



Senator Mitch McConnell (R-KY)

Senate Majority Whip, 108th Congress

Biography

On November 12, 2002, Senator Mitch McConnell was unanimously elected Majority Whip by his Republican colleagues. As Majority Whip, McConnell is the second ranking Republican in the United States Senate. He first served in leadership as chairman of the National Republican Senatorial Committee during the 1998 and 2000 election cycles. In both, Republicans maintained control of the Senate.

Senator McConnell was first elected to the Senate in 1984. That year, he was the only Republican challenger in the country to defeat a Democrat incumbent, and the first Republican to win a statewide race since 1968. Senator McConnell's landslide victory in 2002, is also one for the record books. On November 5, he won a fourth term with 65 percent of the vote – the largest margin of victory for a Republican in Kentucky history. The previous record was held by the legendary Senator John Sherman Cooper.

Born on February 20, 1942, and raised in South Louisville, McConnell graduated in 1964 with honors from the University of Louisville College of Arts and Sciences, where he served as student body president. In 1967, he graduated from the University of Kentucky College of Law where he was elected president of the Student Bar Association. McConnell gained experience on Capitol Hill working as an intern for Senator John Sherman Cooper, later as chief legislative assistant to Senator Marlow Cook, and then as deputy assistant attorney general under President Gerald R. Ford. Before being elected to the U.S. Senate, McConnell served as County Judge-Executive in Jefferson County, Kentucky, from 1978 until he was sworn in to the United States Senate on January 3, 1985.

McConnell currently serves as a senior member of the Appropriations Committee. He is chairman of the Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee, a key foreign policy perch, and a senior member of the Agriculture and Rules Committees.

Senator McConnell is married to United States Secretary of Labor Elaine L. Chao. Previously, Secretary Chao served as president of the United Way of America and director of the Peace Corps. He is the father of three daughters: Elly, Claire, and Porter.

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