding abortion are in line with those of the LDS Church,^[108] which allows it in cases of rape, incest, when the mother's health is seriously threatened, or when the fetus cannot survive past birth.^[69] When Romney was a bishop in the 1980s, there was a case where a woman in his congregation with four children was advised by her doctor to terminate her pregnancy because she had a potentially life-threatening blood clot. Romney strongly advised her not to, but she did anyway.^{[69][108]}
10. Kennedy spent \$10.5 million overall, including a \$1.5 million loan to himself.^[134] This was the second-most expensive race of the 1994 election cycle, after the **Dianne Feinstein–Michael Huffington Senate race in California**.
11. Official state figures for fiscal year 2005 (July 1, 2004 – June 30, 2005) declared a \$594.4 million surplus.^{[166][183]} For fiscal 2006, the surplus was \$720.9 million.^[183] During fiscal 2007, Romney cut \$384 million in spending that the legislature wanted; in January 2007, midway through the fiscal year, incoming Governor **Deval Patrick** restored that amount,^[184] and also declared that the state faced a "looming budget shortfall" of \$1 billion for fiscal 2008.^[185] Patrick consequently proposed a budget for fiscal 2008 that included \$515 million in spending cuts and \$295 million in new corporate taxes.^[186] As it happened, the state ended fiscal 2007 with a \$307.1 million deficit and fiscal 2008 with a \$495.2 million deficit.^[183]
12. Upon passage of the law, Romney said "There really wasn't Republican or Democrat in this. People ask me if this is conservative or liberal, and my answer is yes. It's liberal in the sense that we're getting our citizens health insurance. It's conservative in that we're not getting a government takeover."^[193] Within four years, the Massachusetts law had achieved its primary goal of expanding coverage: in 2010, 98% of state residents had coverage, compared to a national average of 83%. Among children and seniors the 2010 coverage rate was even higher, 99.8% and 99.6% respectively. Approximately two-thirds of residents received coverage through employers; one-sixth each received it through Medicare or public plans.^[199]
13. Romney also amended his position on **embryonic stem cell research**: having once supported it broadly, he changed to being against **therapeutic cloning** of embryos for scientific research, insisting that "surplus embryos" from fertility treatments should be used instead.^{[511][512]}

14. American political opinion periodically looked towards industry for business managers who it was thought could straighten out what was held to be wrong in the nation's capital. The track record of such efforts was at best mixed, with Lee Iacocca declining to run, Romney's father George and Steve Forbes failing to get far in the primaries, and Ross Perot staging one of the more successful third-party runs in American history.^{[223][224]}
15. Biographical parallels between George and Mitt Romney include: Both served as Mormon missionaries in Europe and considered the experiences formative. Both pursued high school sweethearts single-mindedly until the women agreed to marry them several years later, then had families with four or five children. Both had very successful careers in business and became known for turning around failing companies or organizations. Both presided over a stake in the LDS Church. Both achieved their first elected position at age 55, as Republican governor of a Democratic-leaning state. The two bear a close physical resemblance at similar ages and both have been said to "look like a president". Both staged their first presidential run in the year they turned 60. Both were considered suspect by ideological conservatives within the Republican Party.^{[23][225]} Neither protested publicly against the LDS Church policy that did not allow black people in its lay clergy, although the elder Romney hoped the church leadership would revise the policy,^[226] and his son has said that he was greatly relieved when the church did so in 1978.^{[35][106][227]} There are also obvious differences in their paths, including that George had a hardscrabble upbringing while Mitt's was affluent, and that Mitt far exceeded George's accomplishments in formal education. Another is that Mitt's personality is more reserved, private, and controlled than his father's was, traits he got from his mother Lenore,^[55] and his political personality is also shaped at least as much by Lenore as by George.^[54] And while George was willing to defy political trends, Mitt has been much more willing to adapt to them.^{[23][54][179]}
16. Regarding the role of Romney's religion in the 2008 campaign, one academic study, based upon research conducted throughout the 2008 primaries, showed that a negative perception of Mormonism was widespread during the election, and that perception was often resistant to factual information that would correct mistaken notions about the religion or Romney's relationship to it.^[246] The authors concluded that, "For Romney ... religion *is* the central story."^[246] Another study, analyzing a survey conducted during January 2008 (when an African American, a woman, and a Mormon all had realistic chances of becoming the first president from that group), found that voters had internally accepted the notion of black equality, paving the way for Barack Obama's election; had partially established but not fully internalized the notion of gender equality, making Hillary Clinton's task somewhat more difficult; but had only selectively internalized the notion of religious equality, and in particular not extended it to Mormons, thus making Romney's run significantly more difficult.^[247] Those authors concluded that, "for a Mormon candidate, the road to the presidency remains very rough ... The bias against a Mormon candidate is substantial."^[247]
17. During most of Romney's first stint on the Marriott board, he was a member of, and for six years chair of, the board's audit committee.^[272] In 1994, during Romney's time as chair, Marriott implemented the Son of BOSS tax shelter, which resulted in the company claiming \$71 million in losses. In 2008 and 2009, federal courts ruled this use of the shelter illegal and said those losses never existed. PolitiFact.com calls a 2012 claim that Romney personally approved the shelter as "Half True".^{[272][273]}
18. After having attended the 2010 Winter Olympics, Romney and wife were on board an Air Canada plane waiting to take off on a flight from Vancouver to Los Angeles when he got into a physical altercation with Sky Blu, sitting in front of him, over Sky Blu's seat not being in the upright position. Romney said that Sky Blu became physically violent and that he did not retaliate, while Sky Blu said that Romney gave him a "Vulcan grip" first and that he responded physically to that. Sky Blu was escorted off the aircraft by Canadian police but Romney did not press charges and Sky Blu was released.^{[279][280][281]}

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- [Profile](https://www.votesmart.org/candidate/21942) (<https://www.votesmart.org/candidate/21942>) at [Vote Smart](https://www.votesmart.org/)
- [Financial information \(federal office\)](https://www.fec.gov/data/candidate/S8UT00176) (<https://www.fec.gov/data/candidate/S8UT00176>) at the [Federal Election Commission](https://www.fec.gov/)
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- [Mitt Romney](https://curlie.org/Regional/North_America/United_States/Utah/Society_and_Culture/Politics/Candidates_and_Campaigns/US_Senate/Mitt_Romney) (https://curlie.org/Regional/North_America/United_States/Utah/Society_and_Culture/Politics/Candidates_and_Campaigns/US_Senate/Mitt_Romney) at [Curlie](https://curlie.org/)
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Business positions		
New office	Chief Executive Officer of <u>Bain Capital</u> 1984–2002	Position abolished
Preceded by <u>Bill Bain</u>	Chief Executive Officer of <u>Bain and Company</u> 1991–1992	Succeeded by <u>Steve Ellis</u> <i>as Worldwide Managing Director of Bain and Company</i>
		Succeeded by <u>Orit Gadiesh</u> <i>as Chair of Bain and Company</i>
Party political offices		
Preceded by <u>Joe Malone</u>	<u>Republican</u> nominee for <u>U.S. Senator from Massachusetts (Class 1)</u> 1994	Succeeded by <u>Jack Robinson</u>
Preceded by <u>Paul Cellucci</u>	<u>Republican</u> nominee for <u>Governor of Massachusetts</u> 2002	Succeeded by <u>Kerry Healey</u>
Preceded by <u>Kenny Guinn</u>	<u>Chair of the Republican Governors Association</u> 2005–2006	Succeeded by <u>Sonny Perdue</u>
Preceded by <u>John McCain</u>	<u>Republican</u> nominee for <u>President of the United States</u> 2012	Succeeded by <u>Donald Trump</u>
Preceded by <u>Orrin Hatch</u>	<u>Republican</u> nominee for <u>U.S. Senator from Utah (Class 1)</u> 2018	Most recent
Sporting positions		
Preceded by  <u>Eishiro Saito</u>	<u>President of the Organising Committee for Winter Olympic Games</u> 2002	Succeeded by  <u>Valentino Castellani</u>
Political offices		
Preceded by <u>Jane Swift</u> Acting	<u>Governor of Massachusetts</u> 2003–2007	Succeeded by <u>Deval Patrick</u>
U.S. Senate		
Preceded by <u>Orrin Hatch</u>	<u>United States Senator (Class 1) from Utah</u> 2019–present Served alongside: <u>Mike Lee</u>	Incumbent

U.S. order of precedence (ceremonial)

Preceded by <u>Jacky Rosen</u>	<u>United States senators by seniority</u> 87th	Succeeded by <u>Mike Braun</u>
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Mike Pence

Michael Richard Pence (born June 7, 1959) is an American politician, broadcaster, and lawyer who served as the 48th vice president of the United States from 2017 to 2021. A member of the Republican Party, he was the 50th governor of Indiana from 2013 to 2017. Pence was also a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from 2001 to 2013, representing the 2nd district of Indiana from 2001 to 2003 and the 6th district of Indiana from 2003 to 2013.

Pence was born and raised in Columbus, Indiana, and is the younger brother of U.S. representative Greg Pence. He graduated from Hanover College and earned a law degree from the Indiana University Robert H. McKinney School of Law before entering private practice. After losing two bids for a congressional seat in 1988 and 1990, he became a conservative radio and television talk show host from 1994 to 1999. He was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 2000 and represented Indiana's 2nd and 6th congressional districts from 2001 to 2013. He chaired the Republican Study Committee from 2005 to 2007 and served as the chairman of the House Republican Conference from 2009 to 2011, the third-highest position in the House Republican leadership.^[2] Pence described himself as a "principled conservative" and supporter of the Tea Party movement,^[3] saying he was "a Christian, a conservative, and a Republican, in that order."^[4]

Pence successfully sought the Republican nomination for the 2012 Indiana gubernatorial election when term-limited Mitch Daniels retired. He defeated former Indiana House speaker John R. Gregg in the closest gubernatorial election in 50 years.^{[5][6]} Upon becoming governor in January 2013, Pence initiated the largest tax cut in Indiana's history and pushed for more funding for private education initiatives. Pence signed bills intended to restrict abortions, including one that prohibited abortions if the reason for the procedure was the fetus's race, gender, or disability.^[7] After Pence signed the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, he encountered fierce resistance from moderate members of his party, the business community, and LGBT advocates. The backlash against the RFRA led Pence to amend the bill to prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation, gender identity, and other criteria.

Pence withdrew his gubernatorial reelection campaign in July 2016 to become the running mate of Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump, who went on to win the 2016 presidential election. He was inaugurated as vice president of the

Mike Pence

Official portrait, 2017
48th Vice President of the United States
In office
January 20, 2017 – January 20, 2021
President <u>Donald Trump</u>
Preceded by <u>Joe Biden</u>
Succeeded by <u>Kamala Harris</u>
2nd Chairman of the White House Coronavirus Task Force
In office
February 26, 2020 – January 20, 2021
President <u>Donald Trump</u>
Preceded by <u>Alex Azar</u>
Succeeded by <i>Office abolished</i> ^[a]
50th Governor of Indiana
In office
January 14, 2013 – January 9, 2017
Lieutenant <u>Sue Ellspermann</u> <u>Eric Holcomb</u>
Preceded by <u>Mitch Daniels</u>
Succeeded by <u>Eric Holcomb</u>
Chair of the House Republican Conference

United States on January 20, 2017. As vice president, Pence chaired the National Space Council since it was reestablished in June 2017. In February 2020, Pence was appointed chairman of the White House Coronavirus Task Force, which was established in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in the United States.

Pence and Donald Trump lost their bid for re-election in the 2020 presidential election to Joe Biden and Kamala Harris, although the Trump campaign refused to concede, made false allegations of election fraud, and filed more than 86 lawsuits in multiple states, all of which were eventually rejected by the courts.^{[8][9]} Despite Trump's urging to overturn the results, Pence certified the Biden-Harris ticket as the winner of the election. He was vilified by Trump and threatened with violence by some of Trump's supporters, particularly during the storming of the U.S. Capitol, for not trying to overturn the election results.

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Post-vice presidency (2021–present)

	In office
	January 3, 2009 – January 3, 2011
Leader	<u>John Boehner</u>
Preceded by	<u>Adam Putnam</u>
Succeeded by	<u>Jeb Hensarling</u>
	Member of the U.S. House of Representatives from Indiana
	In office
	January 3, 2001 – January 3, 2013
Preceded by	<u>David M. McIntosh</u>
Succeeded by	<u>Luke Messer</u>
Constituency	<u>2nd district</u> (2001–2003)
	<u>6th district</u> (2003–2013)
	Personal details
Born	<u>Michael Richard Pence</u> June 7, 1959 <u>Columbus, Indiana, U.S.</u>
Political party	<u>Republican</u> (1983–present)
Other political affiliations	<u>Democratic</u> (before 1983) ^[1]
Spouse(s)	<u>Karen Batten</u> (m. 1985)
Children	3, including <u>Charlotte</u>
Relatives	<u>Greg Pence</u> (brother)
Residence	<u>Indianapolis, Indiana, U.S.</u>
Education	<u>Hanover College</u> (BA) <u>Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis</u> (JD)
Occupation	Politician · lawyer · broadcaster
Signature	
	Other offices
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2005–2007: Chair of the <u>Republican Study Committee</u>

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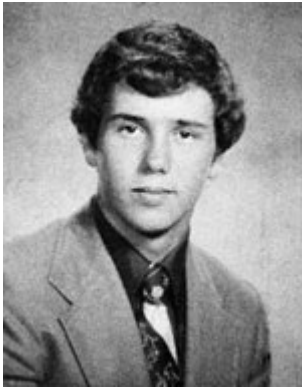
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Early life and education



Pence in Columbus North High School's 1977 yearbook

Mike Pence was born Michael Richard Pence on June 7, 1959, in Columbus, Indiana, one of six children of Ann Jane "Nancy" Cawley and Edward Joseph Pence Jr.,^{[10][11]} who ran a group of gas stations.^{[12][13]} His father served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War and received the Bronze Star in 1953, which Pence displays in his office along with its commendation letter and a reception photograph.^[14] His father was of German and Irish descent and his mother is of Irish ancestry.^[15] His paternal grandfather, Edward Joseph Pence, Sr., worked in the Chicago stockyards.^[16] He was named after his maternal grandfather, Richard Michael Cawley, who emigrated from Doocastle, County Mayo, Ireland, to the United States through Ellis Island, following an aunt and his brother James, and became a bus driver in Chicago, Illinois.^{[17][18][19][20]} His maternal grandmother's parents were from Doonbeg, County Clare, Ireland.^{[21][22]}

Pence graduated from Columbus North High School in 1977. He earned a Bachelor of Arts in history from Hanover College in 1981, and a Juris Doctor from the Robert H. McKinney School of Law at Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis in Indianapolis in 1986.^[23] While at Hanover, he joined the Phi Gamma Delta fraternity, where he became the chapter president.^[24] After graduating from Hanover, he was an admissions counselor at the college from 1981 to 1983.^[25]

In his childhood and early adulthood, Pence was a Roman Catholic and a Democrat, as was the rest of his family.^[26] He volunteered for the Bartholomew County Democratic Party in 1976 and voted for Jimmy Carter in the 1980 presidential election,^{[1][19]} and has said he was originally inspired to get involved in politics by people such as John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King Jr.^[1] While in college, Pence left the Catholic Church and became an evangelical, born-again Christian, to the great disappointment of his mother.^{[1][19]} His political views also started shifting to the right during this time in his life, something which Pence attributes to the "common-sense conservatism of Ronald Reagan" with which he began to identify.^{[1][27]}

Early career and congressional campaigns

After graduating from law school in 1986, Pence was an attorney in private practice.^[28] In 1988, Pence ran for Congress against Democratic incumbent Philip Sharp, but lost.^[29] He ran against Sharp again in 1990, quitting his job in order to work full-time in the campaign, but once again was unsuccessful.^[29] During the race, Pence used "political donations to pay the mortgage on his house, his personal credit card bill, groceries, golf tournament fees and car payments for his wife".^[30] While the spending was not illegal at the time, it reportedly undermined his campaign.^[30]

During the 1990 campaign, Pence ran a television advertisement in which an actor, dressed in a robe and headdress and speaking in a thick Middle Eastern accent, thanked his opponent, Sharp, for doing nothing to wean the United States off imported oil as chairman of a House subcommittee on energy and power.^{[30][31]} In response to criticism, Pence's campaign responded that the advertisement was not about Arabs; rather, it concerned Sharp's lack of leadership.^{[30][31]} In 1991, Pence wrote an essay, "Confessions of a Negative Campaigner", published in the *Indiana Policy Review*, in which he apologized for running negative ads against Sharp. Pence vowed to refrain from using insulting speech or running ads that belittle his adversaries.^{[32][33][30][34]} Also taking place in 1991, he became the president of the *Indiana Policy Review Foundation*, a self-described free-market think tank and a member of the *State Policy Network*, a position he held until 1993.^{[35][36][37]}



Pence with President Ronald Reagan at the White House in 1988

Shortly after his first congressional campaign in 1988, radio station *WRCR-FM* in Rushville, Indiana, hired Pence to host a weekly half-hour radio show, *Washington Update with Mike Pence*.^[38] In 1992, Pence began hosting a daily talk show on *WRCR*, *The Mike Pence Show*, in addition to a Saturday show on *WNDE* in Indianapolis.^{[35][38][39][40]} Pence called himself "Rush Limbaugh on decaf" since he considered himself politically conservative while not as bombastic as Limbaugh.^{[33][41]} Beginning on April 11, 1994, Network Indiana syndicated *The Mike Pence Show* statewide.^[42] With a 9:00 a.m. to noon (ET) time slot, the program reached as many as 18 radio stations in Indiana, including *WIBC* in Indianapolis.^[35] Pence ended his radio show in September 1999 to focus on his 2000 campaign for Congress, which he eventually won.^[43] From 1995 to 1999, Pence hosted a weekend public affairs TV show also titled *The Mike Pence Show* on Indianapolis TV station *WNDY*.^{[38][44]}

U.S. House of Representatives (2001–2013)

Pence rejuvenated his political career by running for the U.S. House of Representatives again in 2000, this time winning the seat in Indiana's 2nd congressional district after six-year incumbent David M. McIntosh opted to run for governor of Indiana. The district (renumbered as Indiana's 6th congressional district beginning in 2002) comprises all or portions of 19 counties in eastern Indiana. As a congressman, Pence adopted the slogan he had used on the radio, describing himself as "a Christian, a conservative and a Republican, in that order".^[4] While in Congress, Pence belonged to the Tea Party Caucus.^[45]

In his first year in office, Pence opposed President George W. Bush's No Child Left Behind Act in 2001,^[46] as well as President Bush's Medicare prescription drug expansion the following year.^[47] Pence was re-elected four more times by comfortable margins. In the 2006, 2008, and 2010 House elections, he defeated Democrat Barry Welsh.^{[48][49][50]}

Pence began to climb the party leadership structure and from 2005 to 2007 was chairman of the Republican Study Committee, a group of conservative House Republicans.^[51] In November 2006, Pence announced his candidacy for leader of the Republican Party (minority leader) in the United States House of Representatives.^[52] Pence's release announcing his run for minority leader focused on a "return to the values" of the Newt Gingrich-headed 1994 Republican Revolution.^[52] However, he lost the bid to Representative John Boehner of Ohio by a vote of 168 for Boehner, 27 for Pence, and one for Representative Joe Barton of Texas.^[53] In January 2009, Pence was elected as the Republican Conference chairman, the third-highest-ranking Republican leadership position at the time behind Minority Leader John Boehner and Republican Whip Eric Cantor. He ran unopposed and was elected unanimously. He was the first representative from

Indiana to hold a House leadership position since 1981.^[2] During Pence's twelve years in the House, he introduced 90 bills and resolutions; none became law.^[54] His committee assignments in the House were the following:

- 107th Congress (2001–2003): Agriculture, Judiciary, Small Business^[55]
- 108th Congress (2003–2005): Agriculture, International Relations, Judiciary^[56]
- 109th Congress (2005–2007): Agriculture, International Relations, Judiciary^[57]
- 110th Congress (2007–2009): Foreign Affairs, Judiciary, Select Committee to Investigate the Voting Irregularities of August 2, 2007 (Ranking Member)^[58]
- 111th Congress (2009–2011): Foreign Affairs^[59]
- 112th Congress (2011–2013): Foreign Affairs, Judiciary^[60]



Pence as a U.S. congressman in 2010

In 2008, *Esquire* magazine listed Pence as one of the ten best members of Congress, writing that Pence's "unalloyed traditional conservatism has repeatedly pitted him against his party elders."^[61] Pence was mentioned as a possible Republican candidate for president in 2008^[62] and 2012.^[63] In September 2010, he was the top choice for president in a straw poll conducted by the Values Voter Summit.^{[64][65]} That same year, he was encouraged to run against incumbent Democratic senator Evan Bayh,^{[66][67][68]} but opted not to enter the race,^[69] even after Bayh unexpectedly announced that he would retire.^[70]

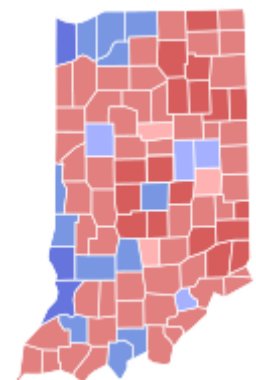


Congressman Pence visits U.S. soldiers in Mosul, Iraq, in 2006.

Governor of Indiana (2013–2017)

2012 election

In May 2011, Pence announced that he would be seeking the Republican nomination for governor of Indiana in 2012.^[71] Incumbent Republican Governor Mitch Daniels was term-limited. Pence ran on a platform that touted the successes of his predecessor and promised to continue educational reform and business deregulation of Daniels.^{[72][73]} The Democratic nominee was former Indiana Speaker of the House John R. Gregg. Despite strong name recognition and a popular outgoing governor of the same party, Pence found himself in a heated race, eventually pulling out a close win with just under 50 percent of the vote, and less than 3% ahead of Gregg, with Libertarian nominee Rupert Boneham receiving most of the remaining votes.^[74]



Results of the 2012 Indiana gubernatorial election; Pence won the counties in red.

Pence was sworn in as the 50th governor of Indiana on January 14, 2013.^[75]

Fiscal and economic policy

Pence "inherited a \$2 billion budget reserve from his predecessor, Mitch Daniels, and the state ... added to that reserve under his watch, though not before requiring state agencies, including public universities, to reduce funding in years in which revenue fell below projections."^[76] The state finished fiscal year 2014 with a reserve of \$2 billion; budget cuts ordered by Pence for the \$14 billion annual state budget include \$24 million cut from colleges and universities; \$27 million cut from the Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA);^[77] and \$12 million cut from the Department of Correction.^[78] During Pence's term as governor, the unemployment rate reflected the national average.^[79] Indiana's job growth lagged slightly behind the national trend.^[80] In 2014, Indiana's economy was among the slowest-growing in the United States, with 0.4 percent GDP growth, compared to the national average of 2.2 percent; this was attributed in part to a sluggish manufacturing sector.^[81] Carrier Corp. and United Technologies Electronic Controls (UTEC) announced in 2016 that they would be closing two facilities in Indiana, sending 2,100 jobs to Mexico; the Trump campaign criticized the moves^[82] and Pence expressed "deep disappointment".^{[83][84]} Pence was unsuccessful in his efforts to persuade the companies to stay in the state, although the companies agreed to reimburse local and state governments for certain tax incentives they had received.^{[84][85]} The Indiana Economic Development Corporation led by Pence had approved \$24 million in incentives to ten companies who sent jobs abroad. \$8.7 million had been paid out by August 2016.^[82]

In 2013, Pence signed a law blocking local governments in Indiana from requiring businesses to offer higher wages or benefits beyond those required by federal law. In 2015, Pence also repealed an Indiana law that required construction companies working on publicly funded projects to pay a prevailing wage.^{[86][87][88][89]} Indiana enacted right-to-work legislation under Pence's predecessor, Republican governor Mitch Daniels. Under Pence, the state successfully defended this legislation against a labor challenge.^[87] In 2013, Pence also announced the formation of the Indiana Biosciences Research Institute, a life sciences research facility supported with \$25 million in startup funds from the state.^[90]

Pence made tax reform, namely a ten percent income-tax rate cut, a priority for 2013.^{[91][92]} While he did not get the ten percent cut he advocated, Pence did accomplish his goal of cutting state taxes.^[91]

Legislators cut the income tax by five percent and also killed the inheritance tax.^[91] Speaker of the House Brian Bosma said the legislative package was the "largest tax cut in our state's history, about \$1.1 billion dollars".^[93] By signing Senate Bill 1, the state corporate income tax would be dropped from 6.5 percent to 4.9 percent by 2021, which would be the second-lowest corporate income tax in the nation.^[94] The law also permitted Indiana counties to eliminate the business personal property tax on new equipment and let them exempt small businesses with less than \$20,000 worth of equipment from paying personal property taxes.^[94]

On June 12, 2013, the Indiana Legislature overrode Pence's veto of a bill to retroactively authorize a local tax. Lawmakers overrode Pence's veto in a 68–23 vote in the House and a 34–12 one in the Senate.^[95] Republican legislators overwhelmingly voted against Pence, while most Democrats supported his veto.^[96] The Jackson–Pulaski tax fix, one of three bills vetoed by Pence during the session, addressed a 15-year-old



Pence was sworn in as governor of Indiana on January 14, 2013.



Governor Pence speaks at the 2015 Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) in National Harbor, Maryland, on February 27, 2015.



Governor Pence (right) with President Barack Obama (left) and Vermont Governor Peter Shumlin, February 25, 2013

county income tax which had been imposed to fund the construction of jail facilities with the stipulation that the tax be lowered by one percent after the first several years. The reduction was not implemented and thus county residents paid an additional one percent tax that they were legally not required to pay. The bill, which was passed by a huge majority of legislators and subsequently vetoed by Pence, allowed money to be kept and not returned to the taxpayers as would have otherwise been necessary.^{[96][97]}

As governor, Pence pressed for a balanced budget amendment to the state's constitution. He initially proposed the initiative in his State of the State address in January 2015. The legislation passed the state Senate.^[98] Indiana has had AAA credit ratings with the three major credit-rating agencies since 2010, before Pence took office; these ratings were maintained throughout Pence's tenure.^[99]

In 2014, Pence supported the Indiana Gateway project,^[100] a \$71.4 million passenger and freight rail improvement initiative paid for by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (the federal stimulus package), which Pence had voted against while a congressman.^[101] In October 2015, Pence "announced plans to pay off a \$250 million federal loan" to cover unemployment insurance payments which had spiked during the recession.^[76] In March 2016, Pence signed legislation to fund a \$230 million two-year road-funding package.^[76]

Education policy

During his tenure as governor, Pence supported significant increases in education funding to pre-schools, voucher programs, and charter schools, but frequently clashed with supporters of traditional public schools.^{[102][103]} In 2014, a little over one year after taking office, Pence helped establish a \$10-million state preschool pilot program in Indiana and testified personally before the state Senate Education Committee in favor of the program to convince fellow Republicans (several of whom opposed the proposal) to approve the plan.^{[102][103]} Although the plan was initially defeated, Pence successfully managed to revive it, "getting Indiana off the list of just 10 states that spent no direct funds to help poor children attend preschool".^[103] Demand for enrollment in the program "far outstripped" capacity, and Pence at first refused to apply for up to \$80 million in federal Health and Human Services Preschool Development Grant program funding,^[102] arguing that "Indiana must develop our own pre-K program without federal intrusion."^[104] After coming under sustained criticism for this position, Pence reversed course and sought to apply for the funds.^{[102][105]}

In 2015, Pence secured significant increases in charter-school funding from the legislation, although he did not get everything he had proposed.^[103] Legislation signed into law by Pence in 2013 greatly increased the number of students in Indiana who qualify for school vouchers, making it one of the largest voucher programs in the United States.^{[106][107][108][109]} The annual cost of the program is estimated to be \$53 million for the 2015–2016 school year.^{[108][109]}

Pence opposed the Common Core State Standards Initiative, calling for the repeal of the standards in his 2014 State of the State address. The Indiana General Assembly then passed a bill to repeal the standards, becoming the first state to do so.^{[102][103]} In a televised interview appearance with Chris Matthews, Pence advocated eroding the teaching of science in public schools by putting religious dogma on a par with established science, accepting "creationist beliefs" as factual, and thus "teaching the controversy" over evolution and natural selection, and regarding the age of the earth, and letting children decide for themselves what to believe.^[110]

Despite successful advocacy for more funding for pre-schools, voucher programs, and charter schools, Pence has frequently clashed with teachers unions and supporters of public schooling.^{[102][103]} In one of his first acts as governor, Pence removed control of the Educational Employment Relations Board, which was in charge of handling conflicts between unions and school boards, from Glenda Ritz, a Democrat who was the Indiana superintendent of public instruction (a separately elected position in the state).^[111] Pence created a new "Center for Education and Career Innovation" (CECI) to coordinate efforts between schools and the private

sector; Ritz opposed the center, viewing it as a "power grab" and encroachment on her own duties. Pence eventually disestablished the center in order to help defuse the conflict.^{[102][103]} In May 2015, Pence signed a bill stripping Ritz of much of her authority over standardized testing and other education issues, and reconstituting the State Board of Education dominated by Pence appointees.^[112] The bill also allowed the board to appoint a chairman other than the Superintendent of Public Instruction starting in 2017, and added the State Board of Education (controlled by Pence) as a "state educational authority" along with the Department of Education (controlled by Ritz) for purposes of accessing sensitive student data.^[112] Pence and Ritz also clashed over non-binding federal guidelines that advised Indiana public schools must treat transgender students in a way that corresponds to their gender identity, even if their education files indicate a different gender.^[113]

Energy and environment

During Pence's term in office, the Republican-controlled Indiana General Assembly "repeatedly tried to roll back renewable energy standards and successfully ended Indiana's energy efficiency efforts".^[114] Pence has been an outspoken supporter of the coal industry, declaring in his 2015 State of the State address that "Indiana is a pro-coal state," expressing support for an "all-of-the-above energy strategy", and stating: "we must continue to oppose the overreaching schemes of the EPA until we bring their war on coal to an end."^{[114][115]} In 2015, Pence sent a letter to President Obama denouncing the EPA's Clean Power Plan (which would regulate carbon emissions from existing power plants) and stating that Indiana would refuse to comply with the plan.^{[114][116]} Indiana joined other states in a lawsuit seeking to invalidate the plan.^[114] In 2016, Pence said that even if legal challenges failed, Indiana would continue to defy the rule and would not come up with its own plan to reduce emissions.^[117]

Gun policy

In 2014, over the opposition of Indiana school organizations, Pence signed a bill which allows firearms to be kept in vehicles on school property.^[118] In 2015, following a shooting in Chattanooga, Pence recruited the National Rifle Association to train the Indiana National Guard on concealed carry. Some National Guard officials from other states questioned why a civilian organization would be involved in a military issue.^[119] In May 2015, Pence signed into law Senate Bill 98, which limited lawsuits against gun and ammunition manufacturers and sellers and retroactively terminated the City of Gary's still-pending 1999 lawsuit against gun manufacturers and retailers that allegedly made illegal sales of handguns.^{[120][121]} The bill was supported by Republicans such as state senator Jim Tomes, who hoped the measure would attract more gun-related businesses to Indiana, but opposed by Gary mayor and former Indiana attorney general Karen Freeman-Wilson, who viewed the measure as "an unprecedented violation of the separation of powers between the legislative and judicial branches of state government".^[121] In 2016, Pence signed Senate Bill 109 into law, legalizing the captive hunting of farm-raised deer in Indiana.^[122]

Public health

In 2009, parts of East Chicago were discovered to have toxic lead and arsenic contamination, and were designated a Superfund site. Governor Pence declined to declare the Superfund site a state emergency,^[123] his successor Governor Eric Holcomb has issued Executive Order 17–13, declaring a disaster emergency in East Chicago.^{[124][125]} The site of several former lead smelting plants was first identified as a health concern by the EPA in 1997.^[126]

Beginning in December 2014, there was an HIV outbreak in Southern Indiana.^[127] In 2011, Planned Parenthood (PP) operated five rural clinics in Indiana. They tested for HIV and offered prevention, intervention and counseling to improve public health outcomes. The PP clinic in Scott County performed no



Governor Pence at the dedication of a new veterans' clinic, March 30, 2016

abortions.^[128] The Republican-controlled legislature and Pence defunded Planned Parenthood.^[129] Scott County has been without an HIV testing center since 2013.^[128] Pence had long been a vocal opponent of needle exchange programs, which allow drug users to trade in used syringes for sterile ones in order to stop the spread of diseases, despite solid scientific evidence that such programs prevent the spread of AIDS, Hepatitis B (HBV) and Hepatitis C (HCV), and do not increase drug abuse.^[127] In March 2015, well after the outbreak began, Pence finally allowed at least five counties to open needle exchanges, but did not move to lift the state ban on funding for needle exchanges.^[127] Critics say Pence's compromise had been ineffective because counties had no way to pay for needle exchanges themselves. Anesthesiologist Jerome Adams, then the Pence-

appointed Indiana state health commissioner and now the Trump-appointed surgeon general of the United States, defended Pence, arguing that publicly funded needle exchange programs are controversial in many conservative communities. During his time as Indiana State Health Commissioner, Adams—along with Governor Pence—delayed Indiana's efforts to deal with the largest HIV outbreak related to injection drug use in the history of the United States by stalling adoption of a needle exchange program. Adams said, "There are people who have real moral and ethical concerns about passing out needles to people with substance abuse problems. To be honest, I shared that sentiment."^{[130][131]} When President Trump appointed Pence in 2020 to head the country's response to coronavirus, he touted his ostensible experience with quelling an epidemic of HIV in Indiana, in which Pence deliberately delayed his state government's response to the disease despite the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control that needle exchange was an efficacious approach to reining in the spread of diseases. Pence had told lawmakers he would veto any bill they might pass that provided for such exchanges.^{[132][133]}

In 2015, Pence and the Obama administration agreed to expand Medicaid in Indiana, in accordance with the Affordable Care Act.^{[134][135]} As part of the expansion, called the Healthy Indiana Plan 2.0, Pence negotiated modifications to the program for Indiana that included co-payments by participants. The co-payments are linked to healthy behaviors on the part of the participants so that, for example, a participant who quit smoking would receive a lower co-payment. Participants can lose benefits for failing to make the payments.^[136] The required contribution would be about 2% of income. Critics say those who already struggle to buy food and housing will have even more difficulty paying their 2%. One critic expressed concern that lower-income people may stay out of the program or avoid pursuing health care. A service provider said the program "wins the award for bureaucratic complexity and red tape".^[137] In early 2017, Indiana submitted its application to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to renew Healthy Indiana, to show that the program was meeting its targets, as required for renewal. National Public Radio/Side Effects Public Media said the application used "misleading and inaccurate information".^[138]

Religion and LGBT rights

On March 26, 2015, Pence signed Indiana Senate Bill 101, also known as the Indiana "religious objections" bill (Religious Freedom Restoration Act, or RFRA), into law.^[139] The move was praised by religious conservatives,^[140] but criticized by people and groups who felt the law was carefully worded in a way that would permit discrimination against LGBT persons.^{[141][142][143][144]} Such organizations as the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), the gamer convention Gen Con, and the Disciples of Christ spoke out against the law. Apple CEO Tim Cook and Salesforce.com CEO Marc Benioff condemned the law, with Salesforce.com saying it would halt its plans to expand in the state.^{[145][146]} Angie's List announced that they would cancel a \$40 million expansion of their Indianapolis-based headquarters over concerns with the law. The expansion would have moved 1000 jobs into the state.^[147] Thousands protested against the policy.^[141]

Five Republican state representatives voted against the bill, and Greg Ballard, the Republican mayor of Indianapolis, criticized it as sending the "wrong signal" about the state.^[148]

Pence defended the law, saying it was not about discrimination. In an appearance on the ABC News program *This Week with George Stephanopoulos*^[149] he said, "We are not going to change this law," while refusing to answer whether examples of discrimination against LGBT people given by Eric Miller of anti-LGBT group Advance America would be legal under the law.^[150] Pence denied the law permitted discrimination and wrote in a March 31, 2015, *Wall Street Journal* op-ed, "If I saw a restaurant owner refuse to serve a gay couple, I wouldn't eat there anymore. As governor of Indiana, if I were presented a bill that legalized discrimination against any person or group, I would veto it."^[151] In the wake of the backlash against the RFRA, on April 2, 2015, Pence signed legislation revising the law to protect against potential discrimination.^[152] Pence received heavy criticism from liberals at the time of signing the religious freedom law, who labeled him as anti-gay. In 2018, emails released to the Associated Press showed that conservatives had also opposed his changing the law.^[153]



Pence addresses supporters at a church service, September 2016.

Abortion

In March 2016, as Indiana governor, Pence signed into law H.B. 1337, a bill that both banned certain abortion procedures and placed new restrictions on abortion providers. The bill banned abortion if the reason for the procedure given by the woman was the fetus' race or gender or a fetal abnormality. In addition, the bill required that all fetal remains from abortions or miscarriages at any stage of pregnancy be buried or cremated, which according to the Guttmacher Institute was not required in any other state.^{[154][155][156]} The law was described as "exceptional for its breadth"; if implemented, it would have made Indiana "the first state to have a blanket ban on abortions based solely on race, sex or suspected disabilities, including evidence of Down syndrome".^[155] Days after the U.S. Supreme Court issued its decision in *Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt*, a federal court issued a preliminary injunction blocking the bill from taking effect, with U.S. district judge Tanya Walton Pratt determining that the bill was likely to be unconstitutional and that the State of Indiana would be unlikely to prevail at trial.^[155] The abortion bill was subsequently ruled unconstitutional in April 2018 by the United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit.^[157]

Media and the press

In June 2013, Pence was criticized for deleting comments of others posted on his official government Facebook page; he apologized.^[158]

On January 26, 2015, it was widely reported that Pence had planned to launch a state-run, taxpayer-funded news service for Indiana.^[159] The service, called "JustIN", was to be overseen by a former reporter for *The Indianapolis Star*, and would feature breaking news, stories written by press secretaries, and light features.^[159] At the time, it was reported that the two employees who would run the news service would be paid a combined \$100,000 yearly salary.^[159] The target audience was small newspapers which had limited staff, but the site would also serve to communicate directly with the public. The publisher of the *Commercial Review of Portland, Indiana*, said, "I think it's a ludicrous idea ... the notion of elected officials presenting material that will inevitably have a pro-administration point of view is antithetical to the idea of an independent press."^[159] There was speculation that the news service would publish pro-administration stories that would make Pence look good in the event of a presidential run.^[160]

According to Associated Press, the idea "of stories prewritten for the media set off a wave of criticism from journalists around the country, who likened the Indiana endeavor to state-run media in Russia and China. Headlines like 'Pravda in the Plains' accompanied calls for Pence to scrap the idea."^[161] David A. Graham of The Atlantic regarded the announcement of JustIN as evidence of a disturbing changing trend in how the public gets news.^[162] After a week or so of controversy about the idea, Pence scrapped the idea saying, "However well-intentioned, after thorough review of the preliminary planning and careful consideration of the concerns expressed, I am writing you to inform you that I have made a decision to terminate development of the JustIN website immediately."^[163]



Pence at the 500 Festival Parade in Indianapolis, 2015

Syrian refugee crisis

As governor, Pence attempted unsuccessfully to prevent Syrian refugees from being resettled in Indiana.^[164] In February 2016, a federal judge ruled that Pence's order to cut off federal funds for a local non-profit refugee resettlement agency was unconstitutional; Pence has appealed.^[164] In December 2015, Pence said that "calls to ban Muslims from entering the U.S. are offensive and unconstitutional."^[165]

Public-records requests and use of private email

Pence "repeatedly stonewalled public records requests as governor, often withholding documents or delaying their release if not denying them outright".^{[166][167][168]} As governor, Pence routinely used a personal AOL email account to conduct official business, according to public records. In 2016, hackers compromised the account and used it to send fraudulent emails in an attempt to obtain money from Pence's contacts.^[169] While Pence's use of a private email account for state business is not prohibited by Indiana law, some of the emails discussed sensitive matters and homeland security issues.^[170] In March 2017, after Pence had become vice president, the State of Indiana released 29 emails to media outlets that had made public records requests, but withheld an undisclosed number of other emails, saying they were deliberative or advisory and thus exempt from public disclosure.^[170] Cybersecurity experts and government transparency advocates were surprised by Pence's use of a personal email account to conduct public business, given Pence's past attacks on Hillary Clinton's use of a private email server while U.S. secretary of state.^[170] In 2017, Indiana hired a private law firm for \$100,000 to handle a backlog of public-records requests for Pence's personal AOL account email correspondence.^[166]

Re-election campaign and withdrawal

Pence ran for a second term as governor. He was unopposed in the May 3, 2016, Republican primary for governor. He was to face Democrat John R. Gregg in a rematch of the 2012 race. However, Pence filed paperwork ending his campaign on July 15, 2016, as Trump announced his selection of Pence as his vice presidential running mate.^[171] Lieutenant Governor Eric Holcomb was nominated in Pence's place, and selected Suzanne Crouch as his running mate.^{[172][173]} Holcomb went on to defeat Gregg in the general election.^[174]

2016 vice presidential campaign

Pence endorsed Senator Ted Cruz of Texas in the 2016 Republican presidential primaries.^[62]



Pence speaks at a campaign rally in Phoenix, Arizona, August 2016.

Donald Trump considered naming Pence as his vice presidential running mate along with other finalists including New Jersey governor Chris Christie and former House speaker Newt Gingrich.^[175] Pence had stronger connections at the time to the politically influential big donors, the Kochs, than Trump did.^{[176][16][177][178][179]} It was widely reported on July 14 that Pence planned to end his re-election campaign and accept the Republican vice presidential nomination instead.^[180] The following day, Trump officially announced on Twitter that Pence would be his running mate.^{[181][182][183]}

Immediately after the announcement, Pence said he was "very supportive of Donald Trump's call to temporarily suspend immigration from countries where terrorist influence and impact represents a threat to the United States".^[184] Pence said he was "absolutely" in sync with Trump's Mexican wall proposal, saying Mexico was "absolutely" going to pay for it.^[185]

According to a FiveThirtyEight rating of candidates' ideology, Pence was the most conservative vice-presidential candidate in the last 40 years.^[186]

Pence said his role model as vice president would be Dick Cheney.^[187]

During Pence's preparations for the vice presidential debate in October 2016, Wisconsin governor Scott Walker played the role of Democratic vice presidential nominee Tim Kaine.^[188] In Kaine's own debate prep, lawyer Robert Barnett was selected to play Pence.^[189] Following the debate, experts concluded Pence won against Kaine, with a CNN poll showing 48% of viewers thought Pence won and 42% believing Kaine won.^[190] Pence's "cooler" temperament was seen as an advantage compared to Kaine, who was perceived as more hotheaded.^{[191][192]}

On October 7, 2016, lewd comments made by Donald Trump in 2005 surfaced and gained heavy media attention.^[193] That day, Pence said to reporters, "I do not condone his remarks and cannot defend them," but made clear that he was standing by Trump.^[194] In response to the revelation, Paul Ryan, the then-speaker of the U. S. House of Representatives, "uninvited" Trump from what would have been a joint campaign event. The Trump campaign attempted to substitute Pence for Trump at the event,^[195] but according to *The New York Times*, Pence called Trump on October 8 and told him that he (Pence) would not appear at the event, and that Trump would need to handle the next 48 hours on his own, as Pence did not think he would be an effective surrogate for Trump.^[196]

According to Bob Woodward's 2018 book *Fear: Trump in the White House*, in the midst of the scandal, then-Republican National Committee chairman Reince Priebus told Trump he should drop out of the race for the good of the party, and that Pence had agreed to replace Trump on the top of the ticket as the Republican presidential nominee, with former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice agreeing to be Pence's running mate.^[197]

On October 10, 2016, Pence appeared on CNN and said, in response to rumors that he was leaving the ticket, that it was "absolutely false to suggest that at any point in time we considered dropping off this ticket" and that it is the "greatest honor of my life" to be nominated as Trump's running mate.^[198]

On October 27, 2016, a chartered Boeing 737 carrying Pence skidded off a runway at LaGuardia Airport in New York City and was slowed by an engineered materials arrestor system; no injuries were reported.^[200]

Vice Presidency (2017–2021)

On November 8, 2016, Pence was elected vice president of the United States as Trump's running mate.

Soon after the election, he was appointed chairman of President-elect Trump's transition team.^[201] During the transition phase of the Trump administration, Pence was reported as holding a large degree of influence in the administration due to his roles as a mediator between Trump and congressional Republicans, for reassuring conservatives about Trump's conservative credentials, and his influence in determining Donald Trump's cabinet.^{[202][203]}

Pence is the sixth vice president from Indiana, following Schuyler Colfax (1869–1873), Thomas A. Hendricks (1885), Charles W. Fairbanks (1905–1909), Thomas R. Marshall (1913–1921), and Dan Quayle (1989–1993).

