

= Newt Gingrich =

Newton Leroy " Newt " Gingrich ( / ˈnuːt ˈɪŋɡrɪtʃ / ; born Newton Leroy McPherson ; June 17 , 1943 ) is an American political consultant , former politician , and historian . He represented Georgia 's 6th congressional district as a Republican from 1979 until his resignation in 1999 , and served as the 50th Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives from 1995 to 1999 . In 2012 , Gingrich was a candidate for the Republican Party presidential nomination .

In the 1970s , Gingrich taught history and geography at the University of West Georgia . During this period he ran twice ( 1974 and 1976 ) for the United States House of Representatives before winning in November 1978 . He served as House Minority Whip from 1989 to 1995 .

A co -author and architect of the " Contract with America " , Gingrich was a major leader in the Republican victory in the 1994 congressional election . In 1995 , Time named him " Man of the Year " for " his role in ending the four -decades -long Democratic majority in the House " . While he was House Speaker , the House enacted welfare reform , passed a capital gains tax cut in 1997 , and in 1998 passed the first balanced budget since 1969 . The poor showing by Republicans in the 1998 Congressional elections , a reprimand from the House for Gingrich 's ethics violation , and pressure from Republican colleagues caused Gingrich 's resignation from the speakership on November 6 , 1998 , followed by his outright resignation from the House on January 3 , 1999 .

Since leaving the House , Gingrich has remained active in public policy debates and worked as a political consultant . He founded and chaired several policy think tanks , including American Solutions for Winning the Future and the Center for Health Transformation . He has written or co-authored 27 books . In May 2011 , he announced his unsuccessful campaign for the Republican presidential nomination . On May 2 , 2012 , Gingrich ended his presidential campaign and endorsed then -front -runner Mitt Romney , who went on to win the nomination .

After being raised Lutheran and spending most of his adult life as a Southern Baptist , Gingrich converted to Roman Catholicism in 2009 . He has been married three times , with the first two marriages ending in affairs and divorce . He has two children from his first marriage and has been married to Callista Gingrich ( née Bisek ) since 2000 .

Currently , Gingrich serves as an advisor to the Canadian mining company Barrick Gold .

On July 12 , 2016 , it was announced that Gingrich was on Donald Trump 's three -person shortlist to be the presumptive Republican nominee 's running mate in the 2016 presidential election , along with New Jersey Governor Chris Christie and Indiana Governor Mike Pence . However , on July 15 , 2016 , Trump officially announced that Pence will be Trump 's running mate .

= = Early life , family , and education = =

Newton Leroy McPherson was born at the Harrisburg Hospital in Harrisburg , Pennsylvania , on June 17 , 1943 . His mother , Kathleen " Kit " ( née Daugherty ; 1925 ? 2003 ) , and father , Newton Searles McPherson ( 1923 ? 1970 ) , married in September 1942 , when she was 16 and McPherson was 19 . The marriage fell apart within days . He is of German , Scottish , and Irish descent .

In 1946 , his mother married Army officer Robert Gingrich ( 1925 ? 1996 ) , who adopted Newt . His father , a career officer , served tours in Korea and Vietnam . In 1956 the family moved to Europe living for a period in Orleans , France and Stuttgart , Germany .

Gingrich has three younger half -sisters , Candace Gingrich , Susan Gingrich , and Roberta Brown . Gingrich was raised in Hummelstown ( near Harrisburg ) and on military bases where Robert Gingrich was stationed . The family 's religion was Lutheran . He also has a half -sister and half -brother , Randy McPherson , from his father 's side . In 1960 the family moved to Georgia at Fort Benning during his junior year in high school .

In 1961 , Gingrich graduated from Baker High School in Columbus , Georgia . He had been interested in politics since his teen years while living in Orléans , France . He visited the site of the Battle of Verdun and learned about the sacrifices made there and the importance of political leadership .

Gingrich avoided the draft , receiving deferments for being a student and being a father , and he did not serve in the military . He expressed some regret about that decision in 1985 , saying , " Given everything I believe in , a large part of me thinks I should have gone over . "

Gingrich received a B.A. degree in history from Emory University in Atlanta in 1965 . He then proceeded to earn an M.A. ( 1968 ) and a Ph.D. in European history ( 1971 ) , both from Tulane University in New Orleans . He spent six months in Brussels in 1969 ? 70 working on his dissertation , " Belgian Education Policy in the Congo 1945 ? 1960 " . In 1970 , Gingrich joined the history department at West Georgia College as an assistant professor . In 1974 he moved to the geography department and was instrumental in establishing an interdisciplinary environmental studies program . Denied tenure , he left the college in 1978 as he was elected to Congress .

= = Early political career = =

Gingrich was the southern regional director for Nelson Rockefeller in 1968 .

= = = Congressional campaigns = = =

In 1974 , Gingrich made his first bid for political office as the Republican candidate in Georgia 's 6th congressional district , which stretched from the southern Atlanta suburbs to the Alabama state line . He lost to 20 @-@ year incumbent Democrat Jack Flynt by 2 @,@ 770 votes . Gingrich ran up huge margins in the more suburban areas of the district , but was unable to overcome Flynt 's lead in the more rural areas . Gingrich 's relative success came as a considerable shock on two fronts . Flynt had never faced a serious challenger ? indeed , Gingrich was only the second Republican to even run against him . Additionally , 1974 was a disastrous year for Republicans nationally due to fallout from the Watergate scandal .

Gingrich sought a rematch in 1976 . While the Republicans did slightly better in the 1976 House elections than in 1974 nationally , the Democratic candidate in the 1976 presidential election was former Governor of Georgia , Jimmy Carter . Carter won over two @-@ thirds of the vote in his native Georgia . As a possible result of Carter 's coattails , Gingrich lost by 5 @,@ 100 votes .

