

= Evan Bayh presidential campaign , 2008 =

Democratic Senator and former Governor Evan Bayh of Indiana began a movement for the 2008 Democratic nomination for president of the United States shortly following the 2004 presidential election .

Although he was frequently mentioned as a possible challenger to frontrunner Hillary Clinton , Bayh stopped short of a full @-@ fledged candidacy , withdrawing from the race in December 2006 despite accumulating approximately \$ 10 @.@ 4 million for the campaign . His withdrawal was tied to his public image , which characterized the candidate as " dependable " but " dull " .

Bayh spent a considerable amount of time campaigning throughout the early primary states (particularly Iowa and New Hampshire) for most of 2005 and 2006 . The staff from his All America Political Action Committee (PAC) worked as his campaign team .

Two weeks prior to his withdrawal , Bayh filed his organization with the Federal Elections Commission as an exploratory committee , under the header Friends of Evan Bayh . Following his exit from the race , Bayh endorsed and campaigned for Hillary Clinton for president , switching his support to Democratic nominee Barack Obama following Clinton 's withdrawal . He was a finalist to become Obama 's running mate , losing , in a close decision , to Delaware Senator Joe Biden .

= = Early stages = =

Following the re @-@ election of President George W. Bush and Bayh 's re @-@ election as a Senator from Indiana , Bayh considered the possibility of running for president in 2008 . Although Bush carried Bayh 's home state by 20 points , Bayh won 61 % of the vote , solidifying the Senator 's appeal to moderate and Republican voters . After serving four years as the chair of the Democratic Leadership Council , Bayh hoped to even further demonstrate his position as a moderate by helping to found the Third Way Political Action Committee in January 2005 .

As word increased of Bayh 's intentions , political scientists opined on the detractions of a run . Citing the fact that his eight years as governor may be nullified by its distance in time and that his visibility in the Senate was low , critics pondered whether moderate voters may be more inclined to line with possible candidate Mark Warner of Virginia . However , this criticism subsided once Warner decided against a run in October 2006 .

= = On the campaign trail = =

= = = 2005 = = =

Bayh traveled to the first primary state of New Hampshire on July 10 , 2005 on his first campaign trip since the 2004 election . He held a " meet and greet " at Democratic headquarters in Manchester , and visited Concord the following day to meet with Governor John Lynch and environmental leaders . The next month he traveled to the first caucus state of Iowa , meeting with Congressman Leonard Boswell to discuss methamphetamine use . He also attended party fundraisers and met with activists during his three @-@ day stay . While in Des Moines , Bayh stated that Democrats must gain credibility on national security , and commented that he would begin a full @-@ fledged presidential campaign if he felt he had the means to win the Democratic nomination . Throughout the month , he visited Iowa and reflected similar rhetoric to the 2004 Kerry campaign , advocating energy independence , fair trade , lowering the federal deficit and an improved handling of the war in Iraq . He explained to reporters that his visits to Iowa were " the beginning of a longer conversation " .

The following month , Bayh decided to vote against the confirmation of John Roberts as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court . This move was judged by some political commentators as " posturing " for the 2008 race . Detractors stated that Bayh voted against the judge to appeal to the liberals of the party , as other possible candidates voted in a similar manner . The next month , Bayh attended

the annual Jefferson @-@ Jackson dinner in New Hampshire . At the event he accused President Bush of dividing the nation and stated that he believed Democrats could win in red states (traditional Republican states) if they stood up for " American values " .

Bayh continued to campaign in Iowa and New Hampshire as November 2005 approached . Media outlets reported that 10 potential presidential candidates had visited Iowa in October . When asked about the attention given to the state 26 months prior to the caucus , Bayh replied that he " wish [ed] the process didn 't begin this early , but it does " . Later in the month , former chief counsel and master political strategist for Bayh , Federal District Judge David Hamilton ruled that prayer could not be conducted prior to the opening of the state legislature in Indiana , reasoning that the mention of " Jesus Christ " as " Savior " or " Son of God " is unconstitutional . Commentators argued that the decision diminished Bayh 's label as the " centrist candidate " for the Democratic nomination due to his connections to the judge .

It was revealed in December 2005 that Bayh had raised \$ 1 @. @ 2 million in the first two quarters of 2005 , more than any other potential candidate with the exception of Senator Bill Frist of Tennessee . But the cash did not translate into high marks among possible voters as a CNN poll conducted December 9 ? 11 found that Bayh had the support of only 1 % of self @-@ identified Democrats , placing him seventh among possible candidates . Later in the month , Bayh was criticized by the video game industry for political posturing in his quest along with Senator Hillary Clinton to crack down on explicit content in video games . The manufacturers claimed that the movements were simply attempts to increase his appeal to values voters for his presidential run .