Inauguration

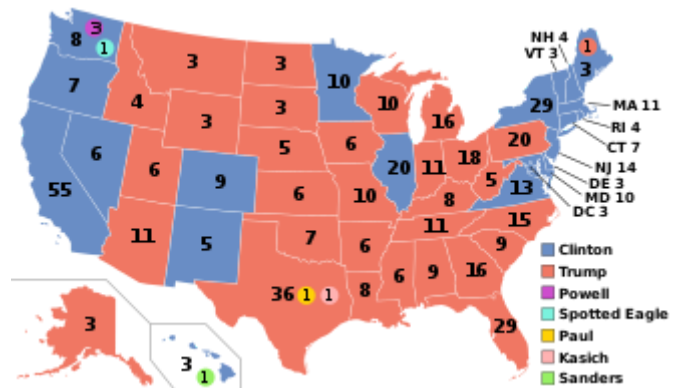
On January 20, 2017, at noon, Pence became the 48th vice president of the United States, sworn into the office by justice Clarence Thomas, using Ronald Reagan's Bible, opened to 2 Chronicles 7:14, "If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land," which is the same verse Reagan used for his swearing-ins as governor and president. Pence also used his personal Bible which he opens every morning.^[204]

Vice presidency

On the first day in office (January 20), Pence performed various ceremonial duties, including swearing in Jim Mattis as United States secretary of defense and John Kelly as secretary of homeland security.^[205] He also administered the oath of office to the White House senior staff on January 22, 2017.^[206]

Pence also sat in on calls made by President Trump to foreign heads of government and state such as Russian president Vladimir Putin^[207] and Australian prime minister Malcolm Turnbull.^{[208][209]}

In January, Pence appointed Josh Pitcock as his chief of staff, whom he had known from his gubernatorial and congressional days.^[210] The following month, Jarrod Agen was tapped as deputy assistant to the president and director of communications to the vice president; his previous job being chief of staff for governor of Michigan Rick



The Trump–Pence ticket won the 2016 presidential election with 306 of the 538 available electoral votes, later reduced to 304 due to a faithless elector.^[b]



Vice President-elect Pence meets with Vice President Joe Biden at the White House on November 10, 2016



Pence being sworn in as vice president by Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas on January 20, 2017



Pence with President Donald Trump

Snyder through the time of the Flint water crisis.^[211] In July, Pitcock stepped down as chief of staff, and was succeeded in the position by Nick Ayers, another longtime Pence advisor.^[212]

On February 5, 2017, Pence warned Iran "not to test the resolve" of the new Trump administration following their ballistic missile tests.^[213]

On February 7, 2017, Pence, in his dual constitutional role as president of the United States Senate made the first ever tie-breaking vote to confirm a Cabinet member.^{[214][215]} He cast the deciding vote to break a fifty-fifty tie to confirm Betsy DeVos as the secretary of education.^[216] Pence cast his second tie-breaking vote on March 30, voting to advance a bill to defund Planned Parenthood.^[217] In 2018, Pence broke a tie to confirm Jonathan A. Kobes for the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit. This was the first ever tie-breaking vote to confirm a judicial nominee in U.S. history. In total, Pence had cast 13 tie-breaking votes, seventh-most in history and more than his previous four predecessors (Joe Biden, Dick Cheney, Al Gore and Dan Quayle) cast combined (Cheney broke eight ties, Gore broke four ties, and Quayle and Biden did not cast a tie-breaking vote).

In April, Pence made a tour of the Asia-Pacific region. In South Korea, he met acting president Hwang Kyo-ahn and condemned North Korea's latest missile launch.^{[218][219][220]} In Japan, Pence met Prime Minister Shinzō Abe and pledged to work with Japan, South Korea, and China "to achieve a peaceable resolution and the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula," adding "The era of strategic patience is over and while all options are on the table."^{[221][222]} Pence subsequently traveled to Jakarta, Indonesia, where he met with president Joko Widodo, toured the largest mosque in the region (the Istiqlal Mosque), and praised moderate Islam.^{[223][224]} Pence ended his trip with stops in Sydney, Australia (where, after meeting with Malcolm Turnbull, he said the U.S. "intends to honor" a U.S.–Australia refugee resettlement agreement),^[225] and Oahu, Hawaii and American Samoa.^[226]

On May 21, 2017, Pence delivered the commencement address at the University of Notre Dame. Traditionally, the president delivers the address at Notre Dame in his inaugural year, but in 2017 Pence was invited instead when Trump decided to speak at Liberty University.^{[227][228][229][230]}

On October 8, 2017, Pence walked out of a game between the NFL's Indianapolis Colts and San Francisco 49ers at Trump's request after members of the 49ers knelt during the national anthem. Shortly afterwards, Pence commented via Twitter, "President Trump and I will not dignify any event that disrespects our soldiers, our Flag, or our National Anthem," adding, "While everyone is entitled to their own opinion, I don't think it's too much to ask NFL players to respect the flag and our national anthem."^[231] Pence was widely criticized by various people for what was considered a publicity stunt. Democratic representative Adam Schiff (CA-28) questioned how much taxpayer's money was used to fund Pence's actions,^[232] and CNN later estimated that the total cost of his eight hours of travel on Air Force Two to attend the game was about \$242,500, not including ground transportation and security.^[233] 49ers safety Eric Reid (the second NFL player after Colin Kaepernick to participate in the protests) told reporters it was predictable that Pence would walk out, knowing that most of the team were protesting.^[232] Reid also expressed doubt over the regularity Pence is in terms of attending Colts matches, and referenced a photograph of the vice president and his wife in Colts uniform that had been tweeted before the match,^[232] although the official photograph (right) proved otherwise. The photograph in question was first published in 2014.^[234] Sportswriter Peter King wrote that the furor surrounding Pence had overshadowed Peyton Manning, who was being honored by the Colts, saying, "Pence trumped a day that belonged to the greatest football hero the state of Indiana has ever seen, and he did it for political purposes ... he stole Manning's last great day as a Colt. [He] will have to live with himself



Vice President Mike Pence, Second Lady Karen Pence, and Major General Courtney P. Carr stand for the National Anthem.

for that."^[232] The following year, Pence reacted positively on Twitter, after NFL owners unanimously decided to approve a new policy requiring all players to stand (or, given the option to stay in the locker room) during the national anthem, despite not consulting the NFL Players Association.^[235]

On February 1, 2018, it was announced that Pence would lead the presidential delegation to the 2018 Winter Olympics, alongside his wife.^[236] Much of Pence's time at PyeongChang was affected by the ongoing North Korean crisis. Prior to the opening ceremony, on February 9, Pence skipped on a dinner held by South Korean president Moon Jae-in, as he would have shared a table with North Korea's ceremonial head of state Kim Yong-nam.^[237] Instead, he met with four North Korean defectors in Pyeongtaek, alongside his special guest, Fred Warmbier (the father of Otto Warmbier, who was arrested in North Korea for attempted theft, and sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment, before returning to the U.S. in a comatose state).^{[238][239][240]} At the ceremony, the Pences were seated in front of the North Korean delegates, and when North and South Korean athletes entered during the Parade of Athletes, they chose to stay seated, which prompted critics to accuse Pence of hypocrisy in regards to the NFL protests.^{[241][242]} Pence was supposed to meet with the North Koreans on February 10, but they pulled out at the last day.^[243]



Pence with South Korean president Moon Jae-in at the 2018 Winter Olympics



Pence (second from left) during the U.S. military raid on ISIL leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi on October 26, 2019

Over the next few months, the North Koreans started communicating more with their neighbors, as Supreme Leader Kim Jong-un secretly met with Chinese paramount leader Xi Jinping in March and then Moon Jae-in in an historic inter-Korean summit in April,^{[244][245]} and around the same time, a meeting between Trump and Kim was also proposed. On May 10, Pence accompanied Trump to Andrews Air Force Base as three American citizens were released by North Korea, and in an early morning interview with ABC's Jonathan Karl, he said seeing the men back on American soil "was really one of the greatest joys of my life".^{[246][247]} Talks broke down later that month following comments made by Pence and Trump, comparing the situation to events in Libya seven years previous, despite their voluntary disarmament of nuclear weapons in 2003.^[248] North Korean vice foreign minister Choe Son-hui called Pence's remarks

"ignorant and stupid".^[249] On May 24, Trump abruptly called off the summit with Pence in attendance,^[248] only for him to change his mind a day later,^[250] later announcing that it would still be scheduled to take place on June 12 in Singapore.^[251]

In September 2019, Pence attended official meetings with Irish prime minister Leo Varadkar in Dublin, Ireland but stayed at President Trump's resort in Doonbeg, 180 miles (290 km) away. Pence's schedule included four hours spent in transit in one day, and two flights on Air Force Two before the end of the next day. Costs for the limousine service alone totaled \$599,000 according to State Department receipts, compared to President Obama's three-day trip to Dublin with the same limousine company totaling \$114,000.^{[252][253]}



Former Vice President and fellow Hoosier Dan Quayle and Marilyn Quayle with Pence in 2019.

Political action committee

In May 2017, Pence filed FEC paperwork to form Great America Committee, a political action committee (PAC) that would be headed by his former campaign staffers Nick Ayers and Marty Obst.^{[254][255]} Pence is the only vice president to have started his own PAC while still in office.^[256] Pence denied a *New York Times* article's allegations that he would run for president in 2020, calling them "laughable and absurd", and said the article was "disgraceful and offensive".^[257]

Pence and the Trump impeachment inquiry

Pence was a key player in the Trump-Ukraine scandal and the Trump impeachment inquiry. Pence had at least two phone conversations and an in-person meeting with Volodymyr Zelensky, President of Ukraine. Pence met with Zelensky in Poland on September 1, 2019, during an unexpected delay in U.S. military aid to Ukraine. Pence later told the press that he did not mention 2020 presidential candidate and former vice president Joe Biden to Zelensky, but raised issues regarding Ukrainian corruption.^[258]

After the inquiry was opened, Pence publicly stated his support of Trump's call for foreign investigation into Joe Biden and his son Hunter, saying, "I think the American people have a right to know if the vice president of the United States or his family profited from his position."^[259] On October 3, Pence stated, "My predecessor had a son who was paid \$50,000 a month to be on a Ukrainian board at the time that Vice President Biden was leading the Obama administration's efforts in Ukraine, I think [that] is worth looking into."^[260]

Death of Soleimani

Pence defended Trump's decision in January 2020 to assassinate the Iranian major general in the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) Qasem Soleimani, promoting conspiracy theories that supposedly linked the al-Qaeda attacks on the United States to Iran. In a series of tweets, the vice president termed Soleimani "an evil man who was responsible for killing thousands of Americans". Pence insisted Soleimani had "assisted in the clandestine travel to Afghanistan of 10 of the 12 terrorists who carried out the September 11 terrorist attacks", which critics said was his confusing the number of 9/11 hijackers (actually 19) and insinuating (without evidence) that the general was involved. Many experts responded that Pence's claims were unsubstantiated.^[261] Pence's spokeswoman Katie Waldman said that the dozen terrorists Pence referred to were those who had traveled through Afghanistan, ten of whom "were assisted by Soleimani".^[262]

COVID-19 pandemic

On February 26, 2020, President Trump named Pence as the leader of the White House Coronavirus Task Force to combat the spread of the coronavirus.^[263] Various public health officials and members of Congress had suggested the selection of a "Coronavirus Czar", though Trump has said Pence will not hold such a title because he is a member of the administration.^[264] As the leader of the task force, Pence will coordinate efforts with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes of Health, Department of Homeland Security, and White House Office.^{[265][266]}



Pence and members of the White House Coronavirus Task Force brief the media in March 2020.

After it was announced a staff member of his tested positive for the coronavirus on March 20, 2020, Pence confirmed he and his wife would be undergoing tests in a statement to the press, though he stressed he had no direct contact with the staff member in question.^[267] By the next day the results of the tests came back negative, with Pence also

announcing that more than 195,000 Americans had been tested at that point, with only 19,343 returning positive.^[268] Another White House employee, a U.S. military member who served as Trump's valet, tested positive for the coronavirus in early May. After becoming aware of this, Pence and Trump were almost immediately tested once again, both proving negative.^[269]

In April 2020, Pence exempted himself from the Mayo Clinic's policy of wearing a face mask in the hospital during a visit. Pence defended his action, saying he needed to look staff "in the eye".^[270] The next day, the vice president's opponents criticized him for promoting "completely irresponsible public health messaging".^[271] Later, Pence acknowledged he should have worn a mask during the hospital visit, and did so two days later when visiting a ventilator production facility.^[272]

In late June 2020, as coronavirus cases were spiking, Pence gave an optimistic press briefing where he made several misleading and false claims about the state of the coronavirus pandemic.^{[273][274]} He misleadingly argued that surges in cases were the result of increased testing, telling reporters that increases in new cases were "a reflection of a great success in expanding testing across the country".^[274] However, health experts noted that case growth outpaced the number of tests, and that the share of positive tests was increasing.^[275] Pence also falsely claimed that coronavirus fatalities were declining all across the country, that the curve had been flattened, and that all 50 states were opening up.^[274] In private meetings with Republican Senators, Pence urged them to focus on "encouraging signs". Pence told the senators that cases were increasing in only 3% of counties and 12 states; however, data at the time showed that cases were increasing in at least 5% of counties and in at least 20 states.^[276] On December 18, the Pences received the Pfizer/BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine for SARS-CoV-2, in front of a live audience at a televised event to show Americans that the vaccine is safe and effective.^{[277][278][279]}

2020 vice presidential election

Ahead of his presidential campaign on February 28, 2019, Joe Biden referred to Pence as a "decent guy" in a speech in Omaha, Nebraska, when making an anecdote about an audience falling silent after Pence mentioned Trump's name. Biden later faced criticism for his complimentary remarks due to Pence's alleged anti-LGBT positions, which Biden would later apologize for and clarify by saying, "I was making a point in a foreign policy context, that under normal circumstances a Vice President wouldn't be given a silent reaction on the world stage." Biden had previously referred to Pence as a "decent guy" in 2018, and Pence and Biden would exchange conversations via phone during Pence's initial transition into the vice presidency.^[280]

In June 2019, the Democratic former New York City Council president Andrew Stein opined that Trump could improve his re-election chances by replacing Pence as his running mate with former South Carolina governor and former United States ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley.^[281] Despite that, Trump has said Pence will be his running mate. He declined to endorse Pence should his running mate seek in 2024 to succeed him, but said he would give it "very strong consideration".^[282]

In remarks about law enforcement during the 2020 Republican convention, Pence said a federal security officer, Dave Underwood, "was shot and killed during the riots in Oakland", implying he was killed by someone involved in nearby George Floyd protests, when instead a man linked to the far-right Boogaloo movement had been charged with Underwood's murder.^{[283][284]}

On October 7, 2020, Pence participated in a debate with Kamala Harris that was held by USA Today in Salt Lake City, Utah, and moderated by Susan Page, the Washington bureau chief of the newspaper. The debate was held with adaptations designed to avoid contagion of the COVID-19 virus given that the vice president had been in close contact with people who had been infected at a recent event at the White House. Plexiglas partitions separated the candidates and masks were required for all attending except the candidates and moderator.^{[285][c]} By some estimates, Pence interrupted Harris twice as much as she interrupted him.^[286]

Media outlets noted that near the end of the debate, a fly landed on Pence's head for almost two minutes.^{[287][288]} A CNN poll found that 59% of registered voters felt that Harris had won the debate, while 38% felt that Pence had.^[286]

On November 7, 2020, after several days of vote counting, Biden and Harris were declared by most major news networks to be the winners of the election.^[289] On December 14 the Electoral College confirmed the win, giving the Biden-Harris campaign 306 votes compared to 232 for the Trump–Pence campaign,^[290] however, Trump refused to concede and insisted that he had actually won. Throughout November and December Trump and his campaign filed more than 50 lawsuits alleging election fraud and other irregularities; all of them were eventually rejected by judges.^[291] Trump also pressured Republican officials and lawmakers to take actions to overturn the election.^[292]

In late December 2020, a federal lawsuit was filed against Pence by Republican congressman Louie Gohmert and 11 Arizona Republicans who would have become presidential electors had Trump actually won Arizona. The plaintiffs sought to give the Vice President the power to reject state-certified presidential electors in favour of "competing slates of electors" so that Biden's victory over Trump could be overturned.^{[293][294][295]} The United States Department of Justice represented Pence in this case, and argued for its dismissal, stating that the lawsuit was a "walking legal contradiction" because it sought to grant power to the Vice President, while suing the Vice President.^[295] Within a week, the lawsuit was dismissed in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Texas, and the appeal was rejected by a United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit panel, both due to the plaintiffs' lack of standing.^[296] Gohmert then appealed to the Supreme Court, which on January 7 tersely "denied" his petition.^[297]

Vote counting and storming of the Capitol

In January 2021, Trump began to pressure Pence to take action to overturn the election. As vice president, Pence presided over the January 6, 2021, Congressional Joint Session to count the electoral votes—normally a non-controversial, ceremonial event. For days beforehand, Trump declared both in public and in private that Pence should use that position to overturn the election results in swing states and declare Trump–Pence the winners of the election.^[298] Pence demurred that the United States constitution does not give him that power, but Trump insisted that "The Vice President and I are in total agreement that the Vice President has the power to act."^[299] According to The New York Times, multiple sources claim that Trump called Pence before he departed to certify the results urging him again one last time ultimately telling him, "You can either go down in history as a patriot, or you can go down in history as a pussy."^[300] Before the start of the Joint Session, Pence stated in a "Dear Colleague" letter that the Constitution prevents him from deciding which electoral votes should be counted and which should not.^[301]

On January 6, 2021, the day on which a joint session of Congress met to count and certify the results of the electoral college for the 2020 presidential election, Trump held a rally at which he urged listeners to go to the Capitol and repeatedly expressed the hope that Pence would "do the right thing".^[302] Many listeners then marched to the Capitol and stormed it. A Reuters photographer overheard three rioters saying they wanted to seize Pence and hang him, while many others chanted their desire to hang Pence.^{[303][304][305][306]}

On January 15, The Washington Post reported that Pence came "dangerously close" to the rioters during their occupation of the Capitol. Pence was not evacuated from the Senate chambers until 14 minutes after the initial breach of the Capitol was reported. He and his family were eventually ushered from the Senate chambers into a second-floor hideaway. One minute later, the mob rushed onto a stair landing only 100 feet away, from which they could have seen him enter the room if they had arrived a minute earlier.^[307] Pence later approved the deployment of the National Guard.^[308] After the Capitol was cleared, Congress resumed its joint session, and officially certified the election results with Pence declaring Biden and Harris the winners.^[304]

During the siege, Trump criticized Pence as lacking "courage"^[309] Earlier L. Lin Wood, a lawyer associated with Trump, had called for Pence to be "executed" by "firing squad".^{[310][311]} In spite of the threats against Pence, Trump never reached out to Pence or inquired about his safety during the attack on the Capitol, according to sources close to the vice president.^{[312][313]} Aides believed that Pence was being set up as a scapegoat for Trump's failure to overturn the results of the election.^[314] Pence was described as very angry with Trump.^[315] The two did not speak for several days, until January 11 when they met at the White House to discuss the prior week's Capitol siege and the final days of their administration.^[316]



Pence and his wife Karen at the inauguration of Joe Biden

On January 20, Pence attended the inauguration of Joe Biden as president of the United States, unlike Trump. Afterwards, he left the Capitol with his successor, Kamala Harris.^[317]

Post-vice presidency (2021–present)

According to media reports, Pence does not have a permanent place of residence in Indiana, so he and his wife have been staying at residences owned by various Indiana Republican politicians since leaving the vice presidency. Official records indicated that Pence has not owned a residence in Indiana since 2013. It is believed that he was at one time staying in a cabin owned by his former lieutenant governor, Indiana governor Eric Holcomb.^{[318][319]} In May 2021, the Pences bought a home north of Indianapolis.^[320]

In February 2021, it was announced that Pence will join the Heritage Foundation as a distinguished visiting fellow.^[321] He also joined the Young America's Foundation conservative youth organization, with plans to launch a new podcast with the group in the coming months.^[322] In March 2021, Pence published an op-ed on a Heritage Foundation website which made false claims of fraud in the 2020 election. He also made numerous false claims about the For the People Act, a Democratic bill under consideration by the Democratic-controlled House to improve voting access, saying the bill would "force states to adopt universal mail-in ballots" and would mean "millions of illegal immigrants are quickly registered to vote."^{[323][324][325]} At speaking engagements in the months after the end of the Trump administration, Pence spoke with reverence of the former president.^[326]

Pence narrated a four-part television series on the career of right-wing radio host Rush Limbaugh titled *Age of Rush*, which debuted on Fox Nation in March 2021.^[327] Pence had previously cited Limbaugh as an inspiration for his career in talk radio and then in politics.^[328] In April 2021, it was reported that Pence signed a deal with publisher Simon & Schuster for two books, including an autobiography that is set to be published in 2023.^[329]

In April 2021, Pence underwent surgery to implant a pacemaker into him after he had a slow heart beat.^{[330][331]}

Political positions

In 2016, Pence was described as being staunchly conservative on fiscal and social issues, with his political views strongly shaped by his Christian faith and by the conservative political theorist Russell Kirk.^[1] As Vice President, Pence defended debt- and deficit-spending as a measure to stimulate economic growth.^[332] During his acceptance speech for the nomination of Republican vice presidential candidate at the 2016 Republican National Convention he said: "I'm a Christian, a conservative, and a Republican, in that order."^[333] As one commentator put it, "Pence doesn't simply wear his faith on his sleeve—he wears the entire Jesus jersey."^[19]

Abortion, sex education, and stem cell research

Pence is an opponent of abortion, and his unwavering support of abortion restrictions has gained him the support of grassroots conservative activists.^[334] He began seeking to defund Planned Parenthood in 2007^[335] and in three congressional sessions, he introduced legislation to block organizations that provide abortion services from receiving any Title X funding, even for services not related to reproductive health or family planning.^[336] Marjorie Dannenfelser, president of the Susan B. Anthony List, has praised Pence as a "pro-life trailblazer".^[337]



Pence speaks at the 2017 March for Life in Washington, D.C.

Pence has criticized comprehensive sex education. In 2002, he criticized a speech by then-secretary of state Colin Powell, who had said it was "important for young people ... to protect themselves from the possibility of acquiring any sexually transmitted disease" through the use of condoms.^{[338][339]} Pence called Powell's comments a "sad day" and expressed his support for abstinence education.^{[338][339]} He asserted that "condoms are a very, very poor protection against sexually transmitted diseases" and that Powell was "maybe inadvertently misleading millions of young people and endangering lives" despite the CDC assessment that when properly used they offer effective protection against STDs.^{[338][339]}

Pence opposed President Obama's executive order eliminating restrictions on embryonic stem-cell research, saying, "I believe it is morally wrong to create human life to destroy it for research ... I believe it is morally wrong to take the tax dollars of millions of pro-life Americans."^{[340][341]} He asserted that "scientific breakthroughs have rendered embryonic stem-cell research obsolete."^{[340][341]}

On January 27, 2017, Pence spoke at the March for Life in Washington, D.C., becoming the first vice president, and at the time, the highest-ranking United States official to ever speak at the annual event, until President Trump spoke at the event in 2020.^{[342][343]}

Pence has said he supports an overturn of Roe v. Wade, though denied that Supreme Court justice Brett Kavanaugh was nominated for that purpose.^{[344][345]} During the 2020 vice presidential debate, when asked by moderator Susan Page what he would want states to do if Roe were overturned, Pence refused to endorse criminalizing abortion, instead simply referring to himself as "pro-life".^[337]

LGBT rights

Pence has been a vocal opponent of efforts to expand LGBT civil rights, during both his governorship and his tenure as a U.S. representative. In 2000, his congressional campaign website said, "Congress should oppose any effort to recognize homosexuals as a 'discrete and insular minority' entitled to the protection of anti-discrimination laws similar to those extended to women and ethnic minorities."^[346] Also included on his website was a call for "an audit to ensure that federal dollars were no longer being given to organizations that celebrate and encourage the types of behaviors that facilitate the spreading of the HIV virus" and instead advocated that "Resources should be directed toward those institutions which provide assistance to those seeking to change their sexual behavior."^{[347][348][349][350]} Some LGBT rights advocates have cited this as evidence of Pence endorsing conversion therapy, a charge he denies.^[351]

In 2007, Pence voted against the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, which would have banned workplace discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.^[352] Pence opposed the 2009 Matthew Shepard Hate Crimes Act,^[353] saying that Barack Obama wanted to "advance a radical social agenda"^[354] and said that pastors "could be charged or be subject to intimidation for simply expressing a Biblical worldview on the issue of

homosexual behavior".^[355] Pence has said that homosexuals should not serve in the military, saying, "Homosexuality is incompatible with military service because the presence of homosexuals in the ranks weakens unit cohesion."^[356] Pence opposed the repeal of "don't ask, don't tell", saying in 2010 that allowing gays and lesbians to openly serve in the military would "have an impact on unit cohesion".^{[356][357]}

Pence opposes both same-sex marriage and civil unions.^[358] While in the House, he said that "societal collapse was always brought about following an advent of the deterioration of marriage and family."^[359] He has advocated a constitutional same-sex marriage ban but did not champion such a proposed ban for his first year as governor.^[360]

In March 2019, former vice president Joe Biden referred to Pence as "a decent guy" during a speech at the University of Nebraska Omaha in Omaha, Nebraska, a month before Biden announced his 2020 presidential campaign. LGBT groups, progressive leaders and celebrities strongly criticized him, with actress and New York gubernatorial candidate Cynthia Nixon chastising Biden on Twitter, to which Biden responded by apologizing and criticizing Pence's stance on LGBT rights. Nixon later penned an op-ed in *The Washington Post* calling Pence "insidious and dangerous" for his actions on LGBT rights, claiming about Biden's comments that "it's easy to say nice things about Pence when you're not personally threatened by his agenda. If Biden were being directly attacked in the same way that our community is, I think he would see Pence from a very different vantage point."^{[361][362]}

Economic policy

Pence was a co-sponsor of H.J.Res.73, a 2011 spending limit amendment to the U.S. Constitution. This amendment would limit federal spending to "the average annual revenue collected in the three prior years, adjusted in proportion to changes in population and inflation".^[363] In regards to adopting the gold standard, Pence said in 2011, "the time has come to have a debate over gold and the proper role it should play in our nation's monetary affairs."^[364] Pence proposed legislation to end the dual mandate of the Federal Reserve (maximizing employment and stabilizing prices), requiring the Fed to just focus on price stability and not full employment.^{[365][366]} He has been a proponent of a flat federal tax rate.^[367] Pence opposed the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP) (the "Wall Street bailout") of 2008.^[367] Pence also opposed the auto industry rescue package of 2008–2009, which guided General Motors and Chrysler through bankruptcy.^[368]



U.S. representative Pence (third from left) behind Governor Mitch Daniels at a 2008 press conference in Martinsville, Indiana

In 2007, Pence voted against raising the federal minimum wage to \$7.25 (from \$5.15) an hour over two years, saying it would "hurt the working poor".^[86] While in the House, Pence voted against the Employee Free Choice Act ("card check").^[87] He voted against the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.^[369] He had publicly opposed the bill^[370] denouncing it as a failure, and called for a federal spending freeze.^[371] Nevertheless, several months after voting against the bill, Pence privately sought \$6 million in stimulus funds for projects in his district,^[372] and in 2010, hosted a job fair for stimulus-backed employers.^[373] A Pence spokesperson said that "once it became law, he had a responsibility to support local efforts to secure funding for projects that could benefit people in his district."^[372] Pence voted against the Dodd–Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act.^[374]

Pence was a supporter of earmark reform. He voted against the \$139.7 billion Transportation-Treasury spending bill in June 2006, and in favor of a series of amendments proposed that same month by Jeff Flake which would strip other members' earmarks from the federal budget.^[375] On occasion, however, Pence secured earmarks for projects in his district.^[375]

Health care

Pence voted against the act that created Medicare Part D (a prescription drug benefit)^[47] and against the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.^[376] In June 2012, after the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the Affordable Care Act in *NFIB v. Sebelius*, Pence likened the ruling to the September 11 attacks in a closed-door meeting of the House Republican Conference. He immediately apologized for making the statement.^[377]

Pence wrote an article that appeared on his 2000 congressional campaign website arguing against the tobacco settlement and tobacco regulation, saying they would create "new government bureaucracies" and encroach on private lives. He wrote, "despite the hysteria from the political class and the media, smoking doesn't kill."^{[127][378]} Pence asserted, "two out of every three smokers does [*sic*] not die from a smoking related illness and nine out of ten smokers do not contract lung cancer," while acknowledging that "smoking isn't good for you" and people who smoke should quit.^{[127][378]} In fact, smoking-related deaths comprise two out of three among those who smoke, twice as high as Pence claimed.^[379] In 2009, Pence voted against the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act, which allows the Food and Drug Administration to regulate tobacco products.^[110] According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Pence's state of Indiana has one of the worst smoking problems in America.^[340]

Pence was slow to support a needle exchange program in Indiana to combat a major HIV outbreak related to needle-sharing among opioid drug users. While giving credit for the program's ultimate start, an AIDS research foundation director of public policy later deemed the outbreak "entirely preventable". Jerome Adams, Pence's state health commissioner, defended Pence's pace at responding to the situation.^{[380][132]} Republican state house representative Edward Clere, concerned about the rapid spread of HIV in Scott County, Indiana, urged then-governor Pence to sign an executive order to allow needle exchange programs to operate. After resisting the intervention for over two months, Pence spoke to the county sheriff, prayed for guidance, then finally capitulated in May 2015, signing an executive order that allowed such a program to address the epidemic. The rate of infection spread then slowed dramatically.^[132]

In February 2020, after conflicting statements by administration officials via television, it was announced that Pence would control all messaging from government health officials regarding the COVID-19 pandemic.^[381]

Immigration

In June 2006, Pence unveiled an immigration plan (which he described as "No Amnesty Immigration reform") that would include increased border security, followed by strict enforcement of laws against hiring illegal aliens, and a guest worker program. This guest worker program would have required participants to apply from their home country to government-approved job placement agencies that match workers with employers who cannot find Americans for the job.^[382] The plan received support from conservatives such as Dick Armey,^[383] but attracted criticism from other conservatives such as Richard Viguerie and paleoconservatives Phyllis Schlafly and Pat Buchanan, who, as described by *The New York Times*, collectively viewed Pence as lending "his conservative prestige to a form of liberal amnesty".^{[17][384]}



Pence speaks at a Tea Party rally in 2011.

Pence opposes birthright citizenship.^[385] Pence asserted in 2018 that the Citizenship Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution (which provides that "all persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein

they reside") would not apply to "people who are in the country illegally".^[386] As a congressman, Pence co-sponsored a bill that would have limited citizenship to children born to at least one parent who is a citizen, immigrants living permanently in the U.S. or non-citizens performing active service in the Armed Forces.^[385]

In 2010, Pence voted against the DREAM Act, which would grant the undocumented children of illegal immigrants conditional non-immigrant status if they met certain requirements.^[387] In 2010, Pence said Arizona S.B. 1070, which at the time of passage in 2010 was the nation's broadest and strictest anti-illegal immigration legislation, was "a good faith to try and restore order to their communities".^[388]

Social Security

Pence supported President George W. Bush's unsuccessful 2005 proposal to partially privatize Social Security^[389] by allowing workers to invest part of their Social Security payroll taxes in private investment accounts and reduce the increase in benefits for high-income participants.^[390] Pence had previously proposed a similar but more aggressive reform plan than Bush's.^[390]

When asked in 2010 if he would be willing to make cuts to Social Security, Pence answered, "I think everything has to be on the table."^[390] When asked if he would raise the retirement age, he said, "I'm an all-of-the-above guy. We need look at everything on the menu."^[390]

Patriot Act

Pence supported the Patriot Act on its passage in 2001,^[391] and in 2005 called the act "essential to our continued success in the war on terror here at home".^[392] Pence was a sponsor of legislation in 2009 to extend three expiring provisions of the Patriot Act (the library records provision, the roving-wiretap provision, and the lone-wolf provision) for an additional ten years.^[393]



Pence swears in John F. Kelly at DHS Headquarters on January 25, 2017.

International trade

Pence "has been a longtime, aggressive advocate of trade deals" between the U.S. and foreign countries.^[394] Pence has been a supporter of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA),^[394] and during his tenure in the House, he voted for every free-trade agreement that came before him.^[395] Pence voted in favor of the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA); in favor of keeping the U.S. in the World Trade Organization; and in favor of permanent normal trade relations with China.^[395] Pence also supported bilateral free-trade agreements with Colombia, South Korea, Panama, Peru, Oman, Chile, and Singapore.^[395] Pence's strong stance in favor of free trade sharply differs from the stance of his running mate Trump, who has condemned globalization and the liberalization of trade.^{[394][395]}

Pence voted against the Trade and Globalization Act of 2007, which would have expanded Trade Adjustment Assistance to American workers adversely affected by globalization.^[396] However, in 2014 Pence called for the "swift adoption" of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), urging Indiana's congressional delegation to support the trade deal.^[394]

Foreign policy



Pence visits the Western Wall in Jerusalem.

Pence supported the Iraq War Resolution, which authorized military action against Iraq.^[397] During the Iraq War, Pence opposed setting a public withdrawal date from Iraq. During an April 2007 visit to Baghdad, Pence and John McCain visited Shorja market, the site of a deadly attack in February 2007 which had claimed 61 lives. Pence and McCain described the visit as evidence that the security situation in Iraqi markets had improved.^[398] The visit to the market took place under tight security, including helicopters overhead, and the *New York Times* reported that the visit gave a false indication of how secure the area was because of the extremely heavy security forces protecting McCain.^[399] Pence chaired the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Middle East and was a prominent supporter of George W. Bush's Iraq War troop surge of 2007. At the time, Pence said "the surge is working" and defended the initial decision to invade in 2003.^[397]

Pence has opposed closing the Guantanamo Bay detention camp and trying the suspected terrorists in the United States.^[400] As an alternative, Pence has said the "enemy combatants" should be tried in a military tribunal.^[400]

Pence has stated his support of Israel and its right to attack facilities in Iran to prevent the Iranians from developing nuclear weapons, has defended the actions of Israel in its use of deadly force in enforcing the blockade of Gaza, and has referred to Israel as "America's most cherished ally".^[401] He visited Israel in 2014 to express his support, and in 2016 signed into law a bill which would ban Indiana from having any commercial dealings with a company that boycotts Israel.^[402] He opposes a Palestinian state.^[403]

Pence criticized Russian president Vladimir Putin and Barack Obama's alleged weak leadership, saying: "When Donald Trump and I observe that, as I've said in Syria, in Iran, in Ukraine, that the small and bullying leader of Russia has been stronger on the world stage than this administration, that's stating painful facts. That's not an endorsement of Vladimir Putin. That's an indictment of the weak and feckless leadership."^[404]

Two weeks prior to the NATO intervention in Libya, Pence thanked the Obama administration and secretary of state Hillary Clinton for their efforts to isolate the Gaddafi regime.^{[405][406][407]} Pence expressed support for "a no-fly zone" and said "Gaddafi must go."^{[405][406][407]}

Pence condemned the "terrible savagery" against Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar, saying "The images of the violence and its victims have shocked the American people, and decent people all over the world."^[408]

Pence called on Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to release Andrew Brunson, an American pastor detained in the post-coup purges in Turkey.^[409] On August 1, 2018, the U.S. Department of Treasury imposed sanctions on two senior Turkish government ministers who were involved in the detention of Brunson.^{[410][411]} Erdoğan said the U.S. behavior will force Turkey to look for new friends and allies.^[412]



Pence and Trump with Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia Mohammad bin Salman on March 14, 2017



Joint press conference with the Baltic states presidents and Pence, July 31, 2017

On July 26, 2018, Pence raised the Xinjiang re-education camps issue at Ministerial To Advance Religious Freedom.^[413] He said that "Sadly, as we speak as well, Beijing is holding hundreds of thousands, and possibly millions, of Uyghur Muslims in so-called 're-education camps', where they're forced to endure around-the-clock political indoctrination and to denounce their religious beliefs and their cultural identity as the goal."^[414]

Climate change

Pence "does not accept the scientific consensus that human activity is the primary driver of climate change".^[415] In 2001, Pence wrote in an op-ed that "global warming is a myth," saying that "the earth is actually cooler today than it was about 50 years ago."^{[416][417]} In 2006 and 2009, Pence expressed the view that it was unclear whether global warming was driven by human activity, and in 2009 he told political commentator Chris Matthews that there was a "growing skepticism in the scientific community about global warming".^{[418][419]} In 2009, Pence led the Republican effort to defeat the American Clean Energy and Security Act (Waxman-Markey), a Democratic-backed bill to cut greenhouse gas emissions (and therefore combat climate change) through a cap-and-trade system.^[415] On September 27, 2016, however, Pence said "there's no question" that human activity affects both the climate and the environment.^[420] Pence holds a lifetime rating of four percent from the League of Conservation Voters.^[421] While in the House, Pence "voted to eliminate funding for climate education programs and to prohibit the Environmental Protection Agency from regulating greenhouse gas emissions".^[114] Pence also "repeatedly voted against energy efficiency and renewable energy funding and rules" and voted "for several bills that supported fossil fuel development, including legislation promoting offshore drilling".^[114]

Crime and illegal drugs



Representative Pence with President George W. Bush

Pence has questioned proposals to decrease penalties for low-level marijuana offenses in Indiana, saying the state should focus on "reducing crime, not reducing penalties".^[422] In 2013, Pence expressed concern that a then-pending bill to revise the state's criminal code was not tough enough on drug crimes, and successfully lobbied to limit the reduction in sentencing of marijuana offenses.^[423]

In 2016, he signed into law a measure that would reinstate a ten-year mandatory minimum prison sentence for certain drug offenders.^{[424][425]}

During 2014, Pence sent a letter to United States attorney general Eric Holder, saying Indiana would not comply with federal prison rape elimination standards because they were "too expensive". According to the Indiana Department of Corrections, it would cost the state \$15–20 million annually to comply with the guidelines. Pence said a number of rape prevention measures had already been "implemented".^[426]

In 2015, Pence signed Senate Bill 94 to lengthen the statute of limitations for rape—continuing for five years after sufficient DNA evidence is uncovered, enough recorded evidence is brought forth or discovered, or the offender confesses to the crime.^[427] Pence also signed Senate Bill 8 to allow the death penalty for beheadings if the victim was alive at the time of the offense.^[427]

Gambling

Pence has been an advocate of federal restrictions on online gambling. In 2006, he was one of 35 cosponsors of H.R. 4411, the Goodlatte–Leach Internet Gambling Prohibition Act,^[428] and H.R. 4777, the Internet Gambling Prohibition Act.^[429]

Campaign finance

Pence praised the 2010 Supreme Court ruling in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* when it was announced. Pence said:

Freedom won today in the Supreme Court. Today's ruling in the Citizens United case takes us one step closer to the Founding Fathers' vision of free speech, a vision that is cherished by all Americans and one Congress has a responsibility to protect. If the freedom of speech means anything, it means protecting the right of private citizens to voice opposition or support for their elected representatives. The fact that the court overturned a 20-year precedent speaks volumes about the importance of this issue.^[430]

Pence described the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act, known as McCain–Feingold, which regulates the financing of political campaigns, as "oppressive restrictions on free speech".^[431]

Racial views

On June 19, 2020—the Juneteenth holiday, and the day before a significant Trump rally held at the BOK Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma—a television journalist asked Pence if he would say the words *black lives matter*. Pence replied that all lives matter. Pence added that no significant U.S. group would disagree, as he saw it, about "the preciousness and importance of every human life".^[432] He denounced the police abolition movement when speaking to a police union rally in Philadelphia in July 2020, commenting how "[w]e also don't need to choose between supporting our police and supporting African American families here in Philadelphia or anywhere in America. We can do both. We have done both."^[433]



Pence speaks to police officers in Youngstown, Ohio, June 25, 2020.

Presidential impeachment

In the late 1990s, Pence supported the impeachment of President Bill Clinton. Arguing for the moral requirements of the office of the presidency, Pence wrote that an American president with "bad moral habits" can "incinerate the planet", thus nothing less than a president who represents "all of our highest hopes and ideals and values" could be accepted. Pence also brought up "staggering rates of illegitimacy and divorce", mandating that "America needs to be able to look to her First Family as role models."^{[434][435]}

Personal life

Mike and Karen Pence have been married since 1985. The two met while he was in law school at Indiana University.^[19] They have three children: Michael, Charlotte, and Audrey.^{[436][437]} During Pence's service in the House, his family lived in Arlington, Virginia when Congress was in session and in Columbus, Indiana, during recesses.^{[13][23]} Pence's son, Michael, is a first lieutenant and training to be a pilot in the United States

Marine Corps.^{[438][439]} Pence has five siblings. His oldest brother, Greg, ran in 2018 to represent Indiana's 6th congressional district in Congress (the seat previously held by Mike), and won.^{[440][441]} Pence's father died in 1988, leaving his mother, Nancy, a widow with four grown children and two teenagers. On May 1, 2004, Pence's mother married Basil Coolidge Fritsch, a widower since 2001.^{[442][443]}

The Pences' pet rabbit Marlon Bundo was featured in two children's books, both released in March 2018. *A Day in the Life of Marlon Bundo* was written by Jill Twiss and released on March 18, 2018.^[444] *Marlon Bundo's: A Day in the Life of the Vice President* was written by his daughter Charlotte and released on March 19, 2018.^[445]

Pence was raised in a Catholic family, served as an altar server, and attended parochial school.^{[4][446]} He became a born-again Christian in college, while a member of a nondenominational Christian student group, and identified his first year—and specifically "a Christian music festival in Asbury, Kentucky, in the spring of 1978"^[447] referring to the Ichthus Music Festival at then Asbury College in Wilmore, Kentucky—as the moment he made a "commitment to Christ".^{[4][446]} After that point, Pence continued to attend Mass (where he met his wife) and was a Catholic youth minister.^[446] Pence called himself Catholic in a 1994 news piece, although by 1995, he and his family had joined an evangelical megachurch, the Grace Evangelical Church.^{[4][446]} In 2013, Pence said his family was "kind of looking for a church".^[4] He has described himself as "a Christian, a conservative and a Republican, in that order", and as "a born-again, evangelical Catholic".^{[4][446]}

When asked by Chris Matthews in 2009 if he believed in evolution, Pence said "I believe with all my heart that God created the heavens and the earth, the seas and all that is in them. How he did that, I'll ask him about some day."^{[340][418]} In a 2002 statement on the floor of the House of Representatives (reported in the *Congressional Record*), Pence told his colleagues "... I also believe that someday scientists will come to see that only the theory of intelligent design provides even a remotely rational explanation for the known universe."^{[448][449]}

Electoral history

House of Representatives

1988



Mike and Karen Pence with their children and daughter-in-law at the 2017 Presidential Inauguration Parade



Mike, Karen and Charlotte Pence with former president George H. W. Bush and former first lady Barbara Bush at Super Bowl LI, 2017

Indiana's 2nd Congressional District Election (1988) ^[450]			
Party	Candidate	Votes	%
<u>Democratic</u>	Philip R. Sharp	116,915	53.20
<u>Republican</u>	Mike Pence	102,846	46.80
Total votes		219,761	100.00
<u>Turnout</u>		291,761	

1990

Indiana's 2nd Congressional District Election (1990) ^[451]			
Party	Candidate	Votes	%
<u>Democratic</u>	Philip R. Sharp	93,495	59.37
<u>Republican</u>	Mike Pence	63,980	40.63
Total votes		157,475	100.00
<u>Turnout</u>		157,475	

2000

Indiana's 2nd Congressional District Election (2000) ^[452]			
Party	Candidate	Votes	%
<u>Republican</u>	Mike Pence	106,023	50.87
<u>Democratic</u>	Robert Rock	80,885	38.81
<u>Independent</u>	William "Bill" Frazier	19,077	9.15
<u>Libertarian</u>	Michael E. Anderson	2,422	1.16
Total votes		208,407	100.00
<u>Turnout</u>		208,407	

2002

Indiana's 6th Congressional District Republican Primary Election (2002) ^[453]			
Party	Candidate	Votes	%
<u>Republican</u>	Mike Pence	55,142	100.00
Total votes		55,142	100.00
<u>Turnout</u>		55,142	22

Indiana's 6th Congressional District Election (2002) ^[453]			
Party	Candidate	Votes	%
<u>Republican</u>	Mike Pence	118,436	63.79
<u>Democratic</u>	Melina Ann Fox	63,871	34.40
<u>Libertarian</u>	Doris Robertson	3,346	1.80
Total votes		185,653	100.00
Turnout		185,653	39
<u>Republican hold</u>			

2004

Indiana's 6th Congressional District Republican Primary Election (2004) ^[454]			
Party	Candidate	Votes	%
<u>Republican</u>	Mike Pence	61,794	100.00
Total votes		61,794	100.00

Indiana's 6th Congressional District Election (2004) ^[454]			
Party	Candidate	Votes	%
<u>Republican</u>	Mike Pence	182,529	67.09
<u>Democratic</u>	Melina Ann Fox	85,123	31.29
<u>Libertarian</u>	Chad (Wick) Roots	4,397	1.62
Total votes		272,049	100.00
Turnout		272,049	58
<u>Republican hold</u>			

2006

Indiana's 6th Congressional District Republican Primary Election (2006) ^[48]			
Party	Candidate	Votes	%
<u>Republican</u>	Mike Pence	52,188	86.13
<u>Republican</u>	George Holland	8,406	13.87
Total votes		60,594	100.00
Turnout		60,594	19

Indiana's 6th Congressional District Election (2006) ^[48]			
Party	Candidate	Votes	%
<u>Republican</u>	Mike Pence	115,266	60.01
<u>Democratic</u>	Barry A. Welsh	76,812	39.99
Total votes		192,078	100.00
Turnout		192,078	40
<u>Republican hold</u>			

2008

Indiana's 6th Congressional District Republican Primary Election (2008) ^[49]			
Party	Candidate	Votes	%
<u>Republican</u>	Mike Pence	46,488	100.00
Total votes		46,488	100.00
Turnout		46,488	40

Indiana's 6th Congressional District Election (2008) ^[49]			
Party	Candidate	Votes	%
<u>Republican</u>	Mike Pence*	180,549	63.96
<u>Democratic</u>	Barry A. Welsh	94,223	33.38
<u>Libertarian</u>	George T. Holland	7,534	2.67
Total votes		282,306	100.00
Turnout		282,306	62
<u>Republican hold</u>			

2010

Indiana's 6th Congressional District Republican Primary Election (2010) ^[50]			
Party	Candidate	Votes	%
<u>Republican</u>	Mike Pence	61,381	100.00
Total votes		61,381	100.00
Turnout		61,381	21

Indiana's 6th Congressional District Election (2010) ^[50]			
Party	Candidate	Votes	%
<u>Republican</u>	Mike Pence*	126,027	66.57
<u>Democratic</u>	Barry A. Welsh	56,647	29.92
<u>Libertarian</u>	Talmage "T.J." Thompson, Jr.	6,635	3.51
Total votes		189,309	100.00
Turnout		189,309	41
<u>Republican hold</u>			

Governor of Indiana

2012

2012 Indiana Republican gubernatorial election primary ^{[455][456]}			
Party	Candidate	Votes	%
<u>Republican</u>	Mike Pence	554,412	100.00
Total votes		554,412	100.00
Turnout		554,412	22

2012 Indiana gubernatorial election ^{[457][458]}				
Party	Candidate	Votes	%	±%
<u>Republican</u>	Mike Pence / Sue Ellspermann	1,275,424	49.49%	
<u>Democratic</u>	John Gregg / Vi Simpson	1,200,016	46.56%	
<u>Libertarian</u>	Rupert Boneham / Brad Klopfenstein	101,868	3.95%	
<i>No party</i>	Donnie Harold Harris / George Fish (write-in)	21	0%	—
Margin of victory		75,408	2.93%	%
Turnout		2,577,329	56.58%	
<u>Republican hold</u>		Swing		

2016

2016 Indiana Republican gubernatorial election primary ^{[459][460]}			
Party	Candidate	Votes	%
<u>Republican</u>	Mike Pence	815,699	100
Total votes		815,699	100
Turnout		815,699	38

Vice president of the United States

Election results							
Year	Election	Votes for Pence	%	Opponent	Party	Votes	%
<u>2016</u>	General	62,984,825 (304 electoral votes) (270 needed)	46.1%	<u>Tim Kaine</u>	Democratic	65,853,516 (227 electoral votes)	48.2% ---
<u>2020</u>	General	74,216,747 (232 electoral votes) (270 needed)	46.8%	<u>Kamala Harris</u>	Democratic	81,268,867 (306 electoral votes)	51.3% ---

Notes

- The White House Coronavirus Task Force was succeeded by the White House COVID-19 Response Team.
- An elector from Texas cast a vote replacing Pence with Carly Fiorina as the vice president.^[199]
- At the end of the debate, Second Lady Karen Pence was seen onstage without a mask, which her spokesperson said was on the basis of an agreement with Harris's husband, Douglas Emhoff, who ended up wearing his mask onstage.^[285]

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- [Governor Mike Pence \(http://www.in.gov/governorhistory/mikepence/2358.htm\)](http://www.in.gov/governorhistory/mikepence/2358.htm) official government website
- [Mike Pence \(https://curlie.org/Regional/North_America/United_States/Indiana/Government/Executive/Governor_Mike_Pence/\)](https://curlie.org/Regional/North_America/United_States/Indiana/Government/Executive/Governor_Mike_Pence/) at Curlie
- [Appearances \(https://www.c-span.org/person/?mikepence\)](https://www.c-span.org/person/?mikepence) on C-SPAN
- [Profile \(http://ballotpedia.org/Mike_Pence\)](http://ballotpedia.org/Mike_Pence) at Ballotpedia
- [Mike Pence's statements \(https://www.politifact.com/personalities/mike-pence/statements/by/\)](https://www.politifact.com/personalities/mike-pence/statements/by/) at Politifact
- "Piety & Power" author gives CBSN an inside look into Mike Pence's rise to the top of politics (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fSzy552TdB4>) on YouTube, published September 30, 2019 [CBS News](#)

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- [Collected news and commentary \(https://web.archive.org/web/20121031051347/http://topics.indystar.com/Mike_Pence/\)](https://web.archive.org/web/20121031051347/http://topics.indystar.com/Mike_Pence/) at *The Indianapolis Star*
- [Candidate information \(http://www.ourcampaigns.com/CandidateDetail.html?CandidateID=1124\)](http://www.ourcampaigns.com/CandidateDetail.html?CandidateID=1124) from *Our Campaigns*

Congress

- [Biography \(http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=p000587\)](http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=p000587) at the *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*
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- [Profile \(http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Mike_Pence\)](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=Mike_Pence) at [SourceWatch](#)

U.S. House of Representatives		
Preceded by <u>David M. McIntosh</u>	Member of the U.S. House of Representatives from <u>Indiana's 2nd congressional district</u> 2001–2003	Succeeded by <u>Chris Chocola</u>
Preceded by <u>Dan Burton</u>	Member of the U.S. House of Representatives from <u>Indiana's 6th congressional district</u> 2003–2013	Succeeded by <u>Luke Messer</u>
Party political offices		
Preceded by <u>Sue Myrick</u>	Chair of the <u>Republican Study Committee</u> 2005–2007	Succeeded by <u>Jeb Hensarling</u>
Preceded by <u>Adam Putnam</u>	Chair of the <u>House Republican Conference</u> 2009–2011	
Political offices		
Preceded by <u>Mitch Daniels</u>	<u>Governor of Indiana</u> 2013–2017	Succeeded by <u>Eric Holcomb</u>
Preceded by <u>Joe Biden</u>	<u>Vice President of the United States</u> 2017–2021	Succeeded by <u>Kamala Harris</u>
U.S. order of precedence (ceremonial)		
Preceded by <u>Dick Cheney</u> <i>as Former Vice President</i>	Current <u>United States order of precedence</u> <i>Former Vice President</i>	Succeeded by <u>Ambassadors of the United States</u>

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Sarah Palin

Sarah Louise Palin (/ˈpeɪlɪn/ (listen[ⓘ]); née **Heath**; born February 11, 1964) is an American politician, commentator, author, and reality television personality, who served as the 9th governor of Alaska from 2006 until her resignation in 2009. As the 2008 Republican vice presidential nominee alongside Arizona Senator John McCain, she was the first Republican female vice presidential nominee and the second female vice presidential nominee of a major party, after Geraldine Ferraro in 1984. The McCain-Palin ticket lost the 2008 election to Barack Obama and Joe Biden.

