



# John Barrasso

**John Anthony Barrasso III** (/bəˈrɑːsoʊ/ *bə-RAH-soh*; born July 21, 1952) is an American physician and politician serving as the senior United States senator from Wyoming, a seat he has held since 2007. A member of the Republican Party, he served in the Wyoming State Senate from 2003 to 2007. In 2025, he became Senate majority whip, the second-ranking Senate Republican.

Born and raised in Reading, Pennsylvania, Barrasso graduated from Georgetown University, where he received his B.S. and M.D. He conducted his medical residency at Yale University before moving to Wyoming and beginning a private orthopedics practice in Casper. Barrasso was active in various medical societies and associations.

Barrasso first ran for U.S. Senate in 1996, narrowly losing the Republican primary to Mike Enzi. In 2002, he was elected to the State Senate, where he stayed until his appointment to the U.S. Senate after the 2007 death of Craig L. Thomas. He was elected to finish Thomas's term in 2008 and won his first full term in 2012. In 2018, Barrasso was selected as chair of the Senate Republican Conference. He has been the dean of Wyoming's congressional delegation since 2021, when Enzi retired from the Senate.

## Early life, education, and medical career

Barrasso was born in Reading, Pennsylvania, on July 21, 1952,<sup>[1]</sup> the son of Louise M. (née DeCisco) and John Anthony Barrasso Jr.<sup>[2]</sup> Barrasso's father was a cement finisher who had a ninth-grade education.<sup>[3]</sup> Barrasso is a third-generation Italian-American with paternal grandparents from Carife and maternal grandparents from Vasto.<sup>[4][5]</sup>

John Barrasso



Official portrait, 2010

Senate Majority Whip

Incumbent

Assumed office

January 3, 2025

Leader

John Thune

Preceded by

Dick Durbin

Senate positions

United States Senator from Wyoming

Incumbent

Assumed office

June 22, 2007

Serving with Cynthia Lummis

Preceded by

Craig L. Thomas

Member of the Wyoming Senate from the 27th district

In office

January 3, 2003 – June 22, 2007

Preceded by

Bruce Hinchey

Barrasso is a graduate of the former [Central Catholic High School](#), which later merged with [Holy Name High School](#) to form [Berks Catholic High School](#).<sup>[6]</sup> He attended [Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute](#) for two years and joined the [Phi Kappa Tau](#) fraternity.<sup>[7]</sup> Barrasso graduated [Phi Beta Kappa](#)<sup>[8]</sup> from [Georgetown](#) in 1974 with a Bachelor of Science degree in [biology](#).<sup>[9]</sup> He received his M.D. degree from [Georgetown University School of Medicine](#) in 1978 and conducted his [residency](#) at [Yale Medical School](#) in [New Haven, Connecticut](#).<sup>[1]</sup>

In 1983, after completing his residency at Yale, Barrasso moved to Wyoming with his then-wife, Linda Nix.<sup>[3]</sup> He joined a private orthopedic practice in [Casper](#) and for a time was the [Wyoming Medical Center](#)'s chief of staff.<sup>[3]</sup> Barrasso was a board-certified orthopedic surgeon in private practice in Casper from 1983 to 2007.<sup>[10][11]</sup> He has served as president of the [Wyoming Medical Society](#).<sup>[12]</sup> Barrasso was also a [rodeo](#) physician for the [Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association](#)<sup>[13]</sup> (and a member of the "Cowboy Joe Club") and volunteered as a team physician for [Casper College](#) and several local high schools.<sup>[10]</sup>

## 1996 U.S. Senate election

Barrasso ran for the Republican nomination for the [U.S. Senate](#) in 1996 for the seat being vacated by Republican [Alan K. Simpson](#), losing narrowly to [State Senator Mike Enzi](#), 32% to 30%, in a nine-candidate election.<sup>[14]</sup> Enzi garnered support due to his pro-life stance, while Barrasso—who had been expected to win the primary—identified as pro-choice at the time.<sup>[3][15]</sup>

## Wyoming Senate

Barrasso was elected to the [Wyoming Senate](#) unopposed in 2002<sup>[16]</sup> and reelected unopposed in 2006. He represented Wyoming's 27th Senate District, including part of Casper.<sup>[17]</sup> During his State Senate tenure, he chaired the Transportation and Highways Committee.<sup>[18]</sup>

Succeeded by [Bill Landen](#)

Personal details

Born

John Anthony Barrasso III

July 21, 1952

Reading, Pennsylvania, U.S.

