



# Russ Feingold

United States Senator



## Biography of U.S. Senator Russ Feingold

*"[Feingold] showed that a politician need not  
shelve his conscience to achieve success."*

—*"A Principled Win," The Washington Post, November 5, 1998*

Russ Feingold is an independent voice for Wisconsin and the nation in the United States Senate - an effective legislator who works across party lines, and a respected leader in both domestic and foreign policy.

A leading defender of privacy and personal freedoms, Feingold cast the Senate's lone vote against the USA PATRIOT Act, and has fought to change the Act to protect the civil liberties of law-abiding Americans. He strongly opposed the President's decision to go to war in Iraq, and was the first Senator to call for a timetable to redeploy troops out of Iraq. Well known for pushing through campaign finance reform in the Senate with Republican Senator John McCain, Feingold has also been a tireless advocate for restoring fiscal discipline in Congress and reducing the federal deficit.

### Fighting for Wisconsin

*"The nation needs more leaders similar to Feingold - a Democrat in  
the Wisconsin Progressive Party tradition - who don't just talk the talk,  
they walk the walk."*

—*"When Wis. Talks, Feingold Listens," The Wausau Daily Herald, June 3, 2001*

*"Feingold shows a knack for thinking through issues on a case-by-case basis  
instead of marching in a partisan parade."*

—*"Feingold Sets the Bar a Little Higher," The Door County Advocate, June 28, 2002*

Since he was first elected to the Senate in 1992, Russ Feingold has built a record as a staunch advocate for working families. He supports health care for all Americans, and is working to stop the flow of jobs overseas and strengthen our public education system. Feingold considers the fight against those who attacked us on 9/11 to be our top national security priority, and has worked to give more resources to first responders on the front lines at home.

Feingold stays in touch with Wisconsin's communities by visiting each of the state's 72 counties every year to hold his Listening Sessions. At these town hall style meetings, Feingold hears directly about the issues that matter to the people of Wisconsin, from supporting Wisconsin's farmers to protecting our environment.

Some of Feingold's recent legislative achievements include:

- Securing benefits for families of injured service members, and improving transition services for veterans returning home.

### **Biographical Highlights**

- Elected to the U.S. Senate in 1992; Re-elected in 1998 and 2004
- U.S. Senate Committee Assignments: Judiciary, Foreign Relations, Budget and Special Committee on Intelligence
- Elected to the Wisconsin State Senate in 1982; Re-elected 1986 and 1990
- Practicing Attorney, Madison, Wisconsin, 1979 to 1985, at Foley & Lardner and La Follette & Sinykin

### **Education**

- Harvard University Law School, Juris Doctor with Honors, 1979
- Rhodes Scholar, Final Honours School of Jurisprudence, Magdalen College, Oxford University, Bachelor of Arts with Honours, 1977
- University of Wisconsin - Madison, Phi Beta Kappa, Bachelor of Arts with Honors, 1975
- Janesville Craig High School, Janesville, Wisconsin, 1971

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- Increasing funding for dental health care, and authoring a law that provides grants for states to increase public access to defibrillators for victims of cardiac arrest.
- Boosting resources for emergency managers, and spearheading successful Senate efforts to ensure every state in the country has a team trained to respond in the event of a weapons of mass destruction attack.
- Working to designate the Gaylord Nelson Wilderness Area in Wisconsin's Apostle Islands, which was completed in 2005.

### **A National Leader in Domestic and Foreign Policy**

Senator Feingold is proud to represent Wisconsin, and carry forward the state's progressive tradition, in the U.S. Senate. In addition to the landmark Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act, Feingold's long record of accomplishment on reform issues includes his key leadership role in the successful efforts to pass the congressional gift ban and lobbying disclosure legislation, as well as work on many other reform initiatives.

Feingold is also a recognized leader in the fight to cut wasteful spending and reduce the nation's growing deficit. A ten-time winner of the Concord Coalition's deficit hawk award, he is the lead author of legislation to institute Pay-As-You-Go legislation to enforce limits on federal spending in Congress. As a member of the Senate Budget Committee, he has worked with Republican colleagues to reform budget rules and restore fiscal sanity to the congressional budgeting process.

A member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, Feingold has brought critical attention to the need to combat terrorism without undermining the privacy and civil liberties of law-abiding Americans. Feingold also has played a lead role in protecting the rights of consumers and preserving access to the courts. As the ranking member of the Subcommittee on the Constitution, Feingold works to protect the civil rights of all Americans, including fighting against discrimination in the workplace and in the criminal justice system.

As a member of the Foreign Relations Committee, and the Ranking Member of the Africa Subcommittee, Feingold has worked to keep the fight against terrorism on track. Feingold opposed the war with Iraq because he understood from the start that it would direct critical resources away from the fight against the forces that attacked us September 11, 2001, and their allies. Feingold works to focus attention and diplomatic resources on African countries that may be havens for terrorist activity. Finally, he has long been an advocate for making human rights a priority in our foreign relations, in Africa and around the world.

In 2006, Feingold also became a member of the Senate Intelligence Committee, where he has continued his work to strengthen national security, and to build a more effective and comprehensive approach to the fight against terrorism. He also has worked to ensure that Congress performs adequate oversight of intelligence matters in the executive branch.

### **Background**

In 1917, Feingold's family settled in Janesville, Wisconsin, where he was born to parents Leon and Sylvia on March 2, 1953. Feingold graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1975, received a degree from Oxford University as a Rhodes Scholar in 1977, and then went on to Harvard Law School, where he earned his degree in 1979.

In 1982, in his first try for elective office, Feingold defeated a longtime incumbent and was elected to the Wisconsin State Senate for the 27th District. Feingold was re-elected in 1986 and 1990. When Feingold first ran for the U.S. Senate in 1992, he won a tough three-way primary, and went on to defeat a two-term incumbent. Feingold was reelected to the Senate in 1998 and 2004.

Senator Feingold has two daughters, Jessica and Ellen. Feingold is a member of Beth Hillel Temple in Kenosha, Wisconsin. He lives in Middleton, Wisconsin.

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