Palin was elected to the Wasilla city council in 1992 and became mayor of Wasilla in 1996. In 2003, after an unsuccessful run for lieutenant governor, she was appointed chair of the Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission, responsible for overseeing the state's oil and gas fields for safety and efficiency. In 2006, she became the youngest person and the first woman to be elected Governor of Alaska.^[1]

Since her resignation as governor, she has endorsed and campaigned for the Tea Party movement as well as several candidates in multiple election cycles, prominently including Donald Trump for president in 2016. From 2010 to 2015, she provided political commentary for Fox News.^[2] She hosted TLC's *Sarah Palin's Alaska* in 2010–11, and *Amazing America with Sarah Palin* on the Sportsman Channel in 2014–15.^{[3][4]} On July 27, 2014, Palin launched an online news network called the Sarah Palin Channel, which was closed on July 4, 2015.^[5] Her book *Going Rogue* has sold more than two million copies.

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Sarah Palin



Palin in 2012

9th Governor of Alaska

In office

December 4, 2006 – July 26, 2009

Lieutenant Sean Parnell

Preceded by Frank Murkowski

Succeeded by Sean Parnell

Chair of the Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission

In office

February 19, 2003 – January 23, 2004

Governor Frank Murkowski

Deputy Mike Bill
Randy Ruedrich
Daniel Seamount

Preceded by Camille Taylor

Succeeded by John Norman

Mayor of Wasilla

In office

October 14, 1996 – October 14, 2002

Preceded by John Stein

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Succeeded by [Dianne Keller](#)

Member of the Wasilla City Council from Ward E

In office

October 19, 1992 – October 14, 1996

Preceded by [Dorothy Smith](#)

Succeeded by [Colleen Cottle](#)

Personal details

Born [Sarah Louise Heath](#)
February 11, 1964
[Sandpoint, Idaho](#),
U.S.

Political party [Republican](#)

Spouse(s) [Todd Palin](#)
([m.](#) 1988; [div.](#) 2020)

Children 5, including [Bristol](#)

Education [University of Idaho](#)
(BA)

Signature



Website [Official website \(http://sarahpalin.com/\)](#)

[Early life and family](#)

Palin was born in [Sandpoint, Idaho](#), the third of four children (three daughters and one son) of Sarah "Sally" Heath (née Sheeran; 1940–2021),^[6] a school secretary, and Charles R. "Chuck" Heath (b. 1938), a science teacher and track-and-field coach. Palin's siblings are Chuck Jr., Heather, and Molly.^{[7][8][9][10]} Palin is of English, Irish, and German ancestry.^[11]

When Palin was a few months old, the family moved to Skagway, Alaska,^[12] where her father had been hired to teach.^[13] They relocated to Eagle River, Anchorage in 1969, and settled in Wasilla, Alaska in 1972.^{[14][15]}

Palin played flute in the junior high band. She attended Wasilla High School, where she was head of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes^[16] and a member of the girls' basketball and cross-country running teams.^[17] During her senior year, she was co-captain and point guard of the basketball team that won the 1982 Alaska state championship, earning the nickname "Sarah Barracuda" for her competitive streak.^{[18][19][20]}

In 1984, Palin won the Miss Wasilla beauty pageant;^[21] she finished third (as second runner-up) in the Miss Alaska pageant, where she won the title of "Miss Congeniality".^{[22][23][24]} She played the flute in the talent portion of the contest.^[25] One author reports that she received the Miss Congeniality award in the Miss Wasilla contest (but this is disputed by another contestant and classmate of Palin's),^[21] and a college scholarship.^[18]

College

After graduating from high school in 1982, Palin enrolled at the University of Hawaii at Hilo.^[26] Shortly after arriving in Hawaii, Palin transferred to Hawaii Pacific University in Honolulu for a semester in the fall of 1982. She returned to the mainland, enrolling at North Idaho College, a community college in Coeur d'Alene, for the spring and fall semesters of 1983.^[27] She transferred and enrolled at the University of Idaho in Moscow for an academic year starting in August 1984. Beginning in the fall of 1985, she attended Matanuska-Susitna College in Alaska. Palin returned to the University of Idaho in January 1986 and received her bachelor's degree in communications with an emphasis in journalism in May 1987.^{[27][28][29][30]}

Early career and marriage

After graduation, she worked as a sportscaster for KTUU-TV and KTVA-TV in Anchorage^{[31][32]} and as a sports reporter for the Mat-Su Valley Frontiersman,^{[33][34]} fulfilling an early ambition.^[35]

In August 1988, she eloped with Todd Palin, her high school sweetheart.^[36] Following the birth of their first child in April 1989, Palin helped in her husband's commercial fishing business.^[37]

Early political career

City council

Palin was elected to the Wasilla City Council in 1992, winning 530 votes to 310.^{[38][39]} Throughout her tenure on the city council and the rest of her political career, Palin has been a Republican since registering in 1982.^[40]

Mayor of Wasilla

Concerned that revenue from a new Wasilla sales tax would not be spent wisely,^[41] Palin ran for mayor of Wasilla in 1996, defeating incumbent mayor John Stein^[36] 651 to 440 votes.^[42] Her biographer described her campaign as targeting wasteful spending and high taxes;^[18] her opponent, Stein, said that Palin introduced abortion, gun rights, and term limits as campaign issues.^[43] The election was nonpartisan, though the state

Republican Party ran advertisements for Palin.^[43] She ran for reelection against Stein in 1999 and won, 909 votes to 292.^[44] In 2002, she completed the second of the two consecutive three-year terms allowed by the city charter.^[45] She was elected president of the Alaska Conference of Mayors in 1999.^[46]

First term

Using revenue generated by a 2% sales tax, which had been approved by Wasilla voters in October 1992,^{[47][48]} Palin cut property taxes by 75% and eliminated personal property and business inventory taxes.^{[49][50]} Using municipal bonds, she made improvements to the roads and sewers and increased funding to the police department.^[43] She oversaw creation of new bike paths and procured funding for storm-water treatment to protect freshwater resources. At the same time, she reduced the budget of the local museum and postponed discussions about a new library and city hall, which some of the council believed was needed.^[49]

Soon after taking office in October 1996, Palin eliminated the position of museum director.^[51] She asked for updated resumes and resignation letters from "city department heads who had been loyal to Stein", although the mayor's office was considered a non-partisan position.^[52] These included the city police chief, public works director, finance director, and librarian.^[53] Palin stated this request was to find out their intentions and whether they supported her. She temporarily required department heads to get her approval before talking to reporters, saying they needed to learn her administration's policies.^[53] She created the position of city administrator^[43] and reduced her own \$68,000 salary by 10%. By mid-1998 this action was reversed by the city council.^[54]

In October 1996, Palin asked library director Mary Ellen Emmons if she would object to the removal of a book from the library if people were picketing to have the book removed.^[55] Emmons responded that she would, and others as well.^[55] Palin stated that she had not been proposing censorship but had been discussing many issues with her staff that were "both rhetorical and realistic in nature."^[55] No attempt was made to remove books from the library during Palin's tenure as mayor.^[56]

Palin said she fired Police Chief Irl Stambaugh because he did not fully support her efforts to govern the city.^[57] Stambaugh filed a lawsuit alleging wrongful termination and violation of his free speech rights.^[58] The judge dismissed Stambaugh's lawsuit, holding that the police chief served at the discretion of the mayor and could be terminated for nearly any reason, even a political one,^{[59][60]} and ordered Stambaugh to pay Palin's legal fees.^[59]

Second term

During her second term as mayor, Palin proposed and promoted the construction of a municipal sports center to be financed by a 0.5%^[43] sales tax increase and a \$14.7 million bond issue.^[61] Voters approved the measure by a 20-vote margin, and the Wasilla Multi-Use Sports Complex (later named the Curtis D. Menard Memorial Sports Center) was built on time and under budget. However, the city spent an additional \$1.3 million because of an eminent domain lawsuit caused by the city's failure to obtain clear title to the property before beginning construction.^[61] The city's long-term debt grew from about \$1 million to \$25 million because of expenditures of \$15 million for the sports complex, \$5.5 million for street projects, and \$3 million for water improvement projects. *The Wall Street Journal* characterized the project as a "financial mess."^[61] A city council member defended the spending increases as being necessitated by the city's growth during that time.^[62]

Palin also joined with nearby communities in hiring the Anchorage-based lobbying firm of Robertson, Monagle & Eastaugh to lobby for federal funds. The firm secured nearly \$8 million in earmarks for the Wasilla city government,^[63] including \$500,000 for a youth shelter, \$1.9 million for a transportation hub, and

\$900,000 for sewer repairs.^[64] In 2008, Wasilla's current mayor credited Palin's 75 percent property tax cuts and infrastructure improvements with bringing "big-box stores" and 50,000 shoppers per day to Wasilla.^[38]

State politics

In 2002, Palin ran for the Republican nomination for lieutenant governor, coming in second to Loren Leman in a five-way Republican primary.^[65] Following her defeat, she campaigned throughout the state for the nominated Republican governor-lieutenant governor ticket of Frank Murkowski and Leman.^[66] Murkowski and Leman won and Murkowski resigned from his long-held U.S. Senate seat in December 2002 to assume the governorship. Palin was said to be on the "short list" of possible appointees to Murkowski's U.S. Senate seat,^[66] but Murkowski ultimately appointed his daughter, State Representative Lisa Murkowski, as his successor in the Senate.^[67]

Governor Murkowski offered other jobs to Palin and, in February 2003, she accepted an appointment to the Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission, which oversees Alaska's oil and gas fields for safety and efficiency.^[66] While she had little background in the area, she said she wanted to learn more about the oil industry and was named chair of the commission and ethics supervisor.^{[66][68][69]} By November 2003, she was filing nonpublic ethics complaints with the state attorney general and the governor against a fellow commission member, Randy Ruedrich, a former petroleum engineer and at the time the chair of the state Republican Party.^[66] He was forced to resign in November 2003.^[66] Palin resigned in January 2004 and put her protests against Ruedrich's "lack of ethics" into the public arena^{[18][66]} by filing a public complaint against Ruedrich,^[70] who was then fined \$12,000. She joined with Democratic legislator Eric Croft^[71] in complaining that Gregg Renkes, then the attorney general of Alaska,^[72] had a financial conflict of interest in negotiating a coal exporting trade agreement.^{[73][74]} Renkes also resigned his post.^{[18][69]}

From 2003 to June 2005, Palin served as one of three directors of "Ted Stevens Excellence in Public Service, Inc.," a 527 group designed to provide political training for Republican women in Alaska.^[75] In 2004, Palin told the Anchorage Daily News that she had decided not to run for the U.S. Senate that year against the Republican incumbent, Lisa Murkowski, because her teenage son opposed it. Palin said, "How could I be the team mom if I was a U.S. Senator?"^[76]

Governor of Alaska

In 2006, running on a clean-government platform, Palin defeated incumbent Governor Frank Murkowski in the Republican gubernatorial primary.^{[77][78]} Her running mate was Sean Parnell.^[79]

In the November election Palin was outspent but victorious, defeating former Democratic governor Tony Knowles by a margin of 48.3% to 41.0%.^[18] She became Alaska's first female governor and, at the age of 42, the youngest governor in Alaskan history. She was the state's first governor to have been born after Alaska achieved U.S. statehood, and the first who was not inaugurated in the capital, Juneau (she chose to have the ceremony held in Fairbanks instead).

She took office on December 4, 2006. For most of her term, she was very popular with Alaska voters. Polls taken in 2007 showed her with 93% and 89% popularity among all voters.^[80] The Anchorage Daily News and The Weekly Standard called



Palin visits soldiers of the Alaska National Guard, July 24, 2007

her "the most popular governor in America."^{[71][80]} A poll taken in late September 2008, after Palin was named to the national Republican ticket, showed her popularity in Alaska at 68%.^[81] A poll taken in May 2009 indicated Palin's popularity among Alaskans had declined to 54% positive and 41.6% negative.^[82]

Palin declared that top priorities of her administration would be resource development, education and workforce development, public health and safety, and transportation and infrastructure development.^[1] She had championed ethics reform throughout her election campaign. Her first legislative action after taking office was to push for a bipartisan ethics reform bill. She signed the resulting legislation in July 2007, calling it a "first step" and declaring that she remained determined to clean up Alaska politics.^[83]

Palin frequently broke with the Alaskan Republican establishment.^{[84][85]} For example, she endorsed Parnell's bid to unseat Don Young, the state's longtime at-large U.S. Representative.^[86] She publicly challenged then-U.S. Senator Ted Stevens to "come clean" about the federal investigation into his financial dealings. Shortly before Stevens was indicted in July 2008, Palin held a joint news conference with him. *The Washington Post* described this as intended to "make clear she had not abandoned him politically."^[75] She promoted the development of oil and natural-gas resources in Alaska, including drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (ANWR). Proposals to drill for oil in ANWR have catalyzed national debate.^[87]

In 2006, Palin obtained a passport^[88] and in 2007 traveled for the first time outside North America, on a trip to Kuwait. There she visited the Khabari Alawazem Crossing at the Kuwait–Iraq border, and met with members of the Alaska National Guard at several bases.^[89] On her return journey she visited injured soldiers in Germany.^[90]

Budget, spending, and federal funds

In June 2007, Palin signed a record \$6.6 billion operating budget into law.^[91] At the same time, she used her veto power to make the second-largest cuts of the capital budget in state history. The \$237 million in cuts represented over 300 local projects and reduced the capital budget to \$1.6 billion.^[92]

In 2008, Palin vetoed \$286 million, cutting or reducing funding for 350 projects from the FY09 capital budget.^[93]

Palin followed through on a campaign promise to sell the Westwind II jet, a purchase made by the Murkowski administration for \$2.7 million in 2005 against the wishes of the legislature.^[94] In August 2007, the jet was listed on eBay, but the sale fell through, and the plane later sold for \$2.1 million through a private brokerage firm.^[95]



Palin in Germany, July 2007

Gubernatorial expenditures

Palin lived in Juneau during the legislative session, and lived in Wasilla and worked out of offices in Anchorage the rest of the year. Since the office in Anchorage was 565 miles from Juneau, while she worked there, state officials said she was permitted to claim a \$58 per diem travel allowance and reimbursement for hotel. She filed for per diem, claiming a total of \$16,951, but rather than stay at a hotel overnight, regularly commuted the 50 miles one way to her home in Wasilla.^[96] She did not use the former governor's private chef.^[97]

Both Republicans and Democrats criticized Palin for taking the per diem, as well as an additional \$43,490 in travel expenses on occasions when her family accompanied her on state business.^{[98][99]} Palin's staffers responded that these practices were in line with state policy, that her gubernatorial expenses were 80% below those of her predecessor Murkowski,^[98] and that "many of the hundreds of invitations Palin receives include requests for her to bring her family, placing the definition of 'state business' with the party extending the invitation."^[96]

In February 2009, the State of Alaska, reversing a policy that had treated the payments as legitimate business expenses under the Internal Revenue Code, decided that per diems paid to state employees for stays in their own homes would be treated as taxable income and will be included in employees' gross income on their W-2 forms.^[100] Palin had ordered the review of the tax policy.^[101]

In December 2008, an Alaska state commission recommended increasing the governor's annual salary from \$125,000 to \$150,000. Palin said that she would not accept the pay raise.^[102] In response, the commission dropped the recommendation.^[103]

Federal funding

In her State of the State address on January 17, 2008, Palin declared that the people of Alaska "can and must continue to develop our economy, because we cannot and must not rely so heavily on federal government [funding]."^[104] Alaska's federal congressional representatives cut back on pork-barrel project requests during Palin's time as governor.^[105]

While the state has no sales tax or income tax, royalty revenues from the Prudhoe Bay Oil Field (consisting mostly of state-owned lands) have supported large state budgets since 1980. The exact amounts have depended on the prevailing price of petroleum. As a result, state revenues doubled to \$10 billion in 2008. Despite this, for the 2009 state budget, Palin gave a list of 31 proposed federal earmarks or requests for funding, totaling \$197 million, to Alaska's senior U.S. Senator Ted Stevens. This was a major decrease from earlier years.^{[106][107]} Palin has said that her decreasing support for federal funding was a source of friction between her and the state's congressional delegation; Palin requested less in federal funding each year than her predecessor Frank Murkowski requested in his last year.^[108]

Bridge to Nowhere



Palin visiting Ketchikan during her gubernatorial campaign, 2006

In 2002, it was proposed that a for-profit prison corporation, Cornell Corrections, build a prison on the island. To connect the island with Ketchikan, it was originally planned that the federal government spend \$175 million on building a bridge to the island, and another \$75 million to connect it to the power grid with an electrical intertie. The Ketchikan Borough Assembly turned the proposal down when the administration of Governor Tony Knowles also expressed its disfavor to the idea. Eventually, the corporation's prison plans led to the exposure of the wide-ranging Alaska political corruption probe, which eventually ensnared U.S. Senator Ted Stevens. The bridge idea persisted through the administration of former U.S. Senator, and then-governor, Frank Murkowski. The 2005 Highway Bill provided for \$223m to build the Gravina Island Bridge between Gravina Island and nearby Ketchikan, on Revillagigedo Island. The provisions and earmarks^[109] were negotiated by Alaska's Rep. Don Young, who chaired the House Transportation Committee and were supported by

the Chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Alaska's Senator Stevens.^[110] This bridge, nicknamed

"The Bridge to Nowhere" by critics, was intended to replace the auto ferry which is currently the only connection between Ketchikan and its airport. While the federal earmark was withdrawn after meeting opposition from Oklahoma Senator Tom Coburn, though the state of Alaska received \$300 million in transportation funding,^[110] the state of Alaska continued to study improvements in access to the airport, which could conceivably include improvements to the ferry service.^[111] In 2006, Palin had run for governor with a "build-the-bridge" plank in her platform,^[112] saying she would "not allow the spinmeisters to turn this project ... into something that's so negative."^[113] Palin criticized the use of the word "nowhere" as insulting to local residents^{[112][114]} and urged speedy work on building the infrastructure "while our congressional delegation is in a strong position to assist."^[114] Despite the demise of the bridge proposal, Palin spent \$26 million in transportation funding for the planned 3-mile access road on the island that ultimately served little use.^{[115][116]} A spokesman for Alaska's Department of Transportation said that it had been within Palin's power to cancel the road project, but noted the state was considering cheaper designs to complete the bridge project, and that in any case, the road would open up the surrounding lands for development.^{[112][117]} As governor, Palin canceled the Gravina Island Bridge in September 2007, saying that Congress had "little interest in spending any more money" due to "inaccurate portrayals of the projects."^[118] Alaska did not return the \$442 million in federal transportation funds.^[119]

In 2008, as a vice-presidential candidate, Palin characterized her position as having told Congress "thanks, but no thanks, on that bridge to nowhere." A number of Ketchikan residents said that the claim was false and a betrayal of Palin's previous support for their community.^[119] Some critics said that her statement was misleading, as she had expressed support for the spending project and kept the federal money after the project was canceled.^[120]

Gas pipeline

In August 2008, Palin signed a bill authorizing the State of Alaska to award TransCanada Pipelines—the sole bidder to meet the state's requirements—a license to build and operate a pipeline to transport natural gas from the Alaska North Slope to the continental United States through Canada.^[121] The governor also pledged \$500 million in seed money to support the project.^[122]

It was estimated that the project would cost \$26 billion.^[121] *Newsweek* described the project as "the principal achievement of Sarah Palin's term as Alaska's governor."^[123] The pipeline also faces legal challenges from Canadian First Nations.^[123]

Predator control

In 2007, Palin supported a 2003 Alaska Department of Fish and Game policy allowing the hunting of wolves from the air as part of a predator control program intended to increase moose and caribou populations for subsistence-food gatherers and other hunters.^{[124][125]} In March 2007, Palin's office announced that a bounty of \$150 per wolf would be paid to the 180 volunteer pilots and gunners in five areas of Alaska to offset fuel costs. In the prior four years, 607 wolves had been killed. State biologists wanted 382 to 664 wolves to be killed by the end of the predator-control season in April 2007. Wildlife activists sued the state, and a state judge declared the bounty illegal on the basis that a bounty would have to be offered by the Board of Game and not by the Department of Fish and Game.^{[124][126]} On August 26, 2008, Alaskans voted against ending the state's predator control program.^[127]

Public Safety Commissioner dismissal

Palin dismissed Public Safety Commissioner Walt Monegan on July 11, 2008, citing performance-related issues, such as not being "a team player on budgeting issues"^[128] and "egregious rogue behavior."^[129] Palin attorney Thomas Van Flein said that the "last straw" was Monegan's planned trip to Washington, D.C., to seek funding for a new, multimillion-dollar sexual assault initiative the governor hadn't yet approved.^[130]

Monegan said that he had resisted persistent pressure from Palin, her husband, and her staff, including state Attorney General Talis J. Colberg, to fire Palin's ex-brother-in-law, Alaska State Trooper Mike Wooten; Wooten was involved in a child custody battle with Palin's sister after a bitter divorce that included an alleged death threat against Palin's father.^{[131][132]} At one point Sarah and Todd Palin hired a private investigator to gather information, seeking to have Wooten officially disciplined.^[133] Monegan stated that he learned an internal investigation had found all but two of the allegations to be unsubstantiated, and Wooten had been disciplined for the others – an illegal moose killing and the tasering of his 11-year-old stepson, who had reportedly asked to be tasered.^[132] He told the Palins that there was nothing he could do because the matter was closed.^[134] When contacted by the press for comment, Monegan first acknowledged pressure to fire Wooten but said that he could not be certain that his own firing was connected to that issue;^[132] he later asserted that the dispute over Wooten was a major reason for his firing.^[135] Palin stated on July 17 that Monegan was not pressured to fire Wooten, nor dismissed for not doing so.^{[128][134]}

Monegan said the subject of Wooten came up when he invited Palin to a birthday party for his cousin, state senator Lyman Hoffman, in February 2007 during the legislative session in Juneau. "As we were walking down the stairs in the capitol building she wanted to talk to me about her former brother-in-law," Monegan said. "I said, 'Ma'am, I need to keep you at arm's length with this. I can't deal about him with you.'^[136] She said, 'OK, that's a good idea.'^[132]

Palin said there was "absolutely no pressure ever put on Commissioner Monegan to hire or fire anybody, at any time. I did not abuse my office powers. And I don't know how to be more blunt and candid and honest, but to tell you that truth. To tell you that no pressure was ever put on anybody to fire anybody." Todd Palin gave a similar account.^[137]

On August 13, she acknowledged that a half dozen members of her administration had made more than two dozen calls on the matter to various state officials. "I do now have to tell Alaskans that such pressure could have been perceived to exist, although I have only now become aware of it", she said.^{[134][136][138]} Palin said, "Many of these inquiries were completely appropriate. However, the serial nature of the contacts could be perceived as some kind of pressure, presumably at my direction."^{[128][139]}

Chuck Kopp, whom Palin had appointed to replace Monegan as public safety commissioner, received a \$10,000 state severance package after he resigned following just two weeks on the job. Kopp, the former Kenai chief of police, resigned July 25 following disclosure of a 2005 sexual harassment complaint and letter of reprimand against him. Monegan said that he did not receive a severance package from the state.^[128]

Legislative investigation

On August 1, 2008, the Alaska Legislature hired an investigator, Stephen Branchflower, to review the Monegan dismissal. Legislators stated that Palin had the legal authority to fire Monegan, but they wanted to know whether her action had been motivated by anger at Monegan for not firing Wooten.^[140] The atmosphere was bipartisan and Palin pledged to cooperate.^{[140][141]} Wooten remained employed as a state trooper.^[133] She placed an aide on paid leave due to a tape-recorded phone conversation that she deemed improper, in which the aide, appearing to act on her behalf, complained to a trooper that Wooten had not been fired.^[142]

Several weeks after the start of what the media referred to as "troopergate", Palin was chosen as John McCain's running mate.^[140] On September 1, Palin asked the legislature to drop its investigation, saying that the state Personnel Board had jurisdiction over ethics issues.^[143] The Personnel Board's three members were

first appointed by Palin's predecessor, and Palin reappointed one member in 2008.^[144] On September 19, Todd Palin and several state employees refused to honor subpoenas, the validity of which were disputed by Talis Colberg, Palin's appointee as Alaska's attorney general.^[145] On October 2, a court rejected Colberg's challenge to the subpoenas,^[146] and seven of the witnesses, not including Todd Palin, eventually testified.^[147]

Branchflower Report

On October 10, 2008, the Alaska Legislative Council unanimously voted to release, without endorsing,^[148] the Branchflower Report, in which investigator Stephen Branchflower found that firing Monegan "was a proper and lawful exercise of her constitutional and statutory authority," but that Palin abused her power as governor and violated the state's Executive Branch Ethics Act when her office pressured Monegan to fire Wooten.^[149] The report stated that "Governor Palin knowingly permitted a situation to continue where impermissible pressure was placed on several subordinates to advance a personal agenda, to wit: to get Trooper Michael Wooten fired."^[150] The report also said that Palin "permitted Todd Palin to use the Governor's office [...] to continue to contact subordinate state employees in an effort to find some way to get Trooper Wooten fired."^{[150][151]}

On October 11, Palin's attorneys responded, condemning the Branchflower Report as "misleading and wrong on the law."^[152] One of Palin's attorneys, Thomas Van Flein, said that it was an attempt to "smear the governor by innuendo."^[153] Later that day, Palin did a conference call interview with various Alaskan reporters, where she stated, "Well, I'm very, very pleased to be cleared of any legal wrongdoing... Any hint of any kind of unethical activity there. Very pleased to be cleared of any of that."^[154]

Alaska Personnel Board investigation and report

The bipartisan State of Alaska Personnel Board reviewed the matter at Palin's request.^[155] On September 15, the Anchorage law firm of Clapp, Peterson, Van Flein, Tiemessen & Thorsness filed arguments of "no probable cause" with the Personnel Board on behalf of Palin.^{[156][157]} The Personnel Board retained independent counsel Timothy Petumenos, a Democrat, as an investigator. On October 24, Palin gave three hours of depositions with the Personnel Board in St. Louis, Missouri.^[158] On November 3, 2008, the State of Alaska Personnel Board reported that there was no probable cause to believe that Palin or any other state official had violated state ethical standards.^{[159][160][161][162][163]} The report further stated that the Branchflower Report used the wrong statute in reaching its conclusions, misconstrued the available evidence and did not consider or obtain all of the material evidence required to properly reach findings in the matter.^[159]

Job approval ratings

As governor of Alaska, Palin's job approval rating ranged from a high of 93% in May 2007 to 54% in May 2009.^[164]

Date	Approval	Disapproval	Pollster
May 15, 2007 ^[165]	93%	<i>Not reported</i>	Dittman Research
May 30, 2007	89%	<i>Not reported</i>	Ivan Moore Research
October 19–21, 2007 ^[166]	83%	11%	Ivan Moore Research
April 10, 2008 ^[167]	73%	7%	<u>Rasmussen Reports</u>
May 17, 2008 ^[168]	69%	9%	Rasmussen Reports
July 24–25, 2008 ^[169]	80%	<i>Not reported</i>	Hays Research Group
July 30, 2008 ^[169]	64%	14%	Rasmussen Reports
September 20–22, 2008 ^[170]	68%	<i>Not reported</i>	Ivan Moore Research
October 7, 2008 ^[171]	63%	37%	Rasmussen Reports
March 24–25, 2009 ^[172]	59.8%	34.9%	Hays Research
May 4–5, 2009 ^[172]	54%	41.6%	Hays Research
June 14–18, 2009 ^[173]	56%	35%	<u>Global Strategy Group</u>

Resignation

On July 3, 2009, Palin announced that she would not run for reelection in the 2010 Alaska gubernatorial election and would resign before the end of the month. In her announcement, Palin stated that since August 2008, both she and the state had been spending an "insane" amount of time and money (\$2.5 million) responding to "opposition research," 150 FOIA requests and 15 "frivolous" legal ethics complaints filed by "political operatives" against her.^{[174][175][176][177]} Her decision not to seek reelection and to resign from office would enable her to avoid being a lame duck politician. She said, "I'm not putting Alaska through that ...".^[176] Contrary to most reports, it has been reported that her decision had been in the works for months, accelerating as it became clear that controversies and endless ethics investigations were threatening to overshadow her legislative agenda. A source close to Palin said, "Attacks inside Alaska and largely invisible to the national media had paralyzed her administration [and] she was no longer able to do the job she had been elected to do."^[74] Essentially, the taxpayers were paying for Sarah to go to work every day and defend herself."^[177]

Palin and her husband Todd had personally incurred more than \$500,000 in legal fees defending against ethics charges brought against her as governor even though all the complaints were dismissed. Lt. Governor Sean Parnell said it "really had to do with the weight on her, the concern she had for the cost of all the ethics investigations and the like – the way that weighed on her with respect to her inability to just move forward Alaska's agenda on behalf of Alaskans in the current context of the environment."^[174] Lieutenant Governor Sean Parnell became governor on July 26, 2009 in an inaugural ceremony in Fairbanks, upon Palin's resignation taking effect.^[178]

In December 2010, new rules governing Alaska executive branch ethics, stemming from Palin's tenure as governor, took effect.^[179] "These include allowing for the state to pay legal costs for officials cleared of ethics violations; (and) allowing for a family member of the governor or lieutenant governor to travel at state cost in certain circumstances ..."^[179]

2008 vice presidential campaign

Several conservative commentators met Palin in the summer of 2007.^[180] Some of them, such as Bill Kristol, later urged McCain to pick Palin as his vice presidential running mate, arguing that her presence on the ticket would provide a boost in enthusiasm among the Religious Right wing of the Republican party, while her status as an unknown on the national scene would also be a positive factor.^[181]

On August 24, 2008, during a general strategy meeting, Steve Schmidt, and a few other senior advisers to the McCain campaign, discussed potential vice presidential picks with the consensus settling around Palin. The following day, the strategists advised McCain of their conclusions and he personally called Palin, who was at the Alaska State Fair.^[182]

On August 27, she visited McCain's vacation home near Sedona, Arizona, where she was offered the position of vice-presidential candidate.^[183] According to Jill Hazelbaker, a spokeswoman for McCain, he had previously met Palin at the National Governors Association meeting in Washington in February 2008 and had come away "extraordinarily impressed."^[184] Palin was the only prospective running mate who had a face-to-face interview with McCain to discuss joining the ticket that week.^[185] Nonetheless, Palin's selection was a surprise to many because a main criticism he had of Obama was his lack of experience, and speculation had centered on other candidates, such as Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty, Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal, former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney, U.S. Senator Joe Lieberman of Connecticut, and former Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge.^[186] On August 29, in Dayton, Ohio, McCain announced he had chosen Palin as his running mate,^[186] making her the first Alaskan and the second woman to run on a major U.S. party ticket.^[186]

As Palin was largely unknown outside Alaska before her selection by McCain, her personal life, policy positions, and political record drew intense media scrutiny.^[187] On September 1, 2008, Palin announced that her daughter Bristol was pregnant and that she would marry the father, Levi Johnston.^[188] During this period, some Republicans felt that Palin was being unfairly attacked by the media.^[189] Timothy Noah of Slate magazine predicted that Palin's acceptance speech would be "wildly overpraised" and might end speculation that she was unqualified for the job of vice president because the press had been beating her up for "various trivial shortcomings" and had lowered the expectations for her speech.^[190] On September 3, 2008, Palin delivered a 40-minute acceptance speech at the Republican National Convention that was well received and watched by more than 40 million people.^[191]



Palin addresses the 2008 Republican National Convention in Saint Paul, Minnesota



The Palins and McCains in Fairfax, Virginia, September 2008

During the campaign, controversy erupted over alleged differences between Palin's positions as a gubernatorial candidate and her position as a vice-presidential candidate. After McCain announced Palin as his running mate, Newsweek and Time put Palin on their magazine covers,^[192] as some of the media alleged that McCain's campaign was restricting press access to Palin by allowing only three one-on-one interviews and no press conferences with her.^[193] Palin's first major interview, with Charles Gibson of ABC News, met with mixed reviews.^[194] Her interview five days later with Fox News Channel's Sean Hannity went more smoothly and focused on many of the same questions from Gibson's interview.^[195] Palin's performance in her third interview with Katie Couric, of CBS News, was widely criticized; her poll numbers declined, Republicans expressed concern that she was becoming a political liability, and some conservative commentators called for Palin to resign from the Presidential ticket.^{[196][197]}

Other conservatives remained ardent in their support for Palin, accusing the columnists of elitism.^[198] Following this interview, some Republicans, including Mitt Romney and Bill Kristol, questioned the McCain campaign's strategy of sheltering Palin from unscripted encounters with the press.^[199]

Palin reportedly prepared intensively for the October 2 vice-presidential debate with Democratic vice-presidential nominee Joe Biden at Washington University in St. Louis. Some Republicans suggested that Palin's performance in the interviews would improve public perceptions of her debate performance by lowering expectations.^{[196][200][201]} Polling from CNN, Fox and CBS found that while Palin exceeded most voters' expectations, they felt that Biden had won the debate.^{[202][203]}

Upon returning to the campaign trail after her debate preparation, Palin stepped up her attacks on the Democratic candidate for president, Illinois Senator Barack Obama. At a fundraising event, Palin explained her new aggressiveness, saying, "There does come a time when you have to take the gloves off and that time is right now."^[204] Palin said that her first amendment right to "call Obama out on his associations" was threatened by "attacks by the mainstream media."^[205]

Palin appeared on *Saturday Night Live*'s "Weekend Update" segment on October 18. Prior to her appearance, she had been parodied several times by Tina Fey, who was noted for her physical resemblance to the candidate.^[206] In the weeks leading up to the election, Palin was also the subject of amateur parodies posted on YouTube.^[207]

Controversy arose after it was reported that the Republican National Committee (RNC) spent \$150,000 of campaign contributions on clothing, hair styling, and makeup for Palin and her family in September 2008. Campaign spokespersons stated the clothing would be going to charity after the election.^[208] Palin and some media outlets blamed gender bias for the controversy.^{[209][210]} At the end of the campaign, Palin returned the clothes to the RNC.^[211]

The election took place on November 4, and Obama was projected as the winner at 11:00 PM EST.^[212] In his concession speech McCain thanked Palin, calling her "one of the best campaigners I've ever seen, and an impressive new voice in our party for reform and the principles that have always been our greatest strength."^[212] While aides were preparing the teleprompter for McCain's speech, they found a concession speech written for Palin by George W. Bush speechwriter Matthew Scully. Two members of McCain's staff, Steve Schmidt and Mark Salter, told Palin that there was no tradition of Election Night speeches by running mates, and that she would not be speaking. Palin appealed to McCain, who agreed with his staff.^[213]

Political scientists have debated the impact that Palin had on the outcome of the 2008 presidential election.^{[214][215][216]} A 2010 study in the journal *Electoral Studies* found that "her campaign performance cost McCain just under 2% of the final vote share."^[214] However, a 2013 study in journal *Political Research Quarterly* failed to find an adverse impact.^[215]

After the 2008 election

Palin was the first guest on commentator Glenn Beck's Fox News television show on January 19, 2009, commenting on Barack Obama that he would be her president and that she would assist in any way to bring progress to the nation without abandoning her conservative views.^[217]

In August 2009, she coined the phrase "death panel", to describe rationing of care as part of the proposed health care reform. She stated that it would require Americans such as her parents or her child with Down syndrome, "to stand in front of Obama's 'death panel' so his bureaucrats can decide, based on a subjective



Sarah Palin at campaign rally in Carson City, Nevada, September 13, 2008



Palin rallies with Saxby Chambliss in Savannah, Georgia, December 2008

judgment of their 'level of productivity in society,' whether they are worthy of health care."^[218] The phrase was criticized by many Democrats and Politifact named it the "Lie of the Year of 2009."^[219] However, conservatives disputed this and defended her use of the term.^[220]

In March 2010, Palin started a show to be aired on TLC called Sarah Palin's Alaska.^[221] The show was produced by Mark Burnett.^[222] Five million viewers tuned in for the premiere episode, a record for TLC.^[223] Palin also secured a segment on Fox News.^[222] Two guests that she was shown to have interviewed claimed to have never met her. Guests LL Cool J and Toby Keith stated that footage shown on the segment was actually taken from another interview with

someone else, but was used in Palin's segment.^[224] Fox News and Palin ended this relationship in January 2013.^[225] But on June 13, 2013, Palin rejoined Fox News Channel as an analyst.^[226]

On December 8, 2010, it was reported that SarahPAC and Palin's personal credit card information were compromised through cyber attacks. Palin's team believed the attack was executed by Anonymous during Operation Payback.^[227] The report was met with skepticism in the blogosphere.^[228] Palin's email had been hacked once before in 2008.^[229]

SarahPAC

On January 27, 2009, Palin formed the political action committee, SarahPAC.^{[230][231]} Michael Glassner, a former aide to Palin, was appointed as the chief of staff of SarahPac.^[232] The organization, which describes itself as an advocate of energy independence,^[233] supports candidates for federal and state office.^[234] Following her resignation as governor, Palin announced her intention to campaign "on behalf of candidates who believe in the right things, regardless of their party label or affiliation."^[235] It was reported that SarahPAC had raised nearly \$1,000,000.^[236] A legal defense fund was set up to help Palin challenge ethics complaints, and it had collected approximately \$250,000 by mid-July 2009.^{[236][237]} In June 2010, Palin's defense fund was ruled illegal and was required to pay back \$386,856 it collected in donations because it used Palin's position as governor to raise money for her personal gain. Palin subsequently set up a new defense fund.^[238] Sarah PAC was terminated as of December 31, 2016.^[239]

In the wake of the January 8, 2011 shooting of Rep. Gabrielle Giffords, Palin faced criticism for her SarahPAC website's inclusion of a political graphic that included a crosshair^[240] over Giffords's district. Palin responded on her Facebook page to the criticism, saying that "Acts of monstrous criminality stand on their own. They begin and end with the criminals who commit them", equating the accusations of her role in the shooting to a "blood libel".^{[241][242][243]}

Going Rogue and America by Heart

In November 2009, Palin released her memoir, *Going Rogue: An American Life*, in which she details her private and political career, including her resignation as Governor of Alaska. Palin said she took the title from the phrase 'gone rogue' used by McCain staffers to describe her behavior when she spoke her mind on the issues during the campaign.^[244] The subtitle, "An American Life," mirrors the title of President Ronald Reagan's 1990 autobiography.^[245] Less than two weeks after its release, sales of the book exceeded the one million mark, with 300,000 copies sold the first day. Its bestseller rankings were comparable to memoirs by Bill Clinton, Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama.^{[246][247][248]}

Palin traveled to 11 states in a bus, with her family accompanying her, to promote the book. She made a number of media appearances as well, including a widely publicized interview on November 16, 2009, with Oprah Winfrey.^[249] In November 2010 HarperCollins released Palin's second book, titled America by Heart.^{[250][251][252]} The book contains excerpts from Palin's favorite speeches, sermons and literature as well as portraits of people Palin admires, including some she met in rural America on her first book tour.^[250]



Palin on the campaign trail in 2008

Tea Party movement

On February 6, 2010, Palin was the keynote speaker at the first Tea Party convention in Nashville, Tennessee. Palin said the Tea Party movement is "the future of politics in America."^[253] She criticized Obama for rising deficits, and for "apologizing for America" in speeches in other countries. Palin said Obama was weak on the War on Terror for allowing the so-called Christmas bomber to board a plane headed for the United States.^[254]



Palin addressing a Labor Day rally sponsored by the Tea Party Express (Manchester, NH), 2011

On April 16, 2011, Palin was the keynote speaker at an annual tax day tea party rally at the state capitol in Madison, Wisconsin sponsored by Americans for Prosperity, a conservative political advocacy group headquartered in Arlington, Virginia.^[255]

On Labor Day, September 5, 2011, Palin was the featured speaker at a Tea Party Express rally in Manchester, New Hampshire's Victory Park. She addressed a large enthusiastic crowd. Palin told the attendees that it was time to grow the Tea Party movement and it was important for them to avoid internal bickering with Establishment Republicans.^[256] She told the crowd, "The Tea Party movement is bigger than any one person and is not about any one candidate."^[257]

"Pink Elephant" movement and 2010 endorsements

In the middle of 2010, Palin flagged the launch of a new "Pink Elephant Movement".^[258] She set about endorsing a number of female GOP candidates.^[259] Her endorsement helped Georgia Gubernatorial candidate Karen Handel to take the lead in the campaign for the Republican nomination,^[260] although Handel lost the primary. Palin endorsed several female candidates nationally. Ryan Rudominer, a spokesman for the House Democratic campaign operation called her involvement in various U.S. House campaigns a "great thing across the board".^[261] She spoke at a May 2010 fundraiser for the Susan B. Anthony List, an anti-abortion political advocacy group and political action committee that supports pro-life women in politics, in which she coined the term "mama grizzly".^{[262][263]} Palin endorsed Nikki Haley for the Republican nomination for Governor of South Carolina three weeks before the election. At the time of the endorsement, Haley was polling last among Republicans; she ended up winning the nomination and general election.^[264]

