**Republican Party (United States)**

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*"GOP" redirects here. For other uses, see* [*GOP (disambiguation)*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/GOP_%28disambiguation%29)*.*

*Not to be confused with* [*American Republican Party*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Republican_Party)*,* [*Democratic-Republican Party*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democratic-Republican_Party)*, or* [*National Republican Party*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Republican_Party)*.*



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| **Republican Party** |
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| **Chairman** | [Reince Priebus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reince_Priebus) ([WI](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wisconsin)) |
| **Senate Leader** | [Mitch McConnell](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mitch_McConnell) ([Minority Leader](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Party_leaders_of_the_United_States_Senate)) ([KY](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kentucky))[John Cornyn](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Cornyn) ([Minority Whip](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Assistant_party_leaders_of_the_United_States_Senate)) ([TX](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Texas)) |
| **House Leader** | [John Boehner](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Boehner) ([Speaker](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Speaker_of_the_United_States_House_of_Representatives)) ([OH](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ohio))[Eric Cantor](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eric_Cantor) ([Majority Leader](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Party_leaders_of_the_United_States_House_of_Representatives)) ([VA](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virginia))[Kevin McCarthy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kevin_McCarthy_%28California_politician%29) ([Majority Whip](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Party_whips_of_the_United_States_House_of_Representatives)) ([CA](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/California)) |
| **Chair of Governors Association** | [Bobby Jindal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bobby_Jindal) ([LA](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louisiana)) |
| **Founded** | March 20, 1854 (1854-03-20) (159 years ago) |
| **Preceded by** | [Whig Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Whig_Party_%28United_States%29)[Free Soil Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Free_Soil_Party) |
| **Headquarters** | 310 First Street SE[Washington, D.C.](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Washington%2C_D.C.) 20003 |
| **Student wing** | [College Republicans](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/College_Republicans) |
| [**Youth wing**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Youth_wing) | [Young Republicans](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Young_Republicans) [Teenage Republicans](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Teenage_Republicans) |
| [**Ideology**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_political_ideologies) | [Conservatism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conservatism) ([American](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conservatism_in_the_United_States))[**Internal factions**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Factions_in_the_Republican_Party_%28United_States%29)**:**• [Traditionalist conservatism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Traditionalist_conservatism)• [Fiscal conservatism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fiscal_conservatism)• [Social conservatism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_conservatism_in_the_United_States)• [Libertarianism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Libertarian_Republican)• [Neoconservatism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neoconservatism)• [Paleoconservatism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paleoconservatism)• [Fusionism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fusionism)• [Compassionate conservatism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Compassionate_conservatism)• [Classical liberalism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Classical_liberalism)• [Reaganism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reaganism) |
| **International affiliation** | [International Democrat Union](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Democrat_Union) |
| **Colors** | [Red](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_states_and_blue_states) |
| [**Seats in the Senate**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Senate) | **45 / 100** |
| [**Seats in the House**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_House_of_Representatives) | **233 / 435** |
| [**Governorships**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Governor_%28United_States%29) | **30 / 50** |
| [**State Upper House Seats**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_legislature_%28United_States%29) | **1,022 / 1,972** |
| [**State Lower House Seats**](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_legislature_%28United_States%29) | **2,786 / 5,411** |
| **Website** |
| [www.gop.com](http://www.gop.com/) |
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The **Republican Party**, also commonly called the **GOP** (for "**Grand Old Party**"), is one of the [two](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Two-party_system) [major](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Major_party) contemporary [political parties in the United States](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political_parties_in_the_United_States), the other being the [Democratic Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democratic_Party_%28United_States%29). Founded by anti-slavery activists in 1854, it dominated politics nationally for most of the period from 1860 to 1932. There have been 18 Republican presidents, the first being [Abraham Lincoln](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abraham_Lincoln), serving from 1861-1865, and the most recent being [George W. Bush](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_W._Bush), serving from 2001-2009.

Currently the [party's platform](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Party_platform) is generally based upon [American conservatism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conservatism_in_the_United_States), in contrast to the [Democratic Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democratic_Party_%28United_States%29), who endorse more [liberal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modern_liberalism_in_the_United_States) policies. American conservatism of the Republican Party is not wholly based upon rejection of the political ideology of [liberalism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liberalism), as many principles of American conservatism are based upon [classical liberalism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Classical_liberalism). Rather, the Republican Party's conservatism is largely based upon its support of classical principles against the [modern liberalism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_liberalism) of the [Democratic Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democratic_Party_%28United_States%29) that is considered [American liberalism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Modern_liberalism_in_the_United_States) in contemporary American political discourse.

In the [113th Congress](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/113th_United_States_Congress), elected in [2012](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_House_of_Representatives_elections%2C_2012), the Republican Party holds a majority of seats in the [House of Representatives](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_House_of_Representatives) and a minority of seats in the [Senate](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Senate). The party currently holds the majority of [governorships](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Governor_%28United_States%29) as well as the majority of [state legislatures](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_U.S._state_legislatures).

**History**

Main article: [History of the United States Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_United_States_Republican_Party)

[Abraham Lincoln](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abraham_Lincoln), the first Republican President (1861–1865)

Founded in the Northern states in 1854 by anti-slavery activists, modernizers, ex-[Whigs](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Whig_Party_%28United_States%29) and ex-[Free Soilers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Free_Soil), the Republican Party quickly became the principal opposition to the dominant Southern [Democratic Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_the_Democratic_Party_%28United_States%29) and the briefly popular [Know Nothing Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Know_Nothing). The main cause was opposition to the [Kansas–Nebraska Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kansas%E2%80%93Nebraska_Act), which repealed the [Missouri Compromise](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Missouri_Compromise) by which slavery was kept out of Kansas. The Northern Republicans saw the expansion of slavery as a great evil. The first public meeting where the name "Republican" was suggested for a new anti-slavery party was held on March 20, 1854 in a schoolhouse in [Ripon, Wisconsin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ripon%2C_Wisconsin).

