

= Rand Paul =

Randal Howard " Rand " Paul (born January 7 , 1963) is an American politician and physician . Since 2011 , Paul has served in the United States Senate as a member of the Republican Party representing Kentucky . He is the son of former U.S. Representative Ron Paul of Texas .

Born in Pittsburgh , Pennsylvania , Paul attended Baylor University and is a graduate of the Duke University School of Medicine . Paul began practicing ophthalmology in 1993 in Bowling Green , Kentucky , and established his own clinic in December 2007 . Throughout Paul 's life , he volunteered for his father 's campaigns . In 2010 , Paul entered politics by running for a seat in the United States Senate . Paul has described himself as a Constitutional conservative and a supporter of the Tea Party movement and has advocated for a balanced budget amendment , term limits , and privacy reform .

On April 7 , 2015 , Paul officially announced his candidacy for the Republican nomination at the 2016 U.S. presidential election . He suspended his campaign on February 3 , 2016 , shortly after the Iowa caucus .

= = Early life = =

Randal Howard Paul was born on January 7 , 1963 , in Pittsburgh , Pennsylvania , to Carol (née Wells) and Ron Paul , who is also a politician and physician . The elder Paul was a U.S. Representative from Texas and ran for President three times . The middle child of five , his siblings are Ronald " Ronnie " Paul Jr . , Lori Paul Pyeatt , Robert Paul , and Joy Paul @-@ LeBlanc . Paul was baptized in the Episcopal Church and identified as a practicing Christian as a teenager . Despite his father 's libertarian views and strong support for individual rights , the novelist Ayn Rand was not the inspiration for his first name . Growing up , he went by " Randy " , but his wife shortened it to " Rand . "

The Paul family moved to Lake Jackson , Texas , in 1968 , where he was raised and where his father began a medical practice and for an extent of time was the only obstetrician in Brazoria County . When he was 13 , his father was elected to the United States House of Representatives . That same year , Paul attended the 1976 Republican National Convention , where his father headed Ronald Reagan 's Texas delegation . The younger Paul often spent summer vacations interning in his father 's congressional office . In his teenage years , Paul studied the Austrian economists that his father respected , as well as the writings of Objectivist philosopher Ayn Rand . Paul went to Brazoswood High School and was on the swimming team and played defensive back on the football team . Paul attended Baylor University from fall 1981 to summer 1984 and was enrolled in the honors program . During the time he spent at Baylor , he was involved in the swim team and the Young Conservatives of Texas and was a member of a secret organization known as the NoZe Brotherhood . Paul also regularly contributed to The Baylor Lariat student newspaper . Paul dropped out of Baylor without completing his Bachelor 's degree in either biology or English , when he was accepted into his father 's alma mater , the Duke University School of Medicine . At the time , Duke did not require an undergraduate degree for admission to its graduate school . He earned an M.D. degree in 1988 and completed his residency in 1993 .

= = Medical career = =

After completing his residency in ophthalmology , Paul moved to Bowling Green , Kentucky . He has held a state @-@ issued medical license since moving there in 1993 . He received his first job from John Downing of Downing McPeak Vision Centers , which brought him to Bowling Green after completing his residency . Paul worked for Downing for about five years before parting ways . Afterwards , he went to work at the Graves Gilbert Clinic , a private medical group in Bowling Green , for 10 years before creating his own practice in a converted one @-@ story house across the street from Downing 's office . After his election to the U.S. Senate , he merged his practice with Downing 's medical practice . Paul has faced two malpractice lawsuits between 1993 and 2010 ; he

was cleared in one case while the other was settled for \$ 50 @, @ 000 . His medical work has been praised by Downing and he has medical privileges at two Bowling Green hospitals . Paul specializes in cataract and glaucoma surgeries , LASIK procedures , and corneal transplants . As a member of the Bowling Green Noon Lions Club , Paul founded the Southern Kentucky Lions Eye Clinic in 2009 to help provide eye surgery and exams for those who cannot afford to pay . Paul won the Melvin Jones Fellow Award for Dedicated Humanitarian Services from the Lions Club International Foundation for his work establishing the Southern Kentucky Lions Eye Clinic .

= = National Board of Ophthalmology = = =

In 1995 , Paul passed the American Board of Ophthalmology (ABO) boards on his first attempt and earned board @-@ certification under the ABO for 10 years .

