

“ That is all that Donald Trump and the Republicans offer: Backward-looking politics that will harm the environment, make communities less healthy, and hold back economic progress while other countries race ahead. It's a mindset that doesn't have any faith in the capacity of the American people to compete, to innovate, and to win. And it will extract a deadly cost. I know better. And I know you do, as well.^[1] ”

—Joe Biden (July 2020)^[2]



Joe Biden is a former Democratic vice president of the United States. He announced that he was running for president on April 25, 2019.^[3]

With the plurality of pledged delegates, Biden became the presumptive Democratic nominee on

April 8, 2020, after Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) suspended his presidential campaign.^[4] Biden crossed the delegate threshold necessary to win the nomination on June 5, 2020, and was formally nominated at the 2020 Democratic National Convention on August 18, 2020.^[5]

Biden announced U.S. Sen. Kamala Harris (D) as his running mate on August 11, 2020. He called her "a fearless fighter for the little guy, and one of the country's finest public servants."^[6] Harris is the first Black woman to appear on a major party's ticket in the United States.^[7]

Biden framed his campaign as a challenge to President Donald Trump (R). "I believe history will look back on four years of this president and all he embraces as an aberrant moment in time. But if we give Donald Trump eight years in the White House, he will forever and fundamentally alter the character of this nation—who we are—and I cannot stand by and watch that happen," he said.^[8]

He represented Delaware in the U.S. Senate from 1973 to 2009 before serving as vice president under President Barack Obama (D) from 2009 to 2017.^[9]

2020 Presidential Election

Date: November 3, 2020

Presidential candidates



Overviews

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Debates

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Biden in the news

See also: *Ballotpedia's Daily Presidential News Briefing and Editorial approach to story selection for the Daily Presidential News Briefing*

This section features five recent news stories about Biden and his presidential campaign. For a complete timeline of Biden's campaign activity, [click here](#).

- **October 5, 2020:** Biden campaigned in Miami with stops at the Little Haiti Cultural Center and in Little Havana. He then attended a town hall event hosted by NBC News.
- **October 3, 2020:** Biden said that he had advised some governors not to publicly endorse him because he was concerned their states would be penalized by the Trump administration and COVID-19 supplies would be withheld.
- **October 2, 2020:** Biden held a campaign event focused on the economy in Grand Rapids, Michigan.
- **October 1, 2020:**
 - Biden held a virtual fundraiser .
 - Biden began airing ads focused on his Catholic faith on Christian and Catholic television programs in 14 states.
- **September 30, 2020:**
 - Biden completed a “Build Back Better Express” train tour across Ohio and Pennsylvania.
 - Biden raised \$3.8 million in one hour during Tuesday night’s debate, setting a single-hour fundraising record for ActBlue. He raised \$10 million in total the night of the debate.

Biography

Biden was born in 1942 in Scranton, Pennsylvania. When he was 10 years old, his family moved to Claymont, Delaware. He graduated from the University of Delaware with a degree in history and political science and received his law degree from the Syracuse University Law School. Biden practiced law and worked as a public defender before seeking public office.^[10]

From 1970 to 1972, Biden served on the New Castle County Council. He was elected to represent Delaware in the U.S. Senate at the age of 29, receiving 58% of the vote to defeat incumbent Sen. James Caleb Boggs (R). Two weeks after the election, his wife and daughter were killed in a car accident, which his two sons survived.^[11]

Biden served in the Senate from 1973 to 2009. During his Senate career, he chaired the Senate Judiciary Committee and the Committee on Foreign Relations for several years.^[11]

Biden launched his first presidential bid in 1987 but withdrew from the race. He launched a second presidential campaign in 2007, dropping out of the race following the 2008 Iowa caucuses, where he placed fifth.^[11] Then-candidate Barack Obama announced Biden was his choice for running mate in August 2008, and the pair won the general election.^[12] Biden served as vice president from 2009 to 2017.



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Policy positions

The following policy positions were compiled from the candidate's official campaign website, editorials, speeches, and interviews.