Political party

[Republican](#)

Spouse(s)

Linda Nix (divorced)

Bobbi Brown

(m. 2008; died 2024)


Children

3

Education

[Georgetown University](#) (BS, MD)

Signature



Website

[Senate website](#) (<http://barrasso.senate.gov>)

[Campaign website](#) (<https://barrassoforwyoming.com/>)

Barrasso's voice

1:45

Barrasso's on the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act

Recorded June 23, 2022

# U.S. Senate

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## Appointment

On June 22, 2007, Governor Dave Freudenthal appointed Barrasso to replace Senator Craig L. Thomas, who had died in office earlier that month. Under state law, Freudenthal was able to consider only three individuals chosen by the Republican State Central Committee because the seat was vacated by a Republican. The others were former State Treasurer Cynthia Lummis of Cheyenne, and former Republican state chairman and Justice Department attorney Tom Sansonetti.<sup>[19]</sup>



Barrasso with President Donald Trump in 2018

## Elections

### 2008

Barrasso won the Republican nomination for the balance of Thomas's third term. He then won the special election in a landslide, defeating Democratic nominee Nick Carter with 73% of the vote.<sup>[20]</sup>

### 2012

Barrasso ran for reelection to a first full term in 2012. He faced two opponents for the Republican nomination, which he won with 90% of the vote.<sup>[21]</sup> In the general election, he defeated Democratic nominee Tim Chestnut with 76% of the vote.<sup>[22]</sup>

### 2018

Barrasso faced Dave Dodson and four other challengers in the 2018 Republican primary; he won the primary with 65% of the vote.<sup>[23]</sup> Barrasso defeated Democrat Gary Trauner and Libertarian Joseph Porambo in the general election, receiving 67% of the vote.<sup>[24]</sup>

### 2024

In the primary, Barrasso faced Casper Executive Reid Rasner, who attacked Barrasso for his support of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act, among other issues.<sup>[25]</sup> Barrasso defeated Rasner, 67.9% to 24.5%. He won the general election against Democratic nominee Scott Morrow with 75.1% of the vote.<sup>[26]</sup>

## Tenure

At the time of his appointment to the U.S. Senate in 2007, Barrasso was quoted as saying on his application: "I believe in limited government, lower taxes, less spending, traditional family values, local control and a strong national defense"; he also said that he had "voted for prayer in schools, against gay marriage and [had] sponsored legislation to protect the sanctity of life".<sup>[27]</sup>

In 2018, Barrasso was selected as chair of the Senate Republican Conference.<sup>[28]</sup> In 2024, he declined to run for Senate Republican leader and instead announced that he would run for Republican Whip.<sup>[29]</sup>

During the COVID-19 pandemic in the United States, Barrasso voted against the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 but for the PPP Extension Act and the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act.<sup>[30][31][32]</sup>

Starting in the 119th Congress, he is the Senate whip of the Republican Party.

### 119th United States Congress Committee assignments

- Committee on Energy and Natural Resources<sup>[33]</sup>
- Committee on Finance<sup>[33]</sup>
- Committee on Foreign Relations<sup>[33]</sup>

### Caucus memberships

- Rare Disease Caucus<sup>[34]</sup>

## Political positions

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### Abortion

When Barrasso ran for the 1996 Republican nomination for U.S. Senate, he presented himself as a supporter of abortion rights.<sup>[35][3]</sup> Following his loss in 1996, Barrasso's position on abortion (and on other issues) shifted in a conservative direction.<sup>[3]</sup>

During his tenure in the Wyoming Legislature, Barrasso sponsored an unsuccessful bill to treat the killing of a pregnant woman as a double homicide.<sup>[3]</sup> He has voted to prohibit federal funding for abortion.<sup>[36]</sup>



Secretary of State John Kerry meets with Senators John McCain, Lindsey Graham and John Barrasso in Jerusalem on January 3, 2014

## Capital punishment

Barrasso co-sponsored the "Thin Blue Line Act", which would have required the death penalty for anyone convicted of killing a first responder.<sup>[37]</sup>

## Gun laws

In April 2013, Barrasso was one of 46 senators to vote against a bill that would have expanded background checks for all gun buyers. He voted with 40 Republicans and five Democrats to stop the bill.<sup>[38]</sup>

## Health care

Barrasso voted against the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare) in December 2009,<sup>[39]</sup> and against the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010.<sup>[40]</sup> He was part of a group of 13 senators that drafted the Senate version of the American Health Care Act of 2017, an Obamacare repeal bill that failed to pass.<sup>[41][42][43][44]</sup>

## Environment and energy

When asked in 2014 whether human activity contributes to climate change, Barrasso denied the existence of the scientific consensus on climate change, saying that "the role human activity plays is not known."<sup>[45][46]</sup> In 2021, he admitted, "We believe that mankind is certainly contributing" to climate change.<sup>[47]</sup>