Prior to this , in 1992 , the ABO had changed their certification program , which had previously awarded lifetime certifications , instead requiring doctors to recertify every 10 years . Those who had already been given lifetime certification were allowed to keep it (according to the ABO , they would not legally have been able to rescind these certifications) . Shortly after this change , Paul began a campaign to protest it . This effort culminated in 1997 with him creating , " along with 200 other young ophthalmologists " , the National Board of Ophthalmology (NBO) to offer an alternative certification system , at a cost substantially lower than that of the ABO . Its certification exam , an open book take @-@ home test , was described by one taker as " probably harder " and " more clinically relevant " than the ABO 's exam .

Named board members were Paul , his wife , and his father @-@ in @-@ law . The NBO was never itself accepted as an accrediting entity by organizations such as the American Board of Medical Specialties , and its certification was considered invalid by many hospitals and insurance companies . Paul let his own ABO certification lapse in 2005 , which did not affect his practice in Kentucky , since the state does not require board certification .

By Paul 's estimate , about 50 or 60 doctors were certified by the NBO . The NBO was incorporated in 1999 , but Paul allowed it to be dissolved in 2000 when he did not file the required paperwork with the Kentucky Secretary of State 's office . He later recreated the board in 2005 , but it was again dissolved in 2011 .

= = Political activism = =

Paul served as the head of the local chapter of the Young Conservatives of Texas during his time at Baylor University . In 1984 , Paul took a semester off to aid his father 's primary challenge to Republican Senator Phil Gramm . While attending Duke Medical School , Paul volunteered for his father 's 1988 Libertarian presidential campaign . In response to President Bush breaking his election promise to not raise taxes , Paul founded the North Carolina Taxpayers Union in 1991 . In 1994 , Paul founded the anti @-@ tax organization Kentucky Taxpayers United (KTU) , serving as chair of the organization from its inception . He has often cited his involvement with KTU as the foundation of his involvement with state politics . Described as " ideological and conservative " by the Lexington Herald @-@ Leader , the group considered itself nonpartisan , examining Kentucky legislators ' records on taxation and spending and encouraging politicians to publicly pledge to vote uniformly against tax increases . Paul managed his father 's successful 1996 Congressional campaign , in which the elder Paul returned to the House after a twelve @-@ year absence . The elder Paul defeated incumbent Democrat @-@ turned @-@ Republican Greg Laughlin in the Republican primary , despite Laughlin 's support from the NRCC and Republican leaders such as Newt Gingrich and George W. Bush .

The Wall Street Journal reported in 2010 that although Paul had told a Kentucky television audience as recently as September 2009 that KTU published ratings each year on state legislators ' tax positions and that " we 've done that for about 15 years " , the group had stopped issuing its ratings and report cards after 2002 and had been legally dissolved by the state in 2000 after failing to file registration documents .

Paul spoke on his father's behalf when his father was campaigning for office, including throughout the elder Paul's run in the 2008 presidential election, during which Rand campaigned door-to-door in New Hampshire and spoke in Boston at a fundraising rally for his father on the 234th anniversary of the Boston Tea Party.

In February 2014, Paul joined the Tea Party affiliated conservative advocacy group FreedomWorks in filing a class action lawsuit charging that the federal government's bulk collection of Americans' phone records metadata is a violation of the Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. Commenting on the lawsuit at a press conference, Paul said, "I'm not against the NSA, I'm not against spying, I'm not against looking at phone records I just want you to go to a judge, have an individual's name and [get] a warrant. That's what the Fourth Amendment says." He also said there was no evidence the surveillance of phone metadata had stopped terrorism. Critics, including Harvard University law professor Alan Dershowitz and Steven Aftergood, the director of the American Scientists' Project on Government Secrecy, called the lawsuit a political stunt. Paul's political campaign organization said that the names of members of the public who went to Paul's websites and signed on as potential class action participants would be available in the organization's database for future campaign use. On the announcement of the filing of the lawsuit, Mattie Fein, the spokeswoman for and former wife of attorney Bruce Fein, complained that Fein's intellectual contribution to the lawsuit had been stolen and that he had not been properly paid for his work. Paul's representatives denied the charge, and Fein issued a statement saying that Mattie Fein had not been authorized to speak for him on the matter and that he had in fact been paid for his work on the lawsuit.

