

Senator Thomas R. Carper – Biography

Born in West Virginia and raised in Virginia, Tom Carper attended Ohio State University on a Navy R.O.T.C. scholarship, graduating in 1968 with a B.A. in economics. He first fell in love with Delaware when he looked out the window of a military transport aircraft flying into Dover Air Force Base during his first year in the U.S. Navy. He went on to complete five years of service as a naval flight officer and continued to serve in the Naval Reserve until retiring from military service in 1991 with the rank of captain.

After serving as a naval flight officer in Southeast Asia during the Vietnam War and later as a P-3 aircraft mission commander, Tom Carper returned to Delaware in 1973 where he earned his M.B.A. at the University of Delaware.

His career in public service began in 1976 when he was elected to the first of three terms as Delaware's state treasurer. In 1982, he was elected to represent Delaware in the U.S. House of Representatives.

After serving five terms as a U.S. congressman, Tom Carper became the 78th governor of Delaware in 1993 and served two terms in that role. As governor, Tom Carper pursued a common-sense agenda that cut taxes, increased employment and the "rainy day" fund, boosted Delaware's credit rating to an all-time high, overhauled the state's education system and helped lead welfare reform initiatives in Delaware and the nation.

During his second term as governor, Tom Carper was selected by his colleagues to serve as vice-chairman, then as chairman of the National Governors' Association (NGA). After serving as chairman, he directed the NGA's "Center for Best Practices" which focused on developing and implementing innovative solutions to policy challenges faced by governors across the nation. From 1994-1998, he served as a member of Amtrak's board of directors.

On January 3, 2001, Tom Carper became Delaware's junior senator. With his re-election to the U.S. Senate on November 7, 2006, he retained his record as the winningest politician in Delaware's history, having been elected to state-wide public office a record 12 times.

During his almost 30 years of public service, Tom Carper has worked tirelessly to develop practical solutions to real problems. His ability to work across party lines has earned Senator Carper a reputation for consensus-building that is unique in today's political climate. The Washington Post's David Broder calls Senator Tom Carper "a notably effective and non-partisan leader, admired and trusted on both sides of the aisle."

For the 110th Congress, beginning in January of 2007, Senator Carper gained a seat on the Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee. He retained his assignments and seniority on the Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee, the Environment & Public Works Committee and the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, as well as the Special Committee on Aging. He also serves as chairman of three subcommittees: Homeland Security's Federal Financial Management, Government Information, Federal Services, and International Security Subcommittee, Banking's Economic Policy Subcommittee, and EPW's Clean Air and Nuclear Safety Subcommittee.

In 2004, Senator Carper was named Deputy Whip – the first time since 1881 that a U.S. senator from Delaware has served in a leadership position. Senator Carper will also serve in this capacity during the 110th Congress, continuing his role as one of the leading voices of moderation within his party, advising the Senate leadership and helping to devise, coordinate and implement strategy for the Democratic caucus.

Senator Carper is also vice-chairman of the Democratic Leadership Council, a leading centrist organization formed in the 1980s to promote "New Democrat" messages of national security, economic growth and personal responsibility.

Senator Carper and his wife Martha Ann reside in Wilmington with their youngest son, Ben, who attends a public charter high school in New Castle County. Their oldest son, Chris, attends college in Boston.