Immigration

Joe Biden's campaign website says he will adopt some of the following immigration enforcement policies in his first 100 days in office: "Immediately reverse the Trump Administration's cruel and senseless policies that separate parents from their children at our border. End Trump's detrimental asylum policies. End the mismanagement of the asylum system, which fuels violence and chaos at the border. Surge humanitarian resources to the border and foster public-private initiatives. End prolonged detention and reinvest in a case management program. Reverse Trump's public charge rule. End the so-called National Emergency that siphons federal dollars from the Department of Defense to build a wall. Protect Dreamers and their families. Order an immediate review of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for vulnerable populations who cannot find safety in their countries ripped apart by violence or disaster." ^[source]

Healthcare

Joe Biden proposes protecting and building on the Affordable Care Act instead of switching to a Medicare for All system.

Biden's campaign website says about the Affordable Care Act: "Because of Obamacare, over 100 million people no longer have to worry that an insurance company will deny coverage or charge higher premiums just because they have a pre-existing condition – whether cancer or diabetes or heart disease or a mental health challenge. Insurance companies can no longer set annual or lifetime limits on coverage. Roughly 20 million additional Americans obtained the peace of mind that comes with health insurance. Young people who are in transition from school to a job have the option to stay covered by their parents' plan until age 26. But, every day over the past nine years, the Affordable Care Act has been under relentless attack. As president, Biden will protect the Affordable Care Act from these continued attacks. He opposes every effort to get rid of this historic law – including efforts by Republicans, and efforts by Democrats. Instead of starting from scratch and getting rid of private insurance, he has a plan to build on the

Affordable Care Act by giving Americans more choice, reducing health care costs, and making our health care system less complex to navigate." Biden also wrote in a Medium post that he would lower the Medicare eligibility age to 60. ^[source]

Energy and environmental issues

Joe Biden's campaign website lists the following key elements of his clean energy plan: "Build a modern infrastructure. Position the U.S. auto industry to win the 21st century with technology invented in America. Achieve a carbon pollution-free power sector by 2035. Make dramatic investments in energy efficiency in buildings, including completing 4 million retrofits and building 1.5 million new affordable homes. Pursue a historic investment in clean energy innovation. Advance sustainable agriculture and conservation. Secure environmental justice and equitable economy opportunity." ^[source]

Trade

Joe Biden's campaign website says, "The goal of every decision about trade must be to build the American middle class, create jobs, raise wages, and strengthen communities. To stand up for American workers, Biden's tax and trade strategy will take a number of steps, including: Take aggressive trade enforcement actions against China or any other country seeking to undercut American manufacturing through unfair practices. Rally our allies in a coordinated effort to pressure the Chinese government and other trade abusers to follow the rules and hold them to account when they do not. Confront foreign efforts to steal American intellectual property. Apply a carbon adjustment fee against countries that are failing to meet their climate and environmental obligations. Support strong and independent trade unions here in the United States and in every one of our trading partners." ^[source]

Economy

Joe Biden's campaign website list the following four pillars of his Build Back Better economic recovery plan: "Mobilize American manufacturing and innovation to ensure that the future is made in America, and in all of America. Mobilize American ingenuity to build a modern infrastructure and an equitable, clean energy future. Mobilize American talent and heart to build a 21st century caregiving and education workforce which will help ease the burden of care for working parents, especially women. Mobilize across the board to advance racial equity in America."

His website continues, "We've seen millions of American workers put their lives and health on the line to keep our country going. As Biden has said, let's not just praise them, let's pay them — a decent wage, at least \$15 per hour, and ending the tipped minimum wage and sub-minimum wage for people with disabilities, and strong benefits so they can live a middle class life and provide opportunity for their kids." ^[source]

Education

Joe Biden's campaign website lists the following five education goals: "Support our educators by giving them the pay and dignity they deserve. Invest in resources for our schools so students grow into physically and emotionally healthy adults, and educators can focus on teaching.

Ensure that no child's future is determined by their zip code, parents' income, race, or disability. Provide every middle and high school student a path to a successful career. Start investing in our children at birth."