In the months ahead of the November 2010 elections, Palin endorsed 64 Republican candidates,^[265] and was a significant fundraising asset to those she campaigned for during the primary season.^[266] According to *Politico*, Palin's criteria for endorsing candidates was whether they had the support of the Tea Party movement and the support of the Susan B. Anthony List.^[267] In terms of success, Palin was 7–2 for Senate endorsements; 7–6 for House endorsements; and 6–3 in endorsements of gubernatorial candidates in races that

were considered 'competitive'.^[268] Palin's endorsement of Joe Miller in the August 24 Alaska primary election for U.S. Senator was identified as a pivotal moment in Miller's upset of the incumbent Republican Senator Lisa Murkowski.^{[269][270]} After losing the Republican Party primary to Miller, Murkowski ran as a write-in candidate, defeating both Miller and Democrat Scott McAdams in the general election, winning with a plurality. This made her only the second U.S. Senator, the first write-in candidate to be elected since Strom Thurmond in the United States Senate election in South Carolina, 1954.^[271] According to *The Daily Beast* reporter Shushannah Walshe, Christine O'Donnell's unlikely prospects of upsetting establishment Republican candidate Mike Castle "changed overnight" due to Palin's endorsement. O'Donnell defeated Castle in the September 14 primary for Joe Biden's former Senate seat in Delaware.^[272] Her O'Donnell endorsement further increased tensions between Palin and the Republican establishment: leading conservative commentator Charles Krauthammer described the endorsement as "reckless and irresponsible".^[273] Party strategist Karl Rove argued that it may have been Palin's endorsement of O'Donnell that ultimately cost the GOP the Delaware Senate seat.^[274] Commentators including Politico's Ben Smith posited that Palin's support of O'Donnell contributed to dashing Republican hopes of regaining control of the U.S. Senate.^[275] Another Palin endorsement carried Nevada's Sharron Angle to a 40.1% primary win,^[276] in the race to beat highly endangered incumbent Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, but the controversial Angle's nomination sank those chances. Reid prevailed 50.3% to 44.6% in the 2010 election, despite his losing 14 of Nevada's 17 counties.^{[277][278]} Angle had led by as much as 11% in March and June Rasmussen polling.^{[279][280]}

Palin's influence over the primaries nonetheless further increased speculation that she would seek to be the party's nominee for president in 2012,^[281] with political pundits such as David Frum and Jonathan Chait identifying Palin as the front-runner.^{[282][283]}

2012 election cycle and candidacy speculation

Beginning in November 2008, following Palin's high profile in the presidential campaign, an active "Draft Palin" movement started.^[284] On February 6, 2010, when asked on Fox News whether she would run for president in 2012, she replied, "I would be willing to if I believe that it's right for the country."^[285] She added, "I won't close the door that perhaps could be open for me in the future."^[286]

In November 2010 Palin confirmed that she was considering running for the Presidency, and was "having that discussion with my family". She said she realised her level of experience could cause problems with winning the nomination, and criticized the "lamestream media" for focusing attention on her personal life.^[287]

In March 2011, Palin and her husband toured India at the invitation of Indian newsmagazine India Today,^[288] subsequently visiting Israel.^[289] During the tour she was asked about her future candidacy; she said, "I don't think there needs to be a rush to get out there as a declared candidate. It's a life-changing decision."^[290] In response to another question, she said "It's time that a woman is president of the United States of America."^[291]

In 2011 Palin said the home she had recently purchased in Scottsdale, Arizona was not a full-time residence,^[292] and denied that she was planning to run for the Arizona Senate seat of the retiring Jon Kyl.^[293] On October 5, 2011, Palin said she had decided not to seek the Republican nomination for president.^[294]



Palin speaking at the 2014 Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) in National Harbor, Maryland

2014 Alaska gubernatorial election endorsement

In October 2014, Palin endorsed the "unity ticket" of Independent Bill Walker and Democrat Byron Mallott in the 2014 Alaska gubernatorial election, which ran against her successor and former lieutenant governor, Sean Parnell.^[295] The endorsement was prompted by Parnell's oil-and-gas industry tax-cuts, which dismantled her administration's "Alaska's Clear and Equitable Share" (ACES) plan. She had previously supported a referendum to repeal the tax cuts, which was narrowly defeated in August 2014.^[296] Walker and Mallott made the repeal of the tax cuts a centerpiece of their campaign.^[297] Walker and Mallott won the governorship in the November 2014 election with 48.1 percent of the vote, versus 45.9 percent for the Republican ticket.^[298]



Palin speaking at the 2015 CPAC in National Harbor

2016 campaign

In January 2016 Palin announced her endorsement of Donald Trump.^[299] The political director of Trump's campaign, Michael Glassner, helped to win Palin's endorsement; he had been an aide to Palin while she was governor, and was also the chief of staff of her political action committee, SarahPAC.^[300]

In a May 2016 interview with CNN's Jake Tapper, Palin said she would work to defeat Republican Speaker of the House Paul Ryan. Palin cited Ryan's reluctance to support Trump for president.^[301] In early August, Palin said again that she supported Paul Nehlen, a little-known Republican and white-supremacist challenger to Ryan, despite Trump's announced support of Ryan.^[302] A few days later, Ryan overwhelmingly defeated Nehlen in the Republican primary, taking over 84 percent of the vote.^[303]

2017 defamation lawsuit

In June 2017, Palin filed a defamation lawsuit against The New York Times for an editorial accusing Palin of "political incitement" in the run-up to the 2011 shooting of Democratic congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords, claiming a link to an advertisement from Palin's political action committee—which showed stylized crosshairs against the congressional districts held by 20 Democrats, including Giffords.^{[304][305]} The *Times* later issued a correction, stating that "no such link was established" between the advertisement and the shooting, and clarifying that what was depicted in the crosshairs in the ads were "electoral districts, not individual Democratic lawmakers." The *Times* wrote that the error did not "undercut or weaken the argument of the piece."^[304] In subsequent testimony at an evidentiary hearing, *Times* editorial page editor James Bennet stated that the editorial sought to make a point about heated political rhetoric, and was not intended to blame Palin for the attack on Giffords.^[306]

Palin's lawsuit was dismissed by the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York in August 2017. Judge Jed S. Rakoff ruled that Palin had failed to show malice, writing: "What we have here is an editorial, written and rewritten rapidly in order to voice an opinion on an immediate event of importance, in which are included a few factual inaccuracies somewhat pertaining to Mrs. Palin that are very rapidly corrected. Negligence this may be; but defamation of a public figure it plainly is not."^[306] On August 6, 2019 the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals at New York reinstated Palin's suit, ruling that U.S. District Judge Jed Rakoff erred when he held an evidentiary hearing on the newspaper's motion to dismiss.^[307] Subsequently, Rakoff ordered a jury trial in the libel suit. He said that as the issues were not as clear cut as either party suggested, the matter will have to be decided by a jury.^[308]

Political positions

Palin has been a registered Republican since 1982.^[309]

Health care

Palin opposed the 2010 health care reform package, saying it would lead to rationing of health care by a bureaucracy, which she described using the term "death panels". This legislation is the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, as modified by the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010.^[310] She also opposes abortion, including in cases of rape, incest, and embryonic stem cell research, but supports it if the mother's life is in jeopardy.^[311] She supports parental consent as a requirement for female minors seeking an abortion.^[312]

Social issues

Palin opposes same-sex marriage^[313] and supports capital punishment.^[314] She has also called marijuana use a "minimal issue" and suggested that arresting cannabis users should be a low priority for local police. Although she opposes full legalization, she admits to smoking marijuana recreationally, when it was legal in Alaska.^[315]

Education

Palin supports sex education in public schools that encourages sexual abstinence along with teaching about contraception.^[316] She also supports discussion of creationism during lessons on evolution in public schools.^[317] Palin believes evolution "should be taught as an accepted principle" and said that her belief in God's role in Earth's creation "is not part of the state policy or a local curriculum in a school district. Science should be taught in science class."^[318] (See Creation–evolution controversy.)

Guns

A Life Member of the National Rifle Association (NRA),^[319] Palin interprets the Second Amendment as including the right to handgun possession and opposes bans on semi-automatic assault weapons.^[320] She supports gun safety education for youth.^[321]

Environment

Palin supports off-shore drilling, and land-based drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.^{[87][322]} When commenting on the Gulf Coast oil disaster Palin said, "I repeat the slogan 'drill here, drill now.'"^[323] She said, "I want our country to be able to trust the oil industry."^[324] Palin asked supporters to read an article by Thomas Sowell that criticized Obama for having BP pay to an escrow fund.^[325]

Palin considers herself a conservationist^[326] and during the 2008 campaign said "of global warming, climate change, whether it's entirely, wholly caused by man's activities or is part of the cyclical nature of our planet...John McCain and I agree that we have to make sure that we're doing all we can to cut down on pollution."^[327] She opposed cap-and-trade proposals contained in the yet to be defeated ACES energy bill.^[328] Speaking at a 2009 Department of Interior hearing, Palin acknowledged that "many believe" a global effort to reduce greenhouse gases is needed. She stated, "[S]topping domestic energy production of preferred fuels does not solve the issues associated with global warming and threatened or endangered species, but it can make them worse ... These available fuels are required to supply the nation's energy needs during the transition

to green energy alternatives."^[329] After the election and the Climategate scandal, Palin spoke at a 2010 California logging conference calling studies supporting global climate change as "snake oil science". She criticized heavy-handed environmental laws and cited her 2008 suit, as Alaska's governor, against the federal government to overturn the listing of polar bears as a threatened species. She considered environmental regulations as an economic burden to businesses trying to recover from the recession and environmental activists as wanting to "lock up the land".^[326]

Foreign policy

Palin is a strong supporter of Israel.^{[330][331]} Referring to Iran's threat to Israel, Palin said Obama would be reelected if "he played the war card. Say he decided to declare war on Iran or decided really come out and do whatever he could to support Israel, which I would like him to do."^[332]

On foreign policy, Palin supported the George W. Bush administration's policies in Iraq, but was concerned that "dependence on foreign energy" may be obstructing efforts to "have an exit plan in place".^{[333][334]} Palin supports preemptive military action in the face of an imminent threat, and supports U.S. military operations in Pakistan. Palin supports NATO membership for Ukraine and Georgia,^[335] and affirms that if Russia invaded a NATO member, the United States should meet its treaty obligations.^[336] She also supported the surge strategy in Iraq, the use of additional ground forces in Afghanistan, and, in general, maintaining a strong defensive posture by increasing the defense budget.^[337]



Palin (red shirt) in Kuwait, July 26, 2007

Palin opposed the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action which placed limits on Iran's nuclear program, on the grounds that the treaty was not strict enough. In a September 9, 2015 speech, she said, "Only in an Orwellian Obama world full of sparkly fairy dust blown from atop his unicorn as he's peeking through a pretty pink kaleidoscope would he ever see victory or safety for America or Israel in this treaty."^[338]

Public image

In June 2008, the Alumni Association of North Idaho College gave Palin its Distinguished Alumni Achievement Award.^{[27][339]}

Prior to the 2008 Republican National Convention, a Gallup poll found that a majority of voters were unfamiliar with Sarah Palin. During her campaign to become vice president, 39% said Palin was ready to serve as president if needed, 33% said Palin was not, and 29% had no opinion. This was "the lowest vote of confidence in a running mate since the elder George Bush chose then-Indiana senator Dan Quayle to join his ticket in 1988."^[340] Following the convention, her image came under close media scrutiny,^{[187][341]} particularly with regard to her religious perspective on public life, her socially conservative views, and her perceived lack of experience. Palin's lack of experience in foreign and domestic politics was criticized by conservatives as well as liberals following her nomination.^{[342][343][344][345]} At the same time, Palin became more popular than John McCain among Republicans.^[346]

One month after McCain announced Palin as his running mate, she was viewed both more favorably and unfavorably among voters than her Democratic opponent, Delaware Senator Joe Biden.^[347] A plurality of the television audience rated Biden's performance higher at the 2008 vice-presidential debate.^{[347][348]}

Media outlets repeated Palin's statement that she "stood up to Big Oil" when she resigned after 11 months as the head of the Alaska Oil and Gas Conservation Commission. She said it was because of abuses she witnessed involving other Republican commissioners and their ties to energy companies and energy lobbyists; she claimed to have confronted the industry when she raised taxes on oil companies as governor.^{[349][350]} In turn, others have said that Palin is a "friend of Big Oil" due to her advocacy for oil exploration and development including for drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and for the de-listing of the polar bear as an endangered species.^{[349][350]}

Palin was named one of America's "10 Most Fascinating People of 2008" by Barbara Walters for an ABC special on December 4, 2008.^[351] In April 2010, she was selected as one of the world's 100 most influential people by Time magazine.^[352]

Personal life

Sarah and Todd Palin married on August 29, 1988, and they have five children: sons Track Charles James (born 1989)^{[353][354]} and Trig Paxson Van (born 2008), and daughters Bristol Sheeran Marie^[355] (born 1990), Willow Bianca Faye (born 1994), and Piper Indy Grace (born 2001).^{[356][357]} Palin's youngest child, Trig, born 2008, was prenatally diagnosed with Down syndrome.^[358]

Palin has seven grandchildren, three by Bristol,^{[359][360]} two by Track^[361] and two girls by Willow.^[362]

Palin's husband Todd worked for oil company BP as an oil-field production operator, retiring in 2009, and owns a commercial fishing business.^{[41][363]}

Palin was "baptized Catholic as a newborn" as her mother, Sally, had been raised Catholic. However, the Heath family "started going to non-denominational churches" thereafter.^[364] Later, her family joined the Wasilla Assembly of God, a Pentecostal church,^[365] which she attended until 2002.^[366] Palin then switched to the Wasilla Bible Church.^[367] Several news reports posted immediately after McCain named her his running mate called her the first Pentecostal/charismatic believer to appear on a major-party ticket.^[368] Palin does not use the term "Pentecostal" but says she is a "Bible-believing Christian".^[364]

Todd filed for divorce from Sarah on August 29, 2019, citing "incompatibility of temperament". He requested an equal division of debts and assets, and to have joint custody of their son, Trig.^[369] The divorce was finalized on March 23, 2020.^{[370][371]}



The Palins' home in Wasilla

Electoral history

1992 Wasilla City Council Seat E election ^[372]				
Party		Candidate	Votes	%
	<u>Nonpartisan</u>	Sarah Palin	530	54.92
	<u>Nonpartisan</u>	John Hartrick	310	32.12
	<u>Write-in</u>	Others	125	12.95
Total votes			965	

1996 Wasilla mayoral election ^[373]				
Party		Candidate	Votes	%
	<u>Nonpartisan</u>	Sarah H. Palin	651	57.66
	<u>Nonpartisan</u>	John C. Stein (incumbent)	440	38.97
	<u>Nonpartisan</u>	Cliff Silvers	36	3.19
	<u>Write-in</u>	Others	2	0.18
Total votes			965	

1999 Wasilla mayoral election ^[374]				
Party		Candidate	Votes	%
	<u>Nonpartisan</u>	Sarah Palin (incumbent)	909	73.60
	<u>Nonpartisan</u>	John Stein	292	23.64
	<u>Nonpartisan</u>	Cliff Silvers	32	2.59
	<u>Write-in</u>	Others	2	0.16
Turnout			1,235	32.62

2006 Alaska gubernatorial Republican primary ^[375]				
Party		Candidate	Votes	%
	<u>Republican</u>	Sarah Palin	51,443	50.59
	<u>Republican</u>	John Binkley	30,349	29.84
	<u>Republican</u>	Frank Murkowski (incumbent)	19,412	19.09
	<u>Republican</u>	Gerald Heikes	280	0.28
	<u>Republican</u>	Merica Hlatcu	211	0.21
Total votes			101,695	100.00

2006 Alaska gubernatorial election ^[376]					
Party		Candidate	Votes	%	±%
	<u>Republican</u>	Sarah Palin	114,697	48.33	-7.6
	<u>Democratic</u>	Tony Knowles	97,238	40.97	+0.3
	<u>Independent</u>	Andrew Halcro	22,443	9.46	<i>n/a</i>
	<u>Alaskan Independence</u>	Don Wright	1,285	0.54	-0.4
	<u>Libertarian</u>	Billy Toien	682	0.29	-0.2
	<u>Green</u>	David Massie	593	0.25	-1.0
	Write-in candidate	Write-in votes	384	0.16	+0.1
Plurality			17,459	7.36	
Turnout			238,307	51.1	
	<u>Republican hold</u>		Swing	-7.6	

2008 United States presidential election					
Party	Presidential Candidate	Vice Presidential Candidate	Popular vote		Electoral vote
			Count	Percentage	
<u>Democratic Party</u>	<u>Barack Obama</u>	<u>Joe Biden</u>	69,456,897	52.92%	365
<u>Republican Party</u>	<u>John McCain</u>	<u>Sarah Palin</u>	59,934,786	45.66%	173
<u>Independent</u>	<u>Ralph Nader</u>	<u>Matt Gonzalez</u>	738,475	0.56%	0
<u>Libertarian Party</u>	<u>Bob Barr</u>	<u>Chuck Baldwin</u>	523,686	0.40%	0
<u>Green</u>	<u>Cynthia McKinney</u>	<u>Rosa Clemente</u>	161,603	0.12%	0
Other			226,908	0.17%	0
Total			131,241,669	100%	538

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- *Going Rogue: An American Life* (2009)
- *America by Heart: Reflections on Family, Faith, and Flag* (2010)
- *Good Tidings and Great Joy: Protecting the Heart of Christmas* (2013)
- *Sweet Freedom: A Devotional* (2015)

See also

- List of female governors in the United States

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External links

- Sarah Palin's channel (<https://www.youtube.com/user/SarahPalinAK>) on YouTube
 - Sarah Palin (<https://www.imdb.com/name/nm3126606/>) at IMDb
 - Sarah Palin (https://curlie.org/Regional/North_America/United_States/Society_and_Culture/Politics/Parties/Republican/People/Palin,_Sarah) at Curlie
 - Appearances (<https://www.c-span.org/person/?sarahpalin>) on C-SPAN
 - Sarah Palin (<https://www.politifact.com/personalities/sarah-palin/>) at Politifact
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Paul Ryan

Paul Davis Ryan (born January 29, 1970) is an American retired politician who served as the 54th speaker of the United States House of Representatives from October 2015 to January 2019. He was the 2012 Republican Party vice presidential nominee running alongside Mitt Romney, losing to incumbent president Barack Obama and vice president Joe Biden.

Ryan, a native of Janesville, Wisconsin, graduated from Miami University in 1992. He spent five years working for Republicans in Washington, D.C. and returned to Wisconsin in 1997 to work at his family's construction company. Ryan was elected to Congress to represent Wisconsin's 1st congressional district the following year, replacing an incumbent Republican who ran for U.S. Senate. Ryan would represent the district for 20 years. He chaired the House Budget Committee from 2011 to 2015 and briefly chaired the House Ways and Means Committee in 2015 prior to being elected Speaker of the House in October 2015 following John Boehner's retirement.

A self-proclaimed deficit hawk, Ryan was a major proponent of Social Security privatization in the mid-2000s. In the 2010s, two proposals heavily influenced by Ryan—"The Path to Prosperity" and "A Better Way"—advocated for the privatization of Medicare, the conversion of Medicaid into a block grant program, the repeal of the Affordable Care Act, and significant federal tax cuts. As Speaker, he had a role in passage of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017. His other major piece of legislation, the American Health Care Act of 2017, passed the House but failed in the Senate by one vote. Despite his past fiscal conservative rhetoric, Ryan's tenure as Speaker of the House—most of which coincided with a period of unified Republican control of the federal government—saw a significant increase in federal government spending and deficits.

Ryan declined to run for re-election in the 2018 midterm elections. With the Democratic Party taking control of the House of Representatives, Nancy Pelosi succeeded Ryan as Speaker of the House.^[1]

Paul Ryan

Ryan in 2018
54th Speaker of the United States House of Representatives
In office
October 29, 2015 – January 3, 2019
President
<u>Barack Obama</u> <u>Donald Trump</u>
Preceded by
<u>John Boehner</u>
Succeeded by
<u>Nancy Pelosi</u>
Leader of the House Republican Conference
In office
October 29, 2015 – January 3, 2019
Preceded by
<u>John Boehner</u>
Succeeded by
<u>Kevin McCarthy</u>
Chair of the House Ways and Means Committee
In office
January 3, 2015 – October 29, 2015
Preceded by
<u>Dave Camp</u>
Succeeded by
<u>Kevin Brady</u>
Chair of the House Budget Committee
In office

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January 3, 2011 – January 3, 2015

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Succeeded by Tom Price

**Member of the
U.S. House of Representatives
from Wisconsin's 1st district**

In office

January 3, 1999 – January 3, 2019

Preceded by Mark Neumann

Succeeded by Bryan Steil

Personal details


Born Paul Davis Ryan
January 29, 1970
Janesville, Wisconsin,
U.S.

Political party Republican

Spouse(s) Janna Little (m. 2000)

Children 3

Education Miami University (BA)

Awards  Department of
Defense Medal for
Distinguished Public
Service

Signature



Early life and education

Paul Davis Ryan was born on January 29, 1970 in Janesville, Wisconsin, the youngest of four children of Elizabeth "Betty" Ann (née Hutter),^[2] who later became an interior designer, and Paul Murray Ryan, a lawyer.^{[3][4]} He is a fifth-generation Wisconsinite.

His father was of Irish ancestry and his mother of German and English descent.^[5] One of Ryan's paternal ancestors settled in Wisconsin prior to the Civil War.^[6] His great-grandfather, Patrick William Ryan, founded an earthmoving company in 1884, which later became P. W. Ryan and Sons and is now known as Ryan Incorporated Central.^{[7][8]} Ryan's grandfather, Stanley M. Ryan, was appointed United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin.^{[9][10]} In 2018, while filming a segment for the PBS series *Finding Your Roots*, Ryan learned that his DNA results included 3 percent Ashkenazi Jewish ancestry.^[11]

Ryan attended St. Mary's Catholic School in Janesville, then attended Joseph A. Craig High School,^[12] where he was elected president of his junior class, and thus became prom king.^[13] As class president Ryan was a representative of the student body on the school board.^[14] Following his second year, Ryan took a job working the grill at McDonald's.^[14] He was on his high school's ski, track, and varsity soccer teams and played basketball in a Catholic recreational league.^{[15][16][17]} He participated in several academic and social clubs including the Model United Nations.^{[14][15]} Ryan and his family often went on hiking and skiing trips to the Colorado Rocky Mountains.^{[18][10]}

Although Ryan's father was not a lifelong heavy drinker, staying sober for nearly twenty years after his first stint in rehabilitation, he had become an alcoholic by the time Ryan was a teenager. Ryan later commented on his relationship with his father, whom he revered as a young child, stating that "[alcohol] made him more distant, irritable and stressed ... whiskey had washed away some of the best parts of the man I knew."^[19] When he was 16, Ryan found his 55-year-old father lying dead in bed of a heart attack, something Ryan later

partially attributed to heavy alcohol consumption.^{[10][14][20]} Following the death of his father, Ryan's grandmother moved in with the family. As she had Alzheimer's, Ryan helped care for her while his mother commuted to college in Madison, Wisconsin.^[14] From the time of his father's death until his 18th birthday, Ryan received Social Security survivors benefits, which were saved for his college education.^{[21][22][23]} His mother later married widower Bruce Douglas.^{[3][24]}

Ryan has a bachelor's degree in economics and political science from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio,^[25] where he became interested in the writings of Friedrich Hayek, Ludwig von Mises, and Milton Friedman.^[14] He often visited the office of libertarian professor Richard Hart to discuss the theories of these economists and of Ayn Rand.^{[14][26]} Hart introduced Ryan to National Review,^[14] and with Hart's recommendation Ryan began an internship in the D.C. office of Wisconsin U.S. Senator Bob Kasten, where he worked with Kasten's foreign affairs adviser.^{[14][27]}

Ryan attended the Washington Semester program at American University.^[28] He worked summers as a salesman for Oscar Mayer and once got to drive the Wienermobile.^{[10][26][29]} Ryan was a member of the College Republicans,^[30] and volunteered for the congressional campaign of John Boehner.^[26] He was a member of the Delta Tau Delta social fraternity.^[31]

Early career

Betty Ryan reportedly urged her son to accept a congressional position as a legislative aide in Senator Kasten's office, which he did after graduating in 1992.^{[27][32][33]} In his early years working on Capitol Hill, Ryan supplemented his income by working as a waiter, as a fitness trainer, and at other jobs.^{[10][29]}

A few months after Kasten lost to Democrat Russ Feingold in the 1992 election, Ryan became a speechwriter for Empower America (now FreedomWorks), a conservative advocacy group founded by Jack Kemp, Jeane Kirkpatrick, and William Bennett.^{[10][34][35]}

Ryan later worked as a speechwriter for Kemp,^[36] the Republican vice presidential candidate in the 1996 United States presidential election. Kemp became Ryan's mentor, and Ryan has said he had a "huge influence".^[37]

In 1995, Ryan became the legislative director for then-U.S. Congressman Sam Brownback of Kansas. In 1997 he returned to Wisconsin, where he worked for a year as a marketing consultant for the construction company Ryan Incorporated Central, owned by his relatives.^{[14][34][38]}

U.S. House of Representatives

Elections

Ryan was first elected to the House in 1998, winning the 1st District seat of Republican Mark Neumann, a two-term incumbent who had vacated his seat to make an unsuccessful bid for the U.S. Senate. Ryan won the Republican primary over 29-year-old pianist Michael J. Logan of Twin Lakes,^[39] and the general election against Democrat Lydia Spottswood.^[40] This made him the second-youngest member of the House.^[14]

Reelected eight times, Ryan never received less than 55 percent of the vote in a congressional election. He defeated Democratic challenger Jeffrey C. Thomas in the 2000, 2002, 2004, and 2006 elections.^[41] In the 2008 election, Ryan defeated Democrat Marge Krupp.^[41]



Paul Ryan with Chairman of the Republican Party of Wisconsin Reince Priebus and Priebus' wife, Sally in 2008

In the 2010 general election, he defeated Democrat John Heckenlively and Libertarian Joseph Kexel.^[42] In 2012, under Wisconsin election law, Ryan was allowed to run concurrently for vice president and for Congress^[43] and was not allowed to remove his name from the Congressional ballot after being nominated for the vice presidency.^[44] He faced Democratic nominee Rob Zerban. As of July 25, 2012, Ryan had over \$5.4 million in his congressional campaign account, more than any other House member.^{[45][46][47]} He was reelected with 55 percent of his district's vote^[48] and 44 percent of the vote in his hometown, Janesville.^[49]

Zerban again challenged Ryan in the 2014 House election.^[50] Ryan won with 63 percent of his district's vote.^[51]

In the 2016 Republican primary election, Ryan faced businessman Paul Nehlen, who had been endorsed by Sarah Palin.^[52] Because of Nehlen's support for Trump, Trump publicly thanked him on Twitter and later told *The Washington Post* that Nehlen was "running a very good campaign", even though he did not endorse him.^{[53][54][55]} On August 5, 2016, Trump endorsed Ryan's re-election after pressure from fellow Republican leaders.^[56] In the August 9, 2016 primary election,^[57] Ryan overwhelmingly defeated Nehlen, taking over 84 percent of the vote.^[58] In the November general election, Ryan faced Democrat Ryan Solen^[58] and won with 65 percent of his district's vote.^[59]

Committee assignments

As Speaker of the House of Representatives, Ryan was not a chair or a member of any committee. Prior to his speakership, Ryan held the following assignments:

- Committee on Ways and Means (Chairman)
 - Subcommittee on Health

Caucus memberships

- House Republican Caucus
- Caucus of House Conservatives Republican Study Committee^[60]
- United States Congressional International Conservation Caucus^[61]
- Middle East Economic Partnership Caucus
- Prayer Caucus
- Sportsmen's Caucus (Co-Chair)
- Congressional Western Caucus^[62]

Pre-Speaker congressional tenure (1999–2015)

Ryan became the ranking Republican member of the House Budget Committee in 2007^[63] and became chairman of the committee in 2011 after Republicans took control of the House. That same year, he was selected to deliver the Republican response to the State of the Union address.^[64] As of August 2012, Ryan had been the primary sponsor of more than 70 bills or amendments,^{[65][66]} and only two of those bills had become law.^[67] One, passed in July 2000, renamed a post office in Ryan's district; the other, passed in December 2008, lowered the excise tax on arrow shafts.^{[68][69]} As of August 2012, Ryan had also co-

sponsored 975 bills, of which 176 had passed; 22% of these bills were originally sponsored by a Democrat.^{[70][67]}

Ryan was a "reliable supporter of the [George W. Bush] administration's foreign policy priorities" who voted for the 2002 Iraq Resolution, authorizing the 2003 invasion of Iraq.^[71]

In 2010, Ryan was a member of the bipartisan National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform (Bowles-Simpson Commission), which was tasked with developing a plan to reduce the federal deficit. He voted against the final report of the commission.^[72] In 2012, Ryan accused the nation's top military leaders of using "smoke and mirrors" to remain under budget limits passed by Congress.^{[73][74]} Ryan later said that he misspoke on the issue and called General Martin Dempsey, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to apologize for his comments.^[75]



Official U.S. Congress portrait of Ryan in 2001

Speaker of the House

114th Congress

On September 25, 2015, John Boehner formally announced to House Republicans his intention to resign from the speakership and the House.^[76] Among those interested in the post, Kevin McCarthy—who had wide support among Republicans, including Boehner, and Ryan, who was set to officially nominate him—was considered the presumptive favorite.^{[77][78]} His candidacy was opposed by conservative House Republicans of the Freedom Caucus, and when it became clear that caucus members would not support his candidacy, McCarthy withdrew his name from consideration on October 8. This led many Republicans to turn to Ryan as a compromise candidate. The push included a plea from Boehner, who reportedly told Ryan that he was the only person who could unite the House Republicans at a time of turmoil.^[79] Ryan released a statement that said, "While I am grateful for the encouragement I've received, I will not be a candidate."^[80] The next day however, close aides of Ryan's confirmed that Ryan had re-evaluated the situation, and was considering the possibility of a run.^{[81][82]}

Ryan confirmed on October 22, that he would seek the speakership after receiving the endorsements of two factions of House Republicans, including the conservative Freedom Caucus.^{[83][84]} Ryan, upon confirming his bid for the speakership, stated, "I never thought I'd be speaker. But I pledged to you that if I could be a unifying figure, then I would serve – I would go all in. After talking with so many of you, and hearing your words of encouragement, I believe we are ready to move forward as one, united team. And I am ready and eager to be our speaker."^[85]

On October 29, Ryan was elected Speaker, receiving 236 votes, an absolute majority of the 435-member chamber. Democrat Nancy Pelosi received 184 votes, with 12 more going to others.^{[86][87]} After the vote Ryan delivered his first remarks as speaker-elect and was sworn in by John Conyers, the dean of the House,



Speaker Ryan (left) shakes hands with outgoing Speaker John Boehner (right)



King Salman of Saudi Arabia speaks with Ryan in April 2016

becoming, at age 45, the youngest person elected as speaker since James G. Blaine (age 39) in 1869.^{[88][89]} Later, he named lobbyist John David Hoppe as his Chief of Staff.^{[90][91]}

As Speaker, Ryan became the leader of the House Republicans. However, by tradition, he largely ceased taking part in debate and almost never voted from the floor. He was also not a member of any committees.

2016 presidential election



Ryan as Speaker of the House, 2017

After Donald Trump became the presumptive Republican nominee in the 2016 presidential election on May 4, 2016, Ryan was hesitant to endorse him, stating on May 5 that he was "not ready".^[92] Ryan and Trump met in private on May 12, releasing a joint statement afterward, acknowledging their differences but stating "we recognize that there are also many important areas of common ground."^[93] On June 2, Ryan announced his support for Trump in an op-ed in *The Janesville Gazette*.^[94]

The following day, June 3, amid Trump's criticism of Judge Gonzalo P. Curiel, Ryan said Trump's critique "just was out of left field for my mind," and voiced disagreement with him.^[95] On June 7, Ryan disavowed Trump's comments about Curiel because he believed they were "the textbook definition of a racist comment". Nevertheless, Ryan continued to endorse Trump, believing that more Republican policies will be enacted under Donald Trump than presumptive Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton.^[96] On June 15, after Kevin

McCarthy stated during a conversation among Republicans, "There's two people I think Putin pays: Rohrabacher and Trump. Swear to God", Ryan interjected, "No leaks. This is how we know we're a real family here."^[97]

On July 5, after FBI Director James Comey advocated against pressing charges against Clinton for her email scandal, Ryan said Comey's decision "defies explanation" and stated that "[d]eclining to prosecute Secretary Clinton for recklessly mishandling and transmitting national security information will set a terrible precedent."^[98]

In October 2016, following the Donald Trump Access Hollywood controversy, Ryan disinvited Trump from a scheduled campaign rally,^[99] and announced that he would no longer defend or support Trump's presidential campaign but would focus instead on Congressional races. He also freed down-ticket congress members to use their own judgment about Trump, saying "you all need to do what's best for you and your district."^[100] Trump then went on to attack Ryan, accusing him and other "disloyal" Republicans of deliberately undermining his candidacy as part of "a whole sinister deal".^{[101][102]}



Ryan shaking hands with Donald Trump prior to his address to a joint session of Congress on February 28, 2017

115th Congress

Two months after the 2016 elections, Ryan was re-elected Speaker of the House on January 3, 2017, the opening day of the 115th Congress. He received 239 votes to House Democratic Leader Pelosi's 189 votes (with 5 more going to others).^[103]

On February 7, 2017, Ryan told reporters a replacement for the Affordable Care Act (ACA) would be introduced "this year" amid speculation Donald Trump would not act toward doing so until the following year.^[104] On March 9, Ryan gave a 30-minute lecture explaining the proposed replacement for the ACA, titled the American Health Care Act (AHCA).^[105] On March 30, Ryan said that he did not intend to work with Democrats on repealing and replacing the ACA, reasoning their involvement would lead to "government running health care."^[106] On April 4, Ryan confirmed renewed discussions of an ACA replacement, but warned that a replacement was in the "conceptual" stages of its development.^[107] On May 4, the House narrowly voted for the AHCA to repeal the ACA.^[108] On May 9, Ryan said that "a month or two" would pass before the Senate would pass its own ACA repeal and replacement legislation.^[109] The Senate created several of its own versions of the act but was unable to pass any of them.^[110]



Ryan with Donald Trump and Vice President Mike Pence, December 2017

During the 2016 presidential campaign, Ryan suggested that candidate Trump should release his tax returns.^[111]

In May 2017, Ryan said Congress' goal was "calendared 2017 for tax reform" and reported progress was being made in doing so.^[112] In December 2017, both houses of Congress passed a \$1.5 trillion tax bill called the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, which Trump signed into law on December 22.^[113] The tax law is projected to add an additional \$1.5 trillion to the national debt over a decade, but the nonpartisan Joint Committee on Taxation also estimated that the GDP level on average would be 0.7% higher during the same period.^{[114][115][116]} In the weeks leading up to his retirement announcement, Ryan also championed a \$1.3 trillion government-wide spending bill that boosted military spending significantly.^[117] *Politico* noted that Ryan "clamored for austerity when he's been in the minority, trashing Democrats as profligate budget-busters, but he's happily busted budgets in the majority."^[114]

In June 2017, Ryan expressed support for strong sanctions on Russia in response to Russian interference in the 2016 elections and its annexation of the Crimea, saying that Russia's actions were "unacceptable".^[118] He urged Special Counsel Robert Mueller and Congressional oversight committees to "do their jobs so that we can get to the bottom of all of this."^[119] In July Congress passed a bill imposing new sanctions on Russia and giving Congress the power to overrule White House attempts to roll back sanctions. Both houses passed the bill with veto-proof majorities (98-2 in the Senate, 419-3 in the House), so Trump reluctantly signed it into law on August 2, 2017.^{[120][118]}

Ryan provided political cover for Devin Nunes, chair of the House Intelligence Committee, who many characterized as a source of the dysfunction in the committee as it investigated Russian interference in the 2016 election.^[117] Nunes accused the Obama administration of improperly "unmasking" the identities of Trump associates (which led Nunes' temporary recusal from the committee's Russia investigation), accused the FBI of misconduct, leaked the text messages of Senator Mark Warner (in an effort to misleadingly suggest impropriety on his behalf), and threatened to impeach FBI Director Christopher Wray and Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein.^{[121][122]} The House Intelligence Committee was one of few so-called "select" committees in Congress, which meant that it was up to Ryan to decide the chairman of the committee.^[121]

Despite having favored comprehensive immigration earlier in his congressional career, Speaker Ryan prevented immigration legislation from being advanced in the House.^{[117][123]} When President Trump ended Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) – which granted temporary stay for undocumented immigrants brought into the United States as minors – Ryan said DACA recipients should "rest easy" because Congress would solve the problem for them, but Ryan backed no bills to protect DACA recipients.^[124]

An article in *The Washington Post* described Ryan's relationship with President Trump as "friendly, if occasionally uneasy," adding that "Ryan did little to check the president or encourage oversight of his administration."^[117] Ryan supported Trump's firing of FBI Director James Comey, and did not support legislation to protect Special Counsel Robert Mueller's investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 election.^[117] Ryan said that legislation to protect Mueller's investigation was not "necessary".^[125]

On April 11, 2018, Ryan announced that he would not run for re-election in November, saying, "I like to think I've done my part, my little part in history to set us on a better course." In response, Trump tweeted, "Speaker Paul Ryan is a truly good man, and while he will not be seeking re-election, he will leave a legacy of achievement that nobody can question."^[126]

After Republicans lost control of the House in the 2018 midterm elections, Ryan suggested that there were irregularities about the election results in California. Ryan said that California's election system was "bizarre", "defies logic" and that "there are a lot of races there we should have won." After Ryan's remarks were reported on, Ryan's spokesperson said "The Speaker did not and does not dispute the results".^[127]

Assessment of Speaker tenure

Following Ryan's retirement announcement, an article in *The Washington Post* stated that Ryan was "leav[ing] behind a legacy of dramatically expanded government spending and immense deficits, a GOP president unchecked, a broken immigration system, and a party that's fast abandoning the free-trade principles that he himself championed."^[117] According to the Associated Press, Ryan "achieved one of his career goals: rewriting the tax code"; however, "on his other defining aim — balancing the budget and cutting back benefit programs like Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid — Ryan has utterly failed".^[115]

Constituent services

In fiscal year 2008, Ryan garnered \$5.4 million in congressional earmarks, including \$3.28 million for bus service in Wisconsin, \$1.38 million for the Ice Age Trail, and \$735,000 for the Janesville transit system.^[128] In 2009, he successfully advocated with the Department of Energy for stimulus funds for energy initiatives in his district.^[128]

Other home district projects he has supported include a runway extension at the Rock County Airport, an environmental study of the Kenosha Harbor, firefighting equipment for Janesville, road projects in Wisconsin, and commuter rail and streetcar projects in Kenosha. In 2008, Ryan pledged to stop seeking earmarks. Prior to that he had sought earmarks less often than other representatives.^[129] Taxpayers for Common Sense records show no earmarks supported by Ryan for fiscal years 2009 and 2010.^[128] In 2012, Ryan supported a request for \$3.8 million from the Department of Transportation for a new transit center in Janesville,^[129] which city officials received in July.^[130]

Ryan was an active member of a task force established by Wisconsin governor Jim Doyle that tried unsuccessfully to persuade General Motors to keep its assembly plant in Janesville open. He made personal contact with GM executives to try to convince them to save or retool the plant, offering GM hundreds of millions of dollars of taxpayer-funded incentives.^[131] Following the closure of factories in Janesville and



Portrait by Leslie W. Bowman, 2018

Kenosha, constituents expressed dissatisfaction with Ryan's voting history.^[132] During the 2011 Congressional summer break, Ryan held town hall meetings by telephone with constituents. The only public meetings Ryan attended in his district required an admission fee of at least \$15.^{[133][134]}

In August 2011, constituents in Kenosha and Racine protested when Ryan would not meet with them about economic and employment issues, after weeks of emailed requests from them. His Kenosha office locked its doors and filed a complaint with the police, who told the protesters that they were not allowed in Ryan's office.^{[132][133][135]}

Ryan maintained a mobile office to serve constituents in outlying areas.^[136]

2012 vice presidential campaign

Dan Balz of *The Washington Post* wrote that Ryan was promoted as a candidate for Vice President "by major elements of the conservative opinion makers, including *The Wall Street Journal* editorial page, the *Weekly Standard* and the editor of *National Review*".^[137]

On August 11, 2012, the Romney campaign announced Ryan as its choice for Vice President^[138] through its "Mitt's VP" mobile app.^[139] It was reported that Romney had offered the position to Ryan on August 1, 2012,^[140] the day after returning from a foreign policy trip to the United Kingdom, Poland, and Israel.^[141] On August 11, 2012, Ryan formally accepted Romney's invitation to join his campaign as his running mate, in front of the USS Wisconsin in Norfolk.^[142] Ryan is the first individual from Wisconsin^[143] as well as the first member of Generation X^[144] to run on a major party's national ticket.



Mitt Romney with Paul Ryan after introducing him as his running mate, for the 2012 presidential election, in Norfolk, Virginia, on August 11, 2012

Also in August 2012, the Associated Press published a story saying that while the Tea Party movement had wanted a nominee other than Romney, it had gotten "one of its ideological heroes" in the Vice Presidential slot. According to the article, Ryan supports the Tea Party's belief in "individual rights, distrust of big government and an allegorical embrace of the Founding Fathers".^[145]

According to a statistical-historical analysis conducted by Nate Silver, "Ryan is the most conservative Republican member of Congress to be picked for the vice-presidential slot since at least 1900" and "is also more conservative than any Democratic nominee [for vice president who previously served in the Congress] was liberal, meaning that he is the furthest from the center" of any vice presidential candidate chosen from Congress since the turn of the 20th century.^[146]

Political scientist Eric Schickler commented that while Ryan "may well be the most conservative vice presidential nominee in decades," the NOMINATE methodology "is not suited to making claims about the relative liberalism or conservatism of politicians" over a long time span.^[147] A *USA Today/Gallup* poll found that 39% thought Ryan was an "excellent" or "pretty good" vice presidential choice, compared to 42% who felt he was a "fair" or "poor" choice.^[148]

Ryan formally accepted his nomination at the 2012 Republican National Convention on August 29, 2012.^[149] In his acceptance speech, he promoted Mitt Romney as the presidential candidate, supported repeal of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA),^[150] said that he and Romney had a plan to generate 12 million new jobs over the ensuing four years, and promoted founding principles as a solution: "We will not

duck the tough issues—we will lead. We will not spend four years blaming others—we will take responsibility. We will not try to replace our founding principles, we will reapply our founding principles."^[150]

The speech was well received by the convention audience and praised for being well-delivered.^{[151][152]} Some fact-checkers purported that there were important factual omissions and that he presented details out of context.^{[153][154][155][156]} Conservative media (including Jennifer Rubin of *The Washington Post*,^[157] the Investor's Business Daily,^[158] and Fox News^[159]) disputed some of the fact-checkers' findings. Politifact.com rated 33 of Ryan's statements which it suspected of being false or misleading as True: 10.5%, Mostly True: 18%, Half True: 21%, Mostly False: 36%, False: 9%, and Pants on Fire: 6%.^[160] On October 11, 2012, Ryan debated his Democratic counterpart, incumbent Vice President Joe Biden, in the only vice presidential debate of the 2012 election cycle.^{[161][162]}

Romney and Ryan lost the 2012 presidential election, but Ryan retained his seat in the House of Representatives.^{[163][164]}

Congressional Leadership Fund

The Congressional Leadership Fund (CLF), a Super PAC, has been closely linked and aligned with Ryan.^{[165][166][167]} Ryan has directed major GOP donors towards the CLF.^[168]

Political positions

Ryan's political positions were generally conservative, with a focus on fiscal policy.^[169] Ryan "played a central role in nearly all" the policy debates of the period 2010–2012.^[169] In 2012, Ryan voted against the Simpson-Bowles commission proposal to reduce the deficit, because the proposal raised taxes and failed to repeal the Affordable Care Act.^[170] While he was a self-proclaimed deficit hawk, Ryan's tenure of Speaker of the House saw a major expansion in government spending and a ballooning of deficits despite unified Republican control of Congress and the White House, no recession and no new foreign conflict.^{[117][123][171]}



Ryan takes his oath of office following his election as Speaker on October 29, 2015.