Paul is co-author of a book entitled *The Tea Party Goes to Washington* (2011) and also the author of *Government Bullies: How Everyday Americans Are Being Harassed, Abused, and Imprisoned by the Feds* (2012). Paul was included in *Time* magazine's world's 100 most influential people, for 2013 and 2014.

= = Election to U.S. Senate = =

= = = Primary campaign = = =

At the beginning of 2009, there was movement by political supporters of his father to draft Paul in a bid to replace beleaguered Republican Kentucky senator Jim Bunning. Paul's potential candidacy was discussed in the *Los Angeles Times* and locally in the Kentucky press. Paul's father said, "Should Senator Bunning decide not to run, I think Rand would make a great U.S. Senator." On April 15, 2009, Paul gave his first political speech as a potential candidate at a Tea Party rally held in his town of Bowling Green, Kentucky, where more than 700 people had gathered in support of the Tea Party movement.

On May 1, 2009, Paul said that if Bunning, whose fundraising in 2009 matched his poor numbers in opinion polling for the 2010 election, declined to seek a third term, he would almost certainly run in the Republican Party primary to succeed him, and formed an exploratory committee soon after, while still promising to stay out of the race if Bunning ultimately decided to run for reelection. Paul made this announcement on MSNBC's *The Rachel Maddow Show*, though a Kentucky news site first broke the news.

On July 28, 2009, Bunning announced that he would not run for reelection in the face of insufficient fundraising. The announcement left only Paul and Secretary of State Trey Grayson as the remaining candidates for the Republican nomination, with Paul announcing on August 5, 2009, that he would officially run for the U.S. Senate as a Republican. The announcement was made through a series of national TV events, radio, and other programs, as well as newspapers in Kentucky.

On August 20, 2009, Paul's supporters planned a moneybomb to kick off his campaign. The official campaign took in \$ 433 @, @ 509 in 24 hours. His website reported that this set a new record in Kentucky's political fundraising history in a 24 @-@ hour period. A second "moneybomb

" was held on September 23 , 2009 , to counter a D.C. fundraiser being held for primary opponent Trey Grayson , by 23 Republican United States Senators . The theme was a UFC " fight " between " We the People " and the " D.C. Insiders " . Later in the campaign , Paul claimed his pledge to not take money from lobbyists and Senators who had voted for the bailout was only a " primary pledge " ; he subsequently held a DC fundraiser with the same Senators who had been the target of the September 23 , 2009 , " moneybomb " . Paul ended up raising some \$ 3 million during the primary period . Paul 's fundraising was aided by his father 's network of supporters .

Although Grayson was considered the frontrunner in July 2009 , Paul found success characterizing Grayson as a " career politician " and challenging Grayson 's conservatism . Paul ran an ad in February that made an issue out of Grayson 's September 2008 admission that he voted for Bill Clinton when he was 20 years old . James Dobson , a Christian evangelical figure , endorsed Grayson on April 26 based on the advice of what Dobson described as " senior members of the GOP " , but on May 3 the Paul campaign announced that Dobson had changed his endorsement to Paul after Paul and some Paul supporters had lobbied Dobson insisting on Paul 's social conservative bona fides .

On May 18 , Paul won the Republican Senatorial primary by a 23 % margin , meaning he would face the Kentucky Attorney General Jack Conway , in the November 2 general election .

= = = General campaign = = =

In the 2010 general election , Paul faced Kentucky Attorney General Jack Conway . The campaign attracted \$ 8 @. @ 5 million in contributions from outside groups , of which \$ 6 million was spent to help Paul and \$ 2 @. @ 5 million to help Conway . This money influx was in addition to the money spent by the candidates themselves : \$ 6 million by Paul and \$ 4 @. @ 7 million by Conway . On June 28 , 2010 , Paul supporters held their first post @-@ primary online fundraising drive , this time promoted as a " money blast " .

Paul 's campaign got off to a rough start after his comments on the Civil Rights Act of 1964 stirred controversy . Paul stated that he favored 9 out of 10 titles of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 , but that had he been a senator during the 1960s , he would have raised some questions on the constitutionality of Title II of the Act . Paul said that he abhors racism , and that he would have marched with Martin Luther King Jr. to repeal Jim Crow Laws . He later released a statement declaring that he would have voted for the Act and stated " unequivocally ... that I will not support any efforts to repeal the Civil Rights Act of 1964 " . Later he generated more controversy by characterizing statements made by Obama Administration officials regarding the BP oil spill cleanup as sounding " un @-@ American " .