Biden's website continues: "Invest in our schools to eliminate the funding gap between white and non-white districts, and rich and poor districts. Improve teacher diversity. Make sure children with disabilities have the support to succeed. Create more opportunities for high school students to take practical classes that lead to credentials." [source]

Gun regulation

Joe Biden's campaign website says, "As president, Biden will pursue constitutional, common-sense gun safety policies. Biden will: Hold gun manufacturers accountable. Ban the manufacture and sale of assault weapons and high-capacity magazines. Buy back the assault weapons and high-capacity magazines already in our communities. Reduce stockpiling of weapons. Require background checks for all gun sales. Create an effective program to ensure individuals who become prohibited from possessing firearms relinquish their weapons. Give states incentives to set up gun licensing programs."

Biden's campaign website also says he will, "Establish a new Task Force on Online Harassment and Abuse to focus on the connection between mass shootings, online harassment, extremism, and violence against women. Put America on the path to ensuring that 100% of firearms sold in America are smart guns. Prioritize prosecution of straw purchasers. Dedicate the brightest scientific minds to solving the gun violence public health epidemic. Prohibit the use of federal funds to arm or train educators to discharge firearms. Address the epidemic of suicides by firearms." [source]

Criminal justice

Joe Biden's campaign website lists the following criminal justice proposals: "Create a new \$20 billion competitive grant program to spur states to shift from incarceration to prevention. Invest in educational opportunity for all. Expand federal funding for mental health and substance use disorder services and research. Expand and use the power of the U.S. Justice Department to address systemic misconduct in police departments and prosecutors' offices. Establish an independent Task Force on Prosecutorial Discretion. Invest in public defenders' offices to ensure defendants' access to quality counsel. Eliminate mandatory minimums." [source]

Foreign policy

Joe Biden's campaign website lists the following foreign policy goals: "Defend our Vital Interests: As president, Biden will never hesitate to protect the American people, including when necessary, by using force. We have the strongest military in the world—and as president, Biden will ensure it stays that way. End Forever Wars: Biden will end the forever wars in Afghanistan and the Middle East, which have cost us untold blood and treasure. Elevate Diplomacy: As president, Biden will elevate diplomacy as the premier tool of our global engagement. He will rebuild a modern, agile U.S. Department of State—investing in and re-empowering the finest diplomatic corps in the world and leveraging the full talent and richness of America's diversity. Restore and Reimagine Partnerships: A Biden administration will do more than restore our historic partnerships; it will lead the effort to reimagine them for the future.

Renew our Commitment to Arms Control for a New Era Rally the World to Address the Existential Climate Crisis: The Biden administration will rejoin the Paris Climate Accord on day one and lead a major diplomatic push to raise the ambitions of countries' climate targets." [source]

Impeachment

Joe Biden called for President Donald Trump's impeachment at a town hall event in New Hampshire, saying that Trump "has indicted himself by obstructing justice, refusing to comply with the congressional inquiry, he's already convicted himself. In full view of the world and the American people, Donald Trump has violated his oath of office, betrayed this nation and committed impeachable acts." [source]

Labor

Joe Biden's campaign website says, "Strong unions built the great American middle class. Everything that defines what it means to live a good life and know you can take care of your family – the 40 hour work week, paid leave, health care protections, a voice in your workplace – is because of workers who organized unions and fought for worker protections. Because of organizing and collective bargaining, there used to be a basic bargain between workers and their employers in this country that when you work hard, you share in the prosperity your work created."