Ryan subscribed to supply-side economics and supported tax cuts including eliminating the capital gains tax, the corporate income tax, the estate tax, and the Alternative Minimum Tax.^{[172][173][174]} Ryan supports deregulation, including the Gramm–Leach–Bliley Act of 1999, which repealed some financial regulation of banks from the Glass–Steagall Act of 1933.^[175] During the economic recovery from the Great Recession of the late 2000s, Ryan supported the Troubled Asset Relief Program (TARP), which authorized the Treasury to purchase toxic assets from banks and other financial institutions, and the auto industry bailout; Ryan opposed the Credit CARD Act of 2009, which expanded consumer protections regarding credit card plans, and the Dodd–Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, which strengthened financial regulation.^{[175][176][177]}

In 2016, Ryan rolled out a set of anti-poverty proposals that "seek to expand work requirements for those receiving federal benefits, to give states and local jurisdictions a greater role in administering those benefits, to better measure the results of federal programs for the poor, and to crack down on waste, fraud and abuse."^[178] Ryan believes federal poverty reduction programs are ineffective and he supports cuts to welfare, child care, Pell Grants, food stamps, and other federal assistance programs.^{[179][180][181]} Ryan supports block granting Medicaid to the states and the privatization of social security and Medicare.^{[182][172][173][183]} Ryan supported the Medicare Part D prescription drug benefit and opposes the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act

(ACA), also known as "Obamacare."^{[175][184][185]} Ryan supported the American Health Care Act of 2017 (AHCA), the 2017 House Republican plan to repeal and replace the ACA.^{[186][187]} In 2012, *The New York Times* said Ryan was "his party's most forceful spokesman for cutting entitlement spending."^[169]

Ryan's non-fiscal policy positions were subject to additional national attention with his 2012 candidacy for Vice President.^[188] Ryan is pro-life and opposes abortion rights.^{[189][190]} Ryan opposed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009, which provides that the 180-day statute of limitations for filing an equal-pay lawsuit regarding pay discrimination resets with each new paycheck affected by that discriminatory action.^{[191][192]} In 2012, Ryan supported civil unions and opposed same-sex marriage.^{[188][193]}

Ryan supported school vouchers, and supported the No Child Left Behind Act in 2001 and its repeal the Every Student Succeeds Act in 2015.^{[194][195]} Ryan is unsure, and believes climate scientists are unsure, of the impact of human activity on climate change.^{[196][197]} Ryan supported tax incentives for the petroleum industry and opposed them for renewable energy.^{[184][198]} Ryan supported gun rights and opposed stricter gun control.^{[188][199]} Ryan supported the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.^{[175][200]}

Ryan condemned Barack Obama's decision not to block a UN resolution criticizing Israeli settlement building in the occupied Palestinian territories as "absolutely shameful".^[201] Ryan supported President Donald Trump's decision to recognize Jerusalem as Israel's capital. He stated: "Jerusalem has been, and always will be, the eternal, undivided capital of the State of Israel."^[202]

Following the 2018 Russia–United States summit, in which Donald Trump stated that he believed Russian government did not interfere in the 2016 U.S. presidential election, Ryan confirmed his belief that Russian government interfered and advocated for more economic sanctions against Russia for the interference.^[203]

Ryan supported U.S. involvement in the Saudi Arabian-led intervention in Yemen and used his power to block a House vote on the war in Yemen.^[204]



Ryan with President Donald Trump and Vice President Mike Pence, January 2018

History with Objectivism

At a 2005 Washington, D.C. gathering celebrating the 100th anniversary of Ayn Rand's birth, Ryan credited Rand with having inspired him to get involved in politics.^[182] In a speech that same year at the Atlas Society, he said he grew up reading Rand, and that her books taught him about his value system and beliefs.^{[205][206]} Ryan required staffers and interns in his congressional office to read Rand^[206] and gave copies of her novel Atlas Shrugged as gifts to his staff for Christmas.^{[207][208]} In his Atlas Society speech, he also described Social Security as a "socialist-based system".^[209]

In 2009, Ryan said, "What's unique about what's happening today in government, in the world, in America, is that it's as if we're living in an Ayn Rand novel right now. I think Ayn Rand did the best job of anybody to build a moral case of capitalism, and that morality of capitalism is under assault."^[207]

In April 2012, after receiving criticism from Georgetown University faculty members on his budget plan, Ryan rejected Rand's philosophy as atheistic, saying it "reduces human interactions down to mere contracts".^[210] He also called the reports of his adherence to Rand's views an "urban legend" and stated that he was deeply influenced by his Roman Catholic faith and by Thomas Aquinas.^[211]

Electoral history

2015 election for <u>Speaker</u> (Special) – 114th Congress ^[212]			
Party	Candidate	Votes	%
<u>Republican</u>	Paul Ryan (WI 1)	236	54.63
<u>Democratic</u>	<u>Nancy Pelosi (CA 12)</u>	184	42.60
<u>Republican</u>	<u>Dan Webster (FL 10)</u>	9	2.08
<u>Democratic</u>	<u>Jim Cooper (TN 5)</u>	1	0.23
<u>Democratic</u>	<u>John Lewis (GA 5)</u>	1	0.23
<u>Republican</u>	<u>Colin Powell</u>	1	0.23
Total votes		432	100
Votes necessary		217	>50

2017 election for <u>Speaker</u> – 115th Congress ^[213] * denotes incumbent			
Party	Candidate	Votes	%
<u>Republican</u>	Paul Ryan* (WI 1)	239	55.19
<u>Democratic</u>	<u>Nancy Pelosi (CA 12)</u>	189	43.65
<u>Democratic</u>	<u>Tim Ryan (OH 13)</u>	2	0.47
<u>Democratic</u>	<u>Jim Cooper (TN 5)</u>	1	0.23
<u>Democratic</u>	<u>John Lewis (GA 5)</u>	1	0.23
<u>Republican</u>	<u>Dan Webster (FL 10)</u>	1	0.23
Total votes		433	100
Votes necessary		217	>50

Post-congressional life

In March 2019, Ryan joined the board of directors of Fox Corporation, the owner of Fox News Channel and the Fox broadcast network.^[214] In August 2019, he joined the board of SHINE Medical Technologies.^[215] He has since joined the faculty of the University of Notre Dame as a professor of practice for the 2019–20 academic year as a guest lecturer in political science and economics.^[216] In April 2019, Ryan was nominated as the delegation leader to represent President Trump to visit Taipei. With Taiwanese President Tsai Ing-wen, he attended the 40th anniversary ceremony of the Taiwan Relations Act.^[217] In October 2019, Ryan launched a non-profit called American Idea Foundation.^[218]

Personal life

In December 2000 Ryan married Janna Christine Little,^[219] a tax attorney, a graduate of Wellesley College and George Washington University Law School, and a native of Madill, Oklahoma.^{[21][220]} The Ryans live in the Courthouse Hill Historic District of Janesville, Wisconsin.^[15] They have three children: Elizabeth "Liza" Anne, Charles Wilson, and Samuel Lowery.^[221] A Roman Catholic, Ryan is a member of St. John Vianney Catholic Church in Janesville.^[222]

Janna is a cousin of former Democratic Representative Dan Boren (D-OK).^[223] She is also a granddaughter of Reuel Little, who helped found the American Party to support the 1968 presidential campaign of George Wallace.^{[224][225]}

Due to a family history of fatal heart attacks before age 60, Ryan pursues an intense cross-training fitness program called P90X.^[226] Ryan has always been a fitness enthusiast and was a personal trainer when he came out of college. About P90X, he said, "It works because it's called muscle confusion. It hits your body in many different ways. Pull-ups, push-ups, sit-ups, lots of cardio, karate, jump training. It has results, it works. It's a good workout."^{[227][228]}

In a 2010 Politico interview he said that he weighed 163 pounds and maintained his body fat percentage between 6 and 8%. Tony Horton, creator of P90X, who has personally trained Ryan many times, reiterated the claim saying, "He is very, very, very lean. I know what 6 to 8 percent body fat looks like, and there's no fat anywhere on the man. I'm around 9 percent and he's much leaner than I am. He's easily 6 to 8 percent body fat. You just have to eat right and exercise every day, and that's what he does."^{[227][228][229]}

In a radio interview Ryan claimed he had once run a marathon in under three hours;^[230] he later stated that he forgot his actual time and was just trying to state what he thought was a normal time.^[231] His one official marathon time is recorded as slightly over four hours.^{[232][233]}



Ryan with his wife and family on the Speaker's balcony at the U.S. Capitol, following his election in October 2015

Awards and honors

- 2004, 2010 – Guardian of Small Business Award, National Federation of Independent Business^{[234][235]}
- 2008 – Defending the American Dream Award, Americans for Prosperity, Wisconsin chapter^[236]
- 2009 – Manufacturing Legislative Excellence Award, National Association of Manufacturers^[237]
- 2009 – Honorary Degree, Miami University^{[25][238]}
- 2010 – Legislator of the Year Award, International Franchise Association^[239]
- 2011 – Statesmanship Award, Claremont Institute^[240]
- 2011 – Fiscy Award for responsible financial stewardship and fiscal discipline in government.^{[241][242]}
- 2011 – Leadership Award, Jack Kemp Foundation^[243]
- 2011 – Freedom and Prosperity Award, Mason Contractors Association of America^[244]
- 2012 – Chair, Honorary Board of the Archery Trade Association^[245]
- 2014 – Alexander Hamilton Award, Manhattan Institute for Policy Research^[246]
- 2018 –  Department of Defense Medal for Distinguished Public Service^[247]

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- [Paul Ryan, Wisconsin Historical Society \(https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS12588\)](https://www.wisconsinhistory.org/Records/Article/CS12588)

<u>U.S. House of Representatives</u>		
Preceded by <u>Mark Neumann</u>	<u>Member of the U.S. House of Representatives from Wisconsin's 1st congressional district</u> 1999–2019	Succeeded by <u>Bryan Steil</u>
Preceded by <u>John Spratt</u>	<u>Chair of the House Budget Committee</u> 2011–2015	Succeeded by <u>Tom Price</u>
Preceded by <u>Dave Camp</u>	<u>Chair of the House Ways and Means Committee</u> 2015	Succeeded by <u>Sam Johnson</u> Acting
Preceded by <u>Ron Wyden</u>	<u>Chair of the Joint Taxation Committee</u> 2015	
Party political offices		
Preceded by <u>Bob McDonnell</u>	<u>Response to the State of the Union address</u> 2011	Succeeded by <u>Mitch Daniels</u>
Preceded by <u>Sarah Palin</u>	<u>Republican nominee for Vice President of the United States</u> 2012	Succeeded by <u>Mike Pence</u>
Political offices		
Preceded by <u>John Boehner</u>	<u>Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives</u> 2015–2019	Succeeded by <u>Nancy Pelosi</u>

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Rand Paul

Randal Howard Paul (born January 7, 1963) is an American physician and politician serving as the junior United States Senator from Kentucky since 2011. He is the son of former three-time presidential candidate and twelve-term U.S. Representative of Texas, Ron Paul.

Born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Paul attended Baylor University and is a graduate of the Duke University School of Medicine. Paul began practicing ophthalmology in 1993 in Bowling Green, Kentucky. In 2003 he withdrew from the American Board of Ophthalmology and declared himself self-certified by his National Board of Ophthalmology.^[1] He continued working and established his own clinic in December 2007. In 2010, Paul entered politics by running for a seat in the United States Senate. A Republican, Paul has described himself as a constitutional conservative and a supporter of the Tea Party movement.

Paul was a candidate for the Republican nomination at the 2016 U.S. presidential election. He suspended his campaign in February 2016, after finishing in fifth place during the Iowa caucuses,^[2] though less than two months later he endorsed eventual Republican nominee and winner of the 2016 election Donald Trump.^[3]

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Rand Paul



Official portrait, 2011

United States Senator from Kentucky

Incumbent

Assumed office

January 3, 2011

Serving with Mitch McConnell

Preceded by Jim Bunning

Ranking Member of the Senate Small Business Committee

Incumbent

Assumed office


February 3, 2021

Preceded by Ben Cardin

Personal details

Born	<u>Randal Howard Paul</u> January 7, 1963 <u>Pittsburgh,</u> <u>Pennsylvania, U.S.</u>
Political party	<u>Republican</u>
Spouse(s)	<u>Kelley Ashby</u> (m. 1990)
Children	3
Parents	<u>Ron Paul</u>

<u>Background</u>
<u>Senate re-election</u>
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	Carol Paul
Education	<u>Baylor University</u> (incomplete) <u>Duke University (MD)</u>
Signature	
Website	<u>Senate website (http://paul.senate.gov)</u>

Early life

Randal Howard Paul was born on January 7, 1963, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to Carol (née Wells) and Ron Paul, who is also a politician and physician. The elder Paul was a U.S. Representative from Texas and ran for President of the United States three times.^[4] The middle child of five, his siblings are Ronald "Ronnie" Paul Jr., Lori Paul Pyeatt, Robert Paul, and Joy Paul-LeBlanc.^[5]

Paul was baptized in the Episcopal Church^[6] and identified as a practicing Christian as a teenager.^[7]

Despite his father's libertarian views and strong support for individual rights,^{[7][8]} the novelist Ayn Rand was not the inspiration for his first name. Growing up, he went by "Randy",^[9] but his wife shortened it to "Rand."^{[7][10][11]}

The Paul family moved to Lake Jackson, Texas, in 1968,^{[9][12]} where he was raised^{[13][14]} and where his father began a medical practice and for a period of time was the only obstetrician in Brazoria County.^{[9][12][15]}

When Rand was 13, his father was elected to the United States House of Representatives.^[16] That same year, Paul attended the 1976 Republican National Convention, where his father headed Ronald Reagan's Texas delegation.^[17] The younger Paul often spent summer vacations interning in his father's congressional

office.^[18] In his teenage years, Paul studied the Austrian economists that his father respected, as well as the writings of Objectivist philosopher Ayn Rand.^[9] Paul went to Brazoswood High School and was on the swimming team and played defensive back on the football team.^{[7][13]}

Paul attended Baylor University from fall 1981 to summer 1984 and was enrolled in the honors program. During the time he spent at Baylor, he was involved in the swim team and the Young Conservatives of Texas and was a member of a secret organization, the NoZe Brotherhood, known for its irreverent humor.^[19] He regularly contributed to The Baylor Lariat student newspaper.^[17] Paul dropped out of Baylor without completing his baccalaureate degree,^[20] when he was accepted into his father's alma mater, the Duke University School of Medicine, which, at the time, did not require an undergraduate degree for admission to its graduate school. He earned an M.D. degree in 1988 and completed his residency in 1993.^[21]

Medical career

After completing his residency in ophthalmology, Paul moved to Bowling Green, Kentucky, where he has held a state-issued medical license since 1993.^[22] He received his first job from John Downing of Downing McPeak Vision Centers. Paul worked for Downing for about five years before parting ways. Afterwards, he went to work at the Graves Gilbert Clinic, a private medical group in Bowling Green, for 10 years before creating his own practice in a converted one-story house across the street from Downing's office.^[23] After his election to the U.S. Senate, he merged his practice with Downing's medical practice.^[24] Paul has faced two malpractice lawsuits between 1993 and 2010; he was cleared in one case while the other was settled for \$50,000.^[23] His medical work has been praised by Downing and he has medical privileges at two Bowling Green hospitals.^{[22][23]} In April 2020, after recovering from COVID-19, Paul began volunteering at a hospital in Bowling Green, assisting them in their response to the COVID-19 pandemic in Kentucky.^[25]

Paul specializes in cataract and glaucoma surgeries, LASIK procedures, and corneal transplants.^[10] As a member of the Bowling Green Noon Lions Club, Paul founded the Southern Kentucky Lions Eye Clinic in 2009 to help provide eye surgery and exams for those who cannot afford to pay.^[26] Paul won the Melvin Jones Fellow Award for Dedicated Humanitarian Services from the Lions Club International Foundation for his work establishing the Southern Kentucky Lions Eye Clinic.^[27]

National Board of Ophthalmology

In 1995, Paul was certified to practice by the American Board of Ophthalmology (ABO).^[28] Three years prior in 1992, the ABO had changed its certification program, which previously awarded lifetime certifications, and required ophthalmologists to recertify every 10 years, while those who had already been given lifetime certification were not required to recertify. Paul felt this was unfair and began an aggressive campaign to have all ophthalmologists recertify every ten years. In 1997 he set up the National Board of Ophthalmology (NBO) to offer an alternative certification system, at a cost substantially lower than that of the ABO.^{[29][30][31]} Its certification exam, an open book take-home test that Paul helped write, was described by one taker as "probably harder" and "more clinically relevant" than the ABO's exam.^[29] Paul appointed his own family members to the board of directors and registered the Board to an incorrect address.^[29]

Named board members were Paul, his wife, and his father-in-law.^[32] The NBO was, itself, never accepted as an accrediting entity by organizations such as the American Board of Medical Specialties,^[22] and its certification was considered invalid by many hospitals and insurance companies. Paul let his own ABO certification lapse in 2005, which did not affect his practice in Kentucky; the state does not require board certification. By Paul's estimate, about 50 or 60 doctors were certified by the NBO.^[29] The NBO was

incorporated in 1999, but Paul allowed it to be dissolved in 2000 when he did not file the required paperwork with the Kentucky Secretary of State's office. He later recreated the board in 2005, but it was again dissolved in 2011.^[33]

Political activism

Paul was head of the local chapter of the Young Conservatives of Texas during his time at Baylor University.^[17] In 1984, Paul took a semester off to aid his father's primary challenge to Republican Senator Phil Gramm.^[17]

While attending Duke University School of Medicine, Paul volunteered for his father's 1988 Libertarian presidential campaign.^[18]

In response to President Bush's breaking his election promise to not raise taxes, Paul founded the North Carolina Taxpayers Union in 1991.^[18] In 1994, Paul founded the anti-tax organization Kentucky Taxpayers United (KTU), and was chair of the organization from its inception. He has often cited his involvement with KTU as the foundation of his involvement with state politics.^[34] The group^{[35][36]} examined Kentucky legislators' records on taxation and spending and encouraging politicians to publicly pledge to vote uniformly against tax increases.^{[37][38]}

Paul managed his father's successful 1996 congressional campaign, in which the elder Paul returned to the House after a twelve-year absence. The elder Paul defeated incumbent Democrat-turned-Republican Greg Laughlin in the Republican primary, despite Laughlin's support from the NRCC and Republican leaders such as Newt Gingrich and George W. Bush.^[17]

The Wall Street Journal reported in 2010 that, although Paul had told a Kentucky television audience as recently as September 2009 that KTU published ratings each year on state legislators' tax positions and that "we've done that for about 15 years", the group had stopped issuing its ratings and report cards after 2002 and had been legally dissolved by the state in 2000 after failing to file registration documents.^[34]

Paul spoke on his father's behalf when his father was campaigning for office,^[39] including throughout the elder Paul's run in the 2008 presidential election, during which Rand campaigned door-to-door in New Hampshire^[40] and spoke in Boston at a fundraising rally for his father on the 234th anniversary of the Boston Tea Party.^[41]

In February 2014, Paul joined the Tea Party-affiliated conservative advocacy group FreedomWorks in filing a class-action lawsuit charging that the federal government's bulk collection of Americans' phone records metadata is a violation of the Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.^{[42][43][44]} Commenting on the lawsuit at a press conference, Paul said, "I'm not against the NSA, I'm not against spying, I'm not against looking at phone records... I just want you to go to a judge, have an individual's name and [get] a warrant. That's what the Fourth Amendment says."^[42] He also said there was no evidence the surveillance of phone metadata had stopped terrorism.^[42] Critics, including Harvard University law professor Alan Dershowitz^[45] and Steven Aftergood, the director of the American Scientists' Project on Government Secrecy,^[44] called the lawsuit a political "stunt". Paul's political campaign organization said that the names of members of the public who went to Paul's websites and signed on as potential class-action participants would be available in the organization's database for future campaign use.^{[42][46]}

On the announcement of the filing of the lawsuit, Mattie Fein, the spokeswoman for and former wife of attorney Bruce Fein, complained that Fein's intellectual contribution to the lawsuit had been stolen and that he had not been properly paid for his work.^[47] Paul's representatives denied the charge, and Fein issued a statement saying that Mattie Fein had not been authorized to speak for him on the matter and that he had in fact been paid for his work on the lawsuit.^[47]

Paul is co-author of a book entitled *The Tea Party Goes to Washington* (2011)^{[48][49]} and also the author of *Government Bullies: How Everyday Americans Are Being Harassed, Abused, and Imprisoned by the Feds* (2012).^[50] Paul was included in *Time* magazine's world's 100 most influential people, for 2013 and 2014.^{[51][52]} He is also a contributor to *Time* magazine.^[53]

Election to U.S. Senate

Primary campaign



Paul speaking at a Tea Party rally in Hawesville, Kentucky, on November 21, 2009.

At the beginning of 2009, there was movement by political supporters of his father to draft Paul in a bid to replace beleaguered Republican Kentucky senator Jim Bunning. Paul's potential candidacy was discussed in the *Los Angeles Times*^[54] and locally in the Kentucky press.^[55] Paul's father said, "Should Senator Bunning decide not to run, I think Rand would make a great U.S. Senator."^[56] On April 15, 2009, Paul gave his first political speech as a potential candidate at a Tea Party rally held in his town of Bowling Green, Kentucky, where more than 700 people had gathered in support of the Tea Party movement.*The Tea Party Goes to Washington*. Nashville: Center Street. 2011.

On May 1, 2009, Paul said that if Bunning, whose fundraising in 2009 matched his poor numbers in opinion polling for the 2010 election,^[57] declined to seek a third term, he would almost certainly run in the Republican Party primary to succeed him,^[58] and formed an exploratory committee soon after, while still promising to stay out of the race if Bunning ultimately decided to run for reelection. Paul made this announcement on MSNBC's *The Rachel Maddow Show*, though a Kentucky news site first broke the news.^[59]

On July 28, 2009, Bunning announced that he would not run for reelection in the face of insufficient fundraising. The announcement left only Paul and Secretary of State Trey Grayson as the remaining candidates for the Republican nomination,^[60] with Paul announcing on August 5, 2009, that he would officially run for the U.S. Senate as a Republican. The announcement was made through a series of national TV events, radio, and other programs, as well as newspapers in Kentucky.^{[61][62][63]}

On August 20, 2009, Paul's supporters planned a moneybomb to kick off his campaign. The official campaign took in \$433,509 in 24 hours. His website reported that this set a new record in Kentucky's political fundraising history in a 24-hour period.^[64] A second "moneybomb" was held on September 23, 2009, to counter a D.C. fundraiser being held for primary opponent Trey Grayson, by 23 Republican United States Senators.^[65] The theme was a UFC "fight" between "We the People" and the "D.C. Insiders".^[66] Later in the campaign, Paul claimed his pledge to not take money from lobbyists and Senators who had voted for the bailout was only a "primary pledge";^[67] he subsequently held a fundraiser in Washington, D.C., with the same Senators who had been the target of the September 23, 2009, "moneybomb". Paul ended up raising some \$3 million during the primary period. Paul's fundraising was aided by his father's network of supporters.^[17]

Although Grayson was considered the frontrunner in July 2009,^[68] Paul found success characterizing Grayson as a "career politician" and challenging Grayson's conservatism. Paul ran an ad in February that made an issue out of Grayson's September 2008 admission that he voted for Bill Clinton when he was 20 years old.^[69] James Dobson, a Christian evangelical figure, endorsed Grayson on April 26 based on the advice of

what Dobson described as "senior members of the GOP", but on May 3 the Paul campaign announced that Dobson had changed his endorsement to Paul^[70] after Paul and some Paul supporters had lobbied Dobson insisting on Paul's social conservative bona fides.^[71]

On May 18, Paul won the Republican Senatorial primary by a 23% margin,^{[72][73]} meaning he would face the Kentucky Attorney General Jack Conway, in the November 2 general election.^[74]

General campaign

In the 2010 general election, Paul faced Kentucky Attorney General Jack Conway. The campaign attracted \$8.5 million in contributions from outside groups, of which \$6 million was spent to help Paul and \$2.5 million to help Conway. This money influx was in addition to the money spent by the candidates themselves: \$6 million by Paul and \$4.7 million by Conway.^{[75][76]}

On June 28, 2010, Paul supporters held their first post-primary online fundraising drive, this time promoted as a "money blast".^{[77][78]}

Paul's campaign got off to a rough start after his comments on the Civil Rights Act of 1964 stirred controversy.^[79] Paul stated that he favored 9 out of 10 titles of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, but that had he been a senator during the 1960s, he would have raised some questions on the constitutionality of Title II of the Act.^[80] Paul said that he abhors racism, and that he would have marched with Martin Luther King Jr. to repeal Jim Crow laws. He later released a statement declaring that he would have voted for the Act and stated "unequivocally ... that I will not support any efforts to repeal the Civil Rights Act of 1964".^{[81][82]} Later he generated more controversy by characterizing statements made by Obama Administration officials regarding the Deepwater Horizon oil spill cleanup as sounding "un-American".^[83]

Paul defeated Conway in the general election with 56% of the vote to 44% for Conway.

U.S. Senate

112th Congress (2011–2013)

Paul was sworn in on January 5, 2011, along with his father, who was simultaneously in the House of Representatives.^[84]

Paul was assigned to be on the Energy and Natural Resources, Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, Homeland Security and Government Affairs, and Small Business committees.^[85] Paul also formed the Senate Tea Party Caucus with Jim DeMint and Mike Lee as its inaugural members.^[86] His first legislative proposal was to cut \$500 billion from federal spending in one year. This proposal included cutting the Department of Education by 83 percent and the United States Department of Homeland Security by 43 percent, as well as folding the Department of Energy into the Department of Defense and eliminating the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Seven independent agencies would be eliminated and food stamps would be cut by 30 percent. Under Paul's proposal, defense spending would be reduced by



Paul greeting supporters at Bowman Field in Louisville, Kentucky, on November 1, 2010.



Paul being sworn in as a senator by Vice President Joe Biden, along with his family, in the Old Senate Chamber in the U.S. Capitol, January 2011.

6.5 percent and international aid would be eliminated.^{[87][88][89]} He later proposed a five-year budget plan intended to balance the budget.^[90]

In February, Paul was one of two Republicans to vote against extending three key provisions of the USA PATRIOT Act (roving wiretaps, searches of business records, and conducting surveillance of "lone wolves" — individuals not linked to terrorist groups).^{[91][92]}

On March 2, Paul was one of nine senators to vote against a stopgap bill that cut \$4 billion from the budget and would temporarily prevent a government shutdown, saying that it did not cut enough from the budget.^[93] One week later, he voted against the Democratic and Republican budget proposals to keep funding the federal government, saying that both bills did not cut enough spending. Both bills failed to pass the Senate. He later voted against stopgap measures on March 17 and April 8, both of which passed the senate.^{[94][95]}

On April 14, he was one of 19 senators to vote against a budget that cut \$38.5 billion from the budget and funded the government for the remainder of the fiscal year.^[96]

Paul voiced opposition to U.S. intervention in the Libyan Civil War and has criticized President Barack Obama for not gaining congressional consent for Operation Odyssey Dawn.^{[97][98]} During the debt ceiling crisis, the Senator stated that he would only support raising the debt ceiling if a balanced budget amendment was enacted.^[99] Paul was a supporter of the Cut, Cap and Balance Act, which was tabled by Democratic opposition.^[100] On August 3, Paul voted against a bill that would raise the debt ceiling.^[101]

On September 7, Paul called for a vote of no confidence in United States Secretary of the Treasury Timothy Geithner.^[102] Later that month, Paul blocked legislation that would strengthen safety rules for oil and gas pipelines, because, he stated, the bill was not strong enough.^[103] In October, Paul blocked a bill that would provide \$36 million in benefits for elderly and disabled refugees, saying that he was concerned that it could be used to aid domestic terrorists. This was in response to two alleged terrorists who came to the United States through a refugee program and were receiving welfare benefits when they were arrested in 2011 in Paul's hometown of Bowling Green.^[104] Paul lifted his hold on the bill after Democratic leaders promised to hold a Congressional hearing into how individuals are selected for refugee status and request an investigation on how the two suspects were admitted in the country through a refugee program.^[105]

In June 2012, Paul endorsed Mitt Romney after it became apparent that he would be the Republican nominee for the 2012 presidential election.^[106] However, he was later vocal about his disagreements with Romney on a number of policies.^[107]

113th Congress (2013–2015)

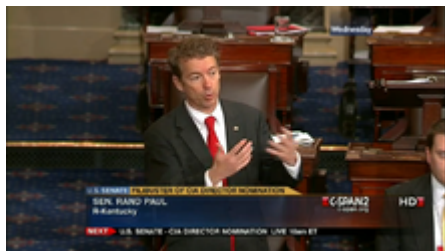
For the 113th Congress, Paul was added to the Foreign Relations committee and retained his spot on the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions, Homeland Security and Government Affairs, and Small Business committees.^[108]

On March 6–7, 2013, Paul engaged in a filibuster to delay voting on the nomination of John O. Brennan as the Director of the Central Intelligence Agency. Paul questioned the Obama administration's use of drones and the stated legal justification for their potential use within the United States. Paul held the floor for 12 hours and 52 minutes.^[109] He ceded to several Republican senators and Democratic senator, Ron Wyden, who generally also questioned drone usage.^{[110][111]} Paul said his purpose was to challenge drone policy in general and specifically as it related to noncombatants on U.S. soil. He requested a pledge from the Administration that



Paul campaigning with his father, Ron Paul, for his 2012 presidential campaign in Waterloo, Iowa, on August 10, 2011.

noncombatants would not be targeted on U.S. soil.^[112] Attorney General Eric Holder responded that the President is not authorized to deploy extrajudicial punishment without due process, against non-combatant citizens. Press Secretary Jay Carney read Holder's letter, indicating president Obama's support, "The president has not and would not use drone strikes against American citizens on American soil"^[113] Press Paul answered that he was "quite happy" with the response.^[114] The filibuster was ended with a cloture vote of 81 to 16, and Brennan was confirmed by the Senate with a vote of 63 to 34.^[115]



Paul speaking during filibuster on the Senate floor on March 6, 2013.

In March 2013, Paul, with Senators Ted Cruz and Mike Lee, threatened another filibuster, this one opposing any legislative proposals to expand federal gun control measures.^[116] The filibuster was attempted on April 11, 2013, but was dismissed by cloture, in a 68–31 vote.^[117] Also in March 2013, Paul endorsed fellow Kentucky Republican Senator Mitch McConnell's 2014 re-election campaign.^[118] McConnell had previously hired Paul's 2010 campaign manager, Jesse Benton, as his own campaign manager.^[119] Paul's endorsement was seen as a major win for McConnell in avoiding a challenge in the Republican primary.^[118]

In response to Detroit's declaration of bankruptcy, Paul stated he would not allow the government to attempt to bail out Detroit. In a phone interview with Breitbart News on July 19, 2013, Paul said, "I basically say he is bailing them out over my dead body because we don't have any money in Washington." Paul said he thought a federal bailout would send the wrong message to other cities with financial problems.^[120]

In September, Paul stated that the United States should avoid military intervention in the ongoing Syrian Civil War.^[121] In an op-ed, Paul disputed the Obama administration's claims that the threat of military force caused Syria's government to consider turning over its chemical weapons, instead arguing that the opposition to military action in Syria, and the delay that it caused, led to diplomatic progress.^[122]

In October 2013, Paul was the subject of some controversy when it was discovered that he had plagiarized from Wikipedia part of a speech in support of Virginia gubernatorial candidate Ken Cuccinelli. Referencing the movie Gattaca, Paul quoted almost verbatim from the Wikipedia article about the film without citing the source.^{[123][124][125]} Evidence soon surfaced that Paul had copied sentences in a number of his other speeches nearly verbatim from other authors without giving credit to the original sources,^{[126][127]} including in the speech he had given as the Tea Party rebuttal to the president's 2013 State of the Union Address. In addition, a three-page-long passage of Paul's book Government Bullies was taken directly from an article by the conservative think tank The Heritage Foundation.^{[128][129]} When it became apparent that Paul's op-ed in The Washington Times on mandatory minimums and related testimony he had given before the Senate Judiciary Committee both contained material that was virtually identical to an article that had been published by another author in The Week a few days earlier,^[130] the Washington Times said that the newspaper would no longer publish the weekly column Paul had been contributing to the paper.^[131] After a week of almost daily news reports of new allegations of plagiarism, Paul said that he was being held to an "unfair standard", but would restructure his office in order to prevent mistakes in the future, if that would be what it would take "to make people leave me the hell alone."^[132]

In response to political turmoil in Ukraine in early 2014, Paul initially said that the United States should remain mindful of the fact that although the Cold War is over, Russia remains a military power with long-range nuclear missiles. He said that the United States should try to maintain a "respectful relationship with Russia" and avoid taking actions that the Russians might view as a provocation, such as seeking to have Ukraine join NATO or otherwise interfering in Russia's relationship with Ukraine.^[133]

Two weeks later, after the Russian parliament authorized the use of military force in Ukraine^[134] and Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered military exercises along Russia's border with Ukraine,^[135] Paul began taking a different tone.^[136] He wrote: "Vladimir Putin's invasion of Ukraine is a gross violation of that nation's sovereignty and an affront to the international community ... Putin must be punished for violating the Budapest Memorandum, and Russia must learn that the U.S. will isolate it if it insists on acting like a rogue nation."^[137] He said that the United States and European allies could retaliate against Russia's military aggression without any need for military action. He urged that the United States impose economic sanctions on Russia and resume an effort to build defensive anti-missile installations in Poland and the Czech Republic. He also called for the United States to take steps as a counterweight to Russia's strategic influence on Europe's oil and gas supply, such as lifting restrictions on new exploration and drilling for fossil fuels in the United States along with immediate approval of the controversial Keystone Pipeline, which he said would allow the United States to ship more oil and gas to Europe if Russia attempts to cut off its own supply to Europe.^[137]

Paul played a leading role in blocking a treaty with Switzerland that would enable the IRS to conduct tax evasion probes, arguing that the treaty would infringe upon Americans' privacy.^[138] Paul received the 2014 Distinguished Service Award from the Center for the National Interest (formally called the Nixon Center) for his public policy work.^{[139][140]}

In response to reports that the CIA infiltrated the computers of the Senate Intelligence Committee, Paul called for the firing of CIA Director John O. Brennan.^[141] In December 2014, Paul supported the actions taken by the Obama administration to change United States policy towards Cuba and to ease trade restrictions with that country.^[142]

114th Congress (2015–2017)

In the beginning of 2015, Senator Paul re-introduced the Federal Reserve Transparency Act.^[143] Paul also introduced the FAIR Act, or Fifth Amendment Integrity Restoration Act, which would restrict civil forfeiture proceedings.^[144] Paul spoke for ten and a half hours on May 20, 2015, in opposition to the reauthorization of Section 215 of the Patriot Act.^{[145][146]} Sections of the Patriot Act were prevented from being reauthorized on June 1.^[147]

After the death of Antonin Scalia in February 2016, on February 15, Paul indicated that he would oppose any nomination by President Obama to replace the late Supreme Court Justice.^[148]

During a press briefing on May 6, 2016, President Obama called on Paul to stop "blocking the implementation of tax treaties that have been pending for years", arguing that they assisted law enforcement in off shore investigations into tax evasion.^[149] Paul advocated for the abolition of gun-free zones during a speech to the National Rifle Association on May 20, citing repeated tragedies occurring in these locations.^[150] On June 6, Paul spoke of introducing legislation to cease Selective Service, three days after the death of Muhammad Ali, after whom he intended to name the legislation in tribute.^[151]

115th Congress (2017–2019)

In March 2017, Paul introduced the Stop Arming Terrorists Act that would prohibit the use of United States Government funds to provide assistance to Al Qaeda, Jabhat Fateh al-Sham, and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and to countries supporting those organizations.^{[152][153]} On March 16, Senator John McCain accused Paul of being an agent of Vladimir Putin after Paul objected to adding Montenegro to NATO.^{[154][155]} Paul responded the following day by saying McCain "makes a really, really strong case for

term limits", suggesting McCain had become "a little unhinged" as a result of his seniority.^[156] On April 7, McCain said he did not pay attention to any of Paul's rhetoric and that the latter did not have "any real influence" in the United States Senate.^[157]

Paul questioned President Trump's April 2017 missile strike to Syria by saying, "While we all condemn the atrocities in Syria, the United States was not attacked." He said that further action should not be taken without congressional authorization.^{[158][159]}

Paul was one of 22 senators to sign a letter^[160] to President Donald Trump urging the President to have the United States withdraw from the Paris Agreement in May 2017. According to the Center for Responsive Politics, Paul has received over \$250,000 from oil, gas and coal interests since 2012.^[161] In July, Rand Paul joined Reps. Justin Amash (R-MI), Thomas Massie (R-KY), John Duncan Jr. (R-TN) and Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT) in opposing a bill that would impose new economic sanctions against Russia, Iran, and North Korea. President Trump opposed the bill, pointing out that relations with Russia were already "at an all-time and dangerous low". He did, however, sign the bill though likely out of political pressure.^[162]

On September 5, the Trump administration announced the intended rescission of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program. In tweets responding to the act, Paul stated the executive order that created DACA was illegal and congressional bipartisanship was needed to solve or fix the program.^[163]

Paul confirmed in an October 2017 interview he would not vote for the Republican budget in the Senate unless billions in spending were removed from the plan: "If leadership is unwilling to compromise with somebody who is concerned about the debt, then they deserve to lose."^[164]

In February 2018, Republican Senators introduced an immigration framework akin to that proposed by President Trump and with his support that called for \$25 billion being provided for border security in exchange for a pathway to citizenship for 1.8 million immigrants brought into the US illegally.^[165] Paul was one of fourteen Republican Senators to vote against the proposal.^[166]

FiveThirtyEight, which tracks Congressional votes, found that Paul had voted with Donald Trump's positions the least out of all Republicans, only voting with him 74% of the time by August 2018.^[167] In December 2018, in the wake of court filings implicating President Trump's involvement in campaign finance violations, including an attempt to buy a woman's silence, Paul played down the alleged violations and said that they should not be "over-criminalized."^[168] Paul said that the campaign finance violations were "an error in filing paperwork or not categorizing" and that going after such violations would turn the U.S. into a "banana republic, where every president gets prosecuted and every president gets thrown in jail when they're done with office."^[168]

Affordable Care Act repeal

Paul introduced a bill on January 25, 2017, that sought to replace the Affordable Care Act which included each person's having a tax credit of \$5,000 and not requiring everyone to have coverage, unlike Obamacare.^[169]

On March 2, after marching to the House of Representatives side of Capitol Hill, Paul was filmed knocking on a door while demanding to see their copy of the replacing and repealing the Affordable Care Act bill.^[170] Paul spoke with President Trump over the phone on March 6, Paul telling him that the repeal and replacement of the Affordable Care Act should be two separate bills. Two days later, Paul said Republicans were united in repealing the Affordable Care Act but divided in their stances on its replacement.^[171] On March 12, Paul accused House Speaker Paul Ryan of being misleading in portraying supporters of the American Health Care Act of 2017 as not being negotiable,^[172] and three days later, March 15, furthered that Ryan was "selling" President Trump "a bill of goods" that he had not explained fully to the president.^[173]

After the bill was pulled by Republican leaders from a vote, Paul released a statement on March 24 thanking House conservatives for rebelling "against ObamaCare Lite."^[174] Later, on April 2, Paul golfed with Trump and Budget Director Mick Mulvaney at the Trump National Golf Club in Virginia, where they discussed a variety of topics, including healthcare.^{[175][176]}

Paul told reporters on June 15 that he was willing to vote for a partial repeal, but not the implementation of new Republican entitlement programs, which he identified as present in both House and Senate versions of the bill.^[177] Paul also told reporters on September 11 that he did not believe the Graham-Cassidy bill would pass.^[178] Paul tweeted on September 15 that Graham-Cassidy retained "90% of Obamacare" and dubbed it "more Obamacare Lite".^[179]

On September 19, Paul asserted the Graham-Cassidy bill as immortalizing the Affordable Care Act and "a big government boondoggle of a trillion dollars of spending" that Republicans should abandon in favor of pursuing measures that would allow for health insurance to be purchased across state lines.^[180] On September 22, after President Trump tweeted that "Rand Paul, or whoever votes against Hcare Bill, will forever (future political campaigns) be known as 'the Republican who saved Obamacare'", Paul responded that he would not be coerced into supporting Graham-Cassidy with bribes or bullying.^[181]

116th Congress (2019–2021)

In January 2019, Paul condemned Senator Mitt Romney for writing an editorial criticizing President Trump. Paul said that Romney's criticism of Trump's character was bad for the country and for the Republican Party.^[182]

On July 17, 2019, Paul blocked Senator Kirsten Gillibrand's motion for unanimous consent on a bill renewing the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund along with Utah Senator Mike Lee. The fund was estimated to run out by the end of the year; the bill would renew it until the year 2090. Paul argued that he was not blocking the bill, but rather seeking a vote on an amendment that would offset the new spending by other spending cuts due to the deficit. In a segment on Fox News, which went viral, comedian Jon Stewart and 9/11 first responder John Feal rebuked Paul, accusing him of hypocritical "fiscal responsibility virtue signalling", for delaying passage of the bill, while at the same time he voted in favor of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act of 2017, which increased the deficit.^[183] In response, Paul said he has always insisted on "pay-go provisions" for any increase in spending, including for disaster relief funding, and called Stewart uninformed and a part of a "left-wing mob".^[184]



Paul at the 2019 Turning Point USA Winter Gala at Mar-a-Lago.



Paul speaking at a Turning Point USA event in 2020

On November 4, 2019, Paul called on the media to reveal the secret identity of Trump's Ukraine quid pro quo whistleblower after threatening to reveal the name himself.^[185]

In February 2020, Paul criticized YouTube for removing a video of his floor speech about the impeachment trial of Donald Trump. His speech contained a controversial question for impeachment manager Adam Schiff and counsel for the president: "Are you aware that House Intelligence Committee staffer Shawn Misko had a close relationship with [...] when at the National Security Council together?"^{[186][187][188]}

In September 2020, Paul was the lone Republican to vote against the COVID-19 aid package introduced by Senator Mitch McConnell, joining the Democrats who unanimously voted against it. Paul's grievance with the bill was the accumulation to the debt it would have triggered.^{[189][190]}

After the 2020 presidential election, Paul refused to accept Democratic candidate Joe Biden's victory against Trump and falsely claimed that the election was "stolen."^[191]

117th Congress (2021–present)

Paul repeatedly made false claims that the 2020 elections were fraudulent.^{[192][193]} He later insisted on accepting the state certified electors that named Biden. In a press release and later during the session held to count the electors, which followed the storming of the U.S. Capitol, Paul argued that the electoral college is an indispensable friend of democracy in checking the danger of centralized power in deciding elections.^[194] He additionally condemned the attack while it occurred, calling it "violence and mob rule" and "un-American." He blamed the rioters as setting back election reform discussions and asked them to "just stop it."^{[195][196]} Later that month, Paul continued to make false claims of fraud in the 2020 election and refused to say that the election was not stolen.^[193] Two days after the Electoral College declared Joe Biden won the 2020 Presidential election, Paul sided with Trump falsely claiming that the election "in many ways was stolen."^[197] In the subsequent impeachment trial of Trump, which sought to convict him on charges of incitement of insurrection, Paul questioned the constitutionality of it due to Trump having left office by the time it reached the Senate, as well as defending him against the charges, "I want Democrats to raise their hands if they have ever given a speech that says 'take back,' 'fight for your country,' who hasn't used the words fight figuratively?"^{[198][199]} Once Trump was impeached for a second time in January 2021, Paul introduced a motion to the Senate declaring the impeachment to be unconstitutional. Five Republicans joined all 50 Democrats to defeat the motion 55 to 45. With 45 Republican senators supporting him, Paul stated the impeachment was 'dead on arrival'.^[200] Paul formally voted against the charges on February 13, 2021.^[201]



[Play media](#)

Paul gives a speech during the 2021 United States Electoral College vote count.

On February 3, 2021, Paul was named a ranking member of the Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee.^[202]

Committee assignments

- **Committee on Foreign Relations**
 - Subcommittee on Near East, South Asia, Central Asia and Counterterrorism
 - Subcommittee on Europe and Regional Security Cooperation
 - Subcommittee on Multilateral International Development, Multilateral Institutions, and International Economic, Energy and Environmental Policy
 - Subcommittee on State Department and USAID Management, International Operations and Bilateral International Development
- **Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions**
 - Subcommittee on Children and Families (Chairman)
 - Subcommittee on Employment and Workplace Safety
- **Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs**
 - Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations

- Subcommittee on Emergency Management, Intergovernmental Relations, and the District of Columbia (Chairman)
- Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship (Ranking Member)

Caucuses

- Senate Republican Conference

2016 presidential campaign

Background

Paul was considered a potential candidate for the Republican nomination for the Presidency of the United States since at least January 2013.^[203] He delivered the Tea Party response to President Barack Obama's State of the Union address on February 13, 2013,^[204] while Marco Rubio gave the official Republican response. This prompted some pundits to call that date the start of the 2016 Republican primaries.^[205] That year, he spoke at the Conservative Political Action Conference in Washington D.C., where he won the 2016 Presidential straw poll. Paul went on to win the straw poll for the next two years as well, leading to some considering Paul to be a front runner for the nomination, although CPAC attendees are typically considered younger and more libertarian-minded than average Republican voters.^{[206][207][208]}



Paul speaking at the 2013 Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) in National Harbor, Maryland, on March 14, 2013.

In a speech at the GOP Freedom Summit in April 2014, Paul insisted that the GOP has to broaden its appeal in order to grow as a party. To do so, he said it cannot be the party of "fat cats, rich people and Wall Street" and that the conservative movement has never been about rich people or privilege, "we are the middle class", he said. Paul also said that conservatives must present a message of justice and concern for the unemployed and be against government surveillance to attract new people to the movement, including the young, Hispanics, and black voters.^[209]



Paul speaking at a campaign rally in Des Moines, Iowa, October 2015.

