



Tim Kaine's Congressional Voting Record

Where Hillary Clinton's Running Mate Stood
on Key Roll Calls as a U.S. Senator from Virginia

By Thomas Voting Reports

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Kaine's Record Compared to Bernie Sanders's How they voted from 2013–2016 on issues such as Abortion Limits, Federal Reserve Audit, Government Surveillance, Guantanamo Bay, Gun Background Checks, Guns & Terrorist Watch List, Immigration Overhaul, Iran Nuclear Deal, LGBT Protections, Minimum Wage, Pay Equity, Planned Parenthood, Puerto Rico Rescue, Sanctuary Cities, Sexual Assaults in Military, Student Loan Refinancing, Syrian Refugee Screening, Trans-Pacific Trade, Violence On Women

2013

1. Violence Against Women: The Senate on Feb. 12, 2013, passed, 78-22, a bill (S 47) that would extend the Violence Against Women Act through fiscal 2018. A yes vote was to send the House a bill adding protections for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) individuals and Native American and Alaska Native women while extending programs to help victims of domestic and campus violence, battered undocumented immigrants and others.

Virginia Sen. **Tim Kaine**, D, of Richmond, voted **yes**. Vermont Sen. **Bernie Sanders**, I, of Burlington, voted **yes**.

2. Food Stamps Cuts: The Senate on May 21, 2013, refused, 40-58, to trim \$30 billion from the \$800 billion, 10-year budget in a five-year farm bill (S 954) for food stamps, known formally as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The bill included a \$4 billion food stamp cut. A yes vote was for a deeper cut.

Kaine voted **no**. **Sanders** voted **no**.

3. Border Security: Voting 69-29, the Senate on June 26, 2013, amended a pending immigration bill (S 744) to further tighten the southern border against illegal entries. A yes vote was to double the number of Border Patrol agents to 40,000, deploy drones and lay a blanket of electronic surveillance at a 10-year cost of \$46 billion.

Kaine voted **yes**. **Sanders** voted **yes**.

4. Immigration Overhaul: The Senate on June 27, 2013, passed, 68-32, a bill that would open a path to citizenship for 11 million undocumented immigrants, tighten the southern border, require employers to verify the legal status of employees and establish visa programs for high- and low-skilled workers. A yes vote was to send S 744 to the House, where it was shelved by the Republican leadership.

Kaine voted **yes**. **Sanders** voted **yes**.

5. Deal To End Shutdown, Raise Debt Cap: The Senate on Oct. 16, 2013, passed, 81-18, a bill (HR 2775) that would end a partial government shutdown that began two weeks earlier. A yes vote was to send the House a bill to provide stopgap funding for all agencies through Jan. 15, 2014, suspend the U.S. debt limit through Feb. 7, 2014, and require House-Senate negotiators to produce a long-term budget plan within three months.

Kaine voted **yes**. **Sanders** voted **yes**.

6. Guantanamo Bay Detainees: The Senate on Nov. 19, 2013, refused, 43-55, to renew a congressional ban in S 1197 on transferring detainees from the Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, military prison to "super-max" incarceration in the United States. A yes vote was to prevent transfers to U.S. prisons.

Kaine voted **no**. **Sanders** voted **no**.

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7. Filibuster Rules Change: The Senate on Nov. 21, 2013, voted, 52-48, to set a simple-majority, up-or-down vote as the threshold for advancing presidential nominees other than Supreme Court nominees. This rules change was dubbed "the nuclear option" because it was a politically explosive rollback of longstanding minority rights in the Senate. A yes vote was to require simple-majority votes, rather than 60 votes, to end filibusters of most presidential nominees in the 100-member Senate.

Kaine voted **yes**. Sanders voted **yes**.

2014

1. New Farm, Food Law: Voting 68-32, the Senate on Feb. 4, 2014, gave final congressional approval to a five-year farm and food bill budgeted at nearly \$100 billion annually. A yes vote was to send President Obama a package (HR 2642) that would fund farm subsidies, cut food stamp spending by 1 percent, expand crop insurance, end most direct payments to growers, promote soil conservation and wetlands protection and spur rural development.

Kaine voted **yes**. Sanders voted **yes**.

2. To Suspend Debt Limit: Voting 55-43, the Senate on Feb. 12, 2014, passed a bill (S 540) that would suspend the federal debt limit until March 16, 2015, so that the Treasury could continue to borrow money to pay bills already incurred by the government. A yes vote was to send the measure to President Obama.