With Gingrich priming for another run in the 1978 elections , Flynt decided not to run for re @-@ election and retired . Gingrich defeated Democratic State Senator Virginia Shapard by 7 @,@ 500 votes . Gingrich was re @-@ elected six times from this district , only facing a close general election race once ? in the House elections of 1990 ? when he won by 978 votes in a race against Democrat David Worley . Although the district was trending Republican at the national level , conservative Democrats continued to hold most local offices , as well as most of the area 's seats in the General Assembly , well into the 1980s .

= = In Congress = =

In 1981 , Gingrich co @-@ founded the Military Reform Caucus ( MRC ) and the Congressional Aviation and Space Caucus . During the 1983 congressional page sex scandal , Gingrich was among those calling for the expulsion of representatives Dan Crane and Gerry Studds . Gingrich supported a proposal to ban loans from the International Monetary Fund to Communist countries and he endorsed a bill to make Martin Luther King , Jr . ' s birthday a national holiday .

In 1983 , he founded the Conservative Opportunity Society ( COS ) , a group that included young conservative House Republicans . Early COS members included Robert Smith Walker , Judd Gregg , Dan Coats and Connie Mack III . The group expanded over time to comprise several dozen representatives who met each week to exchange and develop ideas .

Gingrich 's analysis of polls and public opinion identified the group 's initial focus . Ronald Reagan adopted the " opportunity society " ideas for his 1984 re @-@ election campaign , supporting the group 's conservative goals on economic growth , education , crime , and social issues , which he had not emphasized during his first term . Reagan also referenced an " opportunity " society in the first State of the Union address of his second term .

In May 1988 , Gingrich ( along with 77 other House members and Common Cause ) brought ethics charges against Democratic Speaker Jim Wright , who was alleged to have used a book deal to circumvent campaign @-@ finance laws and House ethics rules . During the investigation , it was noted Gingrich had his own unusual book deal , for Window of Opportunity , in which publicity expenses were covered by a limited partnership , which raised \$ 105 @,@ 000 from Republican political supporters to promote sales of Gingrich 's book . Gingrich 's success in forcing Wright 's resignation was in part responsible for his rising influence in the Republican caucus .

In March 1989 , Gingrich became House Minority Whip in a close election against Edward Rell Madigan . This was Gingrich 's first formal position of power within the Republican party He stated his intention to " build a much more aggressive , activist party " . Early in his role as Whip , in May 1989 , Gingrich was involved in talks about the appointment of a Panamanian administrator of the Panama Canal , which was scheduled to occur in 1989 subject to U.S. government approval . Gingrich was outspoken in his opposition to giving control over the canal to an administrator appointed by the dictatorship in Panama .

Gingrich and others in the House , including the newly minted Gang of Seven , railed against what they saw as ethical lapses under Democratic control for almost 40 years . The House banking scandal and Congressional Post Office scandal were emblems of the exposed corruption . Gingrich himself was among members of the House who had engaged in check kiting ; he had overdrafts on twenty @-@ two checks , including a \$ 9 @,@ 463 check to the Internal Revenue Service in 1990 .

In 1990 , after consulting focus groups with the help of pollster Frank Luntz , GOPAC distributed a memo with a cover letter signed by Gingrich titled " Language , a Key Mechanism of Control " , that encouraged Republicans to " speak like Newt " and contained lists of " contrasting words " ? words with negative connotations such as " radical " , " sick , " and " traitors " ? and " optimistic positive governing words " such as " opportunity " , " courage " , and " principled " , that Gingrich recommended for use in describing Democrats and Republicans , respectively .

As a result of the 1990 United States Census , Georgia picked up an additional seat for the 1992 U.S. House elections . However , the Democratic @-@ controlled Georgia General Assembly under the leadership of fiercely partisan Speaker of the House Tom Murphy specifically targeted Gingrich , eliminating the district that Gingrich represented . Gerrymandering split Gingrich 's territory among three neighboring districts . Much of the southern portion of Gingrich 's district , including his home in Carrollton , was drawn into the Columbus @-@ based 3rd District , represented by five @-@ term Democrat Richard Ray . Gingrich remarked that " The Speaker , by raising money and gerrymandering , has sincerely dedicated a part of his career to wiping me out . " At the same time , the Assembly created a new , heavily Republican 6th District in Fulton and Cobb counties in the wealthy northern suburbs of Atlanta ? -an area that Gingrich had never represented . However , Gingrich sold his home in Carrollton and moved to Marietta in the new 6th . His primary opponent , State Representative Herman Clark , made an issue out of Gingrich 's 22 kited checks in the House Bank Scandal , and also criticized Gingrich for moving into the district . After a recount Gingrich prevailed by 980 votes , or a 51 % to 49 % result ? all but assuring him of election in November . He was re @-@ elected three times from this district against only nominal Democratic opposition .

= = = " Republican Revolution " of 1994 = = =

In the 1994 campaign season , in an effort to offer an alternative to Democratic policies and to unite distant wings of the Republican Party , Gingrich and several other Republicans came up with a Contract with America , which laid out ten policies that Republicans promised to bring to a vote on the House floor during the first hundred days of the new Congress , if they won the election . The contract was signed by Gingrich and other Republican candidates for the House of Representatives . The contract ranged from issues such as welfare reform , term limits , tougher crime laws , and a balanced budget law , to more specialized legislation such as restrictions on American military participation in United Nations missions .

In the November 1994 elections , Republicans gained 54 seats and took control of the House for the first time since 1954 . Long @-@ time House Minority Leader Bob Michel of Illinois had not run

for re @-@ election , giving Gingrich , the highest @-@ ranking Republican returning to Congress , the inside track at becoming Speaker . The midterm election that turned congressional power over to Republicans " changed the center of gravity " in the nation 's capital . Time magazine named Gingrich its 1995 " Man of the Year " for his role in the election .

= = Speaker of the House = =

The House fulfilled Gingrich 's promise to bring all ten of the Contract 's issues to a vote within the first 100 days of the session , even though most of the legislation was initially held up in the Senate by the objection of liberal / progressive interest groups and President Clinton , who called it the " Contract on America " .

