



Al Franken

U.S. Senator for Minnesota

Senator Al Franken was born on May 21, 1951, and grew up in St. Louis Park, Minnesota. In 1973, he graduated from Harvard, where he met his wife Franni. They've been married for 37 years, and have two children: daughter Thomasin, 32, and son Joe, 28. Before running for the Senate, Al spent 37 years as a comedy writer, author, and radio talk show host and has taken part in seven USO tours, visiting our troops overseas in Germany, Bosnia, Kosovo, and Uzbekistan – as well as visiting Iraq, Afghanistan, and Kuwait four times.

In 2008, Al was elected to the Senate as a member of the DFL (Democratic-Farmer-Labor) Party from Minnesota. He currently sits on the Health, Education, Labor, and Pension (HELP) Committee; the Judiciary Committee; the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, and the Committee on Indian Affairs.

Getting Things Done for Minnesota

Since taking office, Sen. Franken has developed an impressive record of legislative accomplishments that focus on holding our nation's biggest institutions accountable to the American people they serve and finding commonsense solutions that improve people's lives. In fact, in both of the most significant pieces of legislation (health care reform and Wall Street reform) considered by the Senate since he's been in office, Senator Franken has had perhaps the strongest provisions in the legislation to do this.

Sen. Franken successfully fought for a [provision](#) included in the health care reform law that makes insurance companies put 80 to 85 percent of premiums toward actual health services, not administrative costs, marketing campaign, or profits. His legislation, based on existing Minnesota law, represents the largest insurance industry reform in the health care reform bill.

Sen. Franken passed an amendment to the Wall Street reform bill to end the conflicts of interest inherent in Wall Street's current pay-to-play [credit rating](#) system. The Securities and Exchange Commission is currently studying the issue and will automatically implement the Franken amendment or another suitable way to eliminate conflicts of interest. This amendment has garnered [editorial praise](#) nationwide for being one of the toughest industry reforms in the Wall Street reform bill.

Sen. Franken has also worked hard to improve education in Minnesota and around the country. As a member of the HELP Committee, he successfully incorporated four key provisions into the Senate bill to reform the federal “No Child Left Behind” law. His provisions would provide more flexibility in testing and improve schools by strengthening principal leadership, among other things. He has also been working hard to make college more affordable for Minnesota families. He introduced legislation that would require schools to use a universal financial aid form letter, giving families a better understanding of the true cost of college.

And in 2011, Sen. Franken was named chairman of the Judiciary [Subcommittee on Privacy, Technology and the Law](#) and has held a number of hearings, including investigations of [mobile device privacy](#) and electronic medical record privacy.

Standing up for Minnesotans

Since taking office in 2009, Sen. Franken has opened five [offices](#) throughout Minnesota and answered more than 500,000 constituent letters. He and his office have successfully closed the constituent cases of more than 10,000 Minnesotans who have reached out to his office for help.

In 2010, Sen. Franken convinced General Motors not to close a family-owned [dealership](#) in Faribault, saving a local business and dozens of jobs. After an earthquake devastated Haiti in January of 2010, he worked with a West St. Paul family to ensure that their ongoing adoption wasn’t disrupted by the disaster and, thanks to the hard work of his office, the family adopted a 6-year-old girl.

Sen. Franken has also worked hard on behalf of Minnesota’s veterans. The first piece of legislation he introduced – and passed – established a study that is currently pairing [service dogs](#) with veterans who have physical or mental wounds. He has helped a number of Minnesotans get the military medals they earned, but never received, including a World War II veteran from Duluth who was owed seven service medals for his service in Europe. He also successfully fought to get the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide benefits for conditions resulting from exposure to [Agent Orange](#).

For constituent service from Sen. Franken’s office, please click [here](#). To e-mail Sen. Franken about a legislative issue or to submit a question, please click [here](#).