Paul defeated Conway in the general election with 56 % of the vote to 44 % for Conway .

= = U.S. Senate career = =

= = = 112th Congress (2011 ? 13) = = =

Paul was sworn in on January 5 , 2011 , along with his father , who simultaneously served in the House of Representatives .

Paul was assigned to serve on the Energy and Natural Resources , Health , Education , Labor and Pensions , Homeland Security and Government Affairs , and Small Business committees . Paul also formed the Senate Tea Party Caucus with Jim DeMint and Mike Lee as its inaugural members . His first legislative proposal was to cut \$ 500 billion from federal spending in one year . This proposal included cutting the Department of Education by 83 percent and the Department of Homeland Security by 43 percent , as well as folding the Department of Energy into the Department of Defense and eliminating the Department of Housing and Urban Development . Seven independent agencies would be eliminated and food stamps would be cut by 30 percent . Under Paul 's proposal , defense spending would be reduced by 6 @. @ 5 percent and international aid would be eliminated . He later

proposed a five @-@ year budget plan intended to balance the budget .

In February , Paul was one of two Republicans to vote against extending three key provisions of the USA PATRIOT Act (roving wiretaps , searches of business records , and conducting surveillance of " lone wolves " ? individuals not linked to terrorist groups) .

On March 2 , Paul was one of nine senators to vote against a stopgap bill that cut \$ 4 billion from the budget and temporarily prevent a government shutdown , saying that it did not cut enough from the budget . One week later , he voted against the Democratic and Republican budget proposals to keep funding the federal government , saying that both bills did not cut enough spending . Both bills failed to pass the Senate . He later voted against stopgap measures on March 17 and April 8 , both of which passed the senate . On April 14 , He was one of 19 senators to vote against a budget that cut \$ 38 @.@ 5 billion from the budget and fund the government for the remainder of the fiscal year . Paul voiced opposition to U.S. intervention in the Libyan civil war and has criticized President Obama for not gaining congressional consent for Operation Odyssey Dawn . During the debt ceiling crisis , the Senator stated that he would only support raising the debt ceiling if a balanced budget amendment was enacted . Paul was a supporter of the Cut , Cap and Balance Act , which was tabled by Democratic opposition . On August 3 , Paul voted against a bill that would raise the debt ceiling .

On September 7 , Paul called for a vote of no confidence in U.S. Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner . Later that month , Paul blocked legislation that would strengthen safety rules for oil and gas pipelines because he stated the bill was not strong enough . In October , Paul blocked a bill that would provide \$ 36 million in benefits for elderly and disabled refugees , saying that he was concerned that it could be used to aid domestic terrorists . This was in response to two alleged terrorists who came to the United States through a refugee program and were receiving welfare benefits when they were arrested in 2011 in Paul 's hometown of Bowling Green . Paul lifted his hold on the bill after Democratic leaders promised to hold a Congressional hearing into how individuals are selected for refugee status and request an investigation on how the two suspects were admitted in the country through a refugee program . In June 2012 , Paul endorsed Mitt Romney after it became apparent that he would be the Republican nominee for the 2012 presidential election . However , he was later vocal about his disagreements with Romney on a number of policies .

= = = 113th Congress (2013 ? 15) = = =

For the 113th Congress , Paul was added to the Foreign Relations committee and retained his spot on the Health , Education , Labor and Pensions , Homeland Security and Government Affairs , and Small Business committees .

On March 6 ? 7 , 2013 , Paul engaged in a filibuster to delay voting on the nomination of John O. Brennan as the Director of the CIA . Paul questioned the Obama administration 's use of drones and the stated legal justification for their potential use within the United States . Paul held the floor for 12 hours and 52 minutes . He ceded to several Republican senators and Democratic senator , Ron Wyden , who generally also questioned drone usage . Paul said his purpose was to challenge drone policy in general and specifically as it related to noncombatants on U.S. soil . He requested a pledge from the Administration that noncombatants would not be targeted on U.S. soil . Attorney General Eric Holder responded that the President is not authorized to deploy extrajudicial punishment without due process , against non @-@ combatant citizens . Paul answered that he was " quite happy " with the response . The filibuster was ended with a cloture vote of 81 to 16 , and Brennan was confirmed by the Senate with a vote of 63 to 34 .

