

SENATOR THOMAS R. CARPER – BIOGRAPHY

Born in West Virginia and raised in Virginia, Senator Tom Carper attended The Ohio State University on a Navy R.O.T.C. scholarship, graduating in 1968 with a B.A. in economics. He went on to complete five years of service as a naval flight officer, serve three tours of duty in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War, and continued to serve in the Naval Reserve as a P-3 aircraft mission commander until retiring with the rank of captain in 1991 after 23 years of military service.

With the war winding down in Southeast Asia, Tom Carper moved to Delaware in 1973 where he earned his M.B.A. at the University of Delaware.

His career in public service began in 1976 when he was elected to the first of three terms as Delaware's state treasurer at the age of 29 at a time when the state of Delaware had the worst credit rating of any state in America. Six years later, with that credit rating restored to a respectable "AA," he ran for -- and was elected -- to Delaware's at-large seat in the U.S. House of Representatives.

After serving five terms as a U.S. congressman, where he earned a reputation as a results-oriented centrist, Tom Carper was elected the 78th governor of Delaware in 1992 and served two terms in that role. As governor, he pursued a common-sense agenda that led to eight balanced budgets, tax cuts in seven of those eight years, and major increases in employment. Governor Carper led the effort to strengthen the state's "rainy day" fund and boost Delaware's credit rating to "AAA" for the first time in state history, while helping to overhaul the state's education system and to implement welfare reform initiatives in Delaware and the nation.

During his second term as governor, Tom Carper was selected by his colleagues to serve as vice-chairman, then as chairman, of the National Governors' Association (NGA). After serving as chairman, he led the NGA's 'Center for Best Practices,' which focused on developing and implementing innovative solutions to policy challenges faced by governors across the nation. From 1994-1998, he served as a member of Amtrak's board of directors and, later, as founding vice-chairman of the American Legacy Foundation to combat youth smoking and as vice-chairman of Jobs for America's Graduates, a national non-profit to reduce high school dropouts.

On Jan. 3, 2001, Governor Carper stepped down two weeks early to become Delaware's junior senator. With his re-election to the U.S. Senate on November 7, 2006, he has been elected to state-wide public office in Delaware twelve times. When Senator Biden stepped down to become vice president in January 2009, Tom Carper became Delaware's senior senator.

During more than 30 years of public service, Senator Carper has worked tirelessly to develop practical solutions to real problems. His ability to work across party lines has earned him a reputation for consensus-building that is unique in today's political climate. The Washington Post's David Broder calls him "a notably effective and non-partisan leader, admired and trusted on both sides of the aisle."

In January of 2009, Senator Carper gained a seat on the prestigious Senate Finance Committee. From this position, he authored or co-authored a number of initiatives to rein in the growth of health care costs, while improving outcomes. Among those provisions that were included in the comprehensive health care reform law were measures to combat fraud in both Medicare and Medicaid, to incentivize Americans to take some responsibility for improving their own health, to promote common sense medical malpractice reform, and to require chain restaurants to provide calories on their menus of the items they serve. In addition, Senator Carper helped lead efforts to improve access to primary care and preventive care, and to promote employer-sponsored wellness programs.

Senator Carper also retained his seats on the Environment and Public Works Committee and the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, and continues to chair the Subcommittee on Clean Air and Nuclear Safety, as well as the Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management, Government Information, Federal Services and International Security. As chair of the Clean Air and Nuclear Safety subcommittee, Senator Carper has fought tirelessly to clean our air, reduce our dependence on foreign oil and fossil fuels and to create American jobs while doing it. The senator plays an influential role in crafting comprehensive energy and climate legislation. Additionally, his position as chair of the Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management has enabled him to bring to the federal government the same common-sense agenda he pursued as governor by leading efforts to reduce wasteful spending in a host of areas, while improving the effectiveness of government programs.

In 2004, Senator Carper was named Deputy Whip - the first time since 1881 that a U.S. senator from Delaware has served in a leadership position. He held this position in the 110th Congress, and again in the 111th Congress, continuing his role as one of the leading voices of moderation within his party, advising the Senate leadership and helping to devise, coordinate and implement strategy for the Democratic caucus. Additionally, he continues to serve as co-chairman of the Senate Nuclear Caucus, the Senate Recycling Caucus and the Congressional Fire Services Caucus.

Senator Carper also serves as an honorary co-chair of Third Way, a leading centrist organization working to promote common-sense approaches to issues such as national security, economic growth and personal responsibility.

He and his wife Martha reside in Wilmington. They have two sons, Chris and Ben. He commutes by train to Washington, DC on a daily basis.