



## **RICHARD J. DURBIN**

### **United States Senator**

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Dick Durbin (Democrat) is Illinois' 47th U.S. Senator. He was 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, 2008 and 2014. He has served as the Democratic Whip — the second-ranking position in the Democratic caucus — since December 2004 and is only the fifth Senator from Illinois to serve as a Senate Leader.

Senator Durbin is the first Illinois Senator in more than a quarter century to serve on the 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 and 2014, Durbin served as chair of the Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense, which controls nearly half of the nation's annual discretionary budget, and currently he is the vice chair of the subcommittee. The role is an important one as Illinois is home to Naval Station Great Lakes, the Rock Island Arsenal, and Scott Air Force Base.

Senator Durbin is also a senior member of the Judiciary Committee and Rules and Administration Committee. He is the ranking Democrat on the Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration. During his terms in the Senate, Durbin has focused on economic development, education, transportation, immigration, criminal justice reform, medical research, and access to affordable, quality health care. He has also pushed to keep the Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security programs strong; reform campaign finance; protect the environment; and control rising energy costs.

In 2019, Senator Durbin joined the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry for the 116th Congress. Illinois is one of the top agriculture states in the nation, and Senator Durbin pushes for Illinois agricultural priorities that strengthen the economy and rural communities across the state.

In 1988, Senator Durbin authored landmark legislation to ban smoking on commercial airline flights. Durbin has also worked to protect children from the harm caused by tobacco and gun violence, and he has authored several pieces of legislation to address both the causes and effects of the nation's opioid epidemic. Senator Durbin has been a champion of Illinois farmers and a proponent of the research and use of ethanol as a viable energy product.

Senator Durbin makes approximately 50 round trips a year between Washington and Illinois. Durbin was born on Nov. 21, 1944, in East St. Louis, Illinois. He received both a bachelor's in foreign service and economics in 1966 and a J.D. in 1969 from Georgetown University. 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 Durbin and his wife, Loretta, reside in Springfield. They have three children (one deceased) and six grandchildren.

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