Kaine voted **yes**. Sanders voted **yes**.

3. Sexual Assaults in Military: The Senate on March 6, 2014, failed, 55-45, to reach 60 votes needed to advance a bill (S 1752) that would transfer the military's handling of sexual-assault cases from the chain of command to outside military prosecutors, who would decide whether to press charges. A yes vote was to remove prosecutorial decisions from the chain of command.

Kaine voted **no**. Sanders voted **yes**.

4. Extended Jobless Benefits: The Senate on April 7, 2014, passed, 59-38, a bill providing aid to millions of the long-term unemployed whose eligibility for extended unemployment compensation had expired. The bill would have made the benefits retroactively available from Dec. 28 through May 31. A yes vote was to send HR 3979 to the House, where it was shelved by the Republican leadership.

Kaine voted **yes**. Sanders voted **yes**.

5. Federal Minimum Wage: The Senate on April 30, 2014, failed, 54-42, to reach 60 votes needed to end Republican blockage of a bill that would increase the federal minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$10.10 per hour over two years. A yes vote backed a bill (S 2223) that also raised the "tipped minimum wage" received by restaurant workers, hotel valets and others.

Kaine voted **yes**. Sanders voted **yes**.

6. Student Loan Refinancing, Millionaire's Tax: The Senate on June 11, 2014, failed, 56-38, to reach 60 votes needed to end Republican blockage of a bill that would allow tens of millions of individuals to refinance their student loans at current interest rates over the next two years. To offset its cost, the bill would impose a 30-percent minimum income-tax rate on households with at least \$1 million in investment and salary income. A yes vote was to advance S 2432.

Kaine voted **yes**. Sanders voted **yes**.

7. Expanding Veterans' Health Care: The Senate on June 11, 2014, passed, 93-3, a bill that would provide outside healthcare options for veterans while authorizing \$500 million for the hiring of more Veterans Health Administration doctors and nurses to cope with a surge of injured veterans from Iraq, Afghanistan and other wars. A yes vote was to pass HR 3230.

Kaine voted **yes**. Sanders voted **yes**.

8. Hobby Lobby Nullification: The Senate on July 16, 2014, failed, 56-43, to reach 60 votes needed to advance a bill that sought to nullify the Supreme Court's "Hobby Lobby" decision of a month earlier. Under the ruling, it is constitutional for closely held, for-profit firms such as Texas-based Hobby Lobby to refuse on religious grounds to pay for birth-control coverage required under the Affordable Care Act. A yes vote was to advance the bill (S 2578) that sought to prohibit employers other than religious institutions from refusing to pay for health services required by law.

Kaine voted **yes**. Sanders voted **yes**.

9. Funding to Address Border Crisis: The Senate on July 31, 2014, failed, 50-44, to reach 60 votes needed to overcome Republican objections and advance a bill that would provide \$2.7 billion that would help agencies deal with tens of thousands of unaccompanied child immigrants from Central America. A yes vote backed emergency funding to ease an immigration crisis on the U.S.-Mexico border. (S 2648)

Kaine voted **yes**. Sanders voted **yes**.

10. Gender-Based Pay Equity: The Senate on Sept. 15, 2014, failed, 52-40, to reach 60 votes needed to end Republican blockage of a Democratic-sponsored bill that would broaden the 1963 Equal Pay Act to give women more legal tools for achieving pay equity with male co-workers. A yes vote was to advance the bill (S 2199).

Kaine voted **yes**. Sanders voted **yes**.

11. Middle East War, Stopgap Spending: Voting 78-22, the Senate on Sept. 18, 2014, joined the House in passing a stopgap funding measure for the first 10 weeks of fiscal 2015 that authorized U.S. support for Syrian rebels fighting Islamic State forces. A yes vote was to send HJ Res 124 to President Obama for his signature.

Kaine voted **yes**. Sanders voted **no**.

2015

1. New Rule for Union Elections: The Senate on March 4, 2015, voted, 53-46, to disapprove a new National Labor Relations Board rule that would quicken the pace of union elections. In part, the rule bars lawsuits filed mainly to delay the election process and allows forms to be filed electronically with the NLRB instead of by regular mail. A yes vote was to send SJ Res 8 to the House, which passed the measure. It was then vetoed by President Obama.

Kaine voted **no**. Sanders voted **no**.