The first official party convention was held on July 6, 1854 in [Jackson, Michigan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jackson%2C_Michigan). By 1858, the Republicans dominated nearly all Northern states. The Republican Party first came to power in 1860 with the election of Lincoln to the Presidency and Republicans in control of Congress and again, the Northern states. It oversaw the saving of the union, the end of slavery, and the provision of equal rights to all men in the [American Civil War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Civil_War) and [Reconstruction](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reconstruction_era_of_the_United_States), 1861-1877.

The Republicans' initial base was in the [Northeast](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Northeastern_United_States) and the upper [Midwest](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Midwestern_United_States). With the [realignment](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Realigning_election) of parties and voters in the [Third Party System](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Third_Party_System), the strong run of [John C. Fremont](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_C._Fremont) in the [1856 Presidential election](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_presidential_election%2C_1856) demonstrated it dominated most northern states.

Early Republican ideology was reflected in the 1856 slogan "free labor, free land, free men", which had been coined by [Salmon P. Chase](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Salmon_P._Chase), a Senator from Ohio (and future [Secretary of the Treasury](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Secretary_of_the_Treasury) and [Chief Justice of the United States](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chief_Justice_of_the_United_States)). "Free labor" referred to the Republican opposition to slave labor and belief in independent artisans and businessmen. "Free land" referred to Republican opposition to plantation system whereby slaveowners could buy up all the good farm land, leaving the [yeoman](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yeoman) independent farmers the leftovers. The Party strived to contain the expansion of slavery, which would cause the collapse of the [slave power](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slave_power) and the expansion of freedom.

Lincoln, representing the fast-growing western states, won the Republican nomination in 1860 and subsequently won the presidency. The party took on the mission of saving the Union and destroying slavery during the American Civil War and over [Reconstruction](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reconstruction_era_of_the_United_States). In the [election of 1864](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_presidential_election%2C_1864), it united with [War Democrats](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_Democrats) to nominate Lincoln on the [National Union Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Union_Party_%28United_States%29) ticket.

The party's success created factionalism within the party in the 1870s. Those who felt that Reconstruction had been accomplished and was continued mostly to promote the large-scale corruption tolerated by President [Ulysses S. Grant](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ulysses_S._Grant) ran [Horace Greeley](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horace_Greeley) for the presidency. The Stalwarts defended Grant and the [spoils system](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spoils_system); the [Half-Breeds](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Half-Breed_%28politics%29) pushed for reform of the [civil service](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Civil_service).

The GOP supported business generally, hard money (i.e., the [gold standard](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gold_standard)), [high tariffs to promote economic growth, high wages and high profits](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tariffs_in_American_history), generous pensions for Union veterans, and (after 1893) the annexation of [Hawaii](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hawaii). The Republicans supported the [pietistic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pietism) Protestants who demanded [Prohibition](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prohibition). As the northern post-bellum economy boomed with heavy and light industry, railroads, mines, fast-growing cities and prosperous agriculture, the Republicans took credit and promoted policies to sustain the fast growth.

Nevertheless, by 1890 the Republicans had agreed to the [Sherman Antitrust Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sherman_Antitrust_Act) and the [Interstate Commerce Commission](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interstate_Commerce_Commission) in response to complaints from owners of small businesses and farmers. The high [McKinley Tariff](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/McKinley_Tariff) of 1890 hurt the party and the Democrats swept to a landslide in the off-year elections, even defeating McKinley himself.

After the two terms of Democrat [Grover Cleveland](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grover_Cleveland), the election of [William McKinley](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_McKinley) in [1896](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_presidential_election%2C_1896) is widely seen as a resurgence of Republican dominance and is sometimes cited as a [realigning election](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Realigning_election). McKinley promised that high tariffs would end the severe hardship caused by the [Panic of 1893](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Panic_of_1893), and that the GOP would guarantee a sort of pluralism in which all groups would benefit.

**20th century**

[Theodore Roosevelt](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theodore_Roosevelt), [26th](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Presidents_of_the_United_States) President of the United States (1901–1909)

The Republicans were cemented as the party of business, though mitigated by the succession of [Theodore Roosevelt](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theodore_Roosevelt) who embraced [trust busting](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trust_busting). He later ran on a third party ticket of the [Progressive Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Progressive_Party_%28United_States%2C_1912%29) and challenged his previous successor [William Howard Taft](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Howard_Taft). The party controlled the presidency throughout the 1920s, running on a platform of opposition to the [League of Nations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/League_of_Nations), high tariffs, and promotion of business interests.

[Warren G. Harding](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Warren_G._Harding), [Calvin Coolidge](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Calvin_Coolidge) and [Herbert Hoover](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herbert_Hoover) were resoundingly elected in [1920](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_presidential_election%2C_1920), [1924](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_presidential_election%2C_1924), and [1928](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_presidential_election%2C_1928) respectively. The [Teapot Dome scandal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Teapot_Dome_scandal) threatened to hurt the party but Harding died and Coolidge blamed everything on him, as the opposition splintered in 1924. The pro-business policies of the decade seemed to produce an unprecedented prosperity until the [Wall Street Crash of 1929](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wall_Street_Crash_of_1929) heralded the [Great Depression](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Depression).

[Dwight Eisenhower](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dwight_Eisenhower), [34th](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Presidents_of_the_United_States) President of the United States (1953-1961)

The [New Deal coalition](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Deal_coalition) of Democrat Franklin D. Roosevelt controlled American politics for most of the next three decades, excepting the two-term presidency of Republican [Dwight D. Eisenhower](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dwight_D._Eisenhower). [African Americans](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/African_American) moved into the Democratic Party during Roosevelt's time. After Roosevelt took office in 1933, New Deal legislation sailed through Congress at lightning speed. In the 1934 midterm elections, 10 Republican senators went down to defeat, leaving them with only 25 against 71 Democrats. The House of Representatives was split in a similar ratio.

