



# MIKE PENCE

VICE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

NationalJournal

## Life in Brief

**Born:** June 7, 1959

**Hometown:** Columbus, IN

**Current Residence:** Washington, DC

**Religion:** Evangelical Christian

### Education:

- BA, History, Hanover College, 1981
- JD, Indiana University – Purdue University Indianapolis School of Law, 1986

### Family:

- Wife, Karen Batten, an elementary school art teacher
- Three children

### Work History:

- Vice President of the United States, 2017-present
- Governor of Indiana, 2013-2017
- Representative from Indiana's 6<sup>th</sup> District, 2001-2013
- Radio Host of *The Mike Pence Show*, 1992-1999
- President of the Indiana Policy Review Foundation
- Attorney in private practice
- Admissions Counselor at Hanover College, 1981-1983

### Past and Present Board and Advisory Roles

- Ex officio member of the Smithsonian Institution Board of Regents

### Electoral Overview

- Won each Congressional campaign following his initial victory with >60% of the vote
- Won his 2012 gubernatorial campaign with 49.5% of the vote

## Quick Summary

**Deeply religious conservative who catapulted into national spotlight on Trump ticket. Focuses on fiscal policy such as tax cuts and reducing government spending, and social issues such as abortion. Has been known to go against party leadership regarding such issues, but has taken a supportive role since becoming Vice President**

- An insider with the political know-how to manifest President Trump's ideas into policy
- Acts as a bridge between the president's populist, passionate supporters, and the religious conservative Republican electorate
- Was known in Congress for his ability to defend and explain arguments, stemming from his background as a media figure
- Was an early advocate of the Tea Party movement, taking strict stances against taxation and government spending
- Served one term as Governor of Indiana; his priorities as Governor included tax cuts, a balanced budget, and implementing a Medicaid expansion via the Healthy Indiana Plan

## Approach and Motivations

**Ambitious politician who believes his role in government is to serve a higher power. Loyal to the Administration throughout controversies**

- Prays often, especially when confronted with a personal or political dilemma; believes that everything happens for a reason
- Has replaced his hardline stances from his days in Congress with deference to the president, earning himself an influential role
- Faced personal struggle in supporting Trump on several occasions, such as the release of Trump's remarks about sexually assaulting women on *Access Hollywood*; continued to support Trump as a candidate following the scandal, despite finding the remarks offensive
- Succinctly communicates President Trump's priorities in various media outlets

## Policy Positions and Areas of Focus

**Known for his socially and fiscally conservative policy beliefs**

**Heath Care: *Pro-life advocate who supports minimal government involvement in health insurance***

- Introduced legislation in Congress to prohibit funding to family planning entities that offer abortion services, such as Planned Parenthood
- Opposed the Affordable Care Act and the Medicare Modernization Act, as he believes such policies to be too government-involved
- Signed legislation implementing a needle exchange program as Governor to combat an HIV outbreak, despite initial hesitation

**Fiscal Policy: *Opposes government spending, as he believes it hinders economic growth***

- Opposed the Troubled Asset Relief Program and the auto industry rescue of 2008
- Denounced the 2009 Recovery Act as a failure
- Voted against Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform
- Co-sponsored a resolution to amend the Constitution to limit federal spending

**Foreign Policy: *Maintains a pro-Israel Middle East policy***

- Strong supporter of Israel; signed a law that would ban Indiana from having commercial dealings with companies boycotting Israel
- Supports sanctions against Iran, and has encouraged European allies to withdraw from the Iran nuclear deal to support U.S. sanctions

**Trade: *Has historically supported free trade***

- Voted in favor of every free trade agreement while in the House, including NAFTA and permanent normal trade relations with China
- In 2019, he criticized China's intellectual property theft, and human rights abuses, stating that these are issues that need to be addressed for an ideal trade partnership

## Core Communities

**Pence's core communities center on figures within the Administration, religious groups, and Koch-backed advocacy groups**

