

CQ MEMBER PROFILE
107th CONGRESS

Sen. James M. Jeffords (R-Vt.)

Junior Senator from Vermont



Hometown: Shrewsbury

Born: May 11, 1934; Rutland, Vt.

Religion: Congregationalist

Family: Wife, Elizabeth Daley; two children

Education: Yale U., B.S.I.A. 1956; Harvard U., LL.B. 1962

Military Service: Navy, 1956-59; Naval Reserve, 1959-90

Career: Lawyer

Elected: 1988 (3rd term)

Political Highlights: Vt. Senate, 1967-69; Vt. attorney general, 1969-73; sought Republican nomination for governor, 1972; U.S. House, 1975-89

Committees:

- . Finance (Health Care; International Trade; Social Security & Family Policy)
- . Health, Education, Labor & Pensions - chairman (Aging; Employment, Safety & Training)
- . Special Aging
- . Veterans' Affairs

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CQ Politics in America Profile

(Updated: May 2001)

Jeffords is one of the most mild-mannered, ultra-polite members of the Senate, but he is also a black belt in tae kwon do. He is a moderate Republican who rarely sees eye to eye with Majority Leader Trent Lott. Yet away from the Senate floor, Jeffords found harmony with Lott and two other conservative senators -- Larry E. Craig of Idaho and John Ashcroft of Missouri, now the attorney general -- as they belted out Oak Ridge Boys songs under the banner of the "Singing Senators." (With Ashcroft's departure, the group has stopped performing, for now.)

And while Vermont's junior senator bucks his party more often than nearly any other Republican, he is just as likely to be a good soldier on major issues. He has been a reliable spokesman for the Senate GOP approach to health care, faithfully opposing any expansion of the right to sue managed-care plans until political pressure forced Senate Republicans to endorse broader legal rights for patients in 2000. At the same time, he has balked at some of his party's education proposals and voted against one of its major initiatives, a bill that would have let

families save up to \$2,000 a year in tax-preferred accounts for elementary and secondary education expenses.

Jeffords cannot be pigeonholed. It is safe to call him a moderate, though, and it is safe to say that his conservative Republican colleagues treat him with suspicion. (Lott was known to introduce Jeffords at Singing Senators performances with the line, "And over on my left -- my left ...")

In recent years, he has voted with Democrats almost as often as he has sided with Republicans. In 2000, Jeffords supported his party's position only 55 percent of the time. In 1999, he backed the GOP on two-thirds of the floor votes -- his highest party loyalty score since he joined the Senate in 1989. In the 106th Congress, he supported President Clinton more often than any Republican senator except Lincoln Chafee of Rhode Island.

In 2000, Jeffords was one of only 10 Republicans to win an election endorsement from the Sierra Club. And early in the 107th, Jeffords made it known that he opposed President Bush's proposal for a \$1.6 trillion tax cut, arguing that it was too costly and tilted toward the rich.

Jeffords' views sometimes work against him on the issues where he should be most effective. As chairman of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, Jeffords should have taken center stage in 2000 when the Senate tried to reauthorize and rewrite the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the main federal education law. Instead, he took a back seat to Republican Judd Gregg of New Hampshire, who reshaped Jeffords' bill in committee so that it was more to the liking of the panel's conservative Republican members. With their support, Gregg added a block grant demonstration project that would have let 15 states use federal funds for any educational purpose.

Jeffords thought that approach threw too much control to the states without demanding anything in return; his original bill would have allowed states to combine federal funds designated for specific programs -- but with more oversight by the Department of Education and a guarantee that Title I funds for disadvantaged students would continue to go to low-income school districts. Rather than oppose Gregg, Jeffords voted "present," allowing the bill to move forward and reach the Senate floor. It never got any further: Lott pulled the measure from the floor after a week of debate when he could not round up enough votes to block a proposed Democratic gun control amendment.

In 1998, Jeffords had suffered another embarrassing defeat when he was unable to corral enough votes in his committee to advance legislation that would have subjected the tobacco industry to tougher regulation by the Food and Drug Administration. Stymied by Republicans, a clearly upset Jeffords took the unusual step of pulling the bill from consideration.

