



RICHARD J. DURBIN

United States Senator

Dick Durbin (Democrat) is Illinois' 47th U.S. Senator from Illinois. First elected to the Senate in 1996 to fill the seat vacated by his political mentor, the late U.S. Senator Paul Simon, Durbin was re-elected in 2002 and 2008. He was elected Assistant Minority Leader in 2004 and currently serves as Assistant Majority Leader, or Majority Whip, the second-highest ranking position in the Senate. His election to leadership in December 2004 marked only the fifth time in history that a Senator from Illinois has served as a Senate leader.

Senator Durbin is the first Illinois Senator in more than a quarter century to serve on the powerful Senate Appropriations Committee. In his decade on the committee, he has helped secure funding for everything from veterans care and schools to highways and health-care clinics. In 2013, Senator Durbin became chair of the Appropriations Committee's Subcommittee on Defense, which controls nearly half the nation's annual discretionary budget. The role is an important one as Illinois is home to Naval Station Great Lakes near Chicago, the Rock Island Arsenal and Scott Air Force Base near Belleville. He also has a seat on the Judiciary, Foreign Relations and Rules Committees, and serves as chair of the Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights and Human Rights.

During his three terms in the Senate, Durbin has focused on economic development, education, transportation and access to affordable, quality health care. He has been a strong advocate for working families, striving to promote economic growth, enhance public education, improve our transportation infrastructure, advance medical research and public health, reduce crime and protect the environment. He also has pushed to keep the Social Security system strong, reform campaign financing, and control rising energy and health-care costs.

In 1988, Durbin authored landmark legislation to ban smoking on commercial airline flights. He also has worked to protect children from tobacco marketing and gun violence. He introduced gun-safety legislation that holds adults responsible if they fail to lock up their firearms and the guns are subsequently used by a child to kill or injure another person. Durbin also has been a champion of Illinois farmers and a proponent of the research and use of ethanol as a viable energy product.

In 2006, Senator Durbin was recognized as "One of America's 10 Best Senators" by *Time* magazine.

Durbin was born Nov. 21, 1944, in East St. Louis. He received his bachelor's degree in foreign service and economics from Georgetown University in 1966 and his J.D. degree from the university in 1969. He began his public service to the state of Illinois in 1982 when he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives representing the 20th Congressional District.

Senator Dick Durbin and his wife, Loretta, reside in Springfield. They have three children (one deceased) and three grandchildren.

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