Republicans in Congress heavily criticized the "Second New Deal" and likened it to [class warfare](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Class_conflict) and [socialism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Socialism). The volume of legislation, and the inability of the Republicans to block it, soon elevated the level of opposition to Roosevelt. Conservative Democrats, mostly from the South, joined with Republicans led by Senator [Robert Taft](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Taft) to create the [conservative coalition](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conservative_coalition), which dominated domestic issues in Congress until 1964. The Republicans recaptured Congress in 1946 after gaining 13 seats in the Senate and 55 seats in the House.

[Ronald Regan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ronald_Regan), [40th](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Presidents_of_the_United_States) President of the United States (1981-1989)

The second half of the 20th century saw election or succession of Republican presidents [Dwight D. Eisenhower](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dwight_D._Eisenhower), [Richard Nixon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Nixon), [Gerald Ford](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gerald_Ford), [Ronald Reagan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ronald_Reagan), [George H. W. Bush](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_H._W._Bush) and [George W. Bush](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_W._Bush). Today, Reagan remains one of the nation's most popular presidents, according to opinion polling. The Republican Party, led by House Republican Minority Whip [Newt Gingrich](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Newt_Gingrich) campaigning on the [*Contract with America*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Contract_with_America), was elected to majorities to both houses of Congress in the [Republican Revolution](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republican_Revolution) of 1994.

**21st century**

The Senate majority lasted until 2001, when the Senate became split evenly but was regained in the 2002 elections. Both Republican majorities in the House and Senate were held until the Democrats regained control in the [mid-term elections of 2006](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_elections%2C_2006).The Republican Party has since been defined by [social conservatism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_conservatism_in_the_United_States), a [preemptive war](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Preemptive_war) foreign policy intended to defeat terrorism and promote global democracy, a more powerful [executive branch](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Executive_%28government%29), [supply-side economics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Supply-side_economics), support for gun ownership, and deregulation.

[George W. Bush](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_W._Bush), [43rd](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Presidents_of_the_United_States) President of the United States (2001-2009)

In the [Presidential election of 2008](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_presidential_election%2C_2008), the party's nominees were Senator [John McCain](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_McCain), of Arizona, for President and Alaska Governor [Sarah Palin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sarah_Palin) for Vice President. They were defeated by Senator [Barack Obama](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barack_Obama) of Illinois and Senator [Joe Biden](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joe_Biden) of Delaware. In 2009, Republicans [Chris Christie](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chris_Christie) and [Bob McDonnell](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bob_McDonnell) were elected to the governorships of New Jersey and Virginia.

2010 was a year of political success for the Republicans, starting with the upset win of [Scott Brown](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scott_Brown) in the Massachusetts special Senate election for the seat held for many decades by the Democratic Kennedy brothers. In the [November elections](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_elections%2C_2010), Republicans recaptured control of the House, increased their number of seats in the Senate, and gained a majority of governorships. Additionally, Republicans took control of at least 19 Democratic-controlled state legislatures.

In the [Presidential election of 2012](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_presidential_election%2C_2012), the Republican nominees were former Governor [Mitt Romney](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mitt_Romney) of Massachusetts for President, and Representative [Paul Ryan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Ryan) of Wisconsin for Vice President. The [Democrats](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democratic_Party_%28United_States%29) nominated incumbent President [Barack Obama](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barack_Obama) of Illinois, and incumbent Vice President [Joe Biden](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joe_Biden) of Delaware. The campaign focused largely on Obama's stewardship of the economy, with the country facing high unemployment numbers and a rising national debt four years after his first election. Romney and Ryan were defeated by Obama and Biden. In addition, in the [November congressional elections](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_elections%2C_2012), while Republicans lost 7 seats in the House, they retained control. However, Republicans were not able to gain control of the Senate, continuing their minority status with a net loss of 2 seats.

**Name and symbols**

1874 [Nast](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Nast) cartoon featuring the first notable appearance of the Republican elephant

The modern GOP elephant

The current GOP logo, incorporating the Republican elephant

The party's founding members chose the name "Republican Party" in the mid-1850s as homage to the values of [republicanism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republicanism_in_the_United_States) promoted by [Thomas Jefferson](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Jefferson)'s Republican party. The idea for the name came from an editorial by the party's leading publicist Horace Greeley, who called for, "some simple name like 'Republican' that would more fitly designate those who had united to restore the Union to its true mission of champion and promulgator of Liberty rather than propagandist of slavery." The name reflects the 1776 [republican](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republicanism_in_the_United_States) values of civic virtue and opposition to aristocracy and corruption

The term "Grand Old Party" is a traditional nickname for the Republican Party, and the abbreviation "GOP" is a commonly used designation. The term originated in 1875 in the *Congressional Record*, referring to the party associated with the successful military defense of the Union as "this gallant old party"; the following year in an article in the Cincinnati *Commercial*, the term was modified to "grand old party". The first use of the abbreviation is dated 1884.

The traditional mascot of the party is the elephant. A political cartoon by [Thomas Nast](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Nast), published in [*Harper's Weekly*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harper%27s_Magazine) on November 7, 1874, is considered the first important use of the symbol. In the early 20th century, the usual symbol of the Republican Party in Midwestern states such as [Indiana](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indiana) and [Ohio](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ohio) was the bald eagle, as opposed to the Democratic rooster.

After the [2000 election](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_presidential_election%2C_2000), the color [red became associated](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political_color) with the GOP, although the party has not officially adopted it. That election night, for the first time, all of the major broadcast networks used the same color scheme for the electoral map: states won by Republican nominee George W. Bush were colored red, and states won by Democratic nominee [Al Gore](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al_Gore) were colored blue. Although the assignment of colors to political parties is unofficial and informal, they have come to be widely recognized by the media to represent the respective political parties.

