



## PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS 2016: PROFILE OF SENATOR TED CRUZ

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### **Personal Background:**

Senator Ted Cruz was elected to the US Senate from Texas in November 2012, replacing fellow Republican Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison. He is member of the Senate Committee on Armed Services; the Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation; the Committee on the Judiciary; the Joint Economic Committee; and the Committee on Rules and Administration. Cruz attended Princeton University and Harvard University.

Cruz's rise to prominence occurred in September 2013 when he held a 21-hour filibuster on the Senate floor in favor of defunding the Affordable Care Act, commonly called Obamacare. In his first two years in the Senate Cruz had an almost perfect voting record, and has become the leading conservative voice on a number of policy issues, from fiscal to social to foreign policy matters. He has led the conservative fight against Obamacare, guns, immigration and foreign policy to mention a few.

Cruz is not popular among his Senate colleagues. Indeed, he proudly touts that he did not come to Washington to make friends and as a result has few friends. He has shown unbelievable disrespect toward Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell (R-Kentucky), by calling him a liar on the floor of the Senate. Cruz's insult violated a sacrosanct Senate custom which discourages any personal criticisms or accusations of or by a fellow Senator.

Cruz's announcement on March 23, 2015 that he would run for the Republican presidential nomination was not taken seriously at first. That perception changed when he emerged as the Republican victor in the February 1 Iowa Caucus taking 27.6 percent of the vote, beating

Donald Trump, his main adversary, by slightly more than 3 points. During the week leading up to the Caucus pundits predicted Trump would win but Cruz had been quietly building support by appealing to evangelicals and his first place showing was not a big surprise, despite the pundits' predictions.

Cruz along with Republican presidential candidate Senator Marco Rubio (R-Florida) is battling for second place in Tuesday's New Hampshire primary on February 9, 2016. Donald Trump continues to hold the lead with 33 percent according to a CNN/WMUR poll. That same poll shows Rubio with 16 percent and Cruz with 14 percent. However, Rubio's poor performance in the February 6, 2016 Republican debate in Manchester, New Hampshire could catapult Cruz to second place, possibly ensuring that he remains in the race to the end. Whether he beats Trump, or another possible emerging front-runner, for the nomination remains to be seen.

Cruz was born on December 22, 1970 in Calgary, Canada. His mother, Eleanor Darragh, was an American-citizen, while his father, Rafael Cruz, was not. According to Cruz's campaign, his mother lived in Canada under a work permit and never applied for Canadian citizenship or permanent residence. Cruz instantly acquired US citizenship when born and then moved to the United States at the age of four. In 2013 he released his birth certificate – which prompted the *Dallas Morning News* to discover that Cruz was also a citizen of Canada based on his birthplace. Cruz, who said he was until then unaware of his dual status, subsequently renounced his Canadian citizenship.

Like Obama, questions have arisen as to Cruz's eligibility to run for President. Among the qualifications to run for president of the United States is the requirement that a candidate must be a "natural born citizen". Most legal experts have interpreted that to be anyone who is a citizen at birth and who did not need to undergo a naturalization process to obtain citizenship – a definition under which Cruz would qualify. Still, there are those who question his eligibility. Donald Trump has led the charge on this point and has suggested he might sue Cruz in the US Supreme Court. However, the US Supreme Court has never addressed the

question of eligibility for those seeking the presidency with regard to citizenship. It is highly unlikely the Court would even take up the case and a legal challenge from Trump, or anyone else, would be difficult.

### **Political Platform:**

Cruz has been consistently conservative throughout his career and his platform reflects this conservatism.

***Immigration:*** Cruz has adopted a hardline stance on immigration issues and opposes comprehensive immigration reform, including amnesty for illegal immigrants. He opposes the Obama Administration's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (**DACA**); a program protects undocumented youth who came to the United States as children from deportation. Cruz has demanded an end to DACA as a prerequisite for even the most minor immigration legislation. However, according to some Republicans who worked with him, during the George W. Bush Administration, and as a board member of the Washington-based Hispanic Alliance for Prosperity Institute, Cruz helped craft policies to allow undocumented immigrants to stay in the US and pursue legal status, though none of those efforts granted automatic amnesty to undocumented workers. Like Trump, Cruz also favors building a wall along the entire US-Mexico border to keep out illegal immigrants.

***Trade:*** Cruz has been labeled by the libertarian Cato Institute Center for Trade Policy Studies as a free trade advocate. He initially was a supporter for trade promotion authority, also known as "fast-track" to speed up the Trans-Pacific Partnership Free Trade Agreement. Although he initially supported the measure, he has flipped position and now opposes the Agreement. Cruz also opposes funding the Export-Import Bank, which provides low-cost financing to foreign buyers of American goods and services.

***Role of Government:*** Like many conservatives, Cruz want to decrease the size of government significantly and eliminate the IRS. He also has pledged to eliminate four cabinet level agencies: The Departments of Energy, Education, Commerce and Housing and Urban Development (**HUD**).

**Capital Punishment:** Cruz favors the death penalty. In September 2015, after His Holiness Pope Francis called for the global abolition of capital punishment in a speech before a joint session of Congress, Cruz said that he disagreed with the Pope and Catholic teachings against the death penalty.

**Civil Liberties and Electronic Surveillance:** In 2015, Cruz voted in favor of the USA Freedom Act, which reauthorized the USA Patriot Act but reformed some of its provisions. In 2014, Cruz expressed agreement with Democrats the sweep of the surveillance has been far too broad with respect to law-abiding citizens. Cruz believes Americans want to see far greater scrutiny on bad guys, people that we have reason to suspect may be planning a terrorist attack and "far more protection" for law-abiding citizens.