Legislation proposed by the 104th United States Congress included term limits for Congressional Representatives , tax cuts , welfare reform , and a balanced budget amendment , as well as independent auditing of the finances of the House of Representatives and elimination of non @-@ essential services such as the House barbershop and shoe @-@ shine concessions . Following Gingrich 's first two years as House Speaker , the Republican majority was re @-@ elected in the 1996 election , the first time Republicans had done so in 68 years , and the first time simultaneously with a Democratic president winning re @-@ election .

= = = Legislation = = =

= = = = Welfare reform = = = =

A central pledge of President Bill Clinton 's campaign was to reform the welfare system , adding changes such as work requirements for recipients . However , by 1994 , the Clinton Administration appeared to be more concerned with pursuing a universal health care program . Gingrich accused Clinton of stalling on welfare , and proclaimed that Congress could pass a welfare reform bill in as little as 90 days . He insisted that the Republican Party would continue to apply political pressure to the President to approve their welfare legislation .

In 1996 , after constructing two welfare reform bills that Clinton vetoed , Gingrich and his supporters pushed for passage of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act , which was intended to reconstruct the welfare system . The act gave state governments more autonomy over welfare delivery , while also reducing the federal government 's responsibilities . It instituted the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program , which placed time limits on welfare assistance and replaced the longstanding Aid to Families with Dependent Children program . Other changes to the welfare system included stricter conditions for food stamp eligibility , reductions in immigrant welfare assistance , and work requirements for recipients . The bill was signed into law on August 22 , 1996 .

In his 1998 book Lessons Learned the Hard Way , Gingrich encouraged volunteerism and spiritual renewal , placing more importance on families , creating tax incentives and reducing regulations for businesses in poor neighborhoods , and increasing property ownership by low @-@ income families . He also praised Habitat for Humanity for sparking the movement to improve people 's lives by helping them build their own homes .

= = = = Balancing the federal budget = = = =

Although congressional Republicans had opposed Clinton 's Deficit Reduction Act of 1993 , a key aspect of the 1994 Contract with America was the promise of a balanced federal budget . After the end of the government shutdown , Gingrich and other Republican leaders acknowledged that Congress would not be able to draft a balanced budget in 1996 . Instead , they opted to approve some small reductions that were already approved by the White House and to wait until the next election season .

By May 1997 , Republican congressional leaders reached a compromise with Democrats and President Clinton on the federal budget . The agreement called for a federal spending plan designed to reduce the federal deficit and achieve a balanced budget by 2002 . The plan included a total of \$ 152 billion in bipartisan tax cuts over five years . Other major parts of the spending plan called for \$ 115 billion to be saved through a restructuring of Medicare , \$ 24 billion set aside to extend health insurance to children of the working poor , tax credits for college tuition , and a \$ 2 billion welfare @-@ to @-@ work jobs initiative .

President Clinton signed the budget legislation in August 1997 . At the signing , Gingrich gave credit to ordinary Americans stating , " It was their political will that brought the two parties together . "

In early 1998 , with the economy performing better than expected , increased tax revenues helped reduce the federal budget deficit to below \$ 25 billion . Clinton submitted a balanced budget for 1999 , three years ahead of schedule originally proposed , making it the first time the federal budget had been balanced since 1969 .

= = = Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997 = = =

In 1997 President Clinton signed into effect the Taxpayer Relief Act of 1997 , which included the largest capital gains tax cut in U.S. history . Under the act , the profits on the sale of a personal residence ( \$ 500 @,@ 000 for married couples , \$ 250 @,@ 000 for singles ) were exempted if lived in for at least 2 years over the last 5 . ( This had previously been limited to a \$ 125 @,@ 000 once @-@ in @-@ a @-@ lifetime exemption for those over the age of 55 . ) There were also reductions in a number of other taxes on investment gains .

Additionally , the act raised the value of inherited estates and gifts that could be sheltered from taxation . Gingrich has been credited with creating the agenda for the reduction in capital gains tax , especially in the " Contract with America " , which set out to balance the budget and implement decreases in estate and capital gains tax . Some Republicans felt that the compromise reached with Clinton on the budget and tax act was inadequate , however Gingrich has stated that the tax cuts were a significant accomplishment for the Republican Congress in the face of opposition from the Clinton administration . Gingrich along with Bob Dole had earlier set @-@ up the Kemp Commission , headed by former US Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Jack Kemp , a tax reform commission that made several recommendations including that dividends , interest , and capital gains should be untaxed .

= = = Other legislation = = =

Among the first pieces of legislation passed by the new Congress under Gingrich was the Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 , which subjected members of Congress to the same laws that apply to businesses and their employees , including the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 . As a provision of the Contract with America , the law was symbolic of the new Republican majority 's goal to remove some of the entitlements enjoyed by Congress . The bill received near universal acceptance from the House and Senate and was signed into law on January 23 , 1995 .

Gingrich shut down the highly regarded Office of Technology Assessment , and relied instead on what the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists called " self @-@ interested lobbyists and think tanks " .

= = = Government shutdown = = =

Gingrich and the incoming Republican majority 's promise to slow the rate of government spending conflicted with the president 's agenda for Medicare , education , the environment and public health , leading to two temporary shutdowns of the federal government totaling 28 days .

Clinton said Republican amendments would strip the U.S. Treasury of its ability to dip into federal trust funds to avoid a borrowing crisis . Republican amendments would have limited appeals by

death @-@ row inmates , made it harder to issue health , safety and environmental regulations , and would have committed the president to a seven @-@ year balanced budget . Clinton vetoed a second bill allowing the government to keep operating beyond the time when most spending authority expires .

A GOP amendment opposed by Clinton would have not only have increased Medicare Part B premiums , but it would also cancel a scheduled reduction . The Republicans held out for an increase in Medicare part B premiums in January 1996 to \$ 53 @. @ 50 a month . Clinton favored the then current law , which was to let the premium that seniors pay drop to \$ 42 @. @ 50 .