**Christian Organizations: *Has been heavily involved in the Christian activist community***

- Curt Smith of the Indiana Family Institute was a consultant for his 2000 Congressional campaign; the two have remained friends
- Friends with political consultant Ralph Reed, founder of the Faith and Freedom Coalition
- Considers conservative figures such as the late Paul Weyrich, co-founder of the Heritage Foundation and ALEC, as well as Evangelical leader James Dobson, to have been friends and mentors

**Administration Allies: *Aligns himself with influential figures within the Administration***

- Has had a strong working relationship with Kellyanne Conway since 2009
- Has a long history of working with Chief of Staff Marc Short, the previous Director of Legislative Affairs who has worked with Freedom Partners
- Former Chief of Staff Nick Ayers has run outside consulting groups such as America First Policies

**Koch Industries: *Has close ties to Koch Industries through campaign donations and legislative advocacy***

- Became involved with Koch Industries in 2009 through Marc Short
- Taking on of the Koch brothers' policy goals, such as promoting anti-climate tax legislation, spurred their generous donations to his political campaigns
- Americans for Prosperity, the Koch brothers' influential advocacy group, funded fiscal policy campaigns that enabled Pence to gain support
- Several former staffers have joined the Koch network, such as Emily Seidel and Matt Lloyd

### Relevant Financial Information

Pence received a large amount of contributions for his congressional and gubernatorial campaigns from retired individuals and Indiana-based businesses

#### Biggest Industry Donors (1989-2014): Congressional and Gubernatorial Campaigns

- Retired Individuals: \$670,000
- Securities & Investment: \$390,000
- Manufacturing & Distributing: \$360,000
- Health Professionals: \$340,000
- Lawyers/Law Firms: \$330,000

#### Biggest Corporate Donors (1989-2014): Congressional and Gubernatorial Campaigns

- Club for Growth (Washington, DC): \$90,000
- Cummins, Inc. (Columbus, IN): \$90,000
- Eli Lilly & Co. (Indianapolis, IN): \$70,000
- Klipsch Audio Technologies (Indianapolis, IN): \$70,000
- Associated Builders & Contractors (Washington, DC): \$60,000

#### Biggest Individual Donors (2011-2016):

- Dean White, Owner of White Lodging Services: \$775,000
- Anthony J. Moravec, Owner of Blairex Laboratories, Inc.: \$506,000
- David Hamilton Koch, Executive of Koch Industries: \$300,000
- Bob Perry, Chairman/CEO of Bob Perry Homes: \$220,000
- Mark R. Holden, CEO of A&R Logistics: \$212,500

#### Political Donations

- Contributed \$1000 each to Jim Toms, Jim Smith, and Judy Biggert for their 2010 Indiana Senate campaigns

### Publications, Media, and Speaking

Pence uses media outlets and speaking engagements to discuss the Trump Administration's policy goals as well as his personal conservative and faith-based views

#### Publications: *Pence has penned opinion pieces commenting on contentious political topics*

- "[A Partisan Impeachment, a Profile in Courage](#)," *Wall Street Journal*, Jan. 16, 2020
- "[The Choice in this Election is between Results or Resistance](#)," *USA Today*, Nov. 6, 2018
- "[Ensuring Religious Freedom in Indiana](#)," *Wall Street Journal*, Mar. 31, 2015

#### Media: *Frequently appears on national cable news outlets, representing the Trump Administration*

- Preferred Outlets: National cable news outlets such as CBS, MSNBC, ABC, and CNBC
- Favorite Subjects: Foreign policy, trade with China, health care policy, immigration, and since February 2020, the coronavirus outbreak

