

Sen. Jeff Merkley (D-OR)



Background

Democrat Jeff Merkley, Oregon's junior senator, was elected in 2008 and reelected six years later. The first in his family to attend college, he pursued international affairs as an undergraduate at Stanford University. He earned a master's degree in public policy from Princeton University, landed a presidential fellowship at the Pentagon in 1982, and then worked as an analyst in the Congressional Budget Office. In 1998, he was elected to the state House, campaigning on his desire to improve Oregon's school system. Aggressively campaigning on behalf of Democratic House candidates in 2006, Merkley helped Democrats win control of the Oregon House for the first time in 16 years, and Merkley was unanimously elected speaker. During his tenure as speaker, the legislature passed several reforms, including an expanded indoor smoking ban and greater rights for same-sex couples. In 2008, Merkley ran for senator in one of the most expensive and closely watched contests. Merkley allied himself with Barack Obama and his presidential campaign theme of change. In the Senate, Merkley has been a dependable liberal vote, particularly on economic and social issues. Politically, he is to the left of many of his Senate colleagues. In 2013, he won a coveted seat on the Appropriations Committee.

State Profile

State: Oregon

Status: Junior Senator

Serving with: Ron Wyden (D)

Cook PVI: D+5

Biography

First Elected: 11/4/2008

Party: Democrat

Birth date: 10/24/1956

Education: Stanford U., B.A. 1979; Princeton U., M.P.P. 1982

Family: Spouse: Mary Sorteberg, 2 children

Election Results

2014 General

Jeff Merkley (D) 56%

Monica Wehby (R) 37%

Official Contact Info

Capitol Hill Office Building: Hart

Room Number: 313

Phone Number: (202) 224-3753

Facebook: @jeffmerkley

Instagram: @senjeffmerkley

Twitter: @SenJeffMerkley

Committees

- Appropriations
- Environment and Public Works
- Foreign Relations
- Budget