Barrasso was a leading opponent of President Barack Obama's climate change policies.<sup>[48]</sup>

Barrasso opposed the CIA's creation of its Center on Climate Change and National Security in 2009.<sup>[49]</sup> In 2011, he introduced a bill that would prevent the Environmental Protection Agency from limiting carbon dioxide emissions.<sup>[50]</sup>

Barrasso and Senators Mike Enzi and Pat Roberts introduced a bill to remove tax credits for electric cars.<sup>[51]</sup>

According to OpenSecrets, as of 2017, Barrasso had received over \$585,000 from the oil and gas industry since 2012.<sup>[52]</sup>

In 2019, Barrasso inaccurately claimed that "livestock will be banned" as a result of the Green New Deal, and said we needed to "say goodbye to dairy, to beef, to family farms, to ranches. American favorites like cheeseburgers and milkshake would become a thing of the past."<sup>[53]</sup>

In September 2020, Barrasso supported a measure to dramatically limit the use of hydrofluorocarbons used in refrigerants and other applications that have contributed to global warming.<sup>[54]</sup>

In November 2022, Barrasso criticized China's "developing country advantage" in international climate agreements, arguing that China is given unfair privileges in climate agreements that do not reflect its economic growth.<sup>[55]</sup>

In November 2024, after Trump nominated fracking magnate Chris Wright for secretary of energy, Barrasso called Wright an "energy innovator".<sup>[56]</sup>

In July 2024, Barrasso and Joe Manchin introduced S. 4753, the Energy Permitting Reform Act of 2024, aiming to speed the permitting process for energy infrastructure and mineral development.<sup>[57][58]</sup> The bill would affect both fossil fuel and electric power transmission projects.<sup>[59]</sup>

## Criminal justice

Barrasso opposed the FIRST STEP Act, legislation which sought to reform the federal prison system. The bill passed 87–12 on December 18, 2018.<sup>[60]</sup>

## Foreign policy

Barrasso opposed the Russian-backed Nord Stream 2—a pipeline to deliver natural gas from Russia to Germany. Bloomberg News reported, "Congress brought forward bills authorizing the administration to levy sanctions against a consortium of five European energy companies that have partnered with [Russia's main gas company] Gazprom; at least one bill, sponsored by Republican Senator John Barrasso, would make them mandatory."<sup>[61]</sup> In May 2022, during the Russo-Ukrainian War, Barrasso visited Kyiv and met with Ukrainian president Volodymyr Zelenskyy as a part of a U.S. Senate delegation to show support to Ukraine.<sup>[62]</sup> The delegation also visited Finland to meet with President Sauli Niinistö and Prime Minister Sanna Marin to express support for Finland's application to join NATO.<sup>[63]</sup>

In July 2025, Barrasso voted against two motions made by Senator Bernie Sanders to block arms sales to Israel.<sup>[64][65][66]</sup>

## Donald Trump

After it was revealed in November 2018 that Trump had business dealings with Russia while a candidate in the 2016 election, Barrasso said, "The president is an international businessman; I'm not surprised he was doing international business." Asked whether Trump should have disclosed those business ties during the campaign, Barrasso said, "There were so many things involved in the 2016 campaign, it's hard to point to what one thing influenced voters."<sup>[67][68]</sup> Trump joined Barrasso on Thanksgiving 2019 in a surprise visit to American troops stationed at Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan. At the time, approximately 370 Wyoming National Guard soldiers were deployed in Europe and the Middle East, the most since 2009.<sup>[69]</sup>

In December 2019, Barrasso appeared to promote Senator John Kennedy's views supporting the discredited conspiracy theory of Ukrainian interference in the 2016 U.S. presidential election.<sup>[70]</sup>

In February 2021, Barrasso opposed the second impeachment of Donald Trump, calling it a "partisan crusade."<sup>[71]</sup> On February 13, 2021, Barrasso voted to acquit Trump of inciting the 2021 United States Capitol attack.<sup>[72]</sup> On May 28, 2021, Barrasso voted against creating the January 6 commission.<sup>[73]</sup> In November 2021, Barrasso refused to condemn Trump for defending January 6 rioters who called for Pence's death.<sup>[74]</sup>

## Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023

Barrasso was among the 31 Senate Republicans who voted against final passage of the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023.<sup>[75]</sup>

## Personal life

Barrasso has three children. He is divorced from Linda Nix.<sup>[76][77]</sup> On August 11, 2007, during Cheyenne's annual Race for the Cure, Barrasso and Bobbi Brown, herself a breast cancer survivor and at the time the director of Barrasso's state senate offices, announced their engagement. Brown then resigned from her position in Barrasso's state senate offices.<sup>[78]</sup> They were married on January 1, 2008, in Thermopolis.<sup>[79]</sup> Brown died of brain cancer on January 25, 2024.<sup>[80]</sup> She was known for being an advocate for mental health and suicide prevention.<sup>[81]</sup>

