

# [***Vulnerable Dem Senator Co-Sponsors Laken Riley Act Weeks After Opposing Provision***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6C0H-7T21-DXXD-700F-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Body**

[*Link to Image*](https://cdn01.dailycaller.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/2017-02-01T000000Z_79631318_RC12C3865930_RTRMADP_3_USA-CONGRESS-scaled-e1715285964582.jpg)

Democratic Montana Sen. Jon Tester appears to be changing his tune on supporting the Republican-led Laken Riley Act, named after the 22-year-old nursing student who was allegedly murdered by an illegal alien in  February on the University of Georgia's campus.

Tester [*voted*](https://www.senate.gov/legislative/LIS/roll_call_votes/vote1182/vote_118_2_00113.htm#top) with Democrats on March 23 in blocking GOP Sen. Ted Budd's [*amendment*](https://www.budd.senate.gov/2024/03/23/budd-fights-to-stop-illegal-aliens-who-assault-police-commit-theft-from-becoming-citizens/) he [*described*](https://x.com/SenTedBuddNC/status/1771358886358061181) as being a “modified version” of the Laken Riley Act to the second government funding [*package*](https://dailycaller.com/2024/03/22/house-freedom-caucus-encourages-republicans-tank-second-funding-package/). The senator is now co-sponsoring the bill, [*according*](https://www.tester.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/tester-backs-laken-riley-act-to-hold-criminals-accountable-and-keep-montana-safe/) to a press release on Thursday, which would [*require*](https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/house-bill/7511/text) federal officials to detain illegal aliens who commit “burglary, theft, larceny, or [a] shoplifting offense.”

“Keeping Montana safe is my top priority, which is why I've repeatedly called on the Biden Administration and Congress to do more to secure the southern border and have worked to get the brave men and women in law enforcement what they need to keep criminals off our streets,” Tester said in a statement.

“After hearing from law enforcement officers across Montana, I'm backing the Laken Riley Act to make sure that individuals who enter our country and commit a crime are held accountable so that no Montana family has to worry about the safety of their loved ones,” Tester added. [***(RELATED: Dem Senator Launches Ad Pitching Himself As Tough On Border - Despite Repeatedly Voting Down Security Measures)***](https://dailycaller.com/2024/04/17/jon-tester-montana-vulnerable-senate-dem-claims-tough-border-ad/)

A spokesperson for Tester [*told*](https://www.belgrade-news.com/news/tester-says-he-would-vote-for-standalone-laken-riley-act-as-gop-trump-press-biden/article_e2dc050c-edfb-11ee-b826-cf7768d1cdd0.html) the Belgrade News on March 29 that he would support the Laken Riley Act as a standalone bill.

[*Link to Image*](https://cdn01.dailycaller.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/2024-03-11T184737Z_249378284_RC2TJ6AAE0C1_RTRMADP_3_USA-ELECTION-scaled.jpg)

Supporters of Republican presidential candidate, former U.S. President Donald Trump, including one holding a sign reading “Say Her Name Laken Riley”, gather outside a campaign stop by U.S. President Joe Biden in Goffstown, New Hampshire, U.S., March 11, 2024. (REUTERS/Brian Snyder)

The [*Laken Riley Act*](https://dailycaller.com/2024/03/07/houses-passes-laken-riley-act-target-illegal-immigrant-criminals/) was introduced by Republican Georgia Rep. Mike Collins who represents the district where the student was killed. The legislation passed the House on March 7, but has yet to face a floor vote in the Senate.

Tester [*has*](https://dailycaller.com/2024/04/17/jon-tester-montana-vulnerable-senate-dem-claims-tough-border-ad/) [*attempted*](https://dailycaller.com/2024/02/20/nrsc-senate-gop-campaign-arm-launches-ad-jon-tester-vulnerable-dem-senator/) to paint himself as a Democrat who is tough on border security and illegal immigration while running for reelection in a state former President Donald Trump won by double digits [*both*](https://www.cnn.com/election/2016/results/states/montana) [*cycles*](https://www.cnn.com/election/2020/results/state/montana). The senator [*launched*](https://twitter.com/AdImpact_Pol/status/1778078917074534439) a TV ad in early April arguing he “worked with Republicans, fighting to shut down the border,” but some of his voting record [*shows*](https://dailycaller.com/2024/04/17/jon-tester-montana-vulnerable-senate-dem-claims-tough-border-ad/) otherwise.

Republican [*Tim Sheehy*](https://x.com/SheehyforMT/status/1788651505568100812), a former Navy SEAL, and the [*National Republican Senatorial Committee*](https://x.com/NRSC/status/1788641227946037725) have dubbed the senator “two-faced Tester” in regard to his changing stances on illegal immigration.

A J.L. Partners survey [*conducted*](https://helenair.com/news/state-regional/government-politics/elections/poll-shows-tight-senate-race-in-montana/article_bbc0a49c-f5e3-11ee-8158-2b2ad843f5b7.html) in late March found Sheehy leading Tester by three points in a head-to-head matchup, with 7% of likely voters remaining undecided. The race is [*characterized*](https://www.cookpolitical.com/ratings/senate-race-ratings) by The Cook Political Report as in the “Toss-Up” category for 2024, along with Democratic Sens. Jacky Rosen of Nevada, Sherrod Brown of Ohio and an open seat in Arizona.

Tester's campaign did not immediately respond to the DCNF's request for comment.

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**Graphic**

Senator Jon Tester (D-MT) speaks to reporters on Capitol Hill in Washington, U.S., February 1, 2017. REUTERS/Joshua Roberts

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