



ARLEN SPECTER

UNITED STATES SENATOR, PENNSYLVANIA

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BIOGRAPHY FOR SENATOR ARLEN SPECTER

Arlen Specter was elected to the United States Senate in 1980 and is currently serving his fifth term. In 2005, Senator Specter became Pennsylvania's longest serving U.S. Senator. He is Ranking Member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, and a senior member of the Appropriations and Veterans Affairs committees.

Senator Specter has been a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee since he came to the Senate. As such, he has played an instrumental role in many of the Senate's most important issues, including the confirmations of Chief Justice John G. Roberts, Jr. and Justice Samuel Alito to serve as Associate Justice on the U.S. Supreme Court.

Senator Specter has also shepherded through the Judiciary Committee legislation on asbestos litigation reform to absolve what the Supreme Court once called an "elephantine mass" clogging our judicial system. Senator Specter has worked in a bipartisan fashion to reauthorize key provisions of the USA PATRIOT Act, an important tool in the United States' war on terror. He has also authored legislation to help consumers better protect the privacy of their personal information in the face of recurrent data security breaches across the country.

On the Judiciary Committee, Senator Specter continues to build on his foundation as a lawyer and former district attorney. He is the author of the Armed Career Criminal Act, which has been praised for its long prison terms for repeat offenders, and the Terrorist Prosecution Act, which authorizes criminal actions in U.S. Courts for assaulting, maiming or murdering Americans anywhere in the world.

As a senior member of the Appropriations Committee, Senator Specter also plays a key role as Ranking Member of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education. This subcommittee oversees federal funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH), the Centers for Disease Control, educational programs like Head Start, Pell grants, and GEAR-UP, and worker safety programs. Under his leadership, funding for education has increased by more than 130%. Senator Specter has also been instrumental in doubling the budget for NIH, which has made major advances in curing Parkinson's, cancer, heart disease and delaying the onset of Alzheimer's. Finally, Senator Specter is a strong proponent of stem cell research for the purposes of discovering knowledge that may lead to cures for these same ailments.

Strengthening our nation's security has been a long-standing priority of Senator Specter's. Thirty days after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Senator Specter drafted the legislation that established the Department of Homeland Security. While serving as Chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee in the 104th Congress, he authored the bill creating the

Inspector General of the Central Intelligence Agency, marking the only reform legislation to emerge from the Iran-Contra affair.

Senator Specter continues his strong advocacy for veterans, a passion born from the first veteran he even knew, his father, Harry Specter, who was wounded in World War I. As a former Chairman of the Veterans Committee, he pushed for just treatment for veterans and increased benefits. Working closely with the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, Senator Specter oversaw the opening of four new veterans outpatient clinics in Fayette, Northampton, Venango, and Warren counties and passed legislation to create a new veterans cemetery in Southeastern Pennsylvania.

A frequent visitor to all of Pennsylvania's 67 counties, Senator Specter places constituent service high on his priorities and has been instrumental on the Appropriations Committee in promoting Pennsylvania's interests in agriculture, high-tech, steel, coal, tourism, mass transit, highways and military installations.

In addition to tackling the major legislative business before the Senate, Senator Specter also engaged in a personal battle with Stage IVB Hodgkin's lymphoma cancer in 2005. He underwent nearly five months of chemotherapy, but still maintained all of his Senatorial duties, including chairing hearings, voting, and brokering important legislative initiatives. On July 22, 2005, Senator Specter received his last chemotherapy treatment and has since received a clean bill of health.

Senator Specter was born to immigrant parents in Wichita, Kansas, and grew up in the small town of Russell, Kansas. He is a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and served as an editor of the Yale Law Journal. He began his career in public service as an Assistant Philadelphia District Attorney. While serving in that position, he was named Assistant Counsel on the Warren Commission investigation into President Kennedy's assassination. Two years later, Senator Specter was elected District Attorney of Philadelphia at the age of 35.

Senator Specter lives in Philadelphia with his wife Joan. They have two sons, Shanin and Steve, and four grandchildren, Silvi, Perri, Lilli, and Hatti.