Barrasso is a member of the board of directors of Presidential Classroom, and a member of the Casper Chamber of Commerce.<sup>[82]</sup> He is as a member of the Presbyterian Church.<sup>[83]</sup>

## Electoral history

U.S. Senate special election in Wyoming, 2008<sup>[20]</sup>

Party		Candidate	Votes	%	±%
	<b>Republican</b>	<b>John Barrasso (incumbent)</b>	<b>183,063</b>	<b>73.35%</b>	<b>+3.37%</b>
	<u>Democratic</u>	Nick Carter	66,202	26.53%	−3.33%
	None	Write-ins	293	0.12%	
<u>Majority</u>			116,861	46.83%	+6.70%
<u>Turnout</u>			249,558		
	<u>Republican</u> <b>hold</b>		<u>Swing</u>		

U.S. Senate Republican primary election in Wyoming, 2012<sup>[21]</sup>

Party		Candidate	Votes	%
	<b>Republican</b>	<b>John Barrasso (incumbent)</b>	<b>73,516</b>	<b>89.9</b>
	<u>Republican</u>	Thomas Bleming	5,080	6.2
	<u>Republican</u>	Emmett Mavy	2,873	3.5
	<u>Republican</u>	Write-in	279	0.3
<b>Total votes</b>			<b>81,748</b>	<b>100</b>

U.S. Senate general election in Wyoming, 2012<sup>[22]</sup>

Party	Candidate	Votes	%	±%
<b>Republican</b>	<b>John Barrasso (incumbent)</b>	<b>185,250</b>	<b>75.66%</b>	<b>+2.31%</b>
<u>Democratic</u>	Tim Chesnut	53,019	21.65%	−4.88%
Wyoming Country	Joel Otto	6,176	2.52%	N/A
<u>n/a</u>	Write-ins	417	0.17%	+0.05%
<b>Total votes</b>		<b>244,862</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	N/A
<u>Republican</u> <b>hold</b>				

U.S. Senate Republican primary election in Wyoming, 2018<sup>[23]</sup>

Party	Candidate	Votes	%
<b>Republican</b>	<b>John Barrasso (incumbent)</b>	<b>74,292</b>	<b>64.76%</b>
<u>Republican</u>	Dave Dodson	32,647	28.46%
<u>Republican</u>	John Holtz	2,981	2.60%
<u>Republican</u>	Charlie Hardy ( <i>withdrawn</i> )	2,377	2.07%
<u>Republican</u>	Roque "Rocky" De La Fuente	1,280	1.16%
<u>Republican</u>	Anthony Van Risseghem	870	0.7%
<u>Write-in</u>		267	0.23%
<b>Total votes</b>		<b>114,714</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

U.S. Senate general election in Wyoming, 2018<sup>[24]</sup>

Party	Candidate	Votes	%	±%
<b>Republican</b>	<b>John Barrasso (incumbent)</b>	<b>136,210</b>	<b>66.96%</b>	<b>−8.70%</b>
<u>Democratic</u>	Gary Trauner	61,227	30.10%	+8.45%
<u>Libertarian</u>	Joseph Porambo	5,658	2.78%	N/A
<u>Write-in</u>		325	0.16%	N/A
<b>Total votes</b>		<b>203,420</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	N/A
<u>Republican</u> <b>hold</b>				

U.S. Senate Republican primary election in Wyoming, 2024<sup>[84]</sup>

Party	Candidate	Votes	%
<b>Republican</b>	<b>John Barrasso (incumbent)</b>	<b>70,494</b>	<b>67.92%</b>
<u>Republican</u>	Reid Rasner	25,427	24.50%
<u>Republican</u>	John Holtz	7,868	7.58%
<b>Total votes</b>		<b>103,789</b>	<b>100.00%</b>



U.S. Senate general election in Wyoming, 2024<sup>[26]</sup>

Party	Candidate	Votes	%	±%
Republican	John Barrasso (incumbent)	198,418	75.11%	+8.15%
Democratic	Scott Morrow	63,727	24.12%	−5.98%
Write-in		2,017	0.76%	+0.60%
Total votes		264,162	100.00%	N/A
Republican hold				

See also

- Physicians in the United States Congress
- List of United States senators from Wyoming

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## External links

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- [Senator John Barrasso \(https://barrasso.senate.gov\)](https://barrasso.senate.gov) official U.S. Senate website
  - [John Barrasso for U.S. Senate \(https://www.barrasso4wyo.com/\)](https://www.barrasso4wyo.com/) official campaign website
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