2. Student-Loan Refinancing: The Senate on March 25, 2015, refused, 46-53, to establish authority for student-loan refinancing in the Republican budget blueprint for fiscal 2016 and later years (S Con Res 11). A yes vote was to allow tens of millions of borrowers to refinance their student loans down to interest rates that prevailed during the 2013-2014 school year.

Kaine voted **yes**. Sanders voted **yes**.

3. LGBT Protections: The Senate on April 22, 2015, failed, 56-43, to reach 60 votes needed to advance a Democratic-sponsored measure that sought to include specific protections for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) individuals in a bill that renewed the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act and provided protection and aid to victims of sex trafficking. A yes vote was to add language tailored to LGBT individuals to S 178.

Kaine voted **yes**. Sanders voted **yes**.

4. Government Spy Powers: Voting 67-32, the Senate on June 2, 2015, gave final congressional approval to a bill (HR 2048) that would end the National Security Agency's collection and storage of bulk data on Americans' telecommunications under Section 215 of the USA Patriot Act. The logs would remain with telephone companies, and the government would need court approval to gain access to specific records in the form of metadata. The bill also would renew three sections of the USA Patriot Act that were soon to expire. A yes vote was to send the bill to President Obama, who signed it into law.

Kaine voted **yes**. Sanders voted **no**.

5. Trans-Pacific Trade Partnership: Voting 60-38, the Senate on June 24, 2015, sent President Obama a bill (HR 2146) that would allow trade deals including the proposed Trans-Pacific Partnership to move through Congress without amendments or filibusters. A yes vote was to set fast-track rules for trade debates over the next six years. The president signed the measure into law. The TPP itself has not yet received a congressional vote.

Kaine voted **yes**. Sanders voted **no**.

6. Defunding Planned Parenthood: The Senate on Aug. 3, 2015, failed, 53-46, to reach 60 votes needed to advance a GOP-drafted bill that would end federal grants and Medicaid payments to the Planned Parenthood Federation of America, a nonprofit organization that provides health care, including abortion and other reproductive services, to low-income women and men at 700 clinics nationwide. A yes vote supported the funding cutoff. (S 1881)

Kaine voted **no**. Sanders voted **no**.

7. Green Light for Iran Deal: The Senate on Sept. 10, 2015, failed, 58-42, to reach 60 votes needed to advance a Republican bid to block an international agreement aimed at preventing Iran from producing nuclear weapons for 10-to-15 years or longer. A yes vote was to kill the deal on grounds, in part, that it was weak on verification and posed a security threat to Israel. (HJ Res 61)

Kaine voted **no**. Sanders voted **no**.

8. Stricter Abortion Limits: The Senate on Sept. 22, 2015, failed, 54-42, to reach 60 votes needed to advance a bill (HR 36) that would outlaw abortions at or beyond 20 weeks after fertilization on grounds that a fetus can feel pain by then. There would be exceptions allowing late-term abortions for ending pregnancies that

result from rape or incest or when abortion is necessary to save the life of the mother. The 20-week threshold would be at odds with the Supreme Court's ruling in *Roe v. Wade* that abortion is legal until viability of the fetus, which occurs at about 24 weeks or later. A yes vote was to advance the bill.

Kaine voted **no**. Sanders voted **no**.

9. Steps to Foil Cyber Attacks: The Senate on Oct. 27, 2015, passed, 74-21, a bill (S 754) that would encourage but not require companies struck by cyber attacks to share sensitive data on the incident with federal agencies in real time so that broad defenses could be quickly mounted to protect the government and private sectors. The bill largely immunized companies submitting data from lawsuits based on privacy violations. A yes vote was to pass a bill that President Obama later signed into law.

Kaine voted **yes**. Sanders voted **no**.

10. Clean Water Dispute: The Senate on Nov. 3, 2015, failed, 57-41, to reach 60 votes needed to advance a Republican bill that would kill a new Environmental Protection Agency rule giving protection under the Clean Water Act to waters such as wetlands and tributaries upstream of navigable waters. A yes vote was to advance S 1140 to full debate.

Kaine voted **no**. Sanders voted **no**.

11. Elementary and Secondary Education: Voting 85-12, the Senate on Dec. 9, 2015, gave final approval to a bill extending elementary and secondary education programs for four years while devolving considerable authority to states and localities. The bill would continue reading and math testing started in 2002, but would allow local authorities to develop their own measures in response to test scores. A yes vote was to send the conference report on S 1177 to President Obama, who signed it into law.

Kaine voted **yes**. Sanders did not vote.