= = = 2006 = = =

As 2006 began , Bayh had \$ 9 @. @ 5 million on hand , \$ 3 @. @ 1 million of which he raised the previous year . A large portion of his time in the first month was spent positioning himself . He took a hard @-@ line against the government of Iran , referring to leader Mahmoud Ahmadinejad as having a " radical , almost delusional nature , " and then criticized the Bush administration for " ignoring " the situation , stating that " diplomacy , economic sanctions , [and] other means " needed to be used . For balance , just as he had in the previous year , Bayh voted against the appointment of a George W. Bush Supreme Court nominee when he cast his " no " vote for Samuel Alito . However , his fellow potential Democratic presidential peers , voted in a similar fashion . Late in January , Bayh gained the position as speaker at the Jefferson @-@ Jackson dinner in North Carolina for the upcoming April . The gain came as a loss for North Carolinian John Edwards , who also was considered a potential candidate for the Democratic nomination . A Bayh spokesman , commented that the Senator was chosen because he " has a lot of ideas about how to fix Washington and make America better " . Prior to the event , in the beginning of February , Bayh made an appearance at the Congressional Black Caucus political action committee , spoke to the United Auto Workers conference , and made a trip back to Iowa for a plethora of events during the February 11 ? 13 weekend . By the end of the month and into March , Bayh criticized the Bush administration from the right , attempting to appeal to all segments of the political spectrum by speaking out against the plan to sell American ports to United Arab Emirates companies .

March for Bayh began with reports that the potential candidate was one of the most conservative Democrats of the Senate . However , it was later revealed that he was the 19th most conservative Democrat during the 109th Congress , demonstrating a sharp trend to the left during his run . This came as the Senator made the keynote speech at the American Israel Public Affairs Committee , where according to a campaign aide , he " la [id] out a tough and smart approach to deal with Iran and Hamas " . While on a campaign stop in Manchester late in March , Bayh revealed to a New Hampshire crowd that he supported the continuation of the New Hampshire Primary as the first in the nation and that he would " do everything " he could " to keep it that way " .

Bayh headlined the Jefferson @-@ Jackson dinner for Michigan in the first week of April , and made rounds on political talk shows throughout the month . He weighed in on the immigration debate , stating that the government should come up with a solution " without rewarding [and] violating the law , to bring [illegal immigrants] out of the shadows " and to " impose fines , [perform

] criminal background checks " while making sure the immigrants " pay back taxes [and] learn English . " He elaborated that it was in America 's " national security interest " to give the immigrants " some kind of regular status here . " Later in the month , he traveled to North Carolina to deliver the keynote address at the Jefferson @-@ Jackson dinner , just as he planned earlier in the year .

Bayh continued campaigning in Iowa during May , making appearances in Osceola , Council Bluffs , and Sioux City . But polls of Iowa in June showed that the candidate had only single digit support . In an attempt to improve his standing on the unpopular war in Iraq , Bayh along with many of his fellow potential Democratic presidential candidates , voted for a resolution that would set July 2007 as the deadline to remove American forces from the nation . At the end of the month , Bayh traveled to Slidell , Louisiana to view the damage brought about by Hurricane Katrina the previous year . Stating that he " just want [ed] to help , " Bayh became the first member of Congress outside of Louisiana to visit the site . On a larger scale , Bayh commented on the rebuilding of the area , conveying that it " is a test of America " .

While campaigning in Des Moines during the first week of July , Bayh commented that he would campaign for embattled Senator Joe Lieberman in his Connecticut primary fight against Ned Lamont if asked to do so , but stopped short of proclaiming support for the candidate if he lost the primary and decided to run as an Independent . As he completed his fifth trip to Iowa , party officials in the state remarked that he was " making inroads " in the state , commenting that " Democrats are looking for somebody who is new and fresh . " The candidate revealed his economic goals during a speech , stating " that creating opportunity for middle @-@ class Americans will be a centerpiece of my campaign . " He then listed his objectives including : tax credits to pay for college tuition of low to mid @-@ level income Americans , covering insurance costs of small businesses for its sickest employees , and incentives for saving and buying automobiles with " good gas mileage . " However , in order to pay for these proposals , Bayh stated that raising taxes would be " a decision worth making " .

In August , with \$ 10 @. @ 4 million on hand , Bayh spread his staffers trained at " Camp Bayh " throughout the critical early primary and caucus states , sending 25 to Iowa , 15 to New Hampshire , three to Nevada , two to South Carolina , and leaving five to remain in Indiana . He returned to Iowa in mid @-@ August , with a packed schedule that included fundraisers and a news conference for the " Wake Up Wal @-@ Mart " organization . During the event , Bayh tried to appeal to populist voters stating that " Wal @-@ Mart has become emblematic of the anxiety around the country , and the middle class squeeze . " The next month , Bayh traveled to Iowa to speak to the United Auto Workers for a second time in 2006 . During a separate trip to New Hampshire later in the month , Bayh tried to appeal to anti @-@ war voters by remarking that the Iraq War was not a central part of the War on Terrorism and that it was " taking the focus away from Afghanistan and Iran " .