The government closed most non @-@ essential offices during the shutdown , which was the longest in U.S. history . The shutdown ended when Clinton agreed to submit a CBO @-@ approved balanced budget plan .

During the crisis , Gingrich 's public image suffered from the perception that the Republicans ' hardline budget stance was owed partly to an alleged snub of Gingrich by Clinton during a flight on Air Force One to and from Yitzhak Rabin 's funeral in Israel . That perception developed after the trip when Gingrich , while being questioned by Lars @-@ Erik Nelson at a Christian Science Monitor breakfast , said that he was dissatisfied that Clinton had not invited him to discuss the budget during the flight . He complained that he and Dole were instructed to use the plane 's rear exit to deplane , saying the snub was " part of why you ended up with us sending down a tougher continuing resolution " . In response to Gingrich 's complaint that they were " forced to use the rear door , " NBC news released their videotape footage showing both Gingrich and Dole disembarking at Tel Aviv just behind Clinton via the front stairway .

Gingrich was widely lampooned for implying that the government shutdown was a result of his personal grievances , including a widely shared editorial cartoon depicting him as a baby throwing a tantrum . Democratic leaders , including Chuck Schumer , took the opportunity to attack Gingrich 's motives for the budget standoff . In 1998 , Gingrich said that these comments were his " single most avoidable mistake " as Speaker .

Discussing the impact of the government shutdown on the Republican Party , Gingrich later commented that , " Everybody in Washington thinks that was a big mistake . They 're exactly wrong . There had been no reelected Republican majority since 1928 . Part of the reason we got reelected ... is our base thought we were serious . And they thought we were serious because when it came to a show @-@ down , we didn 't flinch . " In a 2011 op @-@ ed in The Washington Post , Gingrich said that the government shutdown led to the balanced @-@ budget deal in 1997 and the first four consecutive balanced budgets since the 1920s , as well as the first re @-@ election of a Republican majority since 1928 .

= = = Ethics charges and reprimand = = =

Eighty @-@ four ethics charges were filed by Democrats against Gingrich during his term as Speaker . All were eventually dropped except for one : claiming tax @-@ exempt status for a college course run for political purposes . The House officially reprimanded Gingrich ( in a vote of 395 in favor , 28 opposed ) and " ordered [ him ] to reimburse the House for some of the costs of the investigation in the amount of \$ 300 @, @ 000 " . It was the first time a Speaker was disciplined for an ethics violation .

Additionally , the House Ethics Committee concluded that inaccurate information supplied to investigators represented " intentional or ... reckless " disregard of House rules . The Ethics Committee 's Special Counsel James M. Cole concluded that Gingrich had violated federal tax law and had lied to the ethics panel in an effort to force the committee to dismiss the complaint against him . The full committee panel did not agree whether tax law had been violated and left that issue up to the IRS . In 1999 , the IRS cleared the organizations connected with the " Renewing American Civilization " courses under investigation for possible tax violations .

Regarding the situation , Gingrich said in January 1997 , " I did not manage the effort intensely enough to thoroughly direct or review information being submitted to the committee on my behalf . In my name and over my signature , inaccurate , incomplete and unreliable statements were given to

the committee , but I did not intend to mislead the committee ... I brought down on the people 's house a controversy which could weaken the faith people have in their government . "

= = = Leadership challenge = = =

In the summer of 1997 several House Republicans attempted to replace him as Speaker , claiming Gingrich 's public image was a liability . The attempted " coup " began July 9 with a meeting of Republican conference chairman John Boehner of Ohio and Republican leadership chairman Bill Paxon of New York . According to their plan , House Majority Leader Dick Armey , House Majority Whip Tom DeLay , Boehner and Paxon were to present Gingrich with an ultimatum : resign , or be voted out . However , Armey balked at the proposal to make Paxon the new Speaker , and told his chief of staff to warn Gingrich . On July 11 , Gingrich met with senior Republican leadership to assess the situation . He explained that under no circumstance would he step down . If he was voted out , there would be a new election for Speaker . This would allow for the possibility that Democrats , along with dissenting Republicans , would vote in Democrat Dick Gephardt as Speaker . On July 16 , Paxon offered to resign his post , feeling that he had not handled the situation correctly , as the only member of the leadership who had been appointed to his position ? by Gingrich ? instead of elected .

= = = Resignation = = =

In 1998 , Republicans lost five seats in the House ? the worst midterm performance in 64 years by a party not holding the presidency . Gingrich , who won his reelection , was held largely responsible for Republican losses in the House . His private polls had given his fellow Republican Congressmen a false impression that pushing the Lewinsky scandal would damage Clinton 's popularity and result in the party winning a net total of six to thirty seats in the US House of Representatives in this election . The day after the election , a Republican caucus ready to rebel against him prompted his resignation of the speakership . He also announced his intended and eventual full departure from the House in January 1999 . When relinquishing the speakership , Gingrich said he was " not willing to preside over people who are cannibals , " and claimed that leaving the House would keep him from overshadowing his successor .

= = Post @-@ speakership = =

Gingrich has since remained involved in national politics and public policy debate , especially on issues regarding healthcare , national security , and the role of religion in American public life .

= = = Policy = = =

In 2003 he founded the Center for Health Transformation to develop a 21st @-@ century healthcare system that is centered on the individual , prevention focused , knowledge intense , and innovation rich . Gingrich supported the Medicare Prescription Drug , Improvement , and Modernization Act of 2003 , creating the Medicare Part D federal prescription drugs benefit program . Some conservatives have criticized him for favoring the plan , due to its cost . However , Gingrich has remained a supporter , stating in a 2011 interview that it was a necessary modernization of Medicare , which was created before pharmaceutical drugs became standard in medical care . He has said that the increase in cost from medication must be seen as preventive , leading to reduced need for medical procedures . In a May 15 , 2011 , interview on Meet the Press , Gingrich repeated his long @-@ held belief that " all of us have a responsibility to pay ? help pay for health care " , and suggested this could be implemented by either a mandate to obtain health insurance or a requirement to post a bond ensuring coverage . In the same interview Gingrich said " I don 't think right wing social engineering is any more desirable than left wing social engineering . I don 't think imposing radical change from the right or the left is a very good way for a free society to operate . "

This comment caused back @-@ lash within the Republican Party . Gingrich has also been an advocate for health information technology .