2016

1. Federal Reserve Audit: The Senate on Jan. 12, 2016, failed, 53-44, to reach 60 votes needed to advance a bill authorizing an extensive congressional audit of the Federal Reserve System, which is an independent agency in the executive branch. A yes vote backed S 2232, which critics said would unwisely inject politicians into the central bank's deliberations over matters such as setting interest rates and regulating the currency supply.

Kaine voted **no**. Sanders voted **yes**.

2. Syrian, Iraqi Refugee Screening: The Senate on Jan. 20, 2016, failed, 55-43, to reach 60 votes for advancing a bill that would require the heads of the Department of Homeland Security, Federal Bureau of Investigation and intelligence agencies to clear all refugee applicants from Syria and Iraq on a person-by-person basis. This would add layers to an existing two-year-long clearance process that begins when such individuals are in refugee camps in the Middle East. A yes vote was to start debate on HR 4038.

Kaine voted **no**. Sanders did not vote.

3. Public Disclosure of Political Spending: The Senate on Feb. 2, 2016, defeated, 43-52, a Democratic-sponsored attempt to require public disclosure of federal political contributions that oil and gas firms and their top executives make secretly yet legally under the Supreme Court's 2010 *Citizens United* ruling on campaign finance. A yes vote was to add the disclosure amendment to a pending energy bill (S 2012).

Kaine voted **yes**. Sanders did not vote.

4. Broad Update of Energy Policies: The Senate on April 20, 2016, voted, 85-12, to give federal energy policies their first broad overhaul since 2007. A yes vote was to pass a bill (S 2012) that promotes fossil and clean fuels, electrical-grid upgrades, energy efficiencies, liquefied natural gas exports and sweeping technology advances, among scores of other major provisions.

Kaine voted **yes**. Sanders did not vote.

5. Guns, Explosives, Terror Lists: By a vote of 47-53, the Senate on June 20, 2016, defeated a Democratic-sponsored measure to prohibit the sale of firearms or explosives to individuals on the FBI's terrorism watch list and related lists of persons known or suspected of links to terrorism. Such sales are now legal. The amendment was offered to a budget bill (HR 2578) that awaited final passage. A yes vote backed the Democratic amendment.

Kaine voted **yes**. Sanders voted **yes**.

6. Expanded Gun Background Checks: The Senate on June 20, 2016, defeated, 44-56, a Democratic-sponsored amendment to HR 2578 that would require criminal and mental-health background checks of buyers in virtually all commercial firearms transactions, including gun show and online sales. A yes vote was to close the so-called "gun show loophole" that allows a large share of U.S. firearms sales to bypass the National Instant Criminal Background Check System (NICS).

Kaine voted **yes**. Sanders voted **yes**.

7. Internet Surveillance Without Warrants: The Senate on June 22, 2016, failed, 58-38, to advance a measure extending the reach of FBI "National Security Letters" to allow searches without warrants of Internet usage by Americans suspected of links to terrorism. Recipients of these letters (Internet service providers in this case) are prohibited from ever mentioning them. Backers said the amendment would give the FBI an important tool in real time for monitoring homegrown terrorists and their contacts at home and abroad before they strike, while foes called it a gross violation of Fourth Amendment privacy protections. A yes vote backed the amendment to HR 2578.

Kaine voted **no**. Sanders voted **no**.

8. Rescue Plan for Puerto Rico: Voting 68-30, the Senate on June 29, 2016, gave final congressional approval to a bill (HR 5278) establishing a federal control board to help Puerto Rico restructure more than \$70 billion in debt to bondholders and address its unfunded pension obligations. The Financial Oversight and Management Board would have final say for an

indefinite period over tax, spending and other budgetary policies for the U.S. territory of 3.5 million Americans. Republicans in Congress would select four of the board's seven members and Democrats three. The bill prohibits using federal taxpayer dollars in the reorganization. A yes vote was to send the bill to President Obama, who signed it into law.

Kaine voted **yes**. Sanders voted **no**.

9. Sanctuary Cities, Immigration Enforcement: The Senate on July 6, 2016, failed, 53-44, to reach 60 votes for advancing a bill (S 3001) that would deny economic-development and community block grants to "sanctuary cities" that refuse to act as an arm of federal immigration enforcement. Officials in sanctuary cities say that to assist the Department of Homeland Security in this fashion would undercut community-policing efforts that depend on rapport with immigrant populations. A yes vote was to advance the bill.

Kaine voted **no**. Sanders voted **no**.

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