**Gun Rights:** Cruz is an avid supporter of the right of Americans to own guns. In 2013 he threatened to filibuster any legislation that would entail gun control or require additional background checks. Cruz also has been pressing the Armed Services Committee to hold hearing on whether service members should be allowed to carry concealed firearms on military bases. He believes service members should be better equipped to protect themselves from incidents like the Navy Yard and Fort Hood mass shootings.

**Climate Change:** Cruz adamantly rejects the scientific consensus on climate change, calling environmental advocates concerned with global warming trends "flatearthers." Cruz erroneously claims that satellite data demonstrate that there has been no significant warming whatsoever for 17 years. Scientists have disputed this statements and presented evidence of the global warming trend. As chairman of the Senate Commerce Subcommittee on Space, Science and Competitiveness, Cruz has criticized NASA for conducting what he considers to be too much research on climate change and Earth science, stating that research into these fields are not part of the core function of NASA.

**Energy:** Cruz received more than \$1 million in campaign donations from the oil and gas industry since 2011. Cruz is a critic of the EPA, calling it "unbelievably abusive" and "populated by zealots," and has accused the Obama Administration of waging a war on

coal. Cruz opposes EPA's Clean Power Plan, which aims to cut carbon emissions from power plants; Cruz accused President Obama of engaging in a lawless and radical attempt to destabilize the nation's energy system and called the plan flatly unconstitutional.

Cruz is a supporter of the controversial Keystone XL Pipeline, and along with every other Republican senator was a cosponsor of legislation in support of the pipeline. Cruz has offered amendments seeking to lift ban on US crude oil exports and to expedite approval of export permits for liquid natural gas, issues which divide Republicans.

### **Ted Cruz on the Middle East:**

Cruz's views of the Middle East are nothing short of radical. He claims he is somewhere between Senator Rand Paul's (R-Kentucky) call for isolationism and Senator John McCain's (R-Arizona) call for intervention but his statements often belie this belief. Cruz supports "utterly destroying" ISIS, and that the terrorist group should be bombed into oblivion. This radical statement would do nothing to solve the complex problems of the Middle East but would create a political and ecological fallout on scale never before seen. More important, Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states and Iran, among others, would view such action as an act of aggression against their countries. The international community would condemn the action and the US credibility would plummet even further.

Nor does Cruz believe in nation-building. In his view, it is not the responsibility of the US to turn foreign nations into democratic utopias or to turn Iraq into Switzerland. He considers the job of the US military is to keep the US safe and killing US enemies who have declared war on the US does that.

**Syria:** In 2013, Cruz stated that America had no "dog in the fight" during the Syrian Civil War and stated that US Armed Forces should not serve as al-Qaeda's air force. In 2014, Cruz criticized the Obama Administration for utterly missing the threat of ISIS and that the Administration was working to arm Syrian rebels that were fighting side by side with ISIS, the face of evil. Cruz has called for bombing ISIS, but accused the Administration of not being able to tell the good guys from the bad guys in a plan to arm the moderate Syrian

opposition. He strongly believes that the plan to defeat ISIS should not be "laden with impractical contingencies, such as resolving the Syrian civil war".

***Syrian Refugees:*** Cruz opposes the entry of Syrian refugees into the US and has introduced legislation to prohibit the entry of refugees from Syria (and Iraq) into the US.

***Israel:*** Cruz fervently believes that those who hate Israel hate America. Those who hate Jews hate Christians. His belief is consistent with US Evangelical Christians who strongly support Israel and the US-Israel relationship. If elected Cruz will continue the US-Israel relationship and if possible, even strengthen it. Cruz also supports moving the US Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem.

***Israel-Palestinians:*** Cruz has harshly criticized the Obama Administration's handling of the latest failed round of the Israeli-Palestinian peace talks. Cruz said a long-lasting peace agreement is unlikely unless and until Palestinian leadership agrees to acknowledge the right of Israel to exist as Jewish state, and until they renounce terrorism. He also excoriated Secretary of State John Kerry for his private warning that Israel could become an apartheid state, calling the remark grossly inaccurate and deeply offensive.

***Iran:*** Cruz has been an adamant opponent of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the nuclear agreement with Iran negotiated by the US and other world powers, calling it "catastrophic" and "disastrous." Cruz had previously attempted, without success, to amend the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015 to require affirmative congressional approval of any agreement with Iran before sanctions relief can occur. Cruz asserted that the agreement with Iran would lead to the deaths of millions of Americans. Cruz also said that the Iran agreement trusts the Iranians to inspect themselves and that the agreement would facilitate and accelerate Iran acquiring a nuclear weapon. According to supporters of the JCPOA, neither fact is correct. If elected Cruz will seek to dismantle the JCPOA. He also has called for tougher sanctions on Iran.

**ISIS:** Cruz's answer to dealing with ISIS is simple: Bomb ISIS back to the Stone Age, a truly irresponsible statement with untold consequences for the region. However, Cruz supports congressional approval for such an action.

**The Gulf States:** Cruz has argued that undemocratic leaders, particularly those in Egypt and the Gulf states, are preferable to the prospects of Jihadists who would overthrow them in a revolution. If elected, he will continue to support Saudi Arabia, and the other GCC nations. Cruz looks to the doctrine developed by the late US Ambassador to the UN Jeanne Kirkpatrick (1926-2006) for guidance on much of his foreign policy. He draws many of his positions from her 1979 essay titled "Dictatorships and Double Standards". That essay argued that former President Jimmy Carter should have stood by America's allied dictators like the Shah of Iran, instead of doing nothing in the face of the country's Islamic revolution. Cruz believes Kirkpatrick's political doctrine that "Traditional authoritarian governments are less repressive than revolutionary autocracies" would also apply to the Gulf monarchies and Egypt.