In 2005 , with Hillary Rodham Clinton , Gingrich announced the proposed 21st Century Health Information Act , a bill which aimed to replace paperwork with confidential , electronic health information networks . Gingrich also co @-@ chaired an independent congressional study group made up of health policy experts formed in 2007 to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of action taken within the U.S. to fight Alzheimer 's disease .

Gingrich has served on several commissions , including the Hart @-@ Rudman Commission , formally known as the U.S. Commission on National Security / 21st century , which examined issues affecting the armed forces , law enforcement and intelligence agencies with regards to national security . In 2005 he became the co @-@ chair of a task force for UN reform , which aimed to produce a plan for the U.S. to help strengthen the UN . For over two decades , Gingrich has taught at the United States Air Force 's Air University , where he is the longest @-@ serving teacher of the Joint Flag Officer Warfighting Course . In addition , he is an honorary Distinguished Visiting Scholar and Professor at the National Defense University and teaches officers from all of the defense services . Gingrich informally advised Defense secretary Donald Rumsfeld on strategic issues , on issues including the Israeli ? Palestinian conflict and encouraging the Pentagon to not " yield " foreign policy influence to the State Department and National Security Council . Gingrich is also a guiding coalition member of the Project on National Security Reform .

In September 2007 , Gingrich founded the 527 group American Solutions for Winning the Future . The stated mission of the group is to become the " leading grassroots movement to recruit , educate , and empower citizen activists and elected officials to develop solutions to transform all levels of government " . Gingrich spoke of the group and its objectives at the CPAC conference of 2008 and currently serves as its General Chairman . Other organizations and companies founded or chaired by Gingrich include the creative production company Gingrich Productions , and religious educational organization Renewing American Leadership .

Gingrich is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations . He is also a fellow at conservative think tanks the American Enterprise Institute and Hoover Institution , focusing on U.S. politics , world history , national security policy , and environmental policy issues . He sometimes serves as a commentator , guest or panel member on cable news shows , such as the Fox News Channel . He is listed as a contributor by Fox News Channel , and frequently appears as a guest on various segments ; he has also hosted occasional specials for the Fox News Channel . Gingrich is a proponent of the Lean Six Sigma management techniques for waste reduction , and has signed the " Strong America Now " pledge committing to promoting the methods to reduce government spending .

= = = Businesses = = =

After leaving Congress in 1999 , Gingrich started a number of for @-@ profit companies : Between 2001 and 2010 , the companies he and his wife owned in full or part had revenues of almost \$ 100 million .

According to financial disclosure forms released in July 2011 , Gingrich and his wife had a net worth of at least \$ 6 @.@ 7 million in 2010 , compared to a maximum net worth of \$ 2 @.@ 4 million in 2006 . Most of the increase in his net worth was because of payments to him from his for @-@ profit companies .

= = = = Gingrich Group and the Center for Health Transformation = = = =

The Gingrich Group was organized in 1999 as a consulting company . Over time , its non @-@ health clients were dropped , and it was renamed the Center for Health Transformation . The two companies had revenues of \$ 55 million between 2001 and 2010 . The revenues came from more than 300 health @-@ insurance companies and other clients , with membership costing as much as \$ 200 @,@ 000 per year in exchange for access to Gingrich and other perks . In 2011 , when



Gingrich became a presidential candidate , he sold his interest in the business and said he would release the full list of his clients and the amounts he was paid , " to the extent we can " . In April 2012 , the Center for Health Transformation filed for Chapter 7 bankruptcy , planning to liquidate its assets to meet debts of \$ 1 ? \$ 10 million .

Between 2001 and 2010 , Gingrich consulted for Freddie Mac , a government @-@ sponsored secondary home mortgage company , which was concerned about new regulations under consideration by Congress . Regarding payments of \$ 1 @.@ 6 million for the consulting , Gingrich said that " Freddie Mac paid Gingrich Group , which has a number of employees and a number of offices , a consulting fee , just like you would pay any other consulting firm . " In January 2012 , he said that he could not make public his contract with Freddie Mac , even though the company gave permission , until his business partners in the Center for Health Transformation also agreed to that .

===== Gingrich Productions =====

Gingrich Productions , which is headed by Gingrich 's wife Callista Gingrich , was created in 2007 . According to the company 's website , in May 2011 , it is " a performance and production company featuring the work of Newt and Callista Gingrich . Newt and Callista host and produce historical and public policy documentaries , write books , record audio books and voiceovers , produce photographic essays , and make television and radio appearances . "

Between 2008 and 2011 , the company produced three films on religion , one on energy , one on Ronald Reagan , and one on the threat of radical Islam . All were joint projects with the conservative group Citizens United . In 2011 , Newt and Callista appeared in A City Upon a Hill , on the subject of American exceptionalism .

As of May 2011 , the company had about five employees . In 2010 , it paid Gingrich more than \$ 2 @.@ 4 million .

===== Gingrich Communications =====

Gingrich Communications promoted Gingrich 's public appearances , including his Fox News contract and his website , newt.org. Gingrich received as much as \$ 60 @,@ 000 for a speech , and did as many as 80 in a year . One of Gingrich 's nonprofit groups , Renewing American Leadership , which was founded in March 2009 , paid Gingrich Communications \$ 220 @,@ 000 over two years ; the charity shared the names of its donors with Gingrich , who could use them for his for @-@ profit companies . Gingrich Communications , which employed 15 people at its largest , closed in 2011 when Gingrich began his presidential campaign .