Still, the Vermont lawmaker has had moments of triumph in recent years, notably with legislation affecting people with disabilities. He and Democrat Edward M. Kennedy of Massachusetts teamed up in 1999 to win passage of legislation to help individuals with disabilities go to work without losing their health care coverage. The law allows workers with disabilities to stay on Medicare longer and lets states create an option for them to buy into Medicaid. In doing so, it tackles one of the biggest factors -- the fear of losing insurance for expensive health care needs -- that contributes to a nearly 70 percent unemployment rate among people with disabilities.

When Jeffords was next in line to chair the Labor and Human Resources Committee in the 105th Congress after the retirement of Nancy Landon Kassebaum, R-Kan., there were rumblings of a possible challenge from the right. It would not have been the first time: In 1983, Jeffords' fifth term in the House, conservative opposition kept him from becoming the top Republican on the Agriculture Committee. In 1997, however, Lott backed the Vermonter despite calls to give the post to someone more conservative.

Jeffords most often attracts notice when he goes against the GOP on social issues. In 1994, he was the only Republican senator to cosponsor Clinton's proposed overhaul of the nation's health care system. The plan was so completely discredited by attacks from other Republicans that it was a major factor in the GOP's takeover of Congress that year.

His interest in education programs has manifested itself not just in legislation, but through a Washington, D.C., literacy program he created that now involves 1,500 students, 10 senators and the sponsorship of major Washington corporations. As part of the initiative, Jeffords tutors at a Capitol Hill school every week.

Jeffords has deep roots in his state. His father was the chief justice of the Vermont Supreme Court, and the family's presence reaches back to 1792. After serving a term in the Vermont Senate and four years as the state's attorney general, Jeffords suffered his sole political defeat, losing a GOP gubernatorial primary in 1972. The party hierarchy viewed him as too liberal, and he lost by less than 5,000 votes.

Jeffords bounced back in 1974, winning a three-way primary for Vermont's lone House seat. He went on to win the general election with 53 percent of the vote over former Burlington Mayor Francis Cain -- a seat he held for 14 years. In 1988, he decided to cash in on his status as heir apparent to the Senate seat held by Republican Robert T. Stafford, who was retiring. Jeffords entered the general election an overwhelming favorite and was never threatened, winning 68 percent of the vote.

In 1994, he faced a tough challenge for a second term from Democratic opponent Jan Backus, an underfunded liberal who had scored an upset victory in the primary. Jeffords eventually won the general election by 10 percentage points.

By 2000, Jeffords faced a new challenge: a politically sensitive run against Democrat Ed Flanagan, the first openly gay Senate candidate ever nominated by a major party. It came in the same year that Vermont became the first state to enact a civil union law, allowing gay couples to receive benefits similar to those available under marriage -- provoking a backlash in the form of a "Take Back Vermont" movement. Still, neither candidate made an issue of either the law or Flanagan's sexual orientation, and Jeffords retained the backing of gay rights groups. He won re-election with 66 percent of the vote.

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CQ State Description

(Updated: August 1994)

Vermont

Some things about Vermont remain immutable. The least- populous state in the northeast and third-smallest in the nation, it has a scenic beauty that remains largely unsullied. However, a growth spurt of more than 44 percent since 1960 has driven Vermont's population to nearly 563,000. This growth has had outsized impacts on the demographics and politics of the state.

Much of the population increase stemmed from young urbanites who resettled here and brought with them their liberal politics. These upscale emigres joined remnants of the 1960s counterculture who had settled in the state in the early 1970s, and a state that had been drifting to the political left became firmly planted there.

Shattered by these developments was Vermont's reputation as the sturdiest bastion of Yankee Republicanism. Democrat Patrick J. Leahy, first elected to the Senate in 1974, earned a fourth term in 1992, and Democrat Howard Dean won the governorship with 75 percent of the vote, the largest Democratic gubernatorial victory in state history.

Dean, as lieutenant governor, inherited the top job upon 1991 death of GOP Gov. Richard A. Snelling. Dean has a consensus-oriented style and enough of an image as a moderate that his 1992 winning coalition included many centrist Republicans.

Though the new politics of Vermont has seen the Democratic Party grow in strength, moderate Republicans can still gain and hold statewide office.

In 1988, moderate Republican James M. Jeffords -- then the state's at-large House member -- won the Senate campaign to succeed like-minded Republican Robert T. Stafford. In 1990, Snelling -- who was governor from 1977 to 1985 -- regained the office by pledging fiscal responsibility in the midst of a state budget crisis. Although Snelling's death put the governorship in Democratic hands, Snelling's widow, Barbara, ran for lieutenant governor in 1992 as a Republican and won easily.