In March 2013 , Paul , with Senators Ted Cruz and Mike Lee , threatened another filibuster , this one opposing any legislative proposals to expand federal gun control measures . The filibuster was attempted on April 11 , 2013 , but was dismissed by cloture , in a 68 ? 31 vote . Also in March 2013 , Paul endorsed fellow Kentucky Republican Senator Mitch McConnell 's 2014 re @-@ election campaign . McConnell had previously hired Paul 's 2010 campaign manager , Jesse Benton , as his own campaign manager . Paul 's endorsement was seen as a major win for McConnell in avoiding a challenge in the Republican primary .

In response to Detroit 's declaration of bankruptcy , Paul stated he would not allow the government to attempt to bail out Detroit . In a phone interview with Breitbart.com on July 19 , 2013 , Paul said , " I basically say he is bailing them out over my dead body because we don 't have any money in Washington . " Paul said he thought a federal bailout would send the wrong message to other cities with financial problems .

In September , Paul stated that the United States should avoid military intervention in the ongoing Syrian civil war . In an op @-@ ed , Paul disputed the Obama administration 's claims that the threat of military force caused Syria 's government to consider turning over its chemical weapons , instead arguing that the opposition to military action in Syria , and the delay that it caused , led to diplomatic progress .

In October 2013 , Paul was the subject of some controversy when it was discovered that he had plagiarized from Wikipedia part of a speech in support of Virginia gubernatorial candidate Ken Cuccinelli . Referencing the movie Gattaca , Paul quoted almost verbatim from the Wikipedia article about the film without citing the source . Evidence soon surfaced that Paul had copied sentences in a number of his other speeches nearly verbatim from other authors without giving credit to the original sources , including in the speech he had given as the Tea Party rebuttal to the president 's 2013 State of the Union address . In addition , a three @-@ page @-@ long passage of Paul 's book Government Bullies was taken directly from an article by the conservative think tank The Heritage Foundation . When it became apparent that Paul 's Washington Times op @-@ ed on mandatory minimums and related testimony he had given before the Senate Judiciary Committee both contained material that was virtually identical to an article that had been published by another author in The Week a few days earlier , the Washington Times said that the newspaper would no longer publish the weekly column Paul had been contributing to the paper . After a week of almost daily news reports of new allegations of plagiarism , Paul said that he was being held to an " unfair standard " , but would restructure his office in order to prevent mistakes in the future , if that would be what it would take " to make people leave me the hell alone . "

In response to political turmoil in Ukraine in early 2014 , Paul initially said that the US should remain mindful of the fact that although the Cold War is over , Russia remains a military power with long @-@ range nuclear missiles . He said that the US should try to maintain a " respectful relationship with Russia " and avoid taking actions that the Russians might view as a provocation , such as seeking to have Ukraine join NATO or otherwise interfering in Russia 's relationship with Ukraine . Two weeks later , after the Russian parliament authorized the use of military force in Ukraine and Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered military exercises along Russia 's border with Ukraine , Paul began taking a different tone . He wrote : " Vladimir Putin 's invasion of Ukraine is a gross violation of that nation 's sovereignty and an affront to the international community Putin must be punished for violating the Budapest Memorandum , and Russia must learn that the U.S. will isolate it if it insists on acting like a rogue nation . " He said that the US and European allies could retaliate against Russia 's military aggression without any need for military action . He urged that the US impose economic sanctions on Russia and resume an effort to build defensive anti @-@ missile installations in Poland and the Czech Republic . He also called for the US to take steps as a counterweight to Russia 's strategic influence on Europe 's oil and gas supply , such as lifting restrictions on new exploration and drilling for fossil fuels in the United States along with immediate approval of the controversial Keystone Pipeline , which he said would allow the US to ship more oil and gas to Europe if Russia attempts to cut off its own supply to Europe .

Paul played a leading role in blocking a treaty with Switzerland that would enable the IRS to conduct tax evasion probes , arguing that the treaty would infringe upon Americans ' privacy . Paul received the 2014 Distinguished Service Award from the Center for the National Interest (formally called the Nixon Center) for his public policy work .

In response to reports that the CIA infiltrated the computers of the Senate Intelligence Committee , Paul called for the firing of CIA Director John O. Brennan . In December 2014 , Paul supported the actions to change the US policy towards Cuba and trade with that country taken by the Obama administration .