During the 2014 election, Paul launched a social media campaign titled "Hillary's Losers" which was meant to highlight many of the Democratic candidates that lost their bids for the U.S. Senate despite endorsements from Hillary Clinton. Clinton was also a candidate for President and eventually won the Democratic Party's nomination, going on to lose to Donald Trump in the general election.^[210]

Paul began to assemble his campaign team, setting up campaign offices and hiring his campaign manager in the beginning of 2015, fueling speculation that he was preparing to enter the Presidential race.^[211] Paul officially announced his presidential candidacy on April 7, 2015. Within a day of his announcement, Paul raised \$1 million.^[212]

Senate re-election

In April 2011, Paul filed to run for re-election to his Senate seat in 2016.^[213] Had he become the Republican presidential (or vice-presidential) nominee, state law would prohibit him from simultaneously running for re-election.^[214] In March 2014, the Republican-controlled Kentucky Senate passed a bill that would allow Paul to run for both offices, but the Democratic-controlled Kentucky House of Representatives declined to take it up.^{[215][216][217]}

Paul spent his own campaign money in the 2014 legislative elections, helping Republican candidates for the State House in the hopes of flipping the chamber, thus allowing the legislature to pass the bill (Democratic Governor Steve Beshear's veto can be overridden with a simple majority).^{[218][219]} However, the Democrats retained their 54–46 majority in the State House.^{[220][221][222]} Paul has since given his support to the idea that the Kentucky Republican Party could decide to hold a caucus rather than a primary, potentially giving Paul more time to decide whether he should run for U.S. Senator or continue a potential bid for president.^[223]

Exit from presidential campaign

Paul announced the suspension of his presidential campaign on February 3, 2016, shortly after the Iowa caucus, where he finished in fifth place.^[224]

Political positions

A supporter of the Tea Party movement,^{[225][204]} Paul has described himself as a "constitutional conservative".^[226] He is generally described as a libertarian, a term he both embraced^[227] and rejected^[228] during his first Senate campaign. He supports term limits, a balanced budget amendment, and the Read the Bills Act, in addition to the widespread reduction of federal spending and taxation. He favors a flat tax rate of 14.5% for individuals and business, while eliminating the FICA payroll taxes, as well as taxes on inheritance, gifts, capital gains, dividends, and interest.^[229] Paul has frequently appeared on *Infowars* with radio show host and right-wing conspiracy theorist Alex Jones.^{[230][231][232][233]} Ideologically, the American Conservative Union has given Paul a lifetime conservative rating of 96% and the Conservative Review gave him a 92% score.^[234] Since the 2016 Republican primary, when Paul was highly critical of Trump, he has "become one of the president's closest allies despite occasionally voting against Trump's nominees and legislative proposals."^[182] As of June 2020, according to FiveThirtyEight, Paul had voted with President Trump's position on congressional issues 70% of the time, the second lowest among all Republican senators.^[235]

Abortion

Paul describes himself as "100% pro life", believing that legal personhood begins at fertilization.^{[236][237][238]} In 2009, his position was to ban abortion under all circumstances.^{[239][240]} Since 2010, he has said he would allow for a doctor's discretion in life-threatening cases such as ectopic pregnancies.^[241] In 2011, Paul signed onto the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion Act which was intended to prohibit federal funding for abortion, with the notable exception of abortions in the case of rape, incest, and to save the life of the mother.^[242]

Immigration

In 2017, following President Trump's decision to repeal the previous Obama Administration's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) order, Paul outlined his own solution to the issue of undocumented immigration which included naturalizing DACA beneficiaries over a five-year period as part of the yearly

immigrant quota, and also endorsed a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants in general. Paul said he opposes gross spending on the border, and feels sympathy for most immigrants regardless of status, the DACA beneficiaries in particular.^[243]

Paul was one of 11 Republicans in 2019 to vote against Trump's demand for "emergency border funding".^[244]

LGBTQ+

Paul has said that same-sex marriage "offends [himself] and a lot of people" on a personal level, and said there is a "crisis that allows people to think there would be some other sorts of marriage."^{[245][246]} Prior to the Supreme Court's 2015 decision in Obergefell v. Hodges legalizing same-sex marriage across the United States, Paul held the view that the decision to ban same-sex marriage should be in the hands of states.^[247] Following the Court's decision, Paul said in 2015, "While I disagree with Supreme Court's redefinition of marriage, I believe that all Americans have the right to contract. The Constitution is silent on the question of marriage because marriage has always been a local issue. Our founding fathers went to the local courthouse to be married, not to Washington, D.C. I've often said I don't want my guns or my marriage registered in Washington."^[248]

During Rachel Levine's confirmation hearing with the Senate HELP Committee to be Assistant Secretary of Health and Human Services under President Biden, Paul compared transgender medicine to "genital mutilation" and accused her of supporting "surgical destruction of a minor's genitalia." Paul was rebuked by committee chairman Patty Murray, as well as multiple House and Senate Democrats, who were to vote on the Equality Act that same day.^{[249][250]}

Foreign policy



Paul being interviewed by Jerry Doyle at Liberty Political Action Conference (LPAC) 2011 in Reno, Nevada, September 16, 2011.

Unlike his more stridently "non-interventionist" father, Paul concedes a role for American armed forces abroad, including permanent foreign military bases.^[251] He has said that he blames supporters of the Iraq War and not President Obama for the growth in violence that occurred in 2014, and that the Iraq War "emboldened" Iran.^[252] Dick Cheney, John McCain and Rick Perry responded by calling Paul an isolationist,^{[253][254]} but Paul has pointed to opinion polls of likely GOP primary voters as support for his position.^[255] In 2011, shortly after being elected, Paul proposed a budget which specified \$542 billion in defense spending. In 2015, he called for a defense budget of \$697 billion.^[256]

Referring to ISIS, Paul stated: "I personally believe that this group would not be in Iraq and would not be as powerful had we not been supplying their allies in the war [against Syrian Bashar al-Assad's government]."^[257] Paul then supported airstrikes against ISIS, but questioned the constitutionality of Obama's unilateral actions without a clear congressional mandate.^{[258][259]} Paul has stated concerns about arms sent to Syrian rebels that wind up in unfriendly hands.^[260] In December 2018 he supported President Trump's decision to pull the US army out from the Syrian Civil war.^[261]

In 2016, Paul was one of the first members of Congress to come out in opposition to United States support for the Saudi Arabian-led intervention in Yemen.^[262] In June 2017, Paul tried to block Trump administration's plan to sell more weapons to Saudi Arabia.^[263] In April 2018, he again criticized the U.S.-Saudi Arabia

alliance, highlighting that "Saudi Arabia has funded radical madrassas, teaching hatred of America throughout the world, and that Saudi Arabia also supplied arms to ISIS in the Syrian civil war."^[264] Paul said that U.S.-backed Saudi blockade of Yemen has further aggravated the humanitarian crisis in the country.^[264]

Paul, like father, has also been a critic of neoconservatism,^[265] and urged Trump to not choose prominent neoconservative Elliott Abrams to serve as Deputy Secretary of State.^[266] In April 2018, Paul voted for the confirmation of Mike Pompeo as Secretary of State.^[267] Paul had previously insisted that he would not confirm Pompeo, citing Pompeo's hawkish foreign policy beliefs.^[268]

In June 2019, Paul criticized the Trump administration for escalating tensions with Iran. Said Paul: "One of the things I like about President Trump is that he said the Iraq War was a mistake. I think an Iran war would be even a bigger mistake than the Iraq War."^{[269][270]} In January 2020 he criticized the U.S. airstrike on Baghdad International Airport which killed high-level Iranian General Qasem Soleimani. Paul stated that the attack will increase tensions between the two countries.^[271]

On June 12, 2017, U.S. senators reached an agreement on legislation imposing new sanctions on Russia and Iran. The bill was opposed only by Rand Paul and Bernie Sanders.^[272] In July 2018, shortly after 12 Russian intelligence officers have been charged with hacking and leaking emails of senior Democrats, he described the Special Counsel investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 election as a "witch hunt on the president".^[273] That same month, Paul blocked a Senate resolution that backed the intelligence community's assessment of Russian election interference and called on President Trump to speak with special counsel Robert Mueller.^[274] In August 2018 Paul traveled to Moscow and met with several Russian senators, including Sergey Kislyak. In May 2019, Paul opposed the decision of the Senate Intelligence committee, chaired by Republican Senator Richard Burr, to subpoena Donald Trump Jr., a close friend of Paul's, to testify in front of Congress about his involvement with Russians during the 2016 presidential campaign.^[275] In July 2018, Paul was among only two Senators to vote against a Senate motion supporting NATO.^[276]

On July 1, 2020, the Senate rejected Paul's amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act which would have required the withdrawal of all U.S. forces from Afghanistan within a year and brought an end to the 19-year war.^[277]

Criminal justice issues

Paul has focused on criminal justice reform as a legislative priority.^{[278][279]} He introduced the Justice Safety Valve Act in 2013 to provide judges with greater sentencing flexibility,^[280] the Civil Rights Voting Restoration Act in 2014 to restore voting rights for non-violent felons,^[281] the REDEEM Act in 2014 to allow sealing and expungement for non-violent crimes,^[282] the FAIR Act in 2014 to rein in police use of civil asset forfeiture,^[283] the RESET Act in 2014 to address the crack sentencing disparity and how drugs are weighed,^[284] the Police CAMERA Act in 2015 to increase the use of body cameras by police,^[285] the Stop Militarizing Our Law Enforcement Act in 2015 to reduce the use of military equipment by police,^[286] the MERCY Act in 2015 to restrict the use of solitary confinement on juveniles,^[287] the Pretrial Integrity and Safety Act in 2017 to encourage states to reform bail policies,^[288] the Pregnant Women in Custody Act in 2018 to protect the health and safety of pregnant women in prison,^[289] and the Justice for Breonna Taylor Act in 2020 to end the use of no-knock warrants.^[290] Paul says policies such as the war on drugs and mandatory minimum sentencing have particularly harmed minorities.^{[291][292]}



Paul speaking with former U.S. Congressman Allen West.

In 2020, Paul held up bipartisan legislation that would make lynching a federal crime.^[293] Paul said that he thought lynching should be "universally condemned", but wanted an amendment to clarify that the causation of non-fatal injuries would not be considered lynching.^[294]

Paul was one of six Republican Senators to vote no on expanding the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act, which would allow the U.S. Justice Department to review hate crimes related to COVID-19 and establish an online database.^{[295][296]}

On May 28, 2021, Paul voted against creating an independent commission to investigate the January 6 insurrection.^[297]

Cannabis

On cannabis legalization, Paul says the issue should be left up to the states and that "you ought to be able to pretty much do what you want to do as long as you don't hurt somebody else".^{[298][299]} Regarding medical use, Paul has endorsed efforts to legalize in Kentucky^[300] and introduced the CARERS Act in 2015 to legalize medical cannabis at the federal level.^[301] Paul has also supported states' rights-focused cannabis legislation, introducing the Rohrabacher–Farr amendment in 2014,^[302] cosponsoring the STATES Act in 2018,^[303] and introducing other amendments.^{[304][305]} Paul introduced the Marijuana Businesses Access to Banking Act in 2015 to allow cannabis businesses increased access to banks.^[306]

Regarding industrial hemp cultivation, Paul has supported efforts to legalize in Kentucky^{[307][308]} and at the federal level as well, introducing the Industrial Hemp Farming Act in 2013.^[309] In 2020 he introduced the Hemp Economic Mobilization Plan (HEMP) Act to increase the THC limit of hemp from 0.3% to 1%.^{[310][311]}

Government surveillance

As a critic of warrantless surveillance of Americans, Paul says "the Fourth Amendment is equally as important as the Second Amendment" and has called for conservatives to more strongly defend Fourth Amendment rights.^{[312][313]} In 2015 Paul spoke for ten and a half hours on the Senate floor against renewing provisions of the PATRIOT Act that he said were unconstitutional.^{[314][315]} Paul has called Edward Snowden a "whistleblower" and called for Director of National Intelligence James Clapper to resign for "lying" about the phone metadata program that Snowden exposed.^{[316][317]} He also filed a class action lawsuit against the Obama administration seeking to end the program.^[318] Paul gave a speech at the University of California, Berkeley in 2014 titled "The N.S.A. vs. Your Privacy".^{[319][320]}



Paul in New Hampshire, August 13, 2015.

Climate change

Paul has not definitively accepted the scientific consensus on climate change, which states that global warming is real, progressing, and primarily caused by humans. Paul has said pollution emissions are subject to "onerous regulation."^{[321][322]} In 2018, Paul called for an investigation of a National Science Foundation grant that went towards educating meteorologists about the science of climate change. Paul said the grant was "not science" but "propagandizing".^[323]

Disease control

In 2009, Paul was interviewed by conspiracy theorist, Alex Jones, and suggested mandatory vaccination would be akin to martial law.^[324] On February 2, 2015, he told Fox TV host Laura Ingraham regarding vaccinations, that "most should be voluntary." His remarks generated controversy by suggesting that states should not require parents to vaccinate their children, because parents should have the freedom to make that decision for their children. Later that day, in an interview with CNBC, Paul clarified this statement, commenting "I'm not arguing vaccines are a bad idea. I think they are a good thing, but I think the parent should have some input. The state doesn't own your children. Parents own the children, and it is an issue of freedom."^[325] Afterward, he added about vaccines, "I've heard of many tragic cases of walking, talking, normal children who wound up with profound mental disorders after vaccines."^[326] On February 3, he posted a photograph to Twitter of himself being vaccinated.^[327]

In 2014, Paul argued that the Obama administration and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) were downplaying the threat posed by Ebola virus in the United States. Ultimately, nine people infected with Ebola returned in the United States, two nurses contracted the disease within the US, and two of the returning travelers died.^[328]

In early May 2020, during the coronavirus pandemic, Paul said that stay-at-home orders amounted to "dictatorship" by Kentucky's Democratic Governor Andy Beshear.^[329] Paul clashed with Anthony Fauci, the Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases,^{[330][331]} at a fractious Senate committee hearing on September 23, 2020. Paul asked Fauci if he had "second thoughts" about the CDC's mitigation recommendations, including mask-wearing and maintaining a six feet space of social distancing.^[332] Paul said New York's high fatality rate showed that mitigation efforts were insufficient.^[333] Fauci replied, "You've misconstrued that Senator, and you've done that repetitively in the past," saying that New York had succeeded in getting the virus under control by adhering to the CDC's clinical guidelines.^[334] In May 2021, during President Biden's push to convince more Americans to be vaccinated, Paul said he personally was choosing not get the COVID vaccine, justifying his decision by saying that "I've already had the disease and I have natural immunity" and that "in a free country...each individual would get to make the medical decision."^[335]

At a Senate hearing in May 2021, Sen. Paul debated Anthony Fauci on the origin's of COVID-19, gaining media attention as the financing of dangerous types of research by the NIH may require further investigation.^[336]

Personal life

Paul is married to Kelley Paul (née Ashby), a freelance writer. They were married on October 20, 1990, and have three sons, William (born 1992), Duncan, and Robert. William and Duncan attended the University of Kentucky, while Robert attended a private school in the Washington, D.C. area.^[337] They reside in Bowling Green, Kentucky.^[338] They are active members of the Presbyterian church.^[339]

2017 assault

On November 3, 2017, Paul was assaulted by a neighbor, Rene Boucher (then aged 59), a retired anesthesiologist. Paul, who is deaf in one ear,^[340] was wearing noise-canceling headphones while mowing his lawn, reportedly enabling Boucher to tackle Paul without his own approach being noticed.^[341]

Boucher was arrested and charged with one count of fourth-degree assault and released on a \$7,500 bond. Paul sustained five broken ribs, of which three were displaced fractures.^{[342][343]} In August 2019, part of Paul's lung required removal as a result of the injuries he suffered during the attack.^[344]

Boucher's attorney, Matthew Baker, described it as "a very regrettable dispute between two neighbors over a matter that most people would regard as trivial".^{[343][345]} According to a memorandum filed by Baker the dispute was over Paul repeatedly leaving tree yard debris near his property line with his neighbor.^[346] Rand Paul and his wife deny this, they claim that the "media" has "misrepresented" this "from the beginning" and that the attack was "politically motivated." They claim that Boucher had threatened Donald Trump earlier and that he was "a vocal hater" of Trump and the GOP^[347]

Boucher was originally charged in Kentucky state court,^[348] but was later charged in federal court, where he ultimately pleaded guilty to assaulting a member of Congress.^[349] The state-court charge was dismissed after Boucher pleaded guilty to the federal charge.^[349] Boucher was initially sentenced to 30 days in prison, one year of probation, 100 hours of community service, and a \$10,000 fine. The federal prosecutors had sought a 21-month term and appealed the lenient sentence.^[349]

In September 2019, the United States Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit vacated Boucher's sentence of 30 days, ruling it was unreasonably short, indicating "closer review" was in order, and the case was sent back to the lower court for resentencing.^[350] An appeal to the Supreme Court was denied.^[351] At his resentencing, Boucher received a prison term of eight months, plus another six months of home confinement, and was given credit for the 30 days he had previously served. Prosecutors felt the downward departure from their request for a 21-month sentence was too great, but the judge said Boucher's eight years in the military, being forced to sell his home to pay a \$580,000 judgment assessed by the state court against him in the civil case brought by Paul, and his completed community service mitigated against any additional prison time. Boucher expressed his regrets and contrition for his attack.^[352]



Paul with his family on the Capitol steps.



Paul and his father Ron Paul at an event hosted in their honor at CPAC 2011 in Washington, D.C.

2020 COVID-19 diagnosis

Paul announced on March 22, 2020, that he had tested positive for COVID-19 amid the ongoing pandemic of the disease. He was the first member of the United States Senate to test positive.^{[353][354]} Paul received bipartisan criticism from his Senate colleagues after it was discovered that he attended Senate lunches and used the Senate gym while awaiting his test results; he defended his actions because he had no symptoms of the illness and believed it was "highly unlikely" he was sick.^[355] On April 7, 2020, Paul announced his recovery.^[356]

2020 RNC confrontation

In August 2020, immediately following his attendance at the keynote speech delivered by President Donald Trump for the 2020 Republican National Convention held at the White House, Paul was confronted by protestors on his way to a hotel with his wife. A police perimeter was formed that escorted the Pauls away from the crowd, with one of the escorting officers being pushed in the process. The protestors' main contention point with Paul was the shooting of Breonna Taylor and their demands for Paul to "say her name". However,

as was pointed out by several media organizations in the aftermath of the incident, Paul had previously authored a bill named after Taylor aiming to make no-knock warrants illegal.^{[357][358][359]} The man who had pushed the police officer protecting the Pauls was later charged with assault, with the officer in question receiving stitches for his injuries.^[360]

Electoral history

2010 United States Senate election in Kentucky				
Party	Candidate	Votes	%	±%
<u>Republican</u>	Rand Paul	755,411	55.69%	+5.03%
<u>Democratic</u>	<u>Jack Conway</u>	599,617	44.26%	-5.12%
Total votes		1,354,833	100.0%	N/A
<u>Republican hold</u>				

2016 United States Senate election in Kentucky ^[361]				
Party	Candidate	Votes	%	±%
<u>Republican</u>	Rand Paul (incumbent)	1,090,177	57.27%	+1.58%
<u>Democratic</u>	<u>Jim Gray</u>	813,246	42.73%	-1.53%
<u>Write-in</u>		42	0.00%	N/A
Total votes		1,903,465	100.0%	N/A
<u>Republican hold</u>				

Primary elections

2010 United States Senate Republican primary in Kentucky ^[362]			
Party	Candidate	Votes	%
<u>Republican</u>	Rand Paul	206,986	58.8%
<u>Republican</u>	<u>Trey Grayson</u>	124,864	35.4%
<u>Republican</u>	Bill Johnson	7,861	2.2%
<u>Republican</u>	John Stephenson	6,885	2.0%
<u>Republican</u>	Gurley L. Martin	2,850	0.8%
<u>Republican</u>	Jon J. Scribner	2,829	0.8%
Total votes		352,275	100.0%

Cumulative results of the 2016 Republican Party presidential primaries

Party	Candidate	Votes	%
Republican	Donald Trump	14,015,993	44.95%
Republican	Ted Cruz	7,822,100	25.08%
Republican	John Kasich	4,290,448	13.76%
Republican	Marco Rubio	3,515,576	11.27%
Republican	Ben Carson	857,039	2.75%
Republican	Jeb Bush	286,694	0.92%
Republican	Rand Paul	66,788	0.21%
Republican	Mike Huckabee	51,450	0.16%
Republican	Carly Fiorina	40,666	0.13%
Republican	Chris Christie	57,637	0.18%
Republican	Jim Gilmore	18,369	0.06%
Republican	Rick Santorum	16,627	0.05%

2016 Republican National Convention delegate count

Party	Candidate	Votes	%
Republican	Donald Trump	1,441	58.3%
Republican	Ted Cruz	551	22.3%
Republican	Marco Rubio	173	7.0%
Republican	John Kasich	161	6.5%
Republican	Ben Carson	9	0.4%
Republican	Jeb Bush	4	0.2%
Republican	Rand Paul	1	<0.01%
Republican	Mike Huckabee	1	<0.01%
Republican	Carly Fiorina	1	<0.01%

2016 United States Senate Republican primary in Kentucky^[363]

Party	Candidate	Votes	%
Republican	Rand Paul (incumbent)	169,180	84.79%
Republican	James Gould	16,611	8.33%
Republican	Stephen Slaughter	13,728	6.88%
Total votes		199,519	100.0%

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See also

- [Physicians in the United States Congress](#)
- [List of politicians affiliated with the Tea Party movement](#)
- [Republican Party presidential candidates, 2016](#)
- [List of United States Congress members killed or wounded in office](#)

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External links

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- [Rand Paul for U.S. Senate \(https://www.randpaul.com/\)](https://www.randpaul.com/) campaign website
- [Rand Paul \(https://curlie.org/Regional/North_America/United_States/Kentucky/Government/Federal/US_Senate/Rand_Paul_%5BR%5D\)](https://curlie.org/Regional/North_America/United_States/Kentucky/Government/Federal/US_Senate/Rand_Paul_%5BR%5D) at Curlie
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- [Profile \(https://www.votesmart.org/candidate/117285\)](https://www.votesmart.org/candidate/117285) at Vote Smart
- [Financial information \(federal office\) \(https://www.fec.gov/data/candidate/S0KY00156\)](https://www.fec.gov/data/candidate/S0KY00156) at the Federal Election Commission
- [Legislation sponsored \(https://www.congress.gov/member/rand-paul/2082\)](https://www.congress.gov/member/rand-paul/2082) at the [Library of Congress](#)

Party political offices		
Preceded by <u>Jim Bunning</u>	<u>Republican nominee for U.S. Senator from Kentucky (Class 3)</u> 2010, 2016	Most recent
<u>U.S. Senate</u>		
Preceded by <u>Jim Bunning</u>	<u>U.S. senator (Class 3) from Kentucky</u> 2011–present Served alongside: <u>Mitch McConnell</u>	Incumbent
<u>U.S. order of precedence (ceremonial)</u>		
Preceded by <u>Ron Johnson</u>	<u>United States senators by seniority</u> 48th	Succeeded by <u>Richard Blumenthal</u>

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Newt Gingrich

Newton Leroy Gingrich (/ˈɡɪŋɡrɪtʃ/; né **McPherson**; born June 17, 1943) is an American politician and author who served as the 50th Speaker of the United States House of Representatives from 1995 to 1999. A member of the Republican Party, he was the U.S. Representative for Georgia's 6th congressional district serving north Atlanta and nearby areas from 1979 until his resignation in 1999. In 2012, Gingrich unsuccessfully ran for the Republican nomination for President of the United States.

A professor of history and geography at the University of West Georgia in the 1970s, Gingrich won election to the U.S. House of Representatives in November 1978, the first Republican in the history of Georgia's 6th congressional district to do so. He served as House Minority Whip from 1989 to 1995.^{[1][2]} A co-author and architect of the "Contract with America", Gingrich was a major leader in the Republican victory in the 1994 congressional election. In 1995, *Time* named him "Man of the Year" for "his role in ending the four-decades-long Democratic majority in the House".^[3]

As House Speaker, Gingrich oversaw passage by the House of welfare reform and a capital gains tax cut in 1997. Gingrich played a key role in several government shutdowns, and impeached President Bill Clinton on a party-line vote in the House. The poor showing by Republicans in the 1998 congressional elections, a reprimand from the House for Gingrich's ethics violation, pressure from Republican colleagues, and revelations of an extramarital affair with a congressional employee 23 years his junior resulted in Gingrich's resignation from the speakership on November 6, 1998.^{[4][5]} He resigned altogether from the House on January 3, 1999.^[6] Political scientists have credited Gingrich with playing a key role in undermining democratic norms in the United States and hastening political polarization and partisanship.^{[7][8][9][10][11]}

Since leaving the House, Gingrich has remained active in public policy debates and worked as a political consultant. He founded and chaired several policy think tanks, including American Solutions for Winning the Future and the Center for Health Transformation. Gingrich ran for the Republican nomination for president in the 2012 presidential election, and was considered a potential frontrunner at several points in the race.^[12] Despite an impressive late victory in the South Carolina primary, Gingrich was ultimately unable to win enough primaries to sustain a viable candidacy, he withdrew from the race in May 2012 and endorsed

Newt Gingrich



50th Speaker of the United States House of Representatives

In office

January 3, 1995 – January 3, 1999

President Bill Clinton

Preceded by Tom Foley

Succeeded by Dennis Hastert

Leader of the House Republican Conference

In office

January 3, 1995 – January 3, 1999

Preceded by Robert H. Michel

Succeeded by Dennis Hastert

House Minority Whip

In office

March 20, 1989 – January 3, 1995

Leader Robert H. Michel

Preceded by Dick Cheney

Succeeded by David Bonior

Member of the U.S. House of Representatives from Georgia's 6th district

eventual nominee Mitt Romney. Gingrich later emerged as a key ally of Donald Trump, and was reportedly among the finalists on Trump's short list for running mate in the 2016 election.^[13]

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Preceded by John Flynt

Succeeded by Johnny Isakson

Personal details

Born	<u>Newton Leroy McPherson</u> June 17, 1943 <u>Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, U.S.</u>
Political party	<u>Republican</u>
Spouse(s)	<u>Jackie Battley</u> (<u>m.</u> 1962; <u>div.</u> 1981) <u>Marianne Ginther</u> (<u>m.</u> 1981; <u>div.</u> 2000) <u>Callista Bisek</u> (<u>m.</u> 2000)
Children	2
Relatives	<u>Candace Gingrich</u> (half-sibling)
Education	<u>Emory University</u> (BA) <u>Tulane University</u> (MA, PhD)
Occupation	Politician · professor · businessman · author
Signature	
Website	<u>Official website</u> (http://gingrich360.com)

Fiction

Films

See also

Citations

General sources

External links

Early life



Gingrich as a young history professor

Gingrich was born as Newton Leroy McPherson at the Harrisburg Hospital in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, on June 17, 1943. His mother, Kathleen "Kit" (née Daugherty; 1925–2003), and biological father, Newton Searles McPherson (1923–1970),^[14] married in September 1942, when she was 16 and McPherson was 19. The marriage fell apart within days.^{[15][16][17]} He is of English, German, Scottish and Scots-Irish descent.^{[18][19]}

In 1946, his mother married Robert Gingrich (1925–1996), who adopted him.^[20] Robert Gingrich was a career Army officer who served tours in Korea and Vietnam. In 1956, the family moved to Europe, living for a period in Orléans, France and Stuttgart, Germany.^[21]

Gingrich has three younger half-sisters from his mother, Candace and Susan Gingrich, and Roberta Brown.^[20] Gingrich was raised in Hummelstown (near Harrisburg) and on military bases where his adoptive father was stationed. The family's religion was Lutheran.^[22] He also has a half-sister and half-brother, Randy McPherson, from his biological father's side. In 1960 during his junior year in high school, the family moved to Georgia at Fort Benning.^[21]

In 1961, Gingrich graduated from Baker High School in Columbus, Georgia, where he met, and later married, his math teacher. He had been interested in politics since his teen years. While living with his family in Orléans, France, he visited the site of the Battle of Verdun and learned about the sacrifices made there and the importance of political leadership.^[23]

Gingrich received a B.A. degree in history from Emory University in Atlanta in 1965. He went on to graduate study at Tulane University, earning an M.A. (1968) and a Ph.D. in European history (1971).^[24] He spent six months in Brussels in 1969–70 working on his dissertation, *Belgian Education Policy in the Congo 1945–1960*.^[25]

Gingrich received deferments from the military during the years of the Vietnam War for being a student and a father. In 1985, he stated, "Given everything I believe in, a large part of me thinks I should have gone over."^[26]

In 1970, Gingrich joined the history department at West Georgia College, where he spent "little time teaching history." He coordinated a new environmental studies program and was removed from the history department "by 1976". During his time in the college, he took unpaid leave three times to run for the House of Representatives, losing twice before leaving the college. Serving professors were not allowed under the rules of the university system to run for office. He left the college in 1977 after being denied tenure.^[27]

Early political career

Gingrich was the southern regional director for Nelson Rockefeller in the 1968 Republican primaries.^[28]

Congressional campaigns

In 1974, Gingrich made his first bid for political office as the Republican candidate in Georgia's 6th congressional district in north-central Georgia, which includes many of the northern suburbs of Atlanta, portions of eastern Cobb County, northern Fulton County, and northern DeKalb County. He lost to 20-year incumbent Democrat Jack Flynt by 2,770 votes. Gingrich ran up huge margins in the suburban areas of the district, but was unable to overcome Flynt's lead in the more urban areas.^[29] Gingrich's relative success surprised political analysts. Flynt had never faced a serious challenger; Gingrich was the second Republican to ever run against him.^[30] He did well against Flynt although 1974 was a disastrous year for Republican candidates nationally due to fallout from the Watergate scandal of the Nixon administration, but also the impact of election of Georgia native Jimmy Carter.^[31]

Gingrich sought a rematch against Flynt in 1976. While the Republicans did slightly better in the 1976 House elections than in 1974 nationally, the Democratic candidate in the 1976 presidential election was former Governor of Georgia Jimmy Carter. Carter won more than two-thirds of the vote in his native Georgia.^[32] Gingrich lost his race by 5,100 votes.^[33]

As Gingrich primed for another run in the 1978 elections, Flynt decided to retire. Gingrich defeated Democratic State Senator Virginia Shapard by 7,500 votes.^{[34][35]} Gingrich was re-elected five times from this district.^[36] He faced a close general election race once—in the House elections of 1990—when he won by 978 votes in a primary race against Republican Herman Clark and won a narrow 974 vote victory over Democrat David Worley in the general.^[37] Although the district was trending Republican at the national level, conservative Democrats continued to hold most local offices, as well as most of the area's seats in the General Assembly, well into the 1980s.^[38]

Congress

In 1981, Gingrich co-founded the Military Reform Caucus (MRC) and the Congressional Aviation and Space Caucus. During the 1983 congressional page sex scandal, Gingrich was among those calling for the expulsion of representatives Dan Crane and Gerry Studds.^[39] Gingrich supported a proposal to ban loans from the International Monetary Fund to Communist countries and he endorsed a bill to make Martin Luther King Jr. Day a new federal holiday.^[40]

In 1983, Gingrich founded the Conservative Opportunity Society (COS), a group that included young conservative House Republicans. Early COS members included Robert Smith Walker, Judd Gregg, Dan Coats and Connie Mack III. The group gradually expanded to include several dozen representatives,^[41] who met each week to exchange and develop ideas.^[40]

Gingrich's analysis of polls and public opinion identified the group's initial focus.^[41] Ronald Reagan adopted the "opportunity society" ideas for his 1984 re-election campaign, supporting the group's conservative goals on economic growth, education, crime, and social



Gingrich traveling with President Ronald Reagan aboard Air Force One in August 1983

issues. He had not emphasized these during his first term.^[42] Reagan also referred to an "opportunity" society in the first State of the Union address of his second term.^[41]



Gingrich meets with President Reagan in the Oval Office in May 1985

In March 1988, Gingrich voted against the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 (as well as to uphold President Reagan's veto).^{[43][44]} In May 1988, Gingrich (along with 77 other House members and Common Cause) brought ethics charges against Democratic Speaker Jim Wright, who was alleged to have used a book deal to circumvent campaign-finance laws and House ethics rules. During the investigation, it was reported that Gingrich had his own unusual book deal, for *Window of Opportunity*, in which publicity expenses were covered by a limited partnership. It raised \$105,000 from Republican political supporters to promote sales of Gingrich's book.^[45] Gingrich's success in forcing Wright's resignation contributed to his rising influence in the Republican caucus.^[46]

In March 1989, Gingrich became House Minority Whip in a close election against Edward Rell Madigan.^[47] This was Gingrich's first formal position of power within the Republican party.^[48] He said his intention was to "build a much more aggressive, activist party".^[47] Early in his role as Whip, in May 1989, Gingrich was involved in talks about the appointment of a Panamanian administrator of the Panama Canal, which was scheduled to occur in 1989 subject to U.S. government approval. Gingrich was outspoken in his opposition to giving control over the canal to an administrator appointed by the dictatorship in Panama.^[49]

Gingrich and others in the House, including the newly minted Gang of Seven, railed against what they saw as ethical lapses during the nearly 40 years of Democratic control. The House banking scandal and Congressional Post Office scandal were emblems of the exposed corruption. Gingrich himself was among members of the House who had written NSF checks on the House bank. He had overdrafts on twenty-two checks, including a \$9,463 check to the Internal Revenue Service in 1990.^[50]

In 1990, after consulting focus groups^[51] with the help of pollster Frank Luntz,^[52] GOPAC distributed a memo with a cover letter signed by Gingrich titled "Language, a Key Mechanism of Control", that encouraged Republicans to "speak like Newt". It contained lists of "contrasting words"—words with negative connotations such as "radical", "sick," and "traitors"—and "optimistic positive governing words" such as "opportunity", "courage", and "principled", that Gingrich recommended for use in describing Democrats and Republicans, respectively.^[51]

Due to population increases recorded in the 1990 United States census, Georgia picked up an additional seat for the 1992 U.S. House elections. However, the Democratic-controlled Georgia General Assembly, under the leadership of fiercely partisan Speaker of the House Tom Murphy, specifically targeted Gingrich, eliminating the district Gingrich represented.^[53] Gerrymandering split Gingrich's territory among three neighboring districts. Much of the southern portion of Gingrich's district, including his home in Carrollton, was drawn into the Columbus-based 3rd district, represented by five-term Democrat Richard Ray. Gingrich remarked that "The Speaker, by raising money and gerrymandering, has sincerely dedicated a part of his career to wiping me out."^[53] Charles S. Bullock III, a political science professor at the University of Georgia, said "Speaker Murphy



Gingrich sits alongside First Lady Barbara Bush in December 1989

didn't like having a Republican represent him."^[54] At the onset of the decade, Gingrich proved to be the only Republican representative of Georgia's 10 congressional districts until 1992, with the creation of Georgia's 4th congressional district and the Republican gains of Jack Kingston and Mac Collins.^[55]

The Assembly created a new, heavily Republican 6th district in Fulton and Cobb counties in the wealthy northern suburbs of Atlanta—an area that Gingrich had never represented. Gingrich sold his home in Carrollton and moved to Marietta in the new district. His primary opponent, State Representative Herman Clark, who had challenged Gingrich two years earlier, made an issue out of Gingrich's 22 overdraft checks in the House banking scandal, and also criticized Gingrich for moving into the district. After a recount, Gingrich prevailed by 980 votes, with a 51 to 49 percent result.^[56] His winning the primary all but assured him of election in November. He was re-elected three times from this district against nominal Democratic opposition.^[54]

In the 1994 campaign season, in an effort to offer an alternative to Democratic policies and to unite distant wings of the Republican Party, Gingrich and several other Republicans came up with a Contract with America, which laid out 10 policies that Republicans promised to bring to a vote on the House floor during the first 100 days of the new Congress, if they won the election.^[57] The contract was signed by Gingrich and other Republican candidates for the House of Representatives. The contract ranged from issues such as welfare reform, term limits, crime, and a balanced budget/tax limitation amendment, to more specialized legislation such as restrictions on American military participation in United Nations missions.^[58]

Republican Revolution

In the November 1994 midterm elections, Republicans gained 54 seats and took control of the House for the first time since 1954. Long-time House Minority Leader Bob Michel of Illinois had not run for re-election, giving Gingrich, the highest-ranking Republican returning to Congress, the inside track at becoming Speaker. The midterm election that turned congressional power over to Republicans "changed the center of gravity" in the nation's capital.^[59] Time magazine named Gingrich its 1995 "Man of the Year" for his role in the election.^[3]

Speaker of the House

The House fulfilled Gingrich's promise to bring all ten of the Contract's issues to a vote within the first 100 days of the session. President Clinton called it the "Contract on America".^[60]

Legislation proposed by the 104th United States Congress included term limits for Congressional Representatives, tax cuts, welfare reform, and a balanced budget amendment, as well as independent auditing of the finances of the House of Representatives and elimination of non-essential services such as the House barbershop and shoe-shine concessions. Following Gingrich's first two years as House Speaker, the Republican majority was re-elected in the 1996 election, the first time Republicans had done so in 68 years, and the first time simultaneously with a Democratic president winning re-election.^[61]

As Speaker, Gingrich sought to increasingly tie Christian conservatism to the Republican Party. According to a 2018 study, Christian conservatism had become firmly ingrained in the Republican Party's policy platforms by 2000.^[7] Yale University



Official portrait of Speaker Gingrich

congressional scholar David Mayhew describes Gingrich as profoundly influential, saying "In Gingrich, we have as good a case as we are likely to see of a member of Congress operating in the public sphere with consequence."^[62]

Role in political polarization

A number of scholars have credited Gingrich with playing a key role in undermining democratic norms in the United States, and hastening political polarization and partisan prejudice.^{[7][8][9][63][64][65][66][67][10][68][69][11]} According to Harvard University political scientists Daniel Ziblatt and Steven Levitsky, Gingrich's speakership had a profound and lasting impact on American politics and health of American democracy. They argue that Gingrich instilled a "combative" approach in the Republican Party, where hateful language and hyper-partisanship became commonplace, and where democratic norms were abandoned. Gingrich frequently questioned the patriotism of Democrats, called them corrupt, compared them to fascists, and accused them of wanting to destroy the United States. Gingrich furthermore oversaw several major government shutdowns.^{[70][71][72][64]}

University of Maryland political scientist Lilliana Mason uses Gingrich's instructions to Republicans to use words such as "betray, bizarre, decay, destroy, devour, greed, lie, pathetic, radical, selfish, shame, sick, steal, and traitors" about Democrats as an example of a breach in social norms and exacerbation of partisan prejudice.^[7] Gingrich is a key figure in the 2017 book *The Polarizers* by Colgate University political scientist Sam Rosenfeld about the American political system's shift to polarization and gridlock.^[8] Rosenfeld describes Gingrich as follows, "For Gingrich, responsible party principles were paramount... From the outset, he viewed the congressional minority party's role in terms akin to those found in parliamentary systems, prioritizing drawing stark programmatic contrasts over engaging the majority party as junior participants in governance."^[8]

Boston College political scientist David Hopkins writes that Gingrich helped to nationalize American politics in a way where Democratic politicians on the state and local level were increasingly tied to the national Democratic party and President Clinton. Hopkins notes that Gingrich's view^[69]

directly contradicted the conventional wisdom of politics... that parties in a two-party system achieve increasing electoral success as they move closer to the ideological center... Gingrich and his allies believed that an organized effort to intensify the ideological contrast between the congressional parties would allow the Republicans to make electoral inroads in the South. They worked energetically to tie individual Democratic incumbents to the party's more liberal national leadership while simultaneously raising highly charged cultural issues in Congress, such as proposed constitutional amendments to allow prayer in public schools and to ban the burning of the American flag, on which conservative positions were widely popular – especially among southern voters.

Gingrich's view was however vindicated with the Republican Party's success in the 1994 U.S. midterm elections, sometimes referred to as the "Gingrich Revolution."^[69] Hopkins writes, "More than any speaker before or since, Gingrich had become both the strategic architect and public face of his party."^[69] One consequence of the increasing nationalization of politics was that moderate Republican incumbents in blue states were left more vulnerable to electoral defeat.^[69]

According to University of Texas political scientist Sean M. Theriault, Gingrich had a profound influence on other Republican lawmakers, in particular those who served with him in the House, as they adopted his obstructionist tactics.^[9] A 2011 study by Theriault and Duke University political scientist David W. Rohde in

the *Journal of Politics* found that "almost the entire growth in Senate party polarization since the early 1970s can be accounted for by Republican senators who previously served in the House after 1978" when Gingrich was first elected to the House.^[73]

Gingrich consolidated power in the Speaker's office.^[68] Gingrich elevated junior and more ideologically extreme House members to powerful committees, such as the Appropriations Committee, which over time led to the obliteration of internal norms in the committees.^{[66][74]} Term limits were also imposed on committee chairs, which prevented Republican chairs from developing a power base separate from the Republican Party.^[74] As a result, the power of Gingrich was strengthened and there was an increase in conformity among Republican congresspeople.^[75]

Legislation

Welfare reform

A central pledge of President Bill Clinton's campaign was to reform the welfare system, adding changes such as work requirements for recipients. However, by 1994, the Clinton administration appeared to be more concerned with pursuing a universal health care program. Gingrich accused Clinton of stalling on welfare, and proclaimed that Congress could pass a welfare reform bill in as little as 90 days. He insisted that the Republican Party would continue to apply political pressure on the President to approve their welfare legislation.^[76]

In 1996, after constructing two welfare reform bills that Clinton vetoed,^[77] Gingrich and his supporters pushed for passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act, which was intended to reconstruct the welfare system. The act gave state governments more autonomy over welfare delivery, while also reducing the federal government's responsibilities. It instituted the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, which placed time limits on welfare assistance and replaced the longstanding Aid to Families with Dependent Children program. Other changes to the welfare system included stricter conditions for food stamp eligibility, reductions in immigrant welfare assistance, and work requirements for recipients.^[78] The bill was signed into law by President Clinton on August 22, 1996.^[79]

In his 1998 book *Lessons Learned the Hard Way*, Gingrich encouraged volunteerism and spiritual renewal, placing more importance on families, creating tax incentives and reducing regulations for businesses in poor neighborhoods, and increasing property ownership by low-income families. He also praised Habitat for Humanity for sparking the movement to improve people's lives by helping them build their own homes.^[80]

Balancing the federal budget

A key aspect of the 1994 Contract with America was the promise of a balanced federal budget. After the end of the government shutdown, Gingrich and other Republican leaders acknowledged that Congress would not be able to draft a balanced budget in 1996. Instead, they opted to approve some small reductions that were already approved by the White House and to wait until the next election season.^[81]

By May 1997, Republican congressional leaders reached a compromise with Democrats and President Clinton on the federal budget. The agreement called for a federal spending plan designed to reduce the federal deficit and achieve a balanced budget by 2002. The plan included a total of \$152 billion in bipartisan tax cuts over five years.^[82] Other major parts of the spending plan called for \$115 billion to be saved through a restructuring of Medicare, \$24 billion set aside to extend health insurance to children of the working poor, tax credits for college tuition, and a \$2 billion welfare-to-work jobs initiative.^{[83][84]}

President Clinton signed the budget legislation in August 1997. At the signing, Gingrich gave credit to ordinary Americans stating, "It was their political will that brought the two parties together."^[82]

In early 1998, with the economy performing better than expected, increased tax revenues helped reduce the federal budget deficit to below \$25 billion. Clinton submitted a balanced budget for 1999, three years ahead of schedule originally proposed, making it the first time the federal budget had been balanced since 1969.^[85]



Gingrich and President Bill Clinton during a congressional budget negotiation meeting in December 1995

Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997

In 1997, President Clinton signed into effect the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997, which included the largest capital gains tax cut in U.S. history. Under the act, the profits on the sale of a personal residence (\$500,000 for married couples, \$250,000 for singles) were exempted if lived in for at least 2 years over the last 5. (This had previously been limited to a \$125,000 once-in-a-lifetime exemption for those over the age of 55.)^[86] There were also reductions in a number of other taxes on investment gains.^{[87][88]}

Additionally, the act raised the value of inherited estates and gifts that could be sheltered from taxation.^[88] Gingrich has been credited with creating the agenda for the reduction in capital gains tax, especially in the "Contract with America", which set out to balance the budget and implement decreases in estate and capital gains tax. Some Republicans felt that the compromise reached with Clinton on the budget and tax act was inadequate,^[89] however Gingrich has stated that the tax cuts were a significant accomplishment for the Republican Congress in the face of opposition from the Clinton administration.^[90] Gingrich along with Bob Dole had earlier set-up the Kemp Commission, headed by former US Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Jack Kemp, a tax reform commission that made several recommendations including that dividends, interest, and capital gains should be untaxed.^{[91][92]}

Other legislation

Among the first pieces of legislation passed by the new Congress under Gingrich was the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995, which subjected members of Congress to the same laws that apply to businesses and their employees, including the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. As a provision of the Contract with America, the law was symbolic of the new Republican majority's goal to remove some of the entitlements enjoyed by Congress. The bill received near universal acceptance from the House and Senate and was signed into law on January 23, 1995.^[93]

Gingrich shut down the highly regarded Office of Technology Assessment, and relied instead on what the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists called "self-interested lobbyists and think tanks".^[94]

Government shutdown

Gingrich and the incoming Republican majority's promise to slow the rate of government spending conflicted with the president's agenda for Medicare, education, the environment and public health, leading to two temporary shutdowns of the federal government totaling 28 days.^[95]

Clinton said Republican amendments would strip the U.S. Treasury of its ability to dip into federal trust funds to avoid a borrowing crisis. Republican amendments would have limited appeals by death-row inmates, made it harder to issue health, safety and environmental regulations, and would have committed the president to a

seven-year balanced budget. Clinton vetoed a second bill allowing the government to keep operating beyond the time when most spending authority expires.^[95]

A GOP amendment opposed by Clinton would not only have increased Medicare Part B premiums, but it would also cancel a scheduled reduction. The Republicans held out for an increase in Medicare Part B premiums in January 1996 to \$53.50 a month. Clinton favored the then current law, which was to let the premium that seniors pay drop to \$42.50.^[95]

The government closed most non-essential offices during the shutdown, which was the longest in U.S. history at the time. The shutdown ended when Clinton agreed to submit a CBO-approved balanced budget plan.^[96]

During the crisis, Gingrich's public image suffered from the perception that the Republicans' hardline budget stance was owed partly to an alleged snub of Gingrich by Clinton during a flight on Air Force One to and from Yitzhak Rabin's funeral in Israel.^[97] That perception developed after the trip when Gingrich, while being questioned by Lars-Erik Nelson at a *Christian Science Monitor* breakfast, said that he was dissatisfied that Clinton had not invited him to discuss the budget during the flight.^[98] He complained that he and Dole were instructed to use the plane's rear exit to deplane, saying the snub was "part of why you ended up with us sending down a tougher continuing resolution".^[99] In response to Gingrich's complaint that they were "forced to use the rear door," NBC news released their videotape footage showing both Gingrich and Dole disembarking at Tel Aviv just behind Clinton via the front stairway.^[100]

Gingrich was widely lampooned for implying that the government shutdown was a result of his personal grievances, including a widely shared editorial cartoon depicting him as a baby throwing a tantrum.^[101] Democratic leaders, including Chuck Schumer, took the opportunity to attack Gingrich's motives for the budget standoff.^{[102][103]} In 1998, Gingrich said that these comments were his "single most avoidable mistake" as Speaker.^[104]

Discussing the impact of the government shutdown on the Republican Party, Gingrich later commented that, "Everybody in Washington thinks that was a big mistake. They're exactly wrong. There had been no reelected Republican majority since 1928. Part of the reason we got reelected ... is our base thought we were serious. And they thought we were serious because when it came to a show-down, we didn't flinch."^[105] In a 2011 op-ed in *The Washington Post*, Gingrich said that the government shutdown led to the balanced-budget deal in 1997 and the first four consecutive balanced budgets since the 1920s, as well as the first re-election of a Republican majority since 1928.^[106]

Ethics charges and reprimand

Eighty-four ethics charges were filed by Democrats against Gingrich during his term as Speaker. All were eventually dropped except for one: claiming tax-exempt status for a college course run for political purposes.^[107] On January 21, 1997, the House officially reprimanded Gingrich (in a vote of 395 in favor, 28 opposed) and "ordered [him] to reimburse the House for some of the costs of the investigation in the amount of \$300,000".^{[108][109][110]} It was the first time a Speaker was disciplined for an ethics violation.^{[110][111]}

Additionally, the House Ethics Committee concluded that inaccurate information supplied to investigators represented "intentional or ... reckless" disregard of House rules.^[112] The Ethics Committee's Special Counsel James M. Cole concluded that Gingrich had violated federal tax law and had lied to the ethics panel in an



Senator Bob Dole, Vice President Al Gore, President Clinton and Gingrich converge for budget negotiations in December 1995

effort to force the committee to dismiss the complaint against him. The full committee panel did not agree whether tax law had been violated and left that issue up to the IRS.^[112] In 1999, the IRS cleared the organizations connected with the "Renewing American Civilization" courses under investigation for possible tax violations.^[113]

Regarding the situation, Gingrich said in January 1997, "I did not manage the effort intensely enough to thoroughly direct or review information being submitted to the committee on my behalf. In my name and over my signature, inaccurate, incomplete and unreliable statements were given to the committee, but I did not intend to mislead the committee ... I brought down on the people's house a controversy which could weaken the faith people have in their government."^[114]

Leadership challenge

In the summer of 1997, several House Republicans attempted to replace him as Speaker, claiming Gingrich's public image was a liability. The attempted "coup" began July 9 with a meeting of Republican conference chairman John Boehner of Ohio and Republican leadership chairman Bill Paxon of New York. According to their plan, House Majority Leader Dick Armey, House Majority Whip Tom DeLay, Boehner and Paxon were to present Gingrich with an ultimatum: resign, or be voted out.