There is a vocal conservative element within the state GOP -- the Vermont Republican Assembly -- but it is widely perceived as too far to the right to thrive in general elections. The conservatives, however, sometimes can turn out enough loyalists to take primary nominations away from moderates, who are not always as effective at grass-roots organizing.

Although Vermont has moved away from its historical voting patterns, its modern political persona retains an element of the state's stubborn independence. In 1992, nearly a quarter of the Vermonters voting for president picked independent Ross Perot; and in the House, self-described socialist Bernard Sanders won re-election to a second term as the state's at-large member. Sanders received 58 percent of the statewide vote.

In his 1990 House campaign, Sanders succeeded in portraying the GOP incumbent -- himself a liberal Republican -- as a big- business shill and tool of the Establishment. Sanders' populist message fueled his rise, but his credibility was enhanced by his tenure as mayor of Burlington, where during the 1980s he shepherded the state's most populous city through a period of prosperity.

Although its manufacturing heritage has faded, Burlington (population 39,000) enjoyed good times in the last decade, thanks in large part to a boom in its electronics industry. However, that industry was hit hard by the 1990-1991 recession, and Burlington has been through the same economic slump that all of New England has endured. The Burlington area has been especially

jarred by large-scale layoffs at companies such as Digital Equipment Corp.

Statewide, both the construction and manufacturing industries have seen a total loss of about 12,000 jobs over the past four years. Few of the lost electronics and defense-related jobs are expected to return. To help fill the vacuum, state officials are trying to make tourism more of a year-round source of income by marketing Vermont as more than just an appealing ski-season destination for visitors.

Burlington and Chittenden County cast about one-fourth of the state's vote; Democratic candidates for statewide office can usually count on strong support here. Bill Clinton won a majority in Chittenden County in 1992.

Clinton's best 1992 showing -- 54 percent -- came in southern Vermont's Windham County, which borders Massachusetts. Other small urban centers such as Montpelier and Rutland, reliably Republican in bygone times, now have more Democrats.

At the village level and in most rural areas, Yankee Vermonters still tend to vote Republican, particularly in the northeastern part of the state, which has been less affected by development.

STATE OVERVIEW

(Updated November 2000)

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Gov. Howard Dean (D)

First elected: Succeeded Richard A. Snelling, R, on Aug. 14, 1991; elected 1992

Length of term: 2 years

Term expires: 1/03

Salary: \$80,724

Hometown: Burlington

Born: November 17, 1948; East Hampton, N.Y.

Education: Yale U., B.A. 1971; Albert Einstein

College of Medicine, M.D. 1978.

Military Service: None.

Career: Physician.

Family: Wife, Judy Steinberg M.D.; two children.

Religion: Congregationalist.

Political Highlights: Vt. House, 1983-87 (assistant minority leader, 1985-86); lieutenant governor, 1987-91.

Address: 109 State St., Montpelier, Vermont 05609.

Telephone: (802) 828-3333; Fax: (802) 828-3339.

Web: www.state.vt.us/governor

2000 general election results (nearly complete but unofficial):

Howard Dean (D) 147,105 50.6%

Ruth Dwyer (R) 110,941 38.1%

1998 general election results:

Howard Dean (D) 121,425 55.8%

Ruth Dwyer (R) 89,726 41.2%

Lt. Gov. Douglas Racine (D)

First elected: 1998

Length of term: 2 years

Term expires: 1/03

Salary: \$40,289

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Committees, Leadership Positions and Caucus Memberships

(Updated: May 2001)

Committee and Subcommittee Assignments

- Finance (7th of 10 Republicans)
 - Health Care
 - International Trade
 - Social Security & Family Policy
- Health, Education, Labor & Pensions (chairman)
 - Aging
 - Employment, Safety & Training
- Special Aging (2nd of 10 Republicans)
- Veterans' Affairs (4th of 7 Republicans)

Leadership Positions and Party Committee Assignments

No reported leadership or party committee positions.