His website continues, "As president, Biden will: Check the abuse of corporate power over labor and hold corporate executives personally accountable for violations of labor laws. Encourage and incentivize unionization and collective bargaining. Ensure that workers are treated with dignity and receive the pay, benefits, and workplace protections they deserve." [source]

Abortion

Joe Biden's campaign website says, "As president, Biden will work to codify Roe v. Wade, and his Justice Department will do everything in its power to stop the rash of state laws that so blatantly violate the constitutional right to an abortion, such as so-called TRAP laws, parental notification requirements, mandatory waiting periods, and ultrasound requirements. Biden will reissue guidance specifying that states cannot refuse Medicaid funding for Planned Parenthood and other providers that refer for abortions or provide related information and reverse the Trump Administration's rule preventing Planned Parenthood and certain other family planning programs from obtaining Title X funds. Biden will rescind the Mexico City Policy (also referred to as the global gag rule) that President Trump reinstated and expanded." [source]

Supreme Court vacancy

Joe Biden opposed filling the Supreme Court vacancy before the 2020 presidential election. He said, "This appointment isn't about the past. It's about the future, and the people of this nation. And the people of this nation are choosing their future right now, as they vote. To jam this nomination through the Senate is just an exercise in raw political power. And I don't believe the people of this nation will stand for it. President Trump has already made it clear. This is about power. Pure and simple. Power." [source]

Other policy positions

Click on any of the following links to read more policy positions from the 2020 presidential candidates.

Abortion

- 2020 presidential candidates on abortion

Criminal justice

- 2020 presidential candidates on criminal justice
- 2020 presidential candidates on policing

Economy

- 2020 presidential candidates on coronavirus recovery
- 2020 presidential candidates on the economy
- 2020 presidential candidates on Social Security
- 2020 presidential candidates on the minimum wage
- 2020 presidential candidates on paid leave
- 2020 presidential candidates on taxes

Education

- 2020 presidential candidates on education
- 2020 presidential candidates on student loan debt
- 2020 presidential candidates on

charter schools and voucher programs

Energy and environmental issues

- 2020 presidential candidates on energy and environmental issues
- 2020 presidential candidates on climate change
- 2020 presidential candidates on the Green New Deal

Foreign policy

- 2020 presidential candidates on foreign policy
- 2020 presidential candidates on China
- 2020 presidential candidates on Russia
- 2020 presidential candidates on North Korea
- 2020 presidential candidates on the Middle East and North Africa
- 2020 presidential candidates on South and Central America

Gun regulation

- 2020 presidential candidates on gun regulation

Healthcare

- 2020 presidential candidates on healthcare
- 2020 presidential candidates on the Affordable Care Act
- 2020 presidential candidates on Medicare for All
- 2020 presidential candidates on prescription drugs costs

Immigration

- 2020 presidential candidates on immigration
- 2020 presidential candidates on border security
- 2020 presidential candidates on DACA and Dreamers
- 2020 presidential candidates on immigration enforcement

Impeachment

- 2020 presidential candidates on impeachment

Labor

- 2020 presidential candidates on labor policy
- 2020 presidential candidates on Janus v. AFSCME

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2020 presidential candidates on public-sector unions ▪ 2020 presidential candidates on unionization and organization | Trade | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2020 presidential candidates on the right to strike ▪ 2020 presidential candidates on trade | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2020 presidential candidates on tariffs ▪ 2020 presidential candidates on NAFTA and USMCA |
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Response to the coronavirus pandemic

See also: *Documenting America's Path to Recovery*

Biden's campaign website said the following three principles underscore how his team would respond to the coronavirus pandemic:^[13]

- Listen to science
- Ensure public health decisions are informed by public health professionals
- Restore trust, transparency, common purpose, and accountability to our government

The website also provided a seven-point plan for public health and economic recovery. The text of that plan is provided below:^[13]

- “ 1. Fix Trump’s testing-and-tracing fiasco to ensure all Americans have access to regular, reliable, and free testing. ”**
- Double the number of drive-through testing sites.
 - Invest in next-generation testing, including at home tests and instant tests, so we can scale up our testing capacity by orders of magnitude.
 - Stand up a Pandemic Testing Board like Roosevelt’s War Production Board. It’s how we produced tanks, planes, uniforms, and supplies in record time, and it’s how we can produce and distribute tens of millions of tests.
 - Establish a U.S. Public Health Jobs Corps to mobilize at least 100,000 Americans across the country with support from trusted local organizations in communities most at risk to perform culturally competent approaches to contact tracing and protecting at-risk populations.
- 2. Fix personal protective equipment (PPE) problems for good.**