However, Armey balked at the proposal to make Paxon the new Speaker, and told his chief of staff to warn Gingrich.^[115] On July 11, Gingrich met with senior Republican leadership to assess the situation. He explained that under no circumstance would he step down. If he was voted out, there would be a new election for Speaker. This would allow for the possibility that Democrats, along with dissenting Republicans, would vote in Democrat Dick Gephardt as Speaker.

On July 16, Paxon offered to resign his post, feeling that he had not handled the situation correctly, as the only member of the leadership who had been appointed to his position – by Gingrich – instead of elected.^[116] Gingrich accepted Paxon's resignation and directed Paxon to immediately vacate his leadership office space.^{[116][117][118]}

Resignation

In 1998, Gingrich's private polls had given his fellow Republicans the impression that pushing the Clinton-Lewinsky scandal would damage Clinton's popularity and result in the party winning a net total of six to thirty seats in the House of Representatives. At the same time Gingrich was having an affair with a woman 23 years his junior.^[119] But instead of gaining seats, Republicans lost five, the worst midterm performance in 64 years by a party not holding the presidency.^[120] Other ethics violations including an unpopular book deal, added to his unpopularity even though he himself was reelected in his own district.^{[121][122]}

The day after the election, a Republican caucus ready to rebel against him prompted his resignation of the speakership. He also announced his intended and eventual full departure from the House a few weeks later. In January 1999 he resigned his seat.^[123] When relinquishing the speakership, Gingrich referred to other



Vice President Gore, Gingrich and President Clinton at the 1997 State of the Union Address



Dick Gephardt tried to replace Gingrich as Speaker of the House

Republicans when he said he was "not willing to preside over people who are cannibals".^[123] Writing a retrospective on his career at that point, *The New York Times* in November 1998 described Gingrich as "an expert in how to seize power, but a novice in holding it" further opining that he "illustrate[d] how hard it is for a radical, polarizing figure to last in leadership".^[124]

In December 1997, Gingrich flirted with a potential run for president in the 2000 election, but his party's midterm performance and his subsequent resignation led to him dropping any plans to do so.^[125]

Post-speakership

Gingrich has since remained involved in national politics and public policy debate. McKay Coppins of *The Atlantic* summarized time with Gingrich in 2018:

[Gingrich] is dabbling in geopolitics, dining in fine Italian restaurants. When he feels like traveling, he crisscrosses the Atlantic in business class, opining on the issues of the day from bicontinental TV studios and giving speeches for \$600 a minute. There is time for reading, and writing, and midday zoo trips—and even he will admit, "It's a very fun life."^[126]

Policy

In 2003, he founded the Center for Health Transformation. Gingrich supported the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act of 2003, creating the Medicare Part D federal prescription drugs benefit program. Some conservatives have criticized him for favoring the plan, due to its cost. However, Gingrich has remained a supporter, stating in a 2011 interview that it was a necessary modernization of Medicare, which was created before pharmaceutical drugs became standard in medical care. He has said that the increase in cost from medication must be seen as preventive, leading to reduced need for medical procedures.^[127] In a May 15, 2011, interview on Meet the Press, Gingrich repeated his long-held belief that "all of us have a responsibility to pay—help pay for health care", and suggested this could be implemented by either a mandate to obtain health insurance or a requirement to post a bond ensuring coverage.^{[128][129]} In the same interview Gingrich said "I don't think right-wing social engineering is any more desirable than left-wing social engineering. I don't think imposing radical change from the right or the left is a very good way for a free society to operate." This comment caused backlash within the Republican Party.^{[128][129]}



Gingrich poses with soldiers while on a visit to Kuwait in February 2003

In 2005, with Hillary Clinton, Gingrich announced the proposed 21st Century Health Information Act, a bill which aimed to replace paperwork with confidential, electronic health information networks.^[130] Gingrich also co-chaired an independent congressional study group made up of health policy experts formed in 2007 to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of action taken within the U.S. to fight Alzheimer's disease.^[131]

Gingrich has served on several commissions, including the Hart-Rudman Commission, formally known as the U.S. Commission on National Security/21st century, which examined national security issues affecting the armed forces, law enforcement and intelligence agencies.^[132] In 2005 he became the co-chair of a task force for UN reform, which aimed to produce a plan for the U.S. to help strengthen the UN.^[133] For over two decades, Gingrich has taught at the United States Air Force's Air University, where he is the longest-serving teacher of the Joint Flag Officer Warfighting Course.^[134] In addition, he is an honorary Distinguished Visiting

Scholar and Professor at the National Defense University and teaches officers from all of the defense services.^{[135][136]} Gingrich informally advised Defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld on strategic issues, on issues including the Israeli–Palestinian conflict and encouraging the Pentagon to not "yield" foreign policy influence to the State Department and National Security Council.^[137] Gingrich is also a guiding coalition member of the Project on National Security Reform.^[138]



Senior Advisor Valerie Jarrett, Gingrich and Al Sharpton meet with President Barack Obama in May 2009

Gingrich founded and served as the chairman of American Solutions for Winning the Future, a 527 group established by Gingrich in 2007.^[139] The group was a "fundraising juggernaut" that raised \$52 million from major donors, such as Sheldon Adelson and the coal company Peabody Energy.^[139] The group promoted deregulation and increased offshore oil drilling and other fossil-fuel extraction and opposed the Employee Free Choice Act.^{[139][140]} *Politico* reported, "The operation, which includes a pollster and fundraisers, promotes Gingrich's books, sends out direct mail, airs ads touting his causes and funds his travel across the country."^[140] American Solutions closed in 2011 after he left the organization.^[139]

Other organizations and companies founded or chaired by Gingrich include the creative production company Gingrich Productions,^[141] and religious educational organization Renewing American Leadership.^[142]

Gingrich is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.^[143]

He is a fellow at conservative think tanks the American Enterprise Institute and Hoover Institution. He sometimes serves as a commentator, guest or panel member on cable news shows, such as the Fox News Channel. He is listed as a contributor by Fox News Channel, and frequently appears as a guest on various segments; he has also hosted occasional specials for the Fox News Channel. Gingrich has signed the "Strong America Now" pledge committing to promoting Six Sigma methods to reduce government spending.^[144]

Gingrich founded Advocates for Opioid Recovery together with former Rep. Patrick J. Kennedy and Van Jones, a former domestic policy adviser to President Barack Obama.^[145]

Businesses

After leaving Congress in 1999, Gingrich started a number of for-profit companies.^[146] Between 2001 and 2010, the companies he and his wife owned in full or part had revenues of almost \$100 million.^[147] Currently, Gingrich serves as an advisor to the Canadian mining company Barrick Gold.^[148]

According to financial disclosure forms released in July 2011, Gingrich and his wife had a net worth of at least \$6.7 million in 2010, compared to a maximum net worth of \$2.4 million in 2006. Most of the increase in his net worth was because of payments to him from his for-profit companies.^[149]

Gingrich Group and the Center for Health Transformation

The Gingrich Group was organized in 1999 as a consulting company. Over time, its non-health clients were dropped, and it was renamed the Center for Health Transformation. The two companies had revenues of \$55 million between 2001 and 2010.^[150] The revenues came from more than 300 health-insurance companies and other clients, with membership costing as much as \$200,000 per year in exchange for access to Gingrich

and other perks.^{[147][151]} In 2011, when Gingrich became a presidential candidate, he sold his interest in the business and said he would release the full list of his clients and the amounts he was paid, "to the extent we can".^{[150][152]}

In April 2012, the Center for Health Transformation filed for Chapter 7 bankruptcy, planning to liquidate its assets to meet debts of \$1–\$10 million.^{[153][154]}

Between 2001 and 2010, Gingrich consulted for Freddie Mac, a government-sponsored secondary home mortgage company, which was concerned about new regulations under consideration by Congress. Regarding payments of \$1.6 million for the consulting,^[150] Gingrich said that "Freddie Mac paid Gingrich Group, which has a number of employees and a number of offices, a consulting fee, just like you would pay any other consulting firm."^[155] In January 2012, he said that he could not make public his contract with Freddie Mac, even though the company gave permission, until his business partners in the Center for Health Transformation also agreed to that.^[156]

Gingrich Productions

Gingrich Productions, which is headed by Gingrich's wife Callista Gingrich, was created in 2007. According to the company's website, in May 2011, it is "a performance and production company featuring the work of Newt and Callista Gingrich. Newt and Callista host and produce historical and public policy documentaries, write books, record audio books and voiceovers, produce photographic essays, and make television and radio appearances."^[152]

Between 2008 and 2011, the company produced three films on religion,^[157] one on energy, one on Ronald Reagan, and one on the threat of radical Islam. All were joint projects with the conservative group Citizens United.^[158] In 2011, Newt and Callista appeared in *A City Upon a Hill*, on the subject of American exceptionalism.^[159]

As of May 2011, the company had about five employees. In 2010, it paid Gingrich more than \$2.4 million.^[149]

Gingrich Communications

Gingrich Communications promoted Gingrich's public appearances, including his Fox News contract and his website, newt.org.^[152] Gingrich received as much as \$60,000 for a speech, and did as many as 80 in a year.^[147] One of Gingrich's nonprofit groups, Renewing American Leadership, which was founded in March 2009,^[158] paid Gingrich Communications \$220,000 over two years; the charity shared the names of its donors with Gingrich, who could use them for his for-profit companies.^[160] Gingrich Communications, which employed 15 people at its largest, closed in 2011 when Gingrich began his presidential campaign.^[152]

Other

- Celebrity Leaders is a booking agency that handled Gingrich's speaking engagements, as well as those other clients such as former Republican National Committee chair Michael Steele and former Pennsylvania Senator Rick Santorum.^[146] Kathy Lubbers, the President and CEO of the agency,^[161] who is Gingrich's daughter, owns the agency. Gingrich has shares in the agency, and was paid more than \$70,000 by it in 2010.^[162]
- FGH Publications handles the production of and royalties from fiction books co-authored by Gingrich.^[152]

Political activity

Between 2005 and 2007, Gingrich expressed interest in running for the 2008 Republican presidential nomination.^[163] On October 13, 2005, Gingrich suggested he was considering a run for president, saying, "There are circumstances where I will run", elaborating that those circumstances would be if no other candidate champions some of the platform ideas he advocates. On September 28, 2007, Gingrich announced that if his supporters pledged \$30 million to his campaign by October 21, he would seek the nomination.^[164]

However, insisting that he had "pretty strongly" considered running,^[165] on September 29 spokesman Rick Tyler said that Gingrich would not seek the presidency in 2008 because he could not continue to serve as chairman of American Solutions if he did so.^[166] Citing campaign finance law restrictions (the McCain-Feingold campaign law would have forced him to leave his American Solutions political organization if he declared his candidacy), Gingrich said, "I wasn't prepared to abandon American Solutions, even to explore whether a campaign was realistic."^[167]

During the 2009 special election in New York's 23rd congressional district, Gingrich endorsed moderate Republican candidate Dede Scozzafava, rather than Conservative Party candidate Doug Hoffman, who had been endorsed by several nationally prominent Republicans.^[168] He was heavily criticized for this endorsement, with conservatives questioning his candidacy for president in 2012^{[169][170]} and even comparing him to Benedict Arnold.^[171]

Prior to President Donald Trump leaving office in December 2020, Trump appointed Gingrich to the Defense Policy Board Advisory Committee of the Pentagon as part of a series of shakeups where prominent Trump loyalists replaced former members.^[172] In February 2021, Biden-appointed Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin dismissed all appointments to the committee made by Trump, including Gingrich.^[173]

2012 election

In late 2008, several political commentators, including Marc Ambinder in The Atlantic^[174] and Robert Novak in The Washington Post,^[175] identified Gingrich as a top presidential contender in the 2012 election, with Ambinder reporting that Gingrich was "already planting some seeds in Iowa, New Hampshire". A July 2010 poll conducted by Public Policy Polling indicated that Gingrich was the leading GOP contender for the Republican nomination with 23% of likely Republican voters saying they would vote for him.^[176]

Describing his views as a possible candidate during an appearance on On the Record with Greta Van Susteren in March 2009, Gingrich said, "I am very sad that a number of Republicans do not understand that this country is sick of earmarks. [Americans] are sick of politicians taking care of themselves. They are sick of their money being spent in a way that is absolutely indefensible ... I think you're going to see a steady increase in the number of incumbents who have opponents because the American taxpayers are increasingly fed up."^[177]

On March 3, 2011, Gingrich officially announced a website entitled "Newt Exploratory 2012" in lieu of a formal exploratory committee for exploration of a potential presidential run.^[178] On May 11, 2011, Gingrich officially announced his intention to seek the GOP nomination in 2012.^[179]

On June 9, 2011, a group of Gingrich's senior campaign aides left the campaign en masse, leading to doubts about the viability of his presidential run.^[180] On June 21, 2011, two more senior aides left.^{[181][182]}



Gingrich presenting his 21st Century Contract with America in Iowa in September 2011

In response, Gingrich stated that he had not quit the race for the Republican nomination, and pointed to his experience running for 5 years to win his seat in Congress, spending 16 years helping to build a Republican majority in the house and working for decades to build a Republican majority in Georgia.^[183] Some commentators noted Gingrich's resilience throughout his career, in particular with regards to his presidential campaign.^{[184][185]}

After then-front-runner Herman Cain was damaged by allegations of past sexual harassment, Gingrich gained support, and quickly became a contender in the race, especially after Cain suspended his campaign. By December 4, 2011, Gingrich was leading in the national polls.^[186] However, after an abundance of negative ads run by his opponents throughout December, Gingrich's national polling lead had fallen to a tie with Mitt Romney.^[187]

On January 3, 2012, Gingrich finished in fourth place in the Iowa Republican caucuses, far behind Rick Santorum, Romney, and Ron Paul.^[188] On January 10, Gingrich finished in fifth place in the New Hampshire Republican primary, far behind Romney, Santorum, Jon Huntsman, and Paul.^{[189][190]}

After the field narrowed with the withdrawal from the race of Huntsman and Rick Perry, Gingrich won the South Carolina Republican primary on January 21, obtaining about 40% of the vote, considerably ahead of Romney, Santorum and Paul.^[191] This surprise victory allowed Gingrich to reemerge as the frontrunner once again heading into Florida.^[192]

On January 31, 2012, Gingrich placed second in the Republican Florida primary, losing by a fifteen percentage point margin, 47% to 32%. Some factors that contributed to this outcome include two strong debate performances by Romney (which were typically Gingrich's strong suit), the wide margin by which the Gingrich campaign was outspent in television ads,^[193] and a widely criticized proposal by Gingrich to have a permanent colony on the moon by 2020 to reinvigorate the American Space Program.^[194]

It was later revealed Romney had hired a debate coach to help him perform better in the Florida debates.^{[195][196]}

Gingrich did, however, significantly outvote Santorum and Paul. On February 4, 2012, Gingrich placed a distant second in the Nevada Republican caucuses with 21%, losing to Romney who received over 50% of the total votes cast.^[197]

On February 7, 2012, Gingrich came in last place in the Minnesota Republican caucuses with about 10.7% of the vote. Santorum won the caucus, followed by Paul and Romney.^{[198][199]}

On Super Tuesday Gingrich won his home state, Georgia, which has the most delegates, in "an otherwise dismal night for him". Santorum took Tennessee and Oklahoma, where Gingrich had previously performed well in the polls, though Gingrich managed a close third behind Romney.^[200]

On April 4, the Rick Santorum campaign shifted its position and urged Gingrich to drop out of the race and support Santorum.^[201]

On April 10, Santorum announced the suspension of his campaign.^[202] Following this announcement, The Newt 2012 campaign used a new slogan referring to Gingrich as "the last conservative standing". Despite this, on April 19, Gingrich told Republicans in New York that he would work to help Romney win the general election if Romney secured the nomination.^[203]



Gingrich speaking at CPAC in February 2012

After a disappointing second place showing in the Delaware primary on April 24, and with a campaign debt in excess of \$4 million,^[204] Gingrich suspended his campaign and endorsed front-runner Mitt Romney on May 2, 2012,^[205] on whose behalf he subsequently campaigned (i.e. stump speeches and television appearances).^[206]

Gingrich later hosted a number of policy workshops at the GOP Convention in Tampa presented by the National Republican Committee called "Newt University".^[207] He and his wife Calista addressed the convention on its final day with a Ronald Reagan-themed introduction.^{[208][209]}

Because FEC regulations prevent campaigns from ceasing operations until they settle their debts, the Newt Gingrich campaign was never formally dissolved. In 2016, the campaign filed a proposal to shut down without paying back its outstanding debt to 114 businesses and consultants; the FEC rejected this proposal. By then, the campaign still owed \$4.6 million in debt, with only \$17,000 being raised by the campaign committee over the previous year.^{[210][211][212]}

2016 election

Gingrich supported Donald Trump more quickly than many other establishment Republicans.^[213] After having consulted for Trump's 2016 campaign, Gingrich encouraged his fellow Republicans to unify behind Trump, who had by then become the presumptive Republican presidential nominee.^[214] Gingrich reportedly figured among Trump's final three choices to be his running mate;^{[215][216]} the position ultimately went to Governor of Indiana Mike Pence.^[217]

Following Trump's victory in the presidential election, speculation arose concerning Gingrich as a possible secretary of state, chief of staff or advisor.^[218] Eventually, Gingrich announced that he would not be serving in the cabinet. He stated that he didn't have the interest in serving in any role related to the Trump administration, stressing that as a private citizen he would engage with individuals for "strategic planning" rather than job-seeking.^[219]

In May 2017, he promoted a conspiracy theory that Hillary Clinton and the Democratic Party had Seth Rich, an employee for the Democratic National Committee, killed during the 2016 presidential race.^[220]



Gingrich and his wife alongside President Donald Trump in October 2017

Gingrich attended his wife's swearing-in as U.S. ambassador to the Holy See at the White House in October 2017.^[221] According to journalist Robert Mickens, Newt Gingrich served as the de facto ambassador or the "shadow ambassador" while Callista Gingrich, as paraphrased by McKay Coppins of *The Atlantic*, "is generally viewed as the ceremonial face of the embassy".^[222]

2020 election

While ballots were being counted during the 2020 election, Gingrich supported President Trump in his attempt to win re-election and called on him to stop the vote counts after allegations of fraud emerged.^[223] After the 2020 election, Gingrich made claims of election fraud and refused to acknowledge Joe Biden's victory.^{[224][225]} He called for the arrest of poll workers in Pennsylvania following the election.^{[226][227][228]}

Political positions

Gingrich is most widely identified with the 1994 Contract with America.^[229] He is a founder of American Solutions for Winning the Future. More recently, Gingrich has advocated replacing the Environmental Protection Agency with a proposed "Environmental Solutions Agency".^[230]

He favors a strong immigration border policy and a guest worker program.^[231] In terms of energy policy, he has argued in favor of flex-fuel mandates for cars sold in the U.S. and promoted the use of ethanol generally.^[232]

Gingrich has taken a dim view of internationalism and the United Nations. He said in 2015, "after several years of looking at the UN, I can report to you that it is sufficiently corrupt and sufficiently inefficient. That no reasonable person would put faith in it."^[233]

In 2007, Gingrich authored a book, Rediscovering God in America.

Gingrich's later books take a large-scale policy focus, including Winning the Future, and the most recent, To Save America. Gingrich has identified education as "the number one factor in our future prosperity", and has partnered with Al Sharpton and Education Secretary Arne Duncan on education issues.^[234] Although he previously opposed gay marriage, in December 2012, Gingrich suggested that Republicans should reconsider their opposition to it.^[235]

In 2014, Gingrich sent a letter to Dr. John Koza of National Popular Vote, Inc. endorsing the National Popular Vote Interstate Compact, under which presidents would be elected by the national popular vote of the United States and not by the Electoral College.^[236]

On July 14, 2016, Gingrich stated that he believes that Americans of Muslim backgrounds who believe in Sharia law should be deported, and that visiting websites that promote the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant or Al-Qaeda should be a felony.^[237] Some observers have questioned whether these views violate the free speech and free exercise of religion clauses of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution.^{[238][239]}

On July 21, 2016, Gingrich argued that members of NATO "ought to worry" about a U.S. commitment to their defense. He expanded, saying, "They ought to worry about commitment under any circumstances. Every president has been saying that the NATO countries do not pay their fair share". He also stated that, in the context of whether the United States would provide aid to Estonia (a NATO member) in the event of a Russian invasion, he "would think about it a great deal".^[240]

According to *Science* magazine, Gingrich changed his view on climate change "from cautious skeptic in the late 1980s to believer in the late 2000s to skeptic again during the [2016] campaign."^[241]

Personal life

Marriages and children

Jacqueline May "Jackie" Battley



Gingrich in 2014, addressing a group of conservatives



Gingrich and Congressmen Jay Kim and Ed Royce face North Korea from the Joint Security Area in 1997

Gingrich has been married three times. In 1962, he wed Jacqueline May "Jackie" Battley (February 21, 1936 – August 7, 2013), his former high school geometry teacher, when he was 19 years old and she was 26.^{[242][243]} They had two daughters: Kathy, who is president of Gingrich Communications,^[244] and Jackie Sue, who is an author, conservative columnist and political commentator.^{[245][246]}

Throughout his congressional campaign in 1974, Gingrich was having an affair with a young volunteer. An aide who worked with Gingrich throughout the 1970s stated that "it was common knowledge that Newt was involved with other women during his marriage to Jackie."^{[247][248]} In the spring of 1980, Gingrich filed for divorce from Jackie after beginning an affair with Marianne Ginther.^{[249][250]} Jackie later said in 1984 that the divorce was a "complete surprise" to her.^[251]

In September 1980, according to friends who knew them both, Gingrich visited Jackie in the hospital the day after she had undergone surgery to treat her uterine cancer; once there, Gingrich began talking about the terms of their divorce, at which point Jackie threw him out of the room.^{[252][251]} Gingrich disputed that account.^[253] Although Gingrich's presidential campaign staff continued to insist in 2011 that Jackie had requested the divorce, court documents from Carroll County, Georgia, indicated that Jackie had in fact asked a judge to block the process, stating that although "she has adequate and ample grounds for divorce ... she does not desire one at this time [and] does not admit that this marriage is irretrievably broken."^[254]

According to L. H. Carter, Gingrich's campaign treasurer, Gingrich said of Jackie: "She's not young enough or pretty enough to be the wife of the President. And besides, she has cancer."^{[255][256]} Gingrich has denied saying it.^[252] Following the divorce, Jackie had to raise money from friends in her congregation to help her and the children make ends meet; she later filed a petition in court stating that Gingrich had failed to properly provide for his family.^[248] Gingrich submitted a financial statement to the judge, which showed that he had been "providing only \$400 a month, plus \$40 in allowances for his daughters. He claimed not to be able to afford any more. But in citing his own expenses, Gingrich listed \$400 just for 'Food / dry cleaning, etc.'—for one person."^[248] In 1981, a judge ordered Gingrich to provide considerably more; in 1993, Jackie stated in court that Gingrich had failed to obey the 1981 order "from the day it was issued."^[255] Jackie, a deacon and volunteer in the First Baptist Church of Carrollton, Georgia, died in 2013 in Atlanta at the age of 77.^[257]

Marianne Ginther

In 1981, six months after his divorce from Jackie was final, Gingrich wed Marianne Ginther.^{[258][259][260][261]} Marianne helped control their finances to get them out of debt.^[262] She did not, however, want to have the public life of a politician's wife.^[247] Gingrich's daughter Kathy described the marriage as "difficult".^[263]

Callista Bisek

In 1993, while still married to Marianne, Gingrich began an affair with House of Representatives staffer Callista Bisek, more than two decades his junior.^[264] Gingrich was having this affair even as he led the impeachment of Bill Clinton for perjury related to Clinton's own extramarital affair.^{[265][121]} Gingrich filed for divorce from Marianne in 1999, a few months after she had been diagnosed with multiple sclerosis.^[266] The marriage produced no children. On January 19, 2012, Marianne alleged in an interview on ABC's *Nightline* that she had declined to accept Gingrich's suggestion of an open marriage.^[267] Gingrich disputed the account.^[268]

In August 2000, Gingrich married Callista Bisek four months after his divorce from Marianne was finalized.^[269] He and Callista live in McLean, Virginia.^[270]

In a 2011 interview with David Brody of the Christian Broadcasting Network, Gingrich addressed his past infidelities by saying, "There's no question at times in my life, partially driven by how passionately I felt about this country, that I worked too hard and things happened in my life that were not appropriate."^{[260][261]} In December 2011, after the group Iowans for Christian Leaders in Government requested that he sign their so-called "Marriage Vow", Gingrich sent a lengthy written response. It included his pledge to "uphold personal fidelity to my spouse".^[271]

Religion

Raised as a Lutheran,^[272] Gingrich was a Southern Baptist in graduate school. He converted to Catholicism, the faith of his third wife Callista Bisek, on March 29, 2009.^{[273][274]} He said: "over the course of several years, I gradually became Catholic and then decided one day to accept the faith I had already come to embrace". He decided to officially become a Catholic when he saw Pope Benedict XVI, during the Pope's visit to the United States in 2008: "Catching a glimpse of Pope Benedict that day, I was struck by the happiness and peacefulness he exuded. The joyful and radiating presence of the Holy Father was a moment of confirmation about the many things I had been thinking and experiencing for several years."^[275] At a 2011 appearance in Columbus, Ohio, he said, "In America, religious belief is being challenged by a cultural elite trying to create a secularized America, in which God is driven out of public life."^[157]

The Catholic Church recognizes his third marriage as a valid marriage, based on an annulment granted for his second marriage and the passing of his wife from his first.^{[276][277][278]}

Other interests

Gingrich has expressed a deep interest in animals.^{[279][280]} Gingrich's first engagement in civic affairs was speaking to the city council in his native Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, as to why the city should establish its own zoo.^[281] He authored the introduction to *America's Best Zoos* and claims to have attended more than 100.^[282]

Gingrich has shown enthusiasm towards dinosaurs. The *New Yorker* said of his 1995 book *To Renew America*: "Charmingly, he has retained his enthusiasm for the extinct giants into middle age. In addition to including breakthroughs in dinosaur research on his list of futuristic wonders, he specified 'people interested in dinosaurs' as a prime example of those who might benefit from his education proposals."^[283]

Space exploration has been an additional interest of Gingrich since a fascination with the United States/Soviet Union Space Race started in his teenage years.^[284] Gingrich wants the U.S. to pursue new achievements in space, including sustaining civilizations beyond Earth,^[285] but advocates relying more on the private sector



Callista and Newt Gingrich at the 2012 Republican National Convention



Gingrich says that Pope Benedict XVI's visit to the United States influenced him to convert to Catholicism.



Gingrich feeds an apple to a black rhinoceros at Zoo Atlanta

and less on the publicly funded NASA to drive progress.^[286] Since 2010, he has served on the National Space Society Board of Governors.^[287]

During the 2012 election campaign, Artinfo noted that Gingrich has expressed appreciation for the work of two American painters. He has described James H. Cromartie's painting of the U.S. Capitol as "an exceptional and truly beautiful work of art"; in Norman Rockwell's work, he saw the embodiment of an America circa 1965, at odds with the prevailing sentiment of the modern day "cultural elites".^[288]

CNN announced on June 26, 2013, that Gingrich would join a new version of Crossfire re-launching in fall 2013, with panelists S. E. Cupp, Stephanie Cutter, and Van Jones.^[289] Gingrich represented the right on the revamped debate program.^[289] The show was cancelled the following year.^[290]

Books and film

Nonfiction

- *The Government's Role in Solving Societal Problems*, Associated Faculty Press, January 1982, ISBN 978-0-86733-026-7
- *Window of Opportunity*, Tom Doherty Associates, December 1985, ISBN 978-0-312-93923-6
- *Contract with America* (co-editor). Times Books, December 1994, ISBN 978-0-8129-2586-9
- *Restoring the Dream*, Times Books, May 1995, ISBN 978-0-8129-2666-8
- *Quotations from Speaker Newt*. Workman Publishing Company, July 1995, ISBN 978-0-7611-0092-8
- *To Renew America*, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, July 1996, ISBN 978-0-06-109539-9
- *Lessons Learned The Hard Way*. HarperCollins, May 1998, ISBN 978-0-06-019106-1
- *Presidential Determination Regarding Certification of the Thirty-Two Major Illicit Narcotics Producing and Transit Countries*, DIANE Publishing Company, September 1999, ISBN 978-0-7881-3186-8
- *Saving Lives and Saving Money*, Alexis de Tocqueville Institution, April 2003, ISBN 978-0-9705485-4-2
- *Winning the Future*, Regnery Publishing, January 2005, ISBN 978-0-89526-042-0
- *Rediscovering God in America: Reflections on the Role of Faith in Our Nation's History and Future*, Integrity Publishers, October 2006, ISBN 978-1-59145-482-3
- *The Art of Transformation*, with Nancy Desmond. CHT Press, November 2006, ISBN 978-1-933966-00-7
- *A Contract with the Earth*, with Terry L. Maple. Johns Hopkins University Press, October 2007, ISBN 978-0-8018-8780-2
- *Real Change: From the World That Fails to the World That Works*, Regnery Publishing, January 2008. ISBN 978-1-59698-053-2
- *Drill Here, Drill Now, Pay Less: A Handbook for Slashing Gas Prices and Solving Our Energy Crisis*, with Vince Haley. Regnery Publishing, September 2008, ISBN 978-1-59698-576-6
- *5 Principles for a Successful Life: From Our Family to Yours*, with Jackie Gingrich Cushman, Crown Publishing Group, May 2009, ISBN 978-0-307-46232-9
- *To Save America: Stopping Obama's Secular-Socialist Machine*, with Joe DeSantis, Regnery Publishing, May 2010, ISBN 978-1-59698-596-4
- *Ronald Reagan: Rendezvous with Destiny*, Dunham Books, January 2011, ISBN 978-1-45074-672-4
- *A Nation Like No Other: Why American Exceptionalism Matters*, Regnery Publishing, June 2011, ISBN 978-1-59698-271-0

- *Breakout: Pioneers of the Future, Prison Guards of the Past, and the Epic Battle That Will Decide America's Fate*, Regnery Publishing, November 2013, [ISBN 978-1-62157-021-9](#)
- *Understanding Trump*, Center Street, June 2017, [ISBN 978-1-4789-2308-4](#)
- *Trump's America: The Truth about Our Nation's Great Comeback*, Center Street, June 2018, [ISBN 978-1-5460-7706-0](#)
- *Trump vs China: America's Greatest Challenge*, Center Street, October 2019, [ISBN 978-1-5460-8507-2](#)
- *Trump and the American Future: Solving the Great Problems of Our Time*, Center Street, June 2020, [ISBN 978-1-5460-8504-1](#)

Fiction

Gingrich co-wrote the following alternate history novels and series of novels with William R. Forstchen.

- *1945*, Baen Books, August 1995; [ISBN 978-0-671-87739-2](#)
- Civil War series
 - *Gettysburg: A Novel of the Civil War*, Thomas Dunne Books, June 2003 [ISBN 978-0-312-30935-0](#)
 - *Grant Comes East*, Thomas Dunne Books, June 2004 [ISBN 978-0-312-30937-4](#)
 - *Never Call Retreat: Lee and Grant: The Final Victory*, Thomas Dunne Books, June 2005 [ISBN 978-0-312-34298-2](#)
 - *The Battle of the Crater: A Novel*, Thomas Dunne Books, November 2011 [ISBN 978-0-312-60710-4](#)
- Pacific War series
 - *Pearl Harbor: A Novel of December 8*, Thomas Dunne Books, May 2007 [ISBN 978-0-312-36350-5](#)
 - *Days of Infamy*, Thomas Dunne Books, April 2008 [ISBN 978-0-312-36351-2](#)
- Revolutionary War series
 - *To Try Men's Souls: A Novel of George Washington and the Fight for American Freedom*, Thomas Dunne Books, October 2009, [ISBN 978-0-312-59106-9](#)
 - *Valley Forge: George Washington and the Crucible of Victory*, Thomas Dunne Books, November 2010, [ISBN 978-0-312-59107-6](#)
 - *Victory at Yorktown*, Thomas Dunne Books, November 2012, [ISBN 978-0-312-60707-4](#)
- Miscellaneous fiction
 - *Duplicity: A Novel*, Center Street Press, October 13, 2015, co-author Pete Earley, [ISBN 978-1455530427](#)
 - *Treason: A Novel*, Center Street Press, October 11, 2016, co-author Pete Earley, [ISBN 978-1455530441](#)
 - *Vengeance: A Novel*, Center Street Press, October 10, 2017, co-author Pete Earley, [ISBN 978-1478923046](#)
 - *Collusion: A Novel*, Broadside Books, April 30, 2019, co-author Pete Earley, [ISBN 978-0062859983](#)
 - *Shakedown: A Novel*, Broadside Books, March 24, 2020, co-author Pete Earley, [ISBN 978-0062860194](#)

Films

- *Ronald Reagan: Rendezvous with Destiny*, Gingrich Productions, 2009^[291]
- *Nine Days That Changed the World*, Gingrich Productions, 2010^[292]

See also

- List of federal political scandals in the United States
- List of federal political sex scandals in the United States
- List of United States representatives expelled, censured, or reprimanded

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- [Newt Gingrich papers](http://uwg.galileo.usg.edu/uwg/search?keyword=&title=Gingrich&creator=&year=&year-max=&smode=advanced) at the [University of West Georgia](#) (<http://uwg.galileo.usg.edu/uwg/search?keyword=&title=Gingrich&creator=&year=&year-max=&smode=advanced>) Archived (<https://web.archive.org/web/20190405105248/http://uwg.galileo.usg.edu/uwg/search?keyword=&title=Gingrich&creator=&year=&year-max=&smode=advanced>) April 5, 2019, at the [Wayback Machine](#)

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U.S. House of Representatives		
Preceded by <u>John James Flynt Jr.</u>	Member of the U.S. House of Representatives from <u>Georgia's 6th congressional district</u> 1979–1999	Succeeded by <u>Johnny Isakson</u>
Preceded by <u>Dick Cheney</u>	House Minority Whip 1989–1995	Succeeded by <u>David Bonior</u>
Party political offices		
Preceded by <u>Dick Cheney</u>	House Republican Deputy Leader 1989–1995	Succeeded by <u>Tom DeLay</u>
Political offices		
Preceded by <u>Tom Foley</u>	Speaker of the United States House of Representatives 1995–1999	Succeeded by <u>Dennis Hastert</u>
Business positions		
New office	Chief Executive Officer of the <u>Center for Health Transformation</u> 2003–2011	Succeeded by <u>Nancy Desmond</u>
Non-profit organization positions		
New office	Chair of <u>American Solutions for Winning the Future</u> 2007–2011	Succeeded by <u>Joseph Gaylord</u>

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Antonin Scalia

Antonin Gregory Scalia (/ˌæntənɪn skəˈliːə/ (listen); March 11, 1936 – February 13, 2016)^{[1][n 1]} was an American jurist who served as an associate justice of the Supreme Court of the United States from 1986 until his death in 2016. He was described as the intellectual anchor for the originalist and textualist position in the Court's conservative wing. For catalyzing an originalist and textualist movement in American law, he has been described as one of the most influential jurists of the twentieth century,^[8] and one of the most important justices in the Supreme Court's history.^[9] Scalia was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2018 by President Donald Trump, and the Antonin Scalia Law School at George Mason University was named in his honor.

Scalia was born in Trenton, New Jersey. A devout Catholic, he received his undergraduate degree from Georgetown University. He then obtained his law degree from Harvard Law School and spent six years in a Cleveland law firm before becoming a law professor at the University of Virginia. In the early 1970s, he served in the Nixon and Ford administrations, eventually becoming an Assistant Attorney General. He spent most of the Carter years teaching at the University of Chicago, where he became one of the first faculty advisers of the fledgling Federalist Society. In 1982, President Ronald Reagan appointed Scalia as a judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit. In 1986, he was appointed to the Supreme Court by Reagan and was unanimously confirmed by the Senate, becoming the Court's first Italian-American justice.

Scalia espoused a conservative jurisprudence and ideology, advocating textualism in statutory interpretation and originalism in constitutional interpretation. He peppered his colleagues with "Ninograms" (memos named for his nickname, "Nino") which sought to persuade them to agree with his point of view. He was a strong defender of the powers of the executive branch. He believed that the Constitution permitted the death penalty and did not guarantee the right to abortion or same-sex marriage. Furthermore, Scalia viewed affirmative action and other policies that afforded special protected status to minority groups as unconstitutional. These positions earned him a reputation as one of the most conservative justices on the Court. He filed separate opinions in many cases, often castigating the Court's majority using scathing language. Scalia's most significant opinions include his lone dissent in *Morrison v. Olson* (arguing against the constitutionality of an Independent-Counsel law), his majority opinion in *Crawford v. Washington* (defining a criminal defendant's confrontation right under the 6th Amendment), and his majority opinion in *District of Columbia v. Heller* (holding that the 2nd Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guarantees a right to individual handgun ownership).

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Official portrait, 2013

Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States

In office

September 26, 1986 – February 13, 2016

Nominated by Ronald Reagan

Preceded by William Rehnquist

Succeeded by Neil Gorsuch

Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit

In office

August 17, 1982 – September 26, 1986

Nominated by Ronald Reagan

Preceded by Roger Robb

Succeeded by David Sentelle

United States Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Legal Counsel

In office

August 22, 1974 – January 20, 1977

President Gerald Ford

Preceded by Roger C. Cramton

Succeeded by John Harmon

Personal details

Born Antonin Gregory Scalia
March 11, 1936
Trenton, New Jersey, U.S

Died February 13, 2016 (aged 79)
Shafter, Texas, U.S.

Spouse(s) Maureen McCarthy (m., 1960)

Supreme Court of the United States (1986–2016)

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Awards	 <u>Presidential Medal of Freedom (Trump, 2018)</u>
Signature	

Early life and education

Antonin Scalia was born on March 11, 1936, in Trenton, New Jersey, and was an only child.^[10] His father, Salvatore Eugene Scalia (1903–1986), an Italian immigrant from Sommatino, Sicily, graduated from Rutgers University and was a graduate student at Columbia University and clerk at the time of his son's birth.^[11] The elder Scalia would become a professor of Romance languages at Brooklyn College, where he was an adherent to the formalist New Criticism school of literary theory.^[12] His mother, Catherine Louise (née Panaro) Scalia (1905–1985), was born in Trenton to Italian immigrant parents and worked as an elementary school teacher.^{[11][13]}

In 1939, Scalia and his family moved to Elmhurst, Queens, where he attended P.S. 13 Clement C. Moore School.^{[14][15]} After completing eighth grade in public school,^[16] he obtained an academic scholarship to Xavier High School, a Jesuit military school in Manhattan,^[17] where he graduated first in the class of 1953 and served as valedictorian.^[18] He later stated that he spent much of his time on schoolwork and admitted, "I was never cool."^[19] While a youth, he was also active as a Boy Scout and was part of the Scouts' national honor society, the Order of the Arrow.^[20]

Classmate and future New York State official William Stern remembered Scalia in his high school days: "This kid was a conservative when he was 17 years old. An archconservative Catholic. He could have been a member of the Curia. He was the top student in the class. He was brilliant, way above everybody else."^{[10][21]}

In 1953, Scalia enrolled at Georgetown University, where he majored in history. He became a champion collegiate debater in Georgetown's Philodemic Society and a critically praised thespian.^[22] He took his junior year abroad in Switzerland at the University of Fribourg.^[10] Scalia graduated from Georgetown in 1957 as class valedictorian with a Bachelor of Arts *summa cum laude*. Scalia then studied law at Harvard Law School, where he was a notes editor for the *Harvard Law Review*.^[23] He graduated from Harvard Law in 1960 with a Bachelor of Laws *magna cum laude*, becoming a Sheldon Fellow of Harvard University. The fellowship enabled him to travel in Europe during 1960 and 1961.^[24]

Early legal career (1961–1982)

Scalia began his legal career at the law firm Jones, Day, Cockley and Reavis (now Jones Day) in Cleveland, Ohio, where he worked from 1961 to 1967.^[23] He was highly regarded at the law firm and would most likely have been made a partner but later said he had long intended to teach. He became a professor of law at the University of Virginia School of Law in 1967, moving his family to Charlottesville.^[25]

After four years in Charlottesville, Scalia entered public service in 1971. President Richard Nixon appointed him general counsel for the Office of Telecommunications Policy, where one of his principal assignments was to formulate federal policy for the growth of cable television. From 1972 to 1974, he was chairman of the Administrative Conference of the United States, a small independent agency that sought to improve the functioning of the federal bureaucracy.^[24] In mid-1974, Nixon nominated him as Assistant Attorney General for the Office of Legal Counsel.^[24] After Nixon's resignation, the nomination was continued by President Gerald Ford, and Scalia was confirmed by the Senate on August 22, 1974.^[26]

In the aftermath of Watergate, the Ford administration was engaged in a number of conflicts with Congress. Scalia repeatedly testified before congressional committees, defending Ford administration assertions of executive privilege regarding its refusal to turn over documents.^[27] Within the administration, Scalia advocated a presidential veto for a bill to amend the Freedom of Information Act, which would greatly increase the act's scope. Scalia's view prevailed, and Ford vetoed the bill, but Congress overrode it.^[28] In early 1976, Scalia argued his only case before the Supreme Court, *Alfred Dunhill of London, Inc. v. Republic of Cuba*. Scalia, on behalf of the US government, argued in support of Dunhill, and that position was successful.^[29] Following Ford's defeat by President Jimmy Carter, Scalia worked for several months at the American Enterprise Institute.^[30]

He then returned to academia, taking up residence at the University of Chicago Law School from 1977 to 1982,^[31] though he spent one year as a visiting professor at Stanford Law School.^[32] During Scalia's time at Chicago, Peter H. Russell hired him on behalf of the Canadian government to write a report on how the United States was able to limit the activities of its secret services for the McDonald Commission, which was investigating abuses by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. The report—finished in 1979—encouraged the commission to recommend that a balance be struck between civil liberties and the essentially unchecked activities of the RCMP.^[33] In 1981, he became the first faculty adviser for the University of Chicago's chapter of the newly founded Federalist Society.^[31]

U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit (1982–1986)

When Ronald Reagan was elected president in November 1980, Scalia hoped for a major position in the new administration. He was interviewed for the position of Solicitor General of the United States, but the position went to Rex E. Lee, to Scalia's great disappointment.^[34] Scalia was offered a seat on the Chicago-based United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit in early 1982 but declined it, hoping to be appointed to the highly influential United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit (D.C. Circuit). Later that year, Reagan offered Scalia a seat on the D.C. Circuit, which Scalia accepted.^[35] He was confirmed by the U.S. Senate on August 5, 1982, and was sworn in on August 17, 1982.