*Further information:* [*Red states and blue states*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_states_and_blue_states)

**Structure and composition**

Further information: [Politics of the United States#Organization of American political parties](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Politics_of_the_United_States#Organization_of_American_political_parties)

The [Republican National Committee](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republican_National_Committee) (RNC) is responsible for promoting Republican campaign activities. It is responsible for developing and promoting the Republican political platform, as well as coordinating fundraising and election strategy. Its current chairman is [Reince Priebus](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reince_Priebus). The chairman of the RNC is chosen by the President when the Republicans have the White House or otherwise by the Party's state committees.

The RNC, under the direction of the party's presidential candidate, supervises the [Republican National Convention](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republican_National_Convention), raises funds, and coordinates campaign strategy. On the local level, there are similar state committees in every state and most large cities, counties and legislative districts, but they have far less money and influence than the national body.

The Republican House and Senate caucuses have separate [fundraising](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fundraising) and strategy committees. The [National Republican Congressional Committee](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Republican_Congressional_Committee) (NRCC) assists in House races, whilst the [National Republican Senatorial Committee](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Republican_Senatorial_Committee) (NRSC) does so in Senate races. They each raise over $100 million per election cycle, and play important roles in recruiting strong state candidates, while the [Republican Governors Association](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republican_Governors_Association) (RGA) assists in state gubernatorial races; it is currently chaired by Governor [Bob McDonnell](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bob_McDonnell) of Virginia.

**Ideology and political positions**

Further information: [Factions in the Republican Party (United States)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Factions_in_the_Republican_Party_%28United_States%29)

The Republican Party includes [fiscal conservatives](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fiscal_conservatism), [social conservatives](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_conservatism_in_the_United_States), [neoconservatives](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neoconservatism), [moderates](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moderate), and [libertarians](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Libertarianism). Prior to the formation of the conservative coalition, which helped realign the Democratic and Republican party ideologies in the mid-1960s, the party historically advocated [classical liberalism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Classical_liberalism), [paleo conservatism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paleoconservatism), and [progressivism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_progressivism).

**Economic policies**

Republicans strongly believe that [free markets](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Free_market) and individual achievement are the primary factors behind economic prosperity. To this end, they advocate in favor of [laissez-faire economics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laissez-faire), fiscal conservatism, and the elimination of government run welfare programs in favor of personal responsibility.

A leading economic theory advocated by modern Republicans is [supply-side economics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Supply-side_economics). Some fiscal policies influenced by this theory were popularly known as [Reaganomics](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reaganomics), a term popularized during the Presidential administrations of [Ronald Reagan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ronald_Reagan). This theory holds that reduced income tax rates increase [GDP](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/GDP) growth and thereby generate the same or more revenue for the government from the smaller tax on the extra growth. This belief is reflected, in part, by the party's long-term advocacy of tax cuts. Many Republicans consider the income tax system to be inherently inefficient and oppose graduated tax rates, which they believe are unfairly targeted at those who create jobs and wealth. They believe private spending is usually more efficient than government spending. Republicans oppose the [estate tax](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Estate_tax).

Most Republicans agree there should be a "safety net" to assist the less fortunate; however, they tend to believe the private sector is more effective in helping the poor than government is; as a result, Republicans support giving government grants to faith-based and other private charitable organizations to supplant welfare spending. Members of the GOP also believe that limits on eligibility and benefits must be in place to ensure the safety net is not abused. Republicans introduced and strongly supported the [welfare reform of 1996](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Personal_Responsibility_and_Work_Opportunity_Act), which was signed into law by Democratic President Clinton, and which limited eligibility for welfare, successfully leading to many former welfare recipients finding jobs.

The party opposes a government-run [single-payer health care](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Single-payer_health_care) system, believing such a system constitutes [socialized medicine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Socialized_medicine), and is in favor of a personal or employer-based system of insurance, supplemented by [Medicare](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Medicare_%28United_States%29) for the elderly and [Medicaid](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Medicaid), which covers approximately 40% of the poor. The GOP has a mixed record of supporting the historically popular [Social Security](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_Security_%28United_States%29), Medicare and Medicaid programs. Congressional Republicans and the Bush administration supported a reduction in Medicaid's growth rate; however, congressional Republicans expanded Medicare, supporting a new drug plan for seniors starting in 2006.

In 2011, House Republicans overwhelmingly voted for a proposal named [The Path to Prosperity](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Path_to_Prosperity) and for major changes to Medicare, Medicaid, and the [2010 Health Care Legislation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Health_care_reform_in_the_United_States#Key_reform_drivers_for_the_2010_reforms). Many Republicans support increased health insurance portability, laws promoting coverage of pre-existing medical conditions, a cap on malpractice lawsuits, the implementation of a streamlined [electronic medical records](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Electronic_medical_records) system, an emphasis on preventative care rather than emergency room care, and tax benefits aimed at making health insurance more affordable for the uninsured and targeted to promote universal access. They generally oppose government funding for elective abortions.

Republicans are generally opposed by [labor union](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trade_union) management and members, and have supported various legislation on the state and federal levels, including [right to work](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Right_to_work) legislation and the [Taft-Hartley Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taft-Hartley_Act), which gives workers the right not to participate in unions, as opposed to a [closed shop](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Closed_shop), which prohibits workers from choosing not to join unions in workplaces. Some Republicans are opposed to increases in the [minimum wage](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minimum_wage), believing that such increases hurt many businesses by forcing them to cut jobs and services, export jobs overseas, and raise the prices of goods to compensate for the decrease in profit.