== 114th Congress (2015 ? present) ==

In the beginning of 2015 , Senator Paul re @-@ introduced the Federal Reserve Transparency Act . Senator Paul also introduced the FAIR Act , or Fifth Amendment Integrity Restoration Act , which would restrict civil forfeiture proceedings .

On May 20 , 2015 , Paul spoke for ten and a half hours in opposition to the reauthorization of Section 215 of the Patriot Act . Sections of the Patriot Act were prevented from being reauthorized on June 1 .

After the death of Antonin Scalia in February 2016 , on February 15 , Paul indicated that he would oppose any nomination by President Obama to replace the late Supreme Court Justice .

During a press briefing on May 6 , 2016 , President Obama called on Paul to stop " blocking the implementation of tax treaties that have been pending for years " , arguing that they assisted law enforcement in off shore investigations into tax evasion .

On June 6 , Paul spoke of introducing legislation to cease Selective Service , three days after the passing of Muhammed Ali , who he intended to name the legislation after in tribute .

== Committee assignments ==

Current

Committee on Foreign Relations (starting 2013)

United States Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on International Operations and Organizations , Human Rights , Democracy and Global Women 's Issues (Chairman)

United States Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on African Affairs

United States Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on International Development and Foreign Assistance , Economic Affairs and International Environmental Protection , and Peace Corps

United States Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere and Global Narcotics Affairs

Committee on Health , Education , Labor , and Pensions (starting 2011)

United States Senate Health Subcommittee on Children and Families

United States Senate Health Subcommittee on Employment and Workplace Safety

Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs (starting 2011)

United States Senate Homeland Security Subcommittee on Emergency Management , Intergovernmental Relations , and the District of Columbia (Chairman)

Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations

United States Senate Homeland Security Subcommittee on the Efficiency and Effectiveness of Federal Programs and the Federal Workforce

Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship (starting 2011)

Previous

Committee on Energy and Natural Resources (2011 ? 13)

== 2016 presidential campaign ==

== Background ==

Paul was considered a potential candidate for the Republican nomination for the Presidency of the United States since at least January 2013 . He delivered the Tea Party response to President Barack Obama 's State of the Union address on February 13 , 2013 , while Marco Rubio gave the official Republican response . This prompted some pundits to call that date the start of the 2016 Republican primaries . That year , he spoke at the Conservative Political Action Conference in Washington D.C. , where he won the 2016 Presidential straw poll . Paul went on to win the straw poll for the next two years as well , leading to some considering Paul to be a front runner for the nomination , although CPAC attendees are typically considered younger and more libertarian @-@

minded than average Republican voters .

In a speech at the GOP Freedom Summit in April 2014 , Paul insisted that the GOP has to broaden its appeal in order to grow as a party . To do so , he said it cannot be the party of " fat cats , rich people and Wall Street " and that the conservative movement has never been about rich people or privilege , " we are the middle class " , he said . Paul also said that conservatives must present a message of justice and concern for the unemployed and be against government surveillance to attract new people to the movement , including the young , Hispanics , and blacks During the 2014 election , Paul launched a social media campaign titled " Hillary 's Losers " which was meant to highlight many of the Democratic candidates that lost their bids for the U.S. Senate despite endorsements from Hillary Clinton . Clinton is also a candidate for President and is considered a front runner for the Democratic Party 's nomination .

Paul began to assemble his campaign team , setting up campaign offices and hiring his campaign manager in the beginning of 2015 , fueling speculation that he was preparing to enter the Presidential race . In February 2015 , Paul said he would make an announcement about whether or not he would be running in late March or early April .

Paul officially announced his presidential candidacy on April 7 , 2015 . Within a day of his announcement , Paul raised \$ 1 million .

= = = Senate reelection = = =

In April 2011 , Paul filed to run for re @-@ election to his Senate seat in 2016 . Had he become the Republican presidential (or vice @-@ presidential) nominee , state law would prohibit him from simultaneously running for re @-@ election . In March 2014 , the Republican @-@ controlled Kentucky Senate passed a bill that would allow Paul to run for both offices , but the Democratic @-@ controlled Kentucky House of Representatives declined to take it up . Paul spent his own campaign money in the 2014 legislative elections , helping Republican candidates for the State House in the hopes of flipping the chamber , thus allowing the legislature to pass the bill (Democratic Governor Steve Beshear 's veto can be overridden with a simple majority) . However , the Democrats retained their 54 ? 46 majority in the State House . Paul has since given his support to the idea that the Kentucky Republican Party could decide to hold a caucus rather than a primary , potentially giving Paul more time to decide whether he should run for U.S. Senator or continue a potential bid for President .