===== Other =====

Celebrity Leaders is a booking agency that handled Gingrich 's speaking engagements , as well as those other clients such as former Republican National Committee chair Michael Steele and former Pennsylvania Senator Rick Santorum . Kathy Lubbers , the President and CEO of the agency , who is Gingrich 's daughter , owns the agency . Gingrich has shares in the agency , and was paid more than \$ 70 @,@ 000 by it in 2010 .

FGH Publications handles the production of and royalties from fiction books co @-@ authored by Gingrich .

===== Political activity =====

Between 2005 and 2007 , Gingrich expressed interest in running for the 2008 Republican presidential nomination . On October 13 , 2005 , Gingrich suggested he was considering a run for president , saying , " There are circumstances where I will run " , elaborating that those circumstances would be if no other candidate champions some of the platform ideas he advocates . On September 28 , 2007 , Gingrich announced that if his supporters pledged \$ 30 million to his

campaign by October 21 , he would seek the nomination .

However , insisting that he had " pretty strongly " considered running , on September 29 spokesman Rick Tyler said that Gingrich would not seek the presidency in 2008 because he could not continue to serve as chairman of American Solutions if he did so . Citing campaign finance law restrictions ( the McCain @-@ Feingold campaign law would have forced him to leave his American Solutions political organization if he declared his candidacy ) , Gingrich said , " I wasn 't prepared to abandon American Solutions , even to explore whether a campaign was realistic . "

During the 2009 special election in New York 's 23rd congressional district , Gingrich endorsed moderate Republican candidate Dede Scozzafava , rather than Conservative Party candidate Doug Hoffman , who had been endorsed by several nationally prominent Republicans . He was heavily criticized for this endorsement , with conservatives questioning his candidacy for President in 2012 and even comparing him to Benedict Arnold . Gingrich has since regretted his decision .

= = = 2012 presidential campaign = = =

In late 2008 several political commentators , including Marc Ambinder in The Atlantic and Robert Novak in The Washington Post , identified Gingrich as a top presidential contender in the 2012 election , with Ambinder reporting that Gingrich was " already planting some seeds in Iowa , New Hampshire " . A July 2010 poll conducted by Public Policy Polling indicated that Gingrich was the leading GOP contender for the Republican nomination with 23 % of likely Republican voters saying they would vote for him .

Describing his views as a possible candidate during an appearance on On the Record with Greta Van Susteren in March 2009 , Gingrich said , " I am very sad that a number of Republicans do not understand that this country is sick of earmarks . [ Americans ] are sick of politicians taking care of themselves . They are sick of their money being spent in a way that is absolutely indefensible ... I think you 're going to see a steady increase in the number of incumbents who have opponents because the American taxpayers are increasingly fed up . "

On March 3 , 2011 , Gingrich officially announced a website entitled " Newt Exploratory 2012 " in lieu of a formal exploratory committee for exploration of a potential presidential run . On May 11 , 2011 , Gingrich officially announced his intention to seek the GOP nomination in 2012 .

On June 9 , 2011 , a group of Gingrich 's senior campaign aides left the campaign en masse , leading to doubts about the viability of his presidential run . On June 21 , 2011 , two more senior aides left .

In response , Gingrich stated that he had not quit the race for the Republican nomination , and pointed to his experience running for 5 years to win his seat in Congress , spending 16 years helping to build a Republican majority in the house and working for decades to build a Republican majority in Georgia . Some commentators noted Gingrich 's resilience throughout his career , in particular with regards to his presidential campaign .

After then @-@ front @-@ runner Herman Cain was damaged by allegations of past sexual harassment , Gingrich gained support , and quickly became a contender in the race , especially after Cain suspended his campaign . By December 4 , 2011 , Gingrich was leading in the national polls . However , after an abundance of negative ads run by his opponents throughout December , Gingrich 's national polling lead had fallen to a tie with Mitt Romney .

On January 3 , 2012 , Gingrich finished in fourth place in the Iowa Republican caucuses , far behind Rick Santorum , Romney , and Ron Paul . On January 10 , Gingrich finished in fifth place in the New Hampshire Republican primary , far behind Romney , Santorum , Jon Huntsman , and Paul .

After the field narrowed with the withdrawal from the race of Huntsman and Rick Perry , Gingrich won the South Carolina Republican primary on January 21 , obtaining about 40 % of the vote , considerably ahead of Romney , Santorum and Paul . This surprise victory allowed Gingrich to reemerge as the frontrunner once again heading into Florida .

On January 31 , 2012 , Gingrich placed second in the Republican Florida primary , losing by a fifteen percentage point margin , 47 % to 32 % . Some factors that contributed to this outcome include two strong debate performances by Romney ( which were typically Gingrich 's strong suit ) ,

the wide margin by which the Gingrich campaign was outspent in television ads , and a widely criticized proposal by Gingrich to have a permanent colony on the moon by 2020 to reinvigorate the American Space Program . It was later revealed that Mitt Romney had hired a debate coach to help him perform better in the Florida debates . Gingrich did , however , significantly outvote Santorum and Paul . On February 4 , 2012 , Gingrich placed a distant second in the Nevada Republican caucuses with 21 % , losing to Romney who received over 50 % of the total votes cast .

On February 7 , 2012 , Gingrich came in last place in the Minnesota Republican caucuses with about 10 @. @ 7 % of the vote . Santorum won the caucus , followed by Paul and Romney .

On Super Tuesday Gingrich won his home state , Georgia , which has the most delegates , in " an otherwise dismal night for him " . Santorum took Tennessee and Oklahoma , where Gingrich had previously performed well in the polls , though Gingrich managed a statistical second place showing in Oklahoma .

On April 4 , the Rick Santorum campaign shifted its position and urged Gingrich to drop out of the race and support Santorum .