**Separation of powers and balance of powers**

Many contemporary Republicans voice support of [strict constructionism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strict_constructionism), the judicial philosophy that the Constitution should be interpreted narrowly and as close to the original intent as is practicable rather than a more flexible "living Constitution" model. Most Republicans point to [Roe v. Wade](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roe_v._Wade) as a case of [judicial activism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Judicial_activism), where the court overturned most laws restricting abortion on the basis of a [right to privacy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Privacy_law) inferred from the [Bill of Rights](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Bill_of_Rights) and the [Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fourteenth_Amendment_to_the_United_States_Constitution). Some Republicans have actively sought to block judges whom they see as being [activist judges](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Judicial_activism) and have sought the appointment of judges who claim to practice [judicial restraint](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Judicial_restraint). Other Republicans, though, argue that it is the right of judges to extend the interpretation of the Constitution and judge actions by the legislative or executive branches as legal or [unconstitutional](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constitutionality) on previously unarticulated grounds. The issue of [judicial deference](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Judicial_deference) to the legislature is a matter of some debate—like the Democrats, most Republicans criticize court decisions that overturn their own (conservative) legislation as overstepping bounds and support decisions that overturn opposing legislation. Some commentators have advocated that the Republicans take a more aggressive approach and support legislative supremacy more firmly.

The Republican Party has supported various bills within the last decade to strip some or all federal courts of the ability to hear certain types of cases, in an attempt to limit judicial review. These [jurisdiction stripping](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jurisdiction_stripping) laws have included removing federal review of the recognition of same-sex marriage with the [Marriage Protection Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marriage_Protection_Act_of_2007), the constitutionality of the Pledge of Allegiance with the [Pledge Protection Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pledge_Protection_Act), and the rights of detainees in Guantanamo Bay in the [Detainee Treatment Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Detainee_Treatment_Act). The Supreme Court overruled the last of these limitations in [*Hamdan v. Rumsfeld*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hamdan_v._Rumsfeld).

Compared to Democrats, many Republicans believe in a more robust version of [federalism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federalism) with greater limitations placed upon [federal authorities](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federal_government_of_the_United_States) and a larger role reserved for those of the individual States. Following this view on federalism, Republicans often take a less expansive reading of congressional power under the [Commerce Clause](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commerce_Clause), such as in the opinion of [William Rehnquist](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Rehnquist) in [*United States v. Lopez*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_v._Lopez). Many Republicans on the more libertarian wing wish for a more dramatic narrowing of Commerce Clause power by revisiting, among other cases, [*Wickard v. Filburn*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wickard_v._Filburn), a case that held that growing wheat on a farm for consumption on the same farm fell under congressional power to ["regulate commerce ... among the several States"](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commerce_Clause).

President George W. Bush was a proponent of the [unitary executive theory](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unitary_executive_theory) and cited it within his [Signing statements](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Signing_statement_%28United_States%29) about legislation passed by Congress. The administration's interpretation of the unitary executive theory was called seriously into question by *Hamdan v. Rumsfeld*, where the Supreme Court ruled 5-3 that the President does not have sweeping powers to override or ignore laws through his power as commander in chief, stating "the Executive is bound to comply with the Rule of Law that prevails”. Following the ruling, the Bush administration has sought Congressional authorization for programs started only on executive mandate, as was the case with the [Military Commissions Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military_Commissions_Act_of_2006), or abandoned programs it had previously asserted executive authority to enact, in the case of the [National Security Agency](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Security_Agency) [domestic wiretapping program](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/NSA_warrantless_surveillance_controversy).

**Environmental policies**

Main article: [Environmental policy of the United States](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Environmental_policy_of_the_United_States)

The Republican Party had long supported the protection of the environment. For example, Republican President [Theodore Roosevelt](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theodore_Roosevelt) was a prominent conservationist whose policies eventually led to the creation of the modern [National Park Service](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Park_Service). Republican President [Richard Nixon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Nixon) was responsible for establishing the [Environmental Protection Agency](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Environmental_Protection_Agency) in 1970. More recently, [California](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/California) Republican Governor [Arnold Schwarzenegger](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arnold_Schwarzenegger), with the support of 16 other states, [sued](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Filing_%28legal%29) the [Federal Government](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federal_government_of_the_United_States) and the [United States Environmental Protection Agency](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Environmental_Protection_Agency) for the right to set vehicle emission standards higher than the [Federal Standard](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_emission_standards), a right to which California is entitled under the [Clean Air Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clean_Air_Act_%28United_States%29).

This association however has shifted as the Democratic Party came to also support environmentalism. For example, Democratic President [Bill Clinton](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bill_Clinton) did not send the [Kyoto Protocol](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kyoto_Protocol) to the U.S. Senate for ratification, as he thought it unfair to the United States. President [George W. Bush](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_W._Bush) also publicly opposed ratification of the Kyoto Protocols on the grounds that they unfairly targeted Western industrialized nations such as the United States while favoring developing [Global South](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North-South_divide) polluters such as China and India.

In 2000, the Republican Party adopted as part of its platform support for the development of market-based solutions to environmental problems. According to the platform, "economic prosperity and environmental protection must advance together, environmental regulations should be based on science, the government’s role should be to provide market-based incentives to develop the technologies to meet environmental standards, we should ensure that environmental policy meets the needs of localities, and environmental policy should focus on achieving results processes."

The [Bush administration](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presidency_of_George_W._Bush), along with several of the [candidates that sought the Republican Presidential nomination in 2008](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republican_Party_%28United_States%29_presidential_candidates%2C_2008), supported increased Federal investment into the development of clean alternative fuels, increased [nuclear power](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nuclear_power), as well as fuels such as [ethanol](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethanol), as a way of helping the U.S. achieve [energy independence](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_American_energy_independence), as opposed to supporting less use of carbon dioxide-producing methods of generating energy. McCain supports the [cap-and-trade](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emissions_trading) policy, a policy that is quite popular among Democrats but much less so among other Republicans. Some Republicans support increased [oil drilling](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oil_well) in currently protected areas such as the [Arctic National Wildlife Refuge](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arctic_National_Wildlife_Refuge), a position that has drawn sharp criticism from some activists.