Selected Caucus and Special Organization Memberships

- Congressional Coalition on Adoption
- Congressional Friends of Human Rights Monitors (steering committee)
- Congressional Sportsman's Caucus
- Northeast-Midwest Senate Coalition (co-chair -- New England Task Force)
- Senate Centrist Coalition
- Senate National Guard Caucus
- Senate Rural Health Caucus
- Senate Wednesday Group

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Businesses & Major Employers

(Updated: April 1999)

[See House profiles for information on major employers in individual districts.]

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Higher Education & Media

(Updated: April 1999)

[See House profiles for information on higher education and media in individual districts.]

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Elections & Campaign Finance

(Updated: April 2001)

Election	Candidate	Votes	Percent
2000 General	James M. Jeffords (R)	189,133	65.6%
	Ed Flanagan (D)	73,352	25.4%
	Charles W. Russell (CNSTP)	10,079	3.5%
	Rick Hubbard (I)	5,366	1.9%
	Billy Greer (VG)	4,889	1.7%
	Hugh Douglas (LIBERT)	3,843	1.3%
	Jerry Levy (LU)	1,477	0.5%
	write-ins	361	0.1%
2000 Primary	James M. Jeffords (R)	60,234	77.8%
	Rick Hubbard (R)	15,991	20.7%

Year	Voting Participation	Presidential Support		Party Unity		Conservative Coalition	
		Support	Oppose	Support	Oppose	Support	Oppose
1988	91%	29%	71%	32%	68%	49%	51%
1987	93%	26%	74%	34%	66%	48%	52%
1986	98%	41%	58%	29%	69%	44%	56%
1985	91%	30%	56%	37%	53%	33%	55%
1984	83%	47%	42%	31%	52%	32%	49%
1983	90%	41%	51%	31%	60%	27%	67%
1982	89%	44%	47%	35%	58%	38%	55%
1981	92%	41%	55%	35%	55%	24%	68%
1980	84%	55%	31%	48%	41%	34%	56%
1979	87%	50%	39%	43%	44%	40%	52%
1978	90%	60%	33%	48%	46%	39%	56%
1977	90%	68%	25%	43%	51%	36%	57%
1976	93%	35%	53%	42%	54%	48%	46%
1975	94%	64%	34%	48%	46%	44%	49%

Explanation of Vote Studies

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CQ Key Votes

(Updated: January 2001)

2000

- Clear combined legislative branch and unconfereced Treasury-Postal spending bill (Senate vote 253) N
- Grant China permanent normal trade status (Senate vote 251) N
- Sanction China for selling nuclear weapons in bill to give China permanent normal trade relations status (Senate vote 242) Y
- Cut taxes for married couples (Senate vote 226) Y
- Kill amendment delaying implementation of an anti-missile defense system (Senate vote 178) N
- Approve GOP managed care plan, including limited right to sue plans for damages in federal court (Senate vote 166) Y
- Approve GOP plan to restrict use of genetic information by health insurers (Senate vote 165) Y
- Limit funding for anti-drug campaign in Colombia (Senate vote 139) N
- Include gender, sexual orientation and disability in federal Y

- hate crime protections ([Senate vote 136](#))
- Block requirement that "527" political groups disclose contribution and expenditure information ([Senate vote 122](#)) N
- Oppose effort to terminate Kosovo mission ([Senate vote 105](#)) Y
- Extend certain tariff benefits to the nations of the Caribbean, Central America and sub-Saharan Africa ([Senate vote 98](#)) Y
- Override veto on nuclear waste disposal at Yucca Mountain site in Nevada ([Senate vote 88](#)) Y
- Limit fiscal 2001 discretionary spending to \$600.3 billion ([Senate vote 85](#)) N
- Overhaul bankruptcy law and increase minimum wage ([Senate vote 5](#)) Y