= = = Suspension = = =

Paul announced the suspension of his presidential campaign on February 3 , 2016 , shortly after the Iowa caucus .

= = Political positions = =

A supporter of the Tea Party movement , Paul has described himself as a " constitutional conservative " . He is generally described as a libertarian , a term he both embraced and rejected during his first Senate campaign . He supports term limits , a balanced budget amendment , and the Read the Bills Act , in addition to the widespread reduction of federal spending and taxation . He favors a flat tax rate of 14 @. @ 5 % for individuals and business , while eliminating the FICA payroll taxes , as well as taxes on inheritance , gifts , capital gains , dividends , and interest .

On social issues , Paul describes himself as " 100 % pro life " , believing that legal personhood begins at fertilization . In 2009 , his position was to ban abortion under all circumstances . Since 2010 , he has said he would allow for a doctor 's discretion in life @-@ threatening cases such as ectopic pregnancies . Concerning same @-@ sex marriage , Paul has made a distinction between his personal beliefs and how he feels the government should handle it . He has stated that he personally feels same @-@ sex marriage " offends [himself] and a lot of people " , and said there is a " crisis that allows people to think there would be some other sorts of marriage . " However , he

believes the issue should be left to the states to decide , and would not support a federal ban .

Concerning drugs , Paul has criticized mandatory minimums that he believes have led to unreasonably harsh sentences for repeat offenders . He has highlighted the case of Timothy L. Tyler as particularly unfair . Paul does not believe in legalizing the recreational use of drugs like marijuana and cocaine , but does not support jailing marijuana users . He supports state laws to legalize the use of marijuana for medical purposes . Paul was one of three U.S. senators in 2015 to introduce a bipartisan bill , CARERS , that would legalize medical marijuana under federal law .

Paul opposes all forms of gun control as a violation of Second Amendment rights , including provisions of the Patriot Act . His advocacy of personal property rights includes introducing House Bill S. 890 , the Defense of Environment and Property Act of 2012 . Provisions of the bill include restricting the ability of the Environmental Protection Agency and other Federal agencies to " impinge upon states ' power over land and water use . " The bill holds requires Federal agencies to reimburse private property owners double the amount of any economic losses arising from new Federal regulations " that relate to the definition of navigable waters or waters of the United States " , and holds the enforcement of any such regulation in abeyance until such payments are complete .

Unlike his more stridently " non @-@ interventionist " father , Paul concedes a role for American armed forces abroad , including permanent foreign military bases . He has said that he blames supporters of the Iraq War and not President Obama for the growth in violence that occurred in 2014 , and that the Iraq War " emboldened " Iran . Dick Cheney , John McCain and Rick Perry have responded by calling Paul an isolationist , but Paul has pointed to opinion polls of likely GOP primary voters as support for his position . Paul also stated : " I personally believe that this group [? ISIS ?] would not be in Iraq and would not be as powerful had we not been supplying their allies in the war [against Syrian Bashar al @-@ Assad 's government] . " Paul then supported airstrikes against ISIS , but questioned the constitutionality of Obama 's unilateral actions without a clear congressional mandate . Paul has stated concerns about arms sent to Syrian rebels that wind up in unfriendly hands . In 2015 , Paul called for a defense budget of \$ 697 billion in 2016 . In 2011 , shortly after being elected , he proposed a budget which specified \$ 542 billion in defense spending .

On February 2 , 2015 , Paul generated controversy by suggesting that states should not require parents to vaccinate their children because parents should have the freedom to make that decision for their children . In an interview with CNBC on February 2 , Paul clarified this statement , commenting " I 'm not arguing vaccines are a bad idea . I think they are a good thing . But I think the parent should have some input . The state doesn 't own your children . Parents own the children , and it is an issue of freedom . " On February 3 , he posted a photograph to Twitter of himself being vaccinated .

= = Personal life = =

Paul is married to Kelley Paul (née Ashby) , a freelance writer . They and their three sons reside in Bowling Green , Kentucky .

= = Electoral history = =