**Social policies**

Abortion and embryonic stem cell research A majority of the GOP's national and state candidates are [pro-life](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pro-life) and oppose elective [abortion](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abortion) on religious or moral grounds. However many hold exceptions in the case of [incest](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Incest), rape or the mother's life being at risk. When Congress voted on the [Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Partial-Birth_Abortion_Ban_Act) in 2003, Congressional Republicans voted overwhelmingly to support the ban.

Although the GOP has voted for increases in government funding of scientific research, some members actively oppose the federal funding of [embryonic stem cell](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Embryonic_stem_cell) research beyond the original lines because it involves the destruction of human [embryos](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Embryo), while arguing for applying research money into [adult stem cell](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Adult_stem_cell) or amniotic stem cell research. The stem cell issue has garnered two once-rare vetoes on research funding bills from President Bush, who said the research "crossed a moral boundary".

In August 2012, the party approved a platform advocating banning abortions, without exceptions for the cases of rape or incest. The text specifically stated that "the unborn child has a fundamental individual right to life which cannot be infringed." It also opposed using public revenues to promote abortions, to perform them, or to fund organizations that do either such things.

Civil rights

Republicans are generally against [affirmative action](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Affirmative_action) for women and some minorities, often describing it as a [quota system](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Racial_quota), believing that it is not [meritocratic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meritocratic) and that it is counter-productive socially by only further promoting [discrimination](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Discrimination). Many Republicans support race-neutral admissions policies in universities, but support taking into account the socioeconomic status of the student.

Second Amendment rights

Republicans generally support [gun ownership rights](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gun_politics_in_the_United_States) and oppose laws regulating guns, although some Republicans in urban areas sometimes favor limited restrictions on the grounds that they are necessary to protect safety in large cities.

The War on Drugs

Republicans generally support the [War on Drugs](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_on_Drugs), and oppose the [Legalization of drugs](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Legalization_of_drugs), believing that smoking and drugs are immoral and wrong, and the country should do its best to protect people from illegal drugs, and support the use [Just Say No](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Just_Say_No).

Education

Most Republicans support [school choice](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/School_choice) through [charter schools](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charter_school) and [school vouchers](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/School_voucher) for private schools; many have denounced the performance of the public school system and the teachers' unions. The party has insisted on a system of greater accountability for public schools, most prominently in recent years with the [No Child Left Behind Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/No_Child_Left_Behind_Act) of 2001. Many Republicans, however, opposed the creation of the [United States Department of Education](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Department_of_Education) when it was initially created in 1979.

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender issues

The 2004 Republican platform expressed support for the [Federal Marriage Amendment](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Federal_Marriage_Amendment) to the [United States Constitution](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Constitution) to define marriage as exclusively between one man and one woman. Generally speaking, most Republicans have opposed government recognition of same-sex unions such as with [same-sex marriage](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Same-sex_marriage_in_the_U.S.). This opposition formed a key method of energizing conservative voters, the Republican base, in the 2004 election. Historically, most Republicans have opposed permitting [LGBT](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/LGBT) people to serve openly in the military and supported the "[don't ask, don't tell](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Don%27t_ask%2C_don%27t_tell)" policy. However, majorities of 52% and 58% among Republicans in both 2004 and 2009 opposed the policy and supported open enlistment, according to Gallup polling.

In August 2012, the party approved a platform that would ban same-sex marriage. The Republican Congressional leadership in power since the 2010 midterm elections, led by House Speaker [John Boehner](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Boehner), staunchly have taken stances against same sex marriage.

Groups advocating for LGBT issues inside the party include the [Log Cabin Republicans](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Log_Cabin_Republicans), [GOProud](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/GOProud), Young Conservatives For The Freedom To Marry, and [College Republicans](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/College_Republicans) of the [University of Pennsylvania](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/University_of_Pennsylvania) and [Columbia University](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Columbia_University). A poll in March 2013 found that 34% of Republicans supported same-sex marriage, with 52% of Republicans and GOP-leaning independents between the age of 18-49 years old supporting same-sex marriage.

Notable Republicans who support same-sex marriage include former Vice President [Dick Cheney](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dick_Cheney), former first lady [Laura Bush](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laura_Bush), former Secretary of State [Colin Powell](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colin_Powell), former GOP national chairman [Ken Mehlman](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ken_Mehlman), [Jon Huntsman, Jr.](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jon_Huntsman%2C_Jr.), [Rob Portman](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rob_Portman), [Meg Whitman](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meg_Whitman), [Tom Ridge](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tom_Ridge), [William Weld](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Weld), [Jane Swift](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jane_Swift), [Paul Cellucci](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_Cellucci), [Christine Todd Whitman](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christine_Todd_Whitman), and [Theodore Olson](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theodore_Olson). The last figure has co-led the legal campaign against Californian anti-gay marriage measure [Proposition 8](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/California_Proposition_8). More than 100 former Republican lawmakers, leaders and governors signed an amicus brief calling for California's ban on same-sex marriage to be overturned.

**National defense and military spending**

Although the Republican Party has always advocated a strong national defense, historically they disapproved of interventionist foreign policy actions. Republicans opposed [Woodrow Wilson](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Woodrow_Wilson)'s intervention in [World War I](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_I) and his subsequent attempt to create the [League of Nations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/League_of_Nations). They were also staunchly opposed to intervention in [World War II](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_II) until the [Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attack_on_Pearl_Harbor).

**Dwight Eisenhower**

In 1952 Dwight D. Eisenhower was drafted by the Republican Party to counter the candidacy of [non-interventionist](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Non-interventionism) Senator [Robert Taft](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Taft). Eisenhower's campaign was a crusade against the [Truman](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harry_S._Truman) administration's policies regarding "[Korea](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Korea), [Communism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Communism) and Corruption."