#### Speaking: *Has had numerous speaking engagements with conservative-leaning and faith-based groups*

- Favorite Subjects: Policy successes of the Trump administration, socially conservative politics, religious faith, foreign policy
- Preferred Audience: Conservative political organizations, faith-based groups and universities, think tanks
- Spoke at Ave Maria University about religious freedom and was commencement speaker at Liberty University in 2019
- Highlighted the positive impact the Trump Administration has made to the economy at the CPAC Conference and the Heritage Foundation Honors Gala in 2019
- Spoke about US-China relations at the Woodrow Wilson Center in 2019
- Spoke about religious faith and socially conservative values at the March for Life and at a Focus on the Family event in 2017

### Family and Personal Background

**Pence grew up in a large religious family, and demonstrated interest in politics since he was in high school**

- Parents ran a chain of convenience stores
- Father served in the Army during the Korean War and received the Bronze Star
- Was previously a Roman Catholic; became an evangelical born-again Christian in college
- Originally was inspired to get involved in politics by figures including John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Was previously a Democrat; volunteered for the Bartholomew County Democratic Party in 1976 and voted for Jimmy Carter in the 1980 presidential election
- Shifted his politics after identifying with Ronald Reagan's "common-sense conservatism"
- Has five siblings, including Rep. Greg Pence (R-IN06)
- Eldest daughter, Charlotte Pence, is a writer and filmmaker
- Son is currently serving in the Marine Corps
- Has several pets, including a rabbit named Marlon Bundo

### Criticisms and Controversies

**Pence has attracted public criticism for his views on LGBT rights and climate change**

#### Stance on LGBT rights

- Has been publicly criticized by LGBT rights organizations as well as media outlets for previous policies against the LGBT community
- Examples of such policies include his signing of a 2015 religious freedom law that could be interpreted to permit LGBT discrimination
- Wrote in a *Wall Street Journal* op-ed that the law is not a tool to discriminate; accepted a revised version that prevented discrimination
- Pence's 2000 campaign website advocated for resources to be directed to institutions that "provide assistance to those seeking to change their sexual behavior," suggesting that he supports conversion therapy; a spokesperson claimed this was false, and that the language referred to safe sex to prevent HIV/AIDS

#### State-run news service

- In 2015, Pence's administration planned to launch a website that would be a resource for press releases from Indiana's executive branch
- Documents were obtained that stated the site would include news for the public and media
- This attracted public scrutiny from journalists around the country, comparing it to state-run media services in China and Russia
- Pence addressed the controversy as "an understandable misunderstanding"

#### Climate change skepticism

- Penned a 2001 op-ed where he wrote that "global warming is a myth"
- These views resurfaced in 2009 when he said on MSNBC that there was "growing skepticism in the scientific community about global warming"
- In a 2019 interview, Pence avoided answering the question of whether climate change is a national threat; this led to public criticism in light of the Trump Administration's rollback of Obama-era environmental protection policies

## COVID-19 Response

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**As White House Coronavirus Task Force Chairman, Pence has the responsibility of coordinating efforts with federal health agencies as well as the private sector to mitigate the virus**

### Relevant Positions

- Chair of the Coronavirus Task Force

**Actions: *Has used his position as Chairman to communicate with public and private sector leaders to organize necessary equipment***

- Communicated with governors to survey their states' clinics and determine what equipment can be utilized and what equipment they need
- Has worked with insurance companies to allow free COVID-19 testing
- Deployed inspectors to enforce disease prevention guidelines in nursing homes
- Has spoken to the CEO of Bayer to bring back chloroquine doses from overseas manufacturing plants

**Statements: *His daily statements reflect the task force's latest efforts to curb the outbreak***

- Supports the social distancing guidelines, said that they have led to a significant reduction in the spread of the virus nationwide
- Stated that the task force is in the process of distributing the national stockpile of ventilators, with a large amount of them sent to New York
- Stated that the FDA is approving off-label use for anti-malarial drug hydroxychloroquine to help COVID-19 patients
- Stated that the Administration plans to "follow the science" regarding the timeline of a possible vaccine
- Said that Trump's aspiration to reopen the US economy by Easter was "an aspirational goal," but would continue mitigation efforts in virus hotspots such as New York City, Seattle, and California based on data