1999

- Remove barriers among banking, securities and insurance companies ([Senate vote 354](#)) Y
- Support Roe v. Wade right to abortion ([Senate vote 337](#)) Y
- Prohibit national political parties from collecting "soft money" donations ([Senate vote 331](#)) Y
- Ratify nuclear weapons testing treaty ([Senate vote 325](#)) Y
- Allow study of tougher automobile fuel efficiency standards ([Senate vote 275](#)) Y
- Block effort to allow farm and medicine exports to Cuba ([Senate vote 251](#)) N
- Reduce federal taxes by \$792 billion over 10 years ([Senate vote 247](#)) Y
- Approve GOP proposal to increase rights of patients in managed-care health plans ([Senate vote 210](#)) Y
- Kill amendment to prohibit deployment of ground troops to Kosovo without congressional approval ([Senate vote 145](#)) N
- Require criminal background checks for purchases at gun shows ([Senate vote 134](#)) N
- Kill amendment authorizing state grants to hire teachers and reduce class size ([Senate vote 41](#)) Y
- Convict President Clinton on impeachment Article I, alleging grand jury perjury ([Senate vote 17](#)) N
- Remove President Clinton from office for obstruction of justice ([Senate vote 18](#)) N
- Dismiss impeachment charges against President Clinton ([Senate vote 4](#)) N

1998

- Clear \$500 billion-plus omnibus spending bill ([Senate vote 314](#)) Y
- Ban "partial-birth" abortions ([Senate vote 277](#)) N
- Kill proposal to limit president's ability to impose economic sanctions ([Senate vote 201](#)) N
- Prohibit same-sex military barracks and basic training ([Senate vote 180](#)) N

- Approve tax-sheltered education savings accounts (Senate vote 169) N
- Limit debate on bill to increase tobacco restrictions (Senate vote 161) Y
- Expand visa program for skilled workers (Senate vote 141) Y
- Limit NATO expansion to Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic (Senate vote 112) Y
- Provide \$17.9 billion for the International Monetary Fund (Senate vote 44) Y
- Limit debate on McCain-Feingold plan to overhaul campaign finance laws (Senate vote 16) Y
- Ban human cloning (Senate vote 10) N

1997

- Authorize president to make fast-track trade pacts (Senate vote 292) Y
- Overturn line-item vetoes of 36 military projects (Senate vote 287) Y
- Create educational savings accounts (Senate vote 288) Y
- Support campaign finance overhaul (Senate vote 267) Y
- Earmark most NEA funds for state block grants (Senate vote 246) N
- Approve means-based testing for Medicare insurance premiums (Senate vote 113) Y
- Approve GOP budget to cut spending and taxes (Senate vote 92) Y
- Ban "partial birth" abortions (Senate vote 71) N
- Allow workers to choose between overtime and compensatory time (Senate vote 68) Y
- Approve chemical weapons ban (Senate vote 51) Y
- Approve interim nuclear waste repository (Senate vote 42) Y
- Approve balanced-budget constitutional amendment (Senate vote 24) Y

1996

- Ban most partial-birth abortions (Senate vote 301) N
- Prohibit job discrimination based on sexual orientation (Senate vote 281) Y
- Replace federal welfare guarantee with block grants to the states (Senate vote 262) Y
- Establish a temporary nuclear waste storage site in Nevada (Senate vote 259) Y
- Exempt small businesses from minimum wage increase (Senate vote 183) N
- Consider a bill overhauling campaign finance laws (Senate vote 168) Y
- Approve a constitutional amendment to require a balanced federal budget (Senate vote 158) Y
- Bipartisan plan to balance the budget in seven years (Senate vote 150) Y

Interest Group Ratings

(Updated: February 2001)

Year	AFL-CIO	ADA	CCUS	ACU
2000	38%	55%	73%	36%
1999	22%	45%	76%	40%
1998	38%	55%	89%	24%
1997	0%	45%	100%	21%
1996	43%	50%	62%	45%
1995	36%	55%	76%	23%
1994	50%	85%	50%	12%
1993	40%	60%	64%	38%
1992	56%	65%	60%	27%
1991	50%	65%	22%	10%
1990	44%	72%	25%	26%
1989	40%	40%	71%	44%

House Service:

Year	AFL-CIO	ADA	CCUS	ACU
1988	92%	70%	54%	21%
1987	50%	68%	67%	26%
1986	71%	60%	56%	14%
1985	65%	55%	59%	16%
1984	18%	60%	50%	29%
1983	50%	65%	55%	27%
1982	45%	65%	53%	10%
1981	40%	60%	53%	57%
1980	18%	67%	79%	--
1979	65%	63%	47%	--
1978	30%	40%	56%	--
1977	62%	75%	50%	--
1976	48%	55%	32%	--
1975	50%	68%	47%	--

Source: Compiled by Congressional Quarterly, based on information provided by each participating group.

Interest Group Descriptions

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Post Offices & Zip Codes