**Ronald Reagan**

**Grenada**

On October 25, 1983, at the request of the regional governments, Reagan ordered [*Operation Urgent Fury*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Urgent_Fury), a military invasion of the small, Caribbean island of [Grenada](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grenada), where over a thousand American students and their families were in residence. A Marxist coup d'état had overthrown the established government and shot its leader [Maurice Bishop](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maurice_Bishop). This was the first actual [rollback](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rollback) that destroyed a Communist regime and marked the continued escalation of tensions with the Soviet Union known as the [Second Cold War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cold_War_%281979%E2%80%931985%29). Democrats had been highly critical of Reagan's anti-Communism in Latin America, but this time Reagan had strong support from the voters and leading Democrats said the invasion was justified. It built the President's image of decisive strong action a year before the 1984 election, when Mondale said he too would have ordered the invasion. Indeed Mondale attacked Senator [Gary Hart](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gary_Hart), his chief opponent for the Democratic nomination, as isolationist and weak on fighting dictatorships.

**Cold War**

President Reagan escalated the [Cold War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cold_War) by accelerating a reversal from the policy of [détente](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/D%C3%A9tente), which began in 1979 under President [Jimmy Carter](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jimmy_Carter) following the [Soviet invasion of Afghanistan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soviet_war_in_Afghanistan). Reagan then ordered a massive buildup of the [United States Armed Forces](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Armed_Forces).

**Covert operations**

Under a policy that came to be known as the [Reagan Doctrine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reagan_Doctrine), Reagan and his administration also provided overt and covert aid to [anti-communist](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anti-communist) [resistance movements](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guerrilla_warfare) in an effort to "[rollback](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rollback)" Soviet-backed communist governments in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The policy was politically controversial, with liberal Democrats especially angry with Reagan's operations in Latin America. Covert operations elsewhere, especially in Afghanistan against the Soviets, however, usually won bipartisan support.

**George H. W. Bush**

**Gulf War 1990–91**

Main article: [Gulf War](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gulf_War)

On August 1, 1990, [Iraq](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iraq), led by [Saddam Hussein](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saddam_Hussein), [invaded](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Invasion_of_Kuwait) [Kuwait](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kuwait). President Bush formed an international coalition and secured UN approval to expel Iraq. On January 12, 1991, Congress voted approval for a military attack, [Operation Desert Storm](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Desert_Storm), by a narrow margin, with Republicans in favor and Democrats opposed. The vote in the House was 250–183, and in the Senate 52–47. In the Senate 42 Republicans and 10 Democrats voted yes to war, while 45 Democrats and two Republicans voted no. In the House 164 Republicans and 86 Democrats voted yes, and 179 Democrats, three Republicans and one Independent voted no. The war was short and successful, but Hussein was allowed to remain in power. Arab countries repaid all the American military costs.

**90s opposition politics**

In the 1990s, Republicans in Congress split over U.S. military intervention in the [Yugoslav wars](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yugoslav_wars) under Democratic President [Bill Clinton](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bill_Clinton). Examples of interventionist-minded Republicans are then Senate Majority Leader [Bob Dole](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bob_Dole) and Senator [John McCain](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_McCain) and examples of opposing figures are later Senate Majority Leader [Trent Lott](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Trent_Lott) and House Majority Leader [Dick Armey](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dick_Armey), the latter of which who called [Kosovo](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kosovo) deployment "poorly considered and unlikely to achieve our desired ends." In 2000, successful [Republican Presidential candidate](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2000_Presidential_election%2C_U.S.) [George W. Bush](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_W._Bush) ran on a platform that generally opposed U.S. involvement in foreign conflicts, saying that the U.S. didn't have the responsibly of "nation building". As such, he advocated U.S. military withdrawal from the Balkan NATO peacekeeping mission.

**George W. Bush**

**Invasion of Afghanistan**

After the [September 11 attacks](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/September_11_attacks) in 2001 in New York, Bush launched the [War on Terrorism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_on_Terrorism), in which the United States led an international coalition [invaded Afghanistan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Invasions_of_Afghanistan#U.S.-led_invasion), the base of terrorist [Osama bin Laden](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Osama_bin_Laden). This invasion led to the toppling of the [Taliban](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taliban) regime. After a surprise raid on bin Laden's compound on May 2, 2011, ordered by Barack Obama, bin Laden was killed and his body disposed of in the sea. There was bipartisan support for this action, with notable Republican and Democratic figures speaking out in support of the raid.

**Invasion of Iraq**

In 2003, George W. Bush launched the [invasion of Iraq](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iraq_War), in conjunction with coalition partners, most notably, the United Kingdom. The invasion was described by Bush as being part of the War on Terrorism. Saddam Hussein was captured and executed, but his supporters staged an insurgency that dragged on for years. It was a major election issue in 2004 (when Bush was reelected) and in 2006 and 2008 (when President Obama was first elected to the Presidency, and Democrats increased their numbers in both Houses of Congress.).

**Policies**

As a result, some in the Republican Party support [unilateralism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unilateralism) on issues of national security, believing in the ability and right of the United States to act without external support in matters of its national defense. In general, Republican thinking on defense and [international relations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_relations) is heavily influenced by the theories of [neorealism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neorealism_%28international_relations%29) and [realism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political_realism), characterizing conflicts between nations as struggles between faceless forces of international structure, as opposed to being the result of the ideas and actions of individual leaders. The realist school's influence shows in Reagan's [Evil Empire](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evil_empire) stance on the [Soviet Union](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Soviet_Union) and George W. Bush's [Axis of evil](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Axis_of_evil).