On April 10 , Santorum announced the suspension of his campaign . Following this announcement , The Newt 2012 campaign used a new slogan referring to Gingrich as " the last conservative standing " . Despite this , on April 19 , Gingrich told Republicans in New York that he would work to help Romney win the general election if Romney secured the nomination .

After a disappointing second place showing in the Delaware primary on April 24 , and with a campaign debt in excess of \$ 4 million , Gingrich suspended his campaign and endorsed front @-@ runner Mitt Romney on May 2 , 2012 , on whose behalf he subsequently campaigned ( i.e. stump speeches and television appearances ) .

Gingrich later hosted a number of policy workshops at the GOP Convention in Tampa presented by the National Republican Committee called " Newt University " . He and his wife Calista addressed the convention on its final day with a Ronald Reagan @-@ themed introduction .

= = = 2016 Donald Trump presidential campaign = = =

After having consulted Donald Trump 's 2016 campaign , Gingrich encouraged his fellow Republicans to unify behind Trump who was by then the presumptive Republican presidential nominee . Gingrich was speculated to be a possible nominee for Vice President , and is still a candidate for Chief of Staff , or simply a senior political adviser to a Trump presidential ticket , and a July 12 , 2016 NBC News report stated that Gingrich was among Trump 's final three choices to be his running mate . Had Gingrich been the vice presidential nominee and Trump been successful in his bid for the presidency , Gingrich would have become ( on January 20 , 2017 ) the oldest Vice President in American political history since Alben Barkley .

= = Political positions = =

Gingrich is most widely identified with the 1994 Contract with America . He is a founder of American Solutions for Winning the Future . More recently , Gingrich has advocated replacing the Environmental Protection Agency with a proposed " Environmental Solutions Agency " .

He favors a strong immigration border policy and a guest worker program and a flex @-@ fuel mandate for cars sold in the U.S.

Gingrich has taken a diminutive view of internationalism and the United Nations , saying in 2015 , " after several years of looking at the UN , I can report to you that it is sufficiently corrupt and sufficiently inefficient . That no reasonable person would put faith in it . "

In 2007 , Gingrich authored a book , Rediscovering God in America , arguing that the Founding Fathers actively intended the new republic to not only allow , but encourage , religious expression in the public square . Following publication of the book , he was invited by Jerry Falwell to be the speaker for the second time at Liberty University 's graduation , on May 19 , 2007 , due to Gingrich having , " dedicated much of his time to calling [ the United States of ] America back to our Christian heritage " .

Gingrich 's later books take a large @-@ scale policy focus , including Winning the Future , and the most recent , To Save America . Gingrich has identified education as " the number one factor in our future prosperity " , and has partnered with Al Sharpton and Education Secretary Arne Duncan on education issues . Although he previously opposed gay marriage , in December 2012 Gingrich suggested that Republicans should reconsider their opposition to it .

On July 14 , 2016 , Gingrich stated that he believes that Americans of Muslim backgrounds who believe in Sharia law should be deported , and that visiting websites that promote the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant or Al @-@ Qaeda should be a felony . Some observers have questioned whether these views violate the free speech and free exercise of religion clauses of the First Amendment to the United States Constitution .

On July 21 , 2016 , Gingrich argued that members of NATO " ought to worry " about a U.S. commitment to their defense . He expanded , saying , " They ought to worry about commitment under any circumstances . Every president has been saying that the NATO countries do not pay their fair share " . He also stated that , in the context of whether the United States would provide aid to Estonia ( a NATO member ) in the event of a Russian invasion , he " would think about it a great deal " .

= = Personal life = =

= = = Marriages and children = = =

Gingrich has married three times . In 1962 , he married Jacqueline May " Jackie " Battley ( February 21 , 1936 ? August 7 , 2013 ) , his former high school geometry teacher , when he was 19 years old and she was 26 . They have two daughters from their marriage : Kathy Gingrich Lubbers , married to Paul Lubbers , is president of Gingrich Communications , and Jackie Gingrich Cushman , the wife of Jimmy Cushman , Jr . , is an author , conservative columnist , and political commentator , whose books include 5 Principles for a Successful Life , co @-@ authored with Newt Gingrich .

In the spring of 1980 , Gingrich left his wife after beginning an affair with Marianne Ginther . In 1984 , Jackie Battley Gingrich told The Washington Post that the divorce was a " complete surprise " to her . According to Jackie , in September 1980 , Gingrich and their children visited her while she was in the hospital , recovering from surgery for cancer , and Gingrich wanted to discuss the terms of their divorce . Gingrich has disputed that account . In 2011 , their daughter , Jackie Gingrich Cushman , remembers that it was her mother who requested the divorce , that it happened prior to the hospital stay , and that Gingrich 's visit was for the purpose of bringing the couple 's children to see their mother , not to discuss the divorce . Although Gingrich 's presidential campaign staff continued to insist in 2011 that his wife requested the divorce , court documents obtained by CNN from Carroll County , Georgia , indicated that Jackie had asked a judge to block the process stating that although " she has adequate and ample grounds for divorce ... she does not desire one at this time [ and ] does not admit that this marriage is irretrievably broken . " The daughter of the former Linda May Clay and Wilbur Allen Battley , Jackie Gingrich was a native of Columbus , Georgia . She was a deacon and active volunteer in the First Baptist Church of Carrollton , Georgia . She died in Atlanta at the age of 77 .

According to L. H. Carter , Gingrich 's campaign treasurer , Gingrich said of his first wife : " She 's not young enough or pretty enough to be the wife of the President . And besides , she has cancer . " Gingrich has denied saying it . His supporters dismiss Carter as a disgruntled former aide who was miffed at not being asked to accompany Gingrich to Washington .

In 1981 , six months after his divorce from his first wife was final , Gingrich wed Marianne Ginther . Marianne helped control their finances to get them out of debt . She was also coauthor of his 1984 book Window of Opportunity : A Blueprint for the Future . She did not , however , want to have the public life of a politician 's wife . Gingrich 's daughter Kathy Lubbers described the marriage as " difficult " .