On the D.C. Circuit, Scalia built a conservative record while winning applause in legal circles for powerful, witty legal writing, which was often critical of the Supreme Court precedents he felt bound as a lower-court judge to follow. Scalia's opinions drew the attention of Reagan administration officials, who, according to *The New York Times*, "liked virtually everything they saw and ... listed him as a leading Supreme Court prospect".^[36]



President Reagan and his Supreme Court nominee Scalia in the Oval Office, July 7, 1986

Supreme Court of the United States (1986–2016)

In 1986, Chief Justice Warren Burger informed the White House of his intent to retire. Reagan first decided to nominate Associate Justice William Rehnquist to become Chief Justice. That choice meant that Reagan would also have to choose a nominee to fill Rehnquist's seat as associate justice.^[37] Attorney General Edwin Meese, who advised Reagan on the choice, seriously considered only Scalia and Robert Bork, a fellow judge on the DC Court of Appeals.^[38] Feeling that this might well be Reagan's last opportunity to pick a Supreme Court justice, the president and his advisers chose Scalia over Bork. Many factors influenced the decision. Reagan wanted to appoint the first Italian-American justice.^[39] In addition, Scalia was ten years younger and would likely serve longer on the Court.^[37] Scalia also had the advantage of not having Bork's "paper trail";^[40] the elder judge had written controversial articles about individual rights.^[41] Scalia was called to the White House and accepted Reagan's nomination.^[37]

When Senate Judiciary Committee hearings on Scalia's nomination opened in August 1986, he faced a committee that had just argued divisively over the Rehnquist nomination. Witnesses and Democratic senators contended that before becoming a judge, Rehnquist had engaged in activities designed to discourage minorities from voting. Committee members had little taste for a second battle over Scalia and were in any event reluctant to oppose the first Italian-American Supreme Court nominee.^[42] The judge was not pressed heavily on controversial issues such as abortion or civil rights.^[43] Scalia, who attended the hearing with his wife and nine children seated behind him, found time for a humorous exchange with Democratic Ohio Senator Howard Metzenbaum, whom he had defeated in a tennis match in, as the nominee put it, "a case of my integrity overcoming my judgment".^[44]

Scalia met no opposition from the committee. The full Senate debated Scalia's nomination only briefly, confirming him 98–0 on September 17, 1986 and thereby making him the first Italian-American Justice. That vote followed Rehnquist's confirmation as Chief Justice by a vote of 65–33 on the same day. Scalia took his seat on September 26, 1986. One committee member, Democratic Delaware Senator Joe Biden, later stated that he regretted not having opposed Scalia "because he was so effective".^[45]

Governmental structure and powers

Separation of powers



Play media

Justice Scalia testified before the Senate Judiciary Committee about separation of powers and checks and balances of the U.S. Government

It was Scalia's view that clear lines of separation among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches follow directly from the Constitution, with no branch allowed to exercise powers granted to another branch.^[46] In his early days on the Court, he authored a powerful—and solitary—dissent in 1988's *Morrison v. Olson*, in which the Court's majority upheld the Independent Counsel law. Scalia's thirty-page draft dissent surprised Justice Harry Blackmun for its emotional content; Blackmun felt "it could be cut down to ten pages if Scalia omitted the screaming".^[47] Scalia indicated that the law was an unwarranted encroachment on the executive branch by the legislative. He warned, "Frequently an issue of this sort will come before the Court clad, so to speak, in sheep's clothing ... But this wolf comes as a wolf".^[47]

The 1989 case of *Mistretta v. United States* challenged the United States Sentencing Commission, an independent body within the judicial branch whose members (some of whom were federal judges) were removable only for good cause. The petitioner argued that the arrangement violated separation of powers and that the United States Sentencing Guidelines promulgated by the Commission were invalid. Eight justices joined in the majority opinion written by Blackmun, upholding the Guidelines as constitutional.^[48] Scalia dissented, stating that the issuance of the Guidelines was a lawmaking function that Congress could not delegate^[49] and dubbed the Commission "a sort of junior-varsity Congress".^[47]

In 1996, Congress passed the Line Item Veto Act, which allowed the president to cancel items from an appropriations bill (a bill authorizing spending) once passed into law. The statute was challenged the following year. The matter rapidly reached the Supreme Court, which struck down the law as violating the Presentment Clause of the Constitution, which governs what the president is permitted to do with a bill once it has passed both houses of Congress.^[50] Scalia dissented, seeing no Presentment Clause difficulties and feeling that the act did not violate separation of powers. He argued that authorizing the president to cancel an appropriation was no different from allowing him to spend an appropriation at his discretion, which had long been accepted as constitutional.^[51]

Detainee cases



The 2009–2010 Court, with President Barack Obama, Vice President Joe Biden and retiring justice David Souter with Scalia fourth from right

In 2004, in *Rasul v. Bush*, the Court held that federal courts had jurisdiction to hear *habeas corpus* petitions brought by detainees at the Guantanamo Bay detention camp. Scalia accused the majority of "spring[ing] a trap on the Executive" by ruling that it could hear cases involving persons at Guantanamo when no federal court had ever ruled that it had the authority to hear cases involving people there.^[52]

Scalia (joined by Justice John Paul Stevens) also dissented in the 2004 case of *Hamdi v. Rumsfeld*, involving Yaser Hamdi, an American citizen detained in the United States on the allegation he was an enemy combatant. The Court held that although Congress had authorized Hamdi's detention, Fifth Amendment due process guarantees give a citizen held in the United States as an enemy combatant [Hamdi] the right to contest that detention before a neutral decision maker. Scalia opined that the AUMF (Authorization for Use of Military Force Against Terrorists) could not be read to suspend *habeas corpus* and that the

Court, faced with legislation by Congress that did not grant the president power to detain Hamdi, was trying to "Make Everything Come Out Right".^[53]

In March 2006, Scalia gave a talk at the University of Fribourg in Switzerland. When asked about detainee rights, he responded: "Give me a break ... I had a son on that battlefield and they were shooting at my son, and I'm not about to give this man who was captured in a war a full jury trial. I mean it's crazy".^[54] Although Scalia was not referring to any particular individual, the Supreme Court was about to consider the case of Salim Ahmed Hamdan, supposed driver to Osama bin Laden, who was challenging the military commissions at Guantanamo Bay.^[54] A group of retired military officers that supported Hamdan's position asked Scalia to recuse himself, or step aside from hearing the case, which he declined to do.^[55] The Court held 5–3 in *Hamdan v. Rumsfeld* that the federal courts had jurisdiction to consider Hamdan's claims; Scalia, in dissent, contended that any Court authority to consider Hamdan's petition had been eliminated by the jurisdiction-stripping Detainee Treatment Act of 2005.^[56]

Federalism

In federalism cases pitting the powers of the federal government against those of the states, Scalia often took the states' positions. In 1997, the Supreme Court considered the case of *Printz v. United States*, a challenge to certain provisions of the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act, which required chief law enforcement officers of localities in states to perform certain duties. In *Printz*, Scalia wrote the Court's majority decision. The Supreme Court ruled unconstitutional the provision that imposed those duties as violating the Tenth Amendment, which reserves to the states and to the people those powers not granted to the federal government.^[57] In 2005, Scalia concurred in *Gonzales v. Raich*, which read the Commerce Clause to hold that Congress could ban the use of marijuana even when states approve its use for medicinal purposes. Scalia opined that the Commerce Clause, together with the Necessary and Proper Clause, permitted the regulation. In addition, Scalia felt that Congress may regulate intrastate activities if doing so is a necessary part of a more general regulation of interstate commerce.^[58] He based that decision on *Wickard v. Filburn*, which he now wrote "expanded the Commerce Clause beyond all reason".^[59]

Scalia rejected the existence of the negative Commerce Clause doctrine,^{[60][61]} calling it "a judicial fraud".^[62]

Scalia took a broad view of the Eleventh Amendment, which bars certain lawsuits against states in the federal courts. In his 1989 dissent in *Pennsylvania v. Union Gas Co.*, Scalia stated that there was no intent on the part of the framers to have the states surrender any sovereign immunity and that the case that provoked the Eleventh Amendment, *Chisholm v. Georgia*, came as a surprise to them. Professor Ralph Rossum, who wrote a survey of Scalia's constitutional views, suggests that the justice's view of the Eleventh Amendment was actually contradictory to the language of the Amendment.^[63]

Individual rights

Abortion

Scalia argued that there is no constitutional right to abortion and that if the people desire legalized abortion, a law should be passed to accomplish it.^[19] In his dissenting opinion in the 1992 case of *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, Scalia wrote the following:

The States may, if they wish, permit abortion on demand, but the Constitution does not require them to do so. The permissibility of abortion, and the limitations upon it, are to be resolved like most important questions in our democracy: by citizens trying to persuade one another and then voting.^[64]

Scalia repeatedly called upon his colleagues to strike down *Roe v. Wade*. Scalia hoped to find five votes to strike down *Roe* in the 1989 case of *Webster v. Reproductive Health Services* but was not successful in doing so. Justice Sandra Day O'Connor authored the decision of the Court, allowing the abortion regulations at issue in the case to stand but not overriding *Roe*. Scalia concurred only in part.^[65] Scalia wrote, "Justice O'Connor's assertion, that a 'fundamental rule of judicial restraint' requires us to avoid reconsidering *Roe* cannot be taken seriously".^[66] He noted, "We can now look forward to at least another Term of carts full of mail from the public, and the streets full of demonstrators".^[67]

The Court returned to the issue of abortion in the 2000 case of *Stenberg v. Carhart*, in which it invalidated a Nebraska statute outlawing partial-birth abortion. Justice Stephen Breyer wrote for the Court that the law was unconstitutional because it did not allow an exception for the health of the woman. Scalia dissented, comparing the *Stenberg* case to two of the most reviled cases in Supreme Court history: "I am optimistic enough to believe that, one day, *Stenberg v. Carhart* will be assigned its rightful place in the history of this Court's jurisprudence beside *Korematsu* and *Dred Scott*. The method of killing a human child ... proscribed by this statute is so horrible that the most clinical description of it evokes a shudder of revulsion".^[68]

In 2007, the Court upheld a federal statute banning partial-birth abortion in *Gonzales v. Carhart*.^[69] University of Chicago law professor Geoffrey R. Stone, a former colleague of Scalia's, criticized *Gonzales*, stating that religion had influenced the outcome because all five justices in the majority were Catholic, whereas the dissenters were Protestant or Jewish.^[70] This angered Scalia to such an extent that he stated he would not speak at the University of Chicago as long as Stone was there.^[71]

Race, gender, and sexual orientation

Scalia generally voted to strike down laws that make distinctions by race, gender, or sexual orientation. In 1989, he concurred with the Court's judgment in *City of Richmond v. J.A. Croson Co.*, in which the Court applied strict scrutiny to a city program requiring a certain percentage of contracts to go to minorities, and struck down the program. Scalia did not join the majority opinion, however. He disagreed with O'Connor's opinion, for the Court, that states and localities could institute race-based programs if they identified past discrimination and if the programs were designed to remedy the past racism.^[72] Five years later, in *Adarand Constructors, Inc. v. Peña*, he concurred in the Court's judgment and in part with the opinion that extended strict scrutiny to federal programs. Scalia noted in that matter his view that government can never have a compelling interest in making up for past discrimination by racial preferences,

To pursue the concept of racial entitlement—even for the most admirable and benign of purposes—is to reinforce and preserve for future mischief the way of thinking that produced race slavery, race privilege and race hatred. In the eyes of government, we are just one race here. It is American.^[73]

In the 2003 case of *Grutter v. Bollinger*, involving racial preferences in the University of Michigan's law school, Scalia mocked the Court majority's finding that the school was entitled to continue using race as a factor in admissions to promote diversity and to increase "cross-racial understanding". Scalia noted,

This is not, of course, an "educational benefit" on which students will be graded on their Law School transcript (Works and Plays Well with Others: B+) or tested by the bar examiners (Q: Describe in 500 words or less your cross-racial understanding). For it is a lesson of life rather than law—essentially the same lesson taught to (or rather learned by, for it cannot be "taught" in the usual sense) people three feet shorter and twenty years younger than the full-grown adults at the University of Michigan Law School, in institutions ranging from Boy Scout troops to public-school kindergartens.^[74]

Scalia argued that laws that make distinctions between genders should be subjected to intermediate scrutiny, requiring that the gender classification be substantially related to important government objectives.^[75] When, in 1996, the Court upheld a suit brought by a woman who wished to enter the Virginia Military Institute in the case of United States v. Virginia, Scalia filed a lone, lengthy dissent. Scalia said that the Court, in requiring Virginia to show an "extremely persuasive justification" for the single-sex admission policy, had redefined intermediate scrutiny in such a way "that makes it indistinguishable from strict scrutiny".^[76]

In one of the final decisions of the Burger Court, the Court ruled in 1986 in Bowers v. Hardwick that "homosexual sodomy"^[77] was not protected by the right of privacy and could be criminally prosecuted by the states.^[78] In 1995, however, that ruling was effectively gutted by Romer v. Evans, which struck down a Colorado state constitutional amendment, passed by popular vote, that forbade antidiscrimination laws' being extended to sexual orientation.^[79] Scalia dissented from the opinion by Justice Kennedy, believing that Bowers had protected the right of the states to pass such measures and that the Colorado amendment was not discriminatory but merely prevented homosexuals from gaining favored status under Colorado law.^[80] Scalia later said of Romer, "And the Supreme Court said, 'Yes, it is unconstitutional.' On the basis of—I don't know, the Sexual Preference Clause of the Bill of Rights, presumably. And the liberals loved it, and the conservatives gnashed their teeth".^[81]

In 2003, Bowers was formally overruled by Lawrence v. Texas, from which Scalia dissented. According to Mark V. Tushnet in his survey of the Rehnquist Court, during the oral argument in the case, Scalia seemed so intent on making the state's argument for it that the Chief Justice intervened.^[82] According to his biographer, Joan Biskupic, Scalia "ridiculed" the majority in his dissent for being so ready to cast aside Bowers when many of the same justices had refused to overturn Roe in Planned Parenthood v. Casey.^[83] In March 2009, openly gay Congressman Barney Frank described him as a "homophobe".^[84] Maureen Dowd described Scalia in a 2003 column as "Archie Bunker in a high-backed chair".^[85] In an op-ed for The New York Times, federal appeals judge Richard Posner and Georgia State University law professor Eric Segall called Scalia's positions on homosexuality radical and characterized Scalia's "political ideal as verg[ing] on majoritarian theocracy".^[86] Former Scalia clerk Ed Whelan called this "a smear and a distraction."^[87] Professor John O. McGinnis responded as well,^[88] leading to further exchanges.^{[89][90]}

In the 2013 case of Hollingsworth v. Perry, which involved a California ballot initiative known as Proposition 8 that amended the California State Constitution to ban same-sex marriage, Scalia voted with the majority to uphold a lower court decision overturning the ban. The decision was based on the appellants' lack of standing to appeal and not on the substantive issue of the constitutionality of Proposition 8.^[91]

Also in 2013, Scalia dissented from the majority opinion in United States v. Windsor. In Windsor, the Court held Section Three of the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) (which—for federal government purposes—defined the terms "marriage" and "spouse" as applicable only to opposite-sex unions) unconstitutional under the Due Process Clause of the Fifth Amendment.^[92] Scalia's dissent, which was joined in full by Justice Thomas and in part by Chief Justice Roberts,^[93] opened:

This case is about power in several respects. It is about the power of our people to govern themselves, and the power of this Court to pronounce the law. Today's opinion aggrandizes the latter, with the predictable consequence of diminishing the former. We have no power to decide this case. And even if we did, we have no power under the Constitution to invalidate this democratically adopted legislation.

Scalia argued that the judgment effectively characterized opponents of same-sex marriage as "enemies of the human race".^[94] He argued that the Court's ruling would affect state bans on same-sex marriage as well:

As far as this Court is concerned, no one should be fooled; it is just a matter of listening and waiting for the other shoe. By formally declaring anyone opposed to same-sex marriage an enemy of human decency, the majority arms well every challenger to a state law restricting marriage to its traditional definition.^[95]

Scalia concluded by saying that the Supreme Court "has cheated both sides, robbing the winners of an honest victory, and the losers of the peace that comes from a fair defeat."^[92]

In 2015, Scalia dissented from the majority opinion in Obergefell v. Hodges, in which the Court ruled that the fundamental right to marry was guaranteed to same-sex couples by both the Due Process Clause and the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. In his dissent, Scalia stated that the Court's decision effectively robbed the people of "the freedom to

govern themselves", noting that a rigorous debate on same-sex marriage had been taking place and that—by deciding the issue nationwide—the democratic process had been halted.^[96] Addressing the claimed Fourteenth Amendment violation, Scalia asserted that because a same-sex marriage ban would not have been considered unconstitutional at the time of the Fourteenth Amendment's adoption, such bans are not unconstitutional in 2015.^[97] He claimed there was "no basis" for the Court to strike down legislation that the Fourteenth Amendment did not expressly forbid, and directly attacked the majority opinion for "lacking even a thin veneer of law".^[97] Lastly, Scalia faulted the actual writing in the opinion for "diminish[ing] this Court's reputation for clear thinking and sober analysis" and for "descend[ing] from the disciplined legal reasoning of John Marshall and Joseph Story to the mystical aphorisms of the fortune cookie."^[98]

Criminal law

Scalia believed the death penalty to be constitutional.^{[99][100]} He dissented in decisions that hold the death penalty unconstitutional as applied to certain groups, such as those who were under the age of 18 at the time of offense. In Thompson v. Oklahoma (1988), he dissented from the Court's ruling that the death penalty could not be applied to those aged 15 at the time of the offense, and the following year authored the Court's opinion in Stanford v. Kentucky, sustaining the death penalty for those who killed at age 16. However, in 2005, the Court overturned Stanford in Roper v. Simmons, and Scalia again dissented, mocking the majority's claims that a national consensus had emerged against the execution of those who killed while underage, noting that less than half of the states that permitted the death penalty prohibited it for underage killers. He castigated the majority for including in their count states that had abolished the death penalty entirely, stating that doing so was "rather like including old-order Amishmen in a consumer-preference poll on the electric car. Of course they don't like it, but that sheds no light whatever on the point at issue".^[101] In 2002, in Atkins v. Virginia, the Court ruled the death penalty unconstitutional as applied to the mentally retarded. Scalia dissented, stating that it would not have been considered cruel or unusual to execute the mildly mentally retarded at the time of the 1791 adoption of the Bill of Rights and that the Court had failed to show that a national consensus had formed against the practice.^[102]



Scalia (right) at Harvard Law School on November 30, 2006

Scalia strongly disfavored the Court's ruling in Miranda v. Arizona, which held that a confession by an arrested suspect who had not been advised of his rights was inadmissible in court, and he voted to overrule Miranda in the 2000 case of Dickerson v. United States but was in a minority of two with Justice Clarence Thomas. Calling the Miranda decision a "milestone of judicial overreaching", Scalia stated that the Court should not fear to correct its mistakes.^[103]

Although, in many areas, Scalia's approach was unfavorable to criminal defendants, he took the side of defendants in matters involving the Confrontation Clause of the Sixth Amendment, which guarantees defendants the right to confront their accusers. In multiple cases, Scalia wrote against laws that allowed alleged victims of child abuse to testify behind screens or by closed-circuit television.^[104] In a 2009 case, Scalia wrote the majority opinion in Melendez-Diaz v. Massachusetts, holding that defendants must have the opportunity to confront lab technicians in drug cases and that a certificate of analysis is not enough to prove a substance was a drug.^[105]

Scalia maintained that every element of an offense that helps determine the sentence must be either admitted by the defendant or found by a jury under the Sixth Amendment's jury guarantee. In the 2000 case of Apprendi v. New Jersey, Scalia wrote the Court's majority opinion that struck down a state statute that allowed the trial judge to increase the sentence if the judge found the offense was a hate crime. Scalia found the procedure impermissible because whether it was a hate crime had not been decided by the jury.^[106] In 2004, he wrote for the Court in Blakely v. Washington, striking down Washington state's sentencing guidelines on similar grounds. The dissenters in Blakely foresaw that Scalia would use the case to attack the federal sentencing guidelines (which he had failed to strike down in Mistretta), and they proved correct, as Scalia led a five-member majority in United States v. Booker, which made those guidelines no longer mandatory for federal judges to follow (they remained advisory).^[106]

In the 2001 case of Kyllo v. United States, Scalia wrote the Court's opinion in a 5–4 decision that cut across ideological lines.^[107] That decision found thermal imaging of a home to be an unreasonable search under the Fourth Amendment. The Court struck down a conviction for marijuana manufacture based on a search warrant issued after such scans were conducted, which showed that the garage was considerably hotter than the rest of the house because of indoor growing lights.^[108] Applying that Fourth Amendment prohibition on unreasonable search and seizure to arrest, Scalia dissented from the Court's 1991 decision in County of Riverside v. McLaughlin, allowing a 48-hour delay before a person arrested without a warrant is taken before a magistrate, on the ground that at the time of the adoption of the Fourth Amendment, an arrested person was to

be taken before a magistrate as quickly as practicable.^[109] In a 1990 First Amendment case, *R.A.V. v. St. Paul*, Scalia wrote the Court's opinion striking down a St. Paul, Minnesota, hate speech ordinance in a prosecution for burning a cross.^[110] Scalia noted, "Let there be no mistake about our belief that burning a cross in someone's front yard is reprehensible. But St. Paul has sufficient means at its disposal to prevent such behavior without adding the First Amendment to the fire".^[111]

Second Amendment

In 2008, the Court considered a challenge to the gun laws in the District of Columbia. Scalia wrote the majority opinion in *District of Columbia v. Heller*, which found an individual right to own a firearm under the Second Amendment. Scalia traced the word "militia", found in the Second Amendment, as it would have been understood at the time of its ratification, stating that it then meant "the body of all citizens".^[112] The Court upheld Heller's claim to own a firearm in the District.^[112]

Scalia's opinion for the *Heller* Court was criticized by liberals and applauded by conservatives.^[113] Seventh Circuit Judge Richard Posner disagreed with Scalia's opinion, stating that the Second Amendment "creates no right to the private possession of guns". Posner called Scalia's opinion "faux originalism" and a "historicizing glaze on personal values and policy preferences".^[114] In October 2008, Scalia stated that the court's originalists needed to show only that at the time the Second Amendment was ratified, the right to bear arms did not have an exclusively military context and that they were successful in so showing.^[115]

Litigation and standing

Following the death of Scalia, Paul Barrett, writing for Bloomberg Businessweek, reported that: "Translating into liberal argot: Scalia changed the rules for who could sue". The issue elevated the recognition of Scalia as a notable influence on establishing and determining the conditions under which cases could be brought to trial and for litigation—and by whom such litigation could take place.^[116] David Rivkin, from the conservative standpoint, said, "He (Scalia) did more to clarify and limit the bounds and scope of judicial power than any Supreme Court Justice in history, particularly in the area of standing and class actions". Scalia indicated his long-held position from the time of his 1983 law review article titled "The Doctrine of Standing as an Essential Element of the Separation of Powers". As summarized by Barrett, "He (Scalia) wrote that courts had misappropriated authority from other branches of government by allowing too many people to sue corporations and government agencies, especially in environmental cases". In a practical sense, Scalia brought to the attention of the Court the authority to restrict "standing" in class action suits in which the litigants may be defined in descriptive terms rather than as well-defined and unambiguous litigants.^[117]

Other cases

Scalia concurred in the 1990 case of *Cruzan v. Director, Missouri Department of Health*, in which the family of a woman in a vegetative state sought to have her feeding tube removed so she would die, believing that to have been her wish. The Court found for the State of Missouri, requiring clear and convincing evidence of such a desire. Scalia stated that the Court should have remained away from the dispute and that the issues "are [not] better known to the nine Justices of this Court any better than they are known to nine people picked at random from the Kansas City telephone directory".^[112]

Scalia joined the majority *per curiam* opinion in the 2000 case of *Bush v. Gore*, which effectively ended recounts of ballots in Florida following the 2000 US Presidential election, and also both concurred separately and joined Rehnquist's concurrence.^[118] In 2007, he said of the case, "I and my court owe no apology whatever for *Bush v. Gore*. We did the right thing. So there! ... get over it. It's so old by now".^[119] During an interview on the *Charlie Rose* show, he defended the Court's action:

The decision was not close, it was 7–2 on the principal issue of whether there had been a constitutional violation ... But what if it was unconstitutional to have that recount? You're going to let it continue and come to a conclusion? And *then* overturn it? The reason to stop it sooner was not, "Ooh, we're worried that it's going to come out the wrong way"... you forget what was going on at the time. We were the laughingstock of the world. The world's greatest democracy that couldn't conduct an election. We didn't know who our next president was going to be. The lengthy transition that has become standard when you change from one president to another could not begin because you didn't know who the new president was going to be. It was becoming a very

serious problem. The issue before the United States Supreme Court is: having decided the case, having decided this is unconstitutional, should we nonetheless let the election go on? Or is it time cut it off and let's move on?^[120]

Legal philosophy and approach

Judicial performance

During oral argument before the court, Scalia asked more questions and made more comments than any other justice.^[121] A 2005 study found that he provoked laughter more often than any of his colleagues did.^[122] His goal during oral arguments was to get across his position to the other justices.^[123] University of Kansas social psychologist Lawrence Wrightsman wrote that Scalia communicated "a sense of urgency on the bench" and had a style that was "forever forceful".^[121] After Chief Justice John Roberts joined the Court in 2005, he took to quizzing lawyers in a manner similar to Scalia's; sometimes the two questioned counsel in seeming coordination.^[123] Dahlia Lithwick of *Slate* described Scalia's technique as follows:



Scalia in 2010

Scalia doesn't come into oral argument all secretive and sphinxlike, feigning indecision on the nuances of the case before him. He comes in like a medieval knight, girded for battle. He knows what the law is. He knows what the opinion should say. And he uses the hour allocated for argument to bludgeon his brethren into agreement.^[124]

Scalia wrote numerous opinions from the start of his career on the Supreme Court. During his tenure, he wrote more concurring opinions than any other justice. Only two justices have written more dissents.^[125] According to Kevin Ring, who compiled a book of Scalia's dissenting and concurring opinions: "His opinions are ... highly readable. His entertaining writing style can make even the most mundane areas of the law interesting".^[126] Conor Clarke of *Slate* comments on Scalia's written opinions, especially his dissents:

His writing style is best described as equal parts anger, confidence, and pageantry. Scalia has a taste for garish analogies and offbeat allusions—often very funny ones—and he speaks in no uncertain terms. He is highly accessible and tries not to get bogged down in abstruse legal jargon. But most of all, Scalia's opinions read like they're about to catch fire for pure outrage. He does not, in short, write like a happy man.^[127]

At the Supreme Court, justices meet after the case is briefed and argued and vote on the result. The task of writing the opinion is assigned by the Chief Justice or—if the Chief Justice is in the minority or is not participating—by the senior justice in the majority. After the assignment, the justices generally communicate about a case by sending notes and draft opinions to each other's chambers.^[128] In the give-and-take of opinion-writing, Scalia did not compromise his views in order to attract five votes for a majority (unlike the late Justice William J. Brennan, Jr., who would accept less than what he wanted in order to gain a partial victory).^[129] Scalia attempted to influence his colleagues by sending them "Ninograms"—short memoranda aimed at persuading them of the correctness of his views.^{[125][130]}

In an October 2013 issue of *New York* magazine, Scalia revealed that he scanned *The Wall Street Journal* and *The Washington Times*, obtained most of his news from talk radio, and did not read *The New York Times* or *The Washington Post*. He described *The Washington Post* as "shrilly liberal".^[131]

Statutory and constitutional interpretation

Scalia was a textualist in statutory interpretation, believing that the ordinary meaning of a statute should govern.^[132] In 1998, Scalia vociferously opposed the idea of a living constitution, or the power of the judiciary to modify the meaning of constitutional provisions to adapt them to changing times.^[19] Scalia warned that if one accepted that constitutional standards should evolve with a maturing society, "the risk of assessing evolving standards is that it is all too easy to believe that evolution has culminated in one's own views".^[133] He compared the Constitution to statutes he contended were not understood to change their meaning through time.^[23] Constitutional amendments, such as the 1868 Fourteenth Amendment,



Judge and Mrs. Scalia (left) and President Reagan (right) watch as Chief Justice Warren Burger swears William Rehnquist in as the next Chief Justice, September 26, 1986.

according to Scalia, were to be interpreted based on their meaning at the time of ratification.^[134] Scalia was often asked how that approach justified the result in the 1954 case of *Brown v. Board of Education*, which held that segregated schools were unconstitutional and which relied on the Fourteenth Amendment for the result.^[135] Scalia responded to this argument in two ways. He noted research by Michael McConnell that "persuasively establishes that this was the original understanding of the post Civil War Amendments." However, Scalia continues by arguing that even if non-originalist methods occasionally produce better results than Originalism, "It is in no way remarkable... that taking power from the people and placing it instead with a judicial aristocracy can produce some creditable results that democracy might not achieve. The same can be said of monarchy and totalitarianism. But once a nation has decided that democracy... is the best system of government, the crucial question becomes which theory of textual interpretation is compatible with democracy. Originalism unquestionably is. Non-originalism, by contrast, imposes on society statutory prescriptions that were never democratically adopted. When applied to the

Constitution, nonoriginalism limits the democratic process itself, prohibiting... acts... that 'We The People' never, ever, voted to outlaw.^[136]

In interpreting statutes, Scalia did not look to legislative history. In the 2006 case of *Zedner v. United States*, he joined the majority opinion written by Justice Samuel Alito—all except one paragraph of the opinion, in which Alito cited legislative history. In a concurring opinion in that case, Scalia noted, "The use of legislative history is illegitimate and ill advised in the interpretation of any statute".^[137] His dislike of legislative history may have been a reason that other justices have become more cautious in its use.^[138] Gregory Maggs wrote in the *Public Interest Law Review* in 1995 that by the early 1990s, legislative history was being cited in only about forty percent of Supreme Court cases involving the interpretation of statutes and that no case of that era used legislative history as an essential reason for the outcome. Maggs suggested,

With Justice Scalia breathing down the necks of anyone who peeks into the Congressional Record or Senate reports, the other members of the Court may have concluded that the benefit of citing legislative history does not outweigh its costs. It is likely for this reason that the percentage of cases citing it has decreased dramatically. No one likes an unnecessary fight, especially not one with as formidable an opponent as Justice Scalia.^[138]

Scalia described himself as an originalist, meaning that he interpreted the United States Constitution as it would have been understood when it was adopted. According to Scalia in 2008, "It's what did the words mean to the people who ratified the Bill of Rights or who ratified the Constitution".^[19] In 2006, before George W. Bush appointees Roberts and Alito had had time to make an impact, Rossum wrote that Scalia had failed to win converts among his conservative colleagues for his use of originalism,^[139] whereas Roberts and Alito, as younger men with an originalist approach, greatly admired Scalia battling for what he believed in.^[140] Following the appointments of Roberts and Alito, both Gorsuch and Kavanaugh are identified in their judicial temperament as being originalists with Kavanaugh referred to as "a stalwart originalist" in the tradition of Scalia.^{[141][142]}

In a 2009 public conversation, Justice Stephen Breyer questioned Scalia, indicating that those who ratified the Fourteenth Amendment did not intend to end school segregation. Scalia called this argument "waving the bloody shirt of *Brown*" and indicated that he would have joined first Justice Harlan's solitary dissent in *Plessy v. Ferguson*, the 1896 case that *Brown* overruled.^[143]

Scalia's originalist approach came under attack from critics, who viewed it as "a cover for what they see as Scalia's real intention: to turn back some pivotal court decisions of the 1960s and 70s" reached by the Warren and Burger Courts.^[19] Ralph Nader argued in 2008 that Scalia's originalist philosophy was inconsistent with the justice's acceptance of the extension of certain constitutional rights to corporations when at the time of the Fourteenth Amendment's ratification, corporations were not commonly understood to possess constitutional rights.^[144] Nader's view preceded the Court's 2010 decision in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*. Scalia, in his concurrence in that case, traced his understanding of the rights of groups of individuals at the time of the adoption of the Bill of Rights. His argument was based on the lack of an exception for groups such as corporations in the free speech guarantee in the Bill of Rights and on several examples of corporate political speech from the time of the adoption of the Bill of Rights.^[145] Professor Thomas Colby of George Washington University National Law Center argued that Scalia's votes in Establishment Clause cases do not stem from originalist views but simply from conservative political convictions.^[146] Scalia responded to his critics that his originalism "has occasionally led him to decisions he deplors, like his upholding the constitutionality of flag burning", which according to Scalia was protected by the First Amendment.^[19]

In 2009, after nearly a quarter century on the Court, Scalia characterized his victories as "damn few".^[147]

Writing in *The Jewish Daily Forward* in 2009, J.J. Goldberg described Scalia as "the intellectual anchor of the court's conservative majority".^{[148][149]} Scalia traveled to the nation's law schools, giving talks on law and democracy.^[125] His appearances on college campuses were often standing room only.^[150] Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg indicated that Scalia was "very much in tune with the current generation of law students ... Students now put 'Federalist Society' on their resumes".^[151] John Paul Stevens, who served throughout Scalia's tenure until his 2010 retirement, said of Scalia's influence, "He's made a huge difference. Some of it constructive, some of it unfortunate".^[151] Of the nine sitting justices, Scalia was most often the subject of [law review](#) articles.^[150]



The Roberts Court (October 2010 – February 2016). Front row: Clarence Thomas, Antonin Scalia, John Roberts (Chief), Anthony Kennedy, Ruth Bader Ginsburg. Back row: Sonia Sotomayor, Stephen Breyer, Samuel Alito, Elena Kagan.

Public attention

Requests for recusals



Scalia (right) works on a book with Bryan A. Garner.

Scalia [recused](#) himself from *Elk Grove Unified School District v. Newdow* (2004), a claim brought by atheist Michael Newdow alleging that recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance (including the words "under God") in school classrooms violated the rights of his daughter, who he said was also an atheist. Shortly after the [United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit](#) ruled in Newdow's favor but before the case came before the Supreme Court, Scalia spoke at a [Knights of Columbus](#) event in [Fredericksburg, Virginia](#), stating that the Ninth Circuit decision was an example of how the courts were trying to excise God from public life. The school district requested that the Supreme Court review the case, and Newdow asked that Scalia recuse himself because of this prior statement, which he did without comment.^[152]

Scalia declined to recuse himself from *Cheney v. United States District Court for the District of Columbia* (2005), a case concerning whether Vice President Dick Cheney could keep secret the membership of an advisory task force on energy policy. Scalia was asked to recuse himself because he had gone on a hunting trip with various persons including Cheney, during which he traveled one way on [Air Force Two](#). Scalia issued a lengthy [in-chambers opinion](#) refusing to recuse himself, stating that though Cheney was a longtime friend, he was being sued merely in his official capacity and that were justices to step aside in the cases of officials who are parties because of official capacity, the Supreme Court would cease to function. Scalia indicated that it was far from unusual for justices to socialize with other government officials, recalling that the late Chief Justice Fred M. Vinson played poker with President Harry Truman and that Justice Byron White went skiing with Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy. Scalia stated that he was never alone with Cheney during the trip, the two had not discussed the case, and the justice had saved no money because he had bought round-trip tickets, the cheapest available.^[153] Scalia was part of the 7–2 majority once the case was heard, a decision that generally upheld Cheney's position.^[154] Scalia later described his refusal to recuse himself as his "most heroic opinion" because it had exposed him to a great deal of criticism.^{[155][156]}

Judge Gilbert S. Merritt Jr. of the Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals called for Scalia's recusal in *Bush v. Gore* at the time.^[157] Walter Sinnott-Armstrong, writing in *Law and Philosophy*, later chronicled such calls and contended that "There were many ways for Justice Scalia's sons to benefit from a decision in favor of Bush. Together these benefits could be substantial. Hence, [the law] required recusal".^[158] Republicans dismissed such calls as partisan, noting that Merritt was a close friend of the Gores and a rumored Gore Supreme Court nominee.^[157]

Religious views

Scalia was a devout [Roman Catholic](#), and his son Paul entered the priesthood. Uncomfortable with the changes brought about following [Vatican II](#), Scalia drove long distances to parishes he felt were more in accord with his beliefs, including parishes that celebrated the [Tridentine Latin Mass](#) in Chicago and Washington,^[159] and one celebrating the Latin version^[160] of the [Mass of Paul VI](#) at St. Catherine of Siena in [Great Falls, Virginia](#).^[161] In a 2013 interview with Jennifer Senior for *New York*

magazine, Scalia was asked whether his beliefs extended to the Devil, and he stated, "Of course! Yeah, he's a real person. Hey, c'mon, that's standard Catholic doctrine! Every Catholic believes that". When asked whether he had seen recent evidence of the Devil, Scalia replied: "You know, it is curious. In the Gospels, the Devil is doing all sorts of things. He's making pigs run off cliffs, he's possessing people and whatnot ... What he's doing now is getting people not to believe in him or in God. He's much more successful that way".^[131] In another 2013 interview, Scalia said, "In order for capitalism to work, in order for it to produce a good and stable society, traditional Christian virtues are essential".^[162]

In 2006, upon leaving church, Scalia was asked by a reporter whether being a traditionalist Catholic had caused problems for him, and he responded by asking, "You know what I say to those people?" and with a gesture, cupping his hand under his chin and flicking his fingers out. The gesture, which got captured by a photographer, was initially reported by the *Boston Herald* as obscene. Scalia responded to the reports with a letter to the editor, accusing the news staff of watching too many episodes of *The Sopranos* and stating that the gesture was a strong brush-off. Roger Axtell, an expert on body language, described the gesture as possibly meaning "I've had enough, go away" and noted, "It's a fairly strong gesture".^[163] The gesture was parodied by comedian Stephen Colbert during his performance at the White House Correspondents' Association Dinner later that year, with the justice in attendance: cameras showed that unlike most of the butts of Colbert's jokes that evening, Scalia was laughing.^{[164][165]}

1996 presidential election

According to John Boehner, as chairman of the House Republican Conference, he sought to persuade Scalia to run for election as vice president with Bob Dole in 1996. As related by Boehner, Scalia listened to the proposal and dictated the same reply Justice Charles Evans Hughes had once given to a similar query: "The possibility is too remote to comment upon, given my position". Dole did put Scalia on his list of potential running mates but eventually settled on Jack Kemp.^[166]

Personal life

On September 10, 1960, Scalia married Maureen McCarthy at St. Pius X church in Yarmouth, Massachusetts.^[167] The two had met on a blind date while he was at Harvard Law School. Maureen was an undergraduate student at Radcliffe College when they met; she subsequently obtained a degree in English from the school.^[168]

The Scalias had five sons and four daughters.^[169] Two of their sons, Eugene Scalia and John Scalia, became attorneys,^[170] with Eugene later becoming Secretary of Labor in the Trump administration.^{[171][172]} Paul Scalia became a Catholic priest, Matthew Scalia had a military career, and Christopher Scalia became a writer. All four Scalia daughters—Catherine, Ann, Margaret, and Mary—have families. According to Scalia, Maureen raised all nine children "with very little assistance from me".^[170] The family resided in McLean, Virginia, a suburb of Washington, D.C.^[173]

Scalia enjoyed a warm friendship with fellow Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, considered a member of the court's liberal wing, with the two attending the opera together and appearing together onstage as supernumeraries in Washington National Opera's 1994 production of *Ariadne auf Naxos*.^[121] Ginsburg was a colleague of Scalia on the D.C. Circuit, and the Scalias and Ginsburgs had dinner together every New Year's Eve.^[174]

Scalia also enjoyed a friendship with fellow Justice Elena Kagan, also considered a member of the court's liberal wing. When Justice David Souter retired, Scalia told David Axelrod, an adviser to then-President Barack Obama, that he hoped that Obama would nominate Kagan to replace him. While Obama nominated Sonia Sotomayor instead, a year later when Justice John Paul Stevens retired, Obama nominated Kagan.^[175] An avid hunter, Scalia taught Justice Kagan how to hunt; the two hunted ducks, birds, deer and antelope together.^{[176][177]}

Death and funeral

Scalia died in his sleep^[2] at age 79. His body was discovered on the morning of February 13, 2016, in his room^[7] at Cibolo Creek Ranch in Shafter, Texas. He had gone quail hunting the afternoon before, and then dined as the guest of John B. Poindexter, owner of the ranch.^{[178][179]} After Poindexter discovered the body, he called the Presidio County sheriff's department to ask for the number of the U.S. Marshals Service to report a death. Poindexter was reluctant to say who had died to Sheriff Danny Dominguez. Dominguez had the Marshal's Service call the ranch owner, and both the marshals and the sheriff went to the ranch, where they were shown Scalia's body. Dominguez instructed his office to call local justice of the peace Juanita Bishop, but she was out of town.^[180]

County Judge Cinderela Guevara pronounced Scalia dead of natural causes.^[181] She did not see the body, which under Texas law is not required, nor did she order an autopsy.^[7] Bishop, as well as David Beebe, another justice of the peace, later disagreed with the decision not to order an autopsy for Scalia. Guevara, who conferred by telephone with Scalia's physician, stated that she made the determination to pronounce Scalia dead from natural causes after being told by county sheriff Dominguez on the scene that "there were no signs of foul play" and that Scalia "was having health issues".^{[7][182]} Scalia's physician, Rear Admiral Brian P. Monahan, told her Scalia had a history of heart trouble, including high blood pressure, and was recently deemed too weak to undergo surgery for a torn rotator cuff.^{[183][184]} According to Sunset Funeral Home director Chris Lujan, Scalia's family also declined to have an autopsy performed after his body was transferred to his El Paso funeral home, prior to its return to Fairfax, Virginia.^[185]

Following his death, Scalia lay in repose in the Great Hall of the United States Supreme Court Building on February 19, 2016.^[186] Scalia's son, Father Paul Scalia, celebrated a Catholic funeral Mass and delivered the homily on February 20, 2016, at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C.^[187] The Obama administration was represented at the funeral by Vice President Joe Biden; President Barack Obama did not attend.^[188] Scalia's remains were interred at a private ceremony at Fairfax Memorial Park in Fairfax, Virginia.^[187]

Legacy

Influence

Writing in the *American Spectator*, Adam Carrington noted that, "Since his death in February of 2016, Scalia's influence of course continues through his three decades of judicial opinions. But he still exerts great influence in another, less-discussed way. In 2012, he co-authored the book *Reading Law: The Interpretation of Legal Texts* with Bryan A. Garner. This work describes numerous "canons," or rules regarding how to interpret legal documents ... A mere seven years since its publication, *Reading Law* has been cited in over 1,000 state and federal cases. Just this spring, for instance, Supreme Court justices referenced the work in 10 cases."^[189]

Scalia's promotion of textualism and originalism on the high court led to a shift in the American judiciary's approach to textual interpretation, with greater attention paid to the text itself. The liberal political philosopher Ronald Dworkin said that because of Scalia, "we are all originalists now." For this reason, he is often described as one of the most influential jurists of the twentieth century.^[8]

In popular culture

Derrick Wang's opera *Scalia/Ginsburg* depicts the friendship of Scalia and Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg, both known for their shared love of opera.^{[190][191][192][193]} The opera was introduced before Scalia and Ginsburg at the Supreme Court in 2013,^[194] premiered at the Castleton Festival in 2015,^{[195][196]} and was revised after Scalia's death,^[197] with the revised version broadcast on national radio on November 7, 2020.^{[198][199]} Scalia and Ginsburg both wrote forewords to the libretto,^[200] and Ginsburg cited the opera in her statement on Scalia's death^[201] and in her foreword to the book *Scalia Speaks*.^[202]

John Strand's play *The Originalist* was performed in Washington, DC in 2015; it received a positive review from *The New York Times*. The play depicted Justice Scalia's interaction with a (fictional) liberal court clerk and their mutual criticism and eventual support of each other. The play had a cross-country tour from Washington, D.C. to the Pasadena Playhouse.^[203] The play was scheduled to air on PBS in 2017.^[204]

Posthumous tributes

According to NBC News, tributes to "larger-than-life Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia poured in [from] both sides of the political aisle" following his death.^[205] All eight of Scalia's fellow justices released statements honoring him following his death. Justice Clarence Thomas said, "'Justice Scalia was a good man; a wonderful husband who loved his wife and his family; a man of strong faith; a towering intellect; a legal giant; and a dear, dear friend. In every case, he gave it his all to get the broad principles and the small details right. ... It is hard to imagine the court without my friend. I will miss him beyond all measure'". Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg said:

From our years together at the D.C. Circuit, we were best buddies. We disagreed now and then, but when I wrote for the [Supreme] Court and received a Scalia dissent, the opinion ultimately released was notably better than my initial circulation. Justice Scalia nailed all the weak spots—the "applesauce" and "argle bargle"—and gave me just what I needed to strengthen the majority opinion... It was my great good fortune to have known him as working colleague and treasured friend.^[206]

In May 2016, George Mason University renamed its law school the "Antonin Scalia Law School" after an anonymous donor pledged \$20 million to the school, with an additional \$10 million donated by the Charles Koch Foundation, contingent upon the name change in Scalia's honor.^{[207][208]} The dedication ceremony occurred on October 6, 2016, and was attended by Supreme Court justices. At the ceremony, Justice Elena Kagan called Scalia "one of the most important Supreme Court justices ever, and also one of the greatest".^[9]

In October 2016, the Italy–USA Foundation posthumously awarded Scalia its America Award. The ceremony was conducted in front of the Italian parliament in Rome.^[209]

In 2018, President Donald Trump posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom to Scalia.^{[210][211]}

Writing for the plurality in *Borden v. United States*, Justice Kagan referenced Scalia, writing "Indeed, the Court has made a similar point before, in an opinion by one of its great wordsmiths" ^[212]

Succession

Scalia's death—only the second death of a serving justice in a span of sixty years^[213]—left eight justices remaining on the Supreme Court, split 4–4 between fairly conservative and fairly liberal, during a presidential election year.^{[214][215]} Cases that were pending before the Court at Scalia's death were decided by the remaining eight members.^[216] A 4–4 deadlock would result in the ruling of the lower court being upheld, but no precedent being set, and the justices would not publish written opinions on the merits of the case.^{[216][217]}

In a 2012 interview, Scalia had said he would prefer Judge Frank H. Easterbrook of the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals as his successor.^[218] On March 16, 2016, President Barack Obama, a Democrat, nominated Merrick Garland, Chief Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, to fill Scalia's seat,^[219] but the Republican-controlled Senate declined to take any action on the nomination; the nomination expired with the end of the 114th Congress on January 3, 2017.^[220] On January 31, 2017, Republican President Donald Trump announced the nomination of Judge Neil Gorsuch of the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals to succeed Scalia.^[221] Gorsuch was confirmed by the Senate on April 7, 2017.^[222]

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See also

- List of federal judges appointed by Ronald Reagan
- List of United States Supreme Court justices by time in office

Footnotes

1. Journalistic sources are divided as to whether Scalia died on the night of February 12, 2016 or on the morning of February 13, 2016.^{[2][3][4][5][6][7]}

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- Issue positions and quotes (http://www.OnTheIssues.org/Antonin_Scalia.htm) at OnTheIssues
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