Following Mark Warner 's withdrawal from the race in October , Bayh looked to gain the most in the field of candidates . He immediately began to call former Warner supporters , hoping they would support his campaign . During a visit to New Albany , Indiana , the candidate called for the 9 / 11 Commission 's recommendations to be enacted . Later in the month , he made a stop in Nevada to discuss senior issues with Nevada 's gubernatorial candidate Dina Titus .

The Democratic takeover of Congress during the 2006 Mid @-@ term elections was a victory for Bayh , who had helped three Iowan congressional candidates win their races during campaigning , and whose efforts culminated in a Democratic majority in the state 's legislature . In regards to the election , he stated that " we (the Democrats) won by turning the red states of the heartland blue " . In mid @-@ November , the candidate traveled to the West Coast for a fundraising tour . Late in the month , polls revealed that Bayh had a 43 @. @ 3 % likability rating among the American public , slightly ahead of the last placed finisher John Kerry at 39 @. @ 6 % .

= = = Exploratory Committee = = =

On December 3 , 2006 , Bayh announced that he would form an exploratory committee in order for him to travel and raise funds more effectively for a presidential run . Upon this declaration , the candidate appeared on This Week , articulating that Americans " need someone who can deal with

the dysfunction here in this city (Washington D.C.) so that our government begins to empower our people to fulfill their potential ... if I can be that individual , so be it . " His spokesman remarked that the committee would help " to put an infrastructure in place " for the campaign . Bayh immediately returned to the campaign trail following his announcement , traveling back to Iowa on December 4 with approximately \$ 10 @. @ 6 million to continue spreading his message . The next weekend , Bayh visited New Hampshire to discuss his views on energy independence , global warming and the war in Iraq . But due to the two sold out appearances to the state by Barack Obama , who was recently named a potential candidate , Bayh 's trip did not garner much media attention .

= = = Withdrawal = = =

Two weeks following his announcement , Bayh withdrew from the race , citing that " the odds were longer than I felt I could responsibly pursue " . He further commented that a run would cause him to be " absent from the Senate ... instead of working to help the people of my state and the nation . "

= = Employees = =

The following individuals worked as advisors to Bayh as members of the All America PAC and at the candidate 's Senate office . Media consultant Anita Dunn was slated to be given a promotion and replaced as the Friends of Evan Bayh committee was formed , but the campaign 's brevity prevented any notable action . Dunn would go on to serve as President Barack Obama 's interim @-@ White House Communications Director , replaced by another Bayh campaign employee , Daniel Pfeiffer , who currently holds the post .

The campaign also featured Thurgood Marshall , Jr . , son of the late U.S. Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall , the first African @-@ American to serve on the court . Marshall , Jr . , previously worked in the Bill Clinton administration .

Senate Office

= = Reaction = =

Bayh was criticized throughout his campaign for being " boring " or " dull , " but media outlets also described the candidate as " folksy " and displaying a " Midwest charm , " that some compared to President Harry Truman . The Washington Post commented that he was " unexciting but very dependable and electable , " and that he would " have a great shot " if the Democratic Party was " feeling pragmatic " . The Wall Street Journal lauded the Senator as a " genuinely fiscally conservative Democrat . " His record as a governor and Senator were also portrayed as desirable assets . Pollster Frank Luntz summed up Bayh 's campaign , describing the Senator from the perspective of his audience :

= = Aftermath = =

Nine months following his withdrawal , Bayh endorsed Senator Hillary Clinton , stating that he believed she would " run a campaign that is both tough and smart when it comes to protecting our nation 's security " . He campaigned with the former First Lady , sticking to her when the race tightened with the surging Senator Barack Obama .

After Obama secured the nomination , Bayh endorsed the Senator from Illinois and was mentioned as a possible running mate . He was included on the initial shortlist , which was then whittled down to four names : Bayh , Senator Joe Biden of Delaware , Governor Tim Kaine of Virginia and Governor Kathleen Sebelius of Kansas . On August 22 , the eve of Obama 's scheduled unveiling of his running mate , NBC News reported that Bayh and Kaine had been informed that they were not chosen . Obama opted instead for Biden . Obama 's campaign manager David Plouffe later wrote in his book The Audacity to Win , which was published in November 2009 , that Bayh had been a " coin toss " away from becoming Obama 's running mate . Plouffe and David Axelrod had interviewed

the finalists and Plouffe said that Bayh 's answers were " substantively close to perfect , if cautiously so . " He recalled that at the time of the interview he thought to himself , " there 's no way this guy will color outside the lines ... Bayh 's up side and down side are probably the closest spread of the three " , compared to Biden , who could " reach higher heights but could cause us real pain . " As Obama approached a decision , he told Plouffe " it 's a coin toss now between Bayh and Biden , but Kaine is still a distinct possibility . " On August 17 , Obama told Axelrod simply , " I 've decided . It 's Biden . "

Bayh later appeared at the 2008 Democratic National Convention , delivering a speech in support of the Democratic nominee stating : " The time for change has come and Barack Obama is the change we need " .