In 1993 , while still married to Marianne , Gingrich began an affair with House of Representatives

staffer Callista Bisek , who is 23 years his junior . Gingrich and his second wife were divorced in 2000 . The marriage produced no children . On January 19 , 2012 , Marianne Ginther Gingrich alleged in an interview on ABC 's Nightline that she had declined to accept Gingrich 's suggestion of an open marriage . Asked about the allegations at the beginning of the televised South Carolina primary debate , Gingrich said the story was false and told the co @-@ ordinator that making an ex @-@ wife a significant question in a presidential campaign was " close to despicable " .

In August 2000 , Gingrich married Callista Bisek four months after his divorce from Marianne was finalized . He and Callista live in McLean , Virginia . In a 2011 interview with David Brody of the Christian Broadcasting Network , Gingrich addressed his past infidelities by saying , " There 's no question at times in my life , partially driven by how passionately I felt about this country , that I worked too hard and things happened in my life that were not appropriate . " In December 2011 , after the group Iowans for Christian Leaders in Government requested that he sign their so @-@ called " Marriage Vow " , Gingrich sent a lengthy written response . It included his pledge to " uphold personal fidelity to my spouse " .

= = = Religion = = =

Gingrich was raised a Lutheran . In graduate school , he was a Southern Baptist . He converted to Catholicism , Bisek 's faith , on March 29 , 2009 . He said " over the course of several years , I gradually became Catholic and then decided one day to accept the faith I had already come to embrace . " The moment when he decided to officially become a Catholic was when he saw Pope Benedict XVI , on his visit to the United States in 2008 : " Catching a glimpse of Pope Benedict that day , I was struck by the happiness and peacefulness he exuded . The joyful and radiating presence of the Holy Father was a moment of confirmation about the many things I had been thinking and experiencing for several years . " Gingrich has stated that he has developed a greater appreciation for the role of faith in public life following his conversion , and believes that the United States has become too secular .

At a 2011 appearance in Columbus , Ohio , he said , " In America , religious belief is being challenged by a cultural elite trying to create a secularized America , in which God is driven out of public life . "

Gingrich is allowed to receive holy communion , despite being divorced , because his two earlier marriages were annulled by the Catholic church .

= = = Other interests = = =

Gingrich has written about his interest in animals . Gingrich 's first engagement in civic affairs was speaking to the city council in Harrisburg , Pennsylvania , about why the city should establish its own zoo . He wrote the introduction to America 's Best Zoos . He is also a dinosaur enthusiast . The New Yorker said of his 1995 book To Renew America : " Charmingly , he has retained his enthusiasm for the extinct giants into middle age . In addition to including breakthroughs in dinosaur research on his list of futuristic wonders , he specified ' people interested in dinosaurs ' as a prime example of who might benefit from his education proposals . "

Space exploration has been an interest since his fascination with the United States / Soviet Union Space Race during his teenage years . Gingrich wants the U.S. to pursue new achievements in space , such as sustaining civilizations beyond Earth , but advocates relying more on the private sector and less on the publicly funded NASA to drive progress . As of 2010 and to the present , Gingrich serves on the National Space Society Board of Governors .

During the 2012 election campaign , Artinfo noted that Gingrich has expressed appreciation for the work of two American painters . He has described James H. Cromartie 's painting of the U.S. Capitol as " an exceptional and truly beautiful work of art " ; in Norman Rockwell 's work , he saw the embodiment of an America circa 1965 , at odds with the prevailing sentiment of the modern day " cultural elites " .

CNN announced on June 26 , 2013 , that Gingrich would join a new version of Crossfire re @-@

launching in fall 2013 , with panelists S.E. Cupp , Stephanie Cutter , and Van Jones . Gingrich represented the right on the revamped debate program . The show is now off the air .

= = Books and film = =

= = = Nonfiction = = =

Gingrich has authored or co @-@ authored 18 non @-@ fiction books since 1982 .

= = = Fiction = = =

Gingrich co @-@ wrote the following alternate history novels and series of novels with William R. Forstchen .

1945 Baen Books , August 1995 ISBN 978 @-@ 0 @-@ 671 @-@ 87739 @-@ 2

Civil War series

Gettysburg : A Novel of the Civil War Thomas Dunne Books , June 2003 ISBN 978 @-@ 0 @-@ 312 @-@ 30935 @-@ 0

Grant Comes East Thomas Dunne Books , June 2004 ISBN 978 @-@ 0 @-@ 312 @-@ 30937 @-@ 4

Never Call Retreat : Lee and Grant : The Final Victory Thomas Dunne Books , June 2005 ISBN 978 @-@ 0 @-@ 312 @-@ 34298 @-@ 2

The Battle of the Crater : A Novel Thomas Dunne Books , November 2011 ISBN 978 @-@ 0 @-@ 312 @-@ 60710 @-@ 4

Pacific War series

Pearl Harbor : A Novel of December 8 Thomas Dunne Books , May 2007 ISBN 978 @-@ 0 @-@ 312 @-@ 36350 @-@ 5

Days of Infamy Thomas Dunne Books , April 2008 ISBN 978 @-@ 0 @-@ 312 @-@ 36351 @-@ 2

Revolutionary War series

To Try Men 's Souls : A Novel of George Washington and the Fight for American Freedom , October 2009 , ISBN 978 @-@ 0 @-@ 312 @-@ 59106 @-@ 9

Valley Forge : George Washington and the Crucible of Victory , November 2010 , ISBN 978 @-@ 0 @-@ 312 @-@ 59107 @-@ 6

Victory at Yorktown , November 2012 , ISBN 978 @-@ 0 @-@ 312 @-@ 60707 @-@ 4

Miscellaneous Fiction

Duplicity : A Novel Center Street Press , October 13 , 2015 , co @-@ author Pete Earley , ISBN 978 @-@ 1455530427

= = = Films = = =

Nine Days that Changed the World , Gingrich Productions , April 2010