

U.S. SENATOR ALFONSE M. D'AMATO

Biography

Alfonse M. D'Amato (R-C-NY) was first elected to the United States Senate on November 4, 1980. He came to Washington as a member of the 97th Congress, the first in twenty-five years to have a two-party balance. To the position, he brought the unique understanding and knowledge acquired from more than 16 years in local government.

In 1986, Senator D'Amato was re-elected to a second term in the United States Senate. The people of the State of New York reaffirmed their strong confidence in Senator D'Amato by providing him with an overwhelming landslide victory.

Senator D'Amato serves on four influential committees. As a member of the powerful Appropriations Committee, Senator D'Amato has been a strong advocate of mass transit aid, housing programs, and guaranteed student loans through the following Subcommittees: HUD and Independent Agencies; Defense; Foreign Operations; Treasury, Postal Service and General Government; and as ranking Republican member of Transportation and Related Agencies.

As a member of the Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Committee, Senator D'Amato serves on the Securities Subcommittee, where he has worked to enhance the integrity and efficient operation of the nation's financial markets. He is also ranking Republican member of Housing and Urban Affairs.

As a member of the Small Business Committee, Senator D'Amato serves as the ranking Republican member of the Subcommittee on Rural Economy and Family Farming, and is a member of the Subcommittee on Export Expansion. He also serves as ranking Republican Senator on three subcommittees on the Joint Economic Committee of the House and Senate.

Senator D'Amato serves as Co-Chairman of the Senate Caucus on International Narcotics Control, established in January 1987. As a leader in the war on drugs, he is responsible for the increased effort to interdict drugs and the author of tough reforms that strike at those responsible for the illegal narcotics trade. Senator D'Amato has also been a leading voice for criminal justice reform, advocating tough determinate sentences and the preventive detention of repeat violent offenders.

As an ardent supporter of human rights around the world, Senator D'Amato, during the 99th Congress, served as Chairman of the International Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, created in 1976 to monitor East-West relations and humanitarian and economic concerns in Eastern Europe. Today, Senator D'Amato continues his active leadership in the struggle for human rights as a member of the Helsinki Commission, as this prestigious panel is known. Senator D'Amato is also Founder and Co-Chairman of the Senate Anti-Terrorism Caucus, established to help find ways to combat international terrorism.

Prior to being elected to the United States Senate, Al D'Amato served two terms as Presiding Supervisor of the Town of Hempstead, America's largest Town (population 800,000). In this capacity, he was also Majority Leader of the Nassau County Board of Supervisors. He was formerly Town Supervisor of Hempstead and a Public Administrator of Nassau County.

Born in Brooklyn, New York on August 1, 1937, Al D'Amato was raised in Island Park, Long Island. He is a graduate of Chaminade High School and worked his way through Syracuse University, where he was graduated with a degree in Business Administration. He was later graduated from the Syracuse University School of Law and was admitted to the New York State Bar in 1962.

Senator D'Amato is the first American of Italian descent to become a United States Senator from New York. A resident of Island Park, he has four children: Lisa, Lorraine, Daniel and Christopher, and recently became a grandfather with the birth of Gregory Daniel Murphy. Senator D'Amato is a sailing enthusiast and enjoys reading and playing the piano.