Republicans secured gains in the [2002](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_congressional_elections%2C_2002) and [2004 elections](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_congressional_elections%2C_2004), with the [War on Terror](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_on_Terror) being one of the top issues favoring them. Since the [September 11, 2001 attacks](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/September_11%2C_2001_attacks), some in the party support [neoconservative](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neoconservatism) policies with regard to the War on Terror, including the [2001 war in Afghanistan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/War_in_Afghanistan_%282001%E2%80%93present%29) and the [2003 invasion of Iraq](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2003_invasion_of_Iraq).

The doctrine of [preemptive war](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Preemptive_war), wars to disarm and destroy potential military foes based on speculation of future attacks rather than in defense against actual attack, has been advocated by prominent members of the Bush administration, but the war within Iraq has undercut the influence of this doctrine within the Republican Party. [Rudy Giuliani](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rudy_Giuliani), mayor of New York at the time of the September 11 terrorist attacks, and a candidate for the Republican [presidential nomination in 2008](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_presidential_election%2C_2008), has stated his support for that policy, saying America must keep itself "on the offensive" against terrorists.

The George W. Bush administration took the position that the [Geneva Conventions](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geneva_Conventions) do not apply to [unlawful combatants](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unlawful_combatant), saying they apply to soldiers serving in the armies of [nation states](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nation_state) and not [terrorist organizations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_designated_terrorist_organizations) such as [Al-Qaeda](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Al-Qaeda). The Supreme Court overruled this position in [*Hamdan v. Rumsfeld*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hamdan_v._Rumsfeld), which held that the Geneva Conventions were legally binding and must be followed in regards to all enemy combatants. Prominent Republicans such as [John McCain](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_McCain), [Mike Huckabee](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mike_Huckabee), and [Ron Paul](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ron_Paul) strongly oppose the use of enhanced interrogation techniques, which they view as torture.

**Other international policies**

**Israel**

The Republican leadership supports a strong [Israel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israel), but supports efforts to secure peace in the Middle East between Israel and its [Arab](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arab) neighbors.

**Russia**

The Republican Party claims the U.S. should promote friendship not only between the United States and Russia, but also between Russia and its neighbors. With Russia, the U.S. needs patience, consistency, and a principled reliance on democratic forces. Russia must stop encouraging the proliferation of [weapons of mass destruction](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Weapons_of_mass_destruction). The party stress the common interests of the two countries which includes ending [terrorism](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terrorism), combating [nuclear proliferation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nuclear_proliferation), promoting [bilateral trade](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bilateral_trade).

**Trade**

The party, through former U.N. Ambassador [John Bolton](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_R._Bolton), has advocated reforms in the [United Nations](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations) to halt corruption such as that which afflicted the [Oil-for-Food Program](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oil-for-Food_Program). Most Republicans oppose the [Kyoto Protocol](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kyoto_Protocol). The party promotes [free trade](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Free_trade) agreements, most notably [North American Free Trade Agreement](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_American_Free_Trade_Agreement), [Dominican Republic–Central America Free Trade Agreement](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dominican_Republic%E2%80%93Central_America_Free_Trade_Agreement) and an effort to go further south to Brazil, Peru and Colombia, although some have a protectionist view of trade.

**Immigration**

Republicans are divided on how to confront [illegal immigration](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Illegal_immigration) between a platform that allows for migrant workers and easing citizenship guidelines, and border enforcement-first approach. In general, pro-growth advocates within the Republican Party support more immigration, and traditional or populist conservatives oppose it. In 2006, the White House supported and Republican-led Senate passed [comprehensive immigration reform](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comprehensive_Immigration_Reform_Act_of_2006) that would eventually allow millions of illegal immigrants to become citizens, but the House, also led by Republicans, took an enforcement-first approach, and the bill failed to pass the [conference committee](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conference_committee).

Lately, after the defeat in the 2012 presidential elections, and considering the low percent of Latinos that voted Republican, several Republicans are advocating a friendlier approach to immigrants. Former US Secretary of Commerce [Carlos Gutierrez](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carlos_Gutierrez) is promoting the creation of a [SuperPAC for immigration reform](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republicans_for_Immigration_Reform).

**Political status of Puerto Rico**

The Republican Party has expressed its support for the [U.S. citizens](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_nationality_law) of [Puerto Rico](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Puerto_Rico) to exercise their right to determine a future permanent non-territorial political status with government by consent, full enfranchisement and to be admitted to the union as a fully sovereign [U.S. state](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U.S._state). Puerto Rico has been under U.S. sovereignty for over a century and Puerto Ricans have been U.S. citizens since 1917; but the island’s ultimate status still has not been determined and its 3.9 million residents still do not have voting representation in their national government. The following is a section from the 2012 party platform (slightly changed on the last sentence from the 2008, 2004 and 2000 platforms).

We support the right of the United States citizens of Puerto Rico to be admitted to the Union as a fully sovereign state if they freely so determine. We recognize that Congress has the final authority to define the constitutionally valid options for Puerto Rico to achieve a permanent non-territorial status with government by consent and full enfranchisement. As long as Puerto Rico is not a State, however, the will of its people regarding their political status should be ascertained by means of a general right of referendum or specific referenda sponsored by the U.S. government.

**Voter base**

As of 2010[[update]](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Republican_Party_(United_States)&action=edit), [Gallup](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Gallup_Organization) polling found that 31% of Americans identified as Democrats, 29% as Republicans, and 38% as independents.

**Business community**

The GOP is usually seen as the traditionally pro-business party and it garners major support from a wide variety of industries from the financial sector to small businesses. Republicans are about 50 percent more likely to be self-employed, and are more likely to work in management.

**Demographics**

In recent elections, Republicans have found their greatest support among whites from married couples with children living at home. Unmarried and divorced women were far more likely to vote for Kerry in 2004. Since 1980, a "gender gap" has seen slightly stronger support for the GOP among men than among women. In the 2006 House races, 43% of women voted for GOP, while 47% of men did so. In the 2010 midterms, the "gender gap" was reduced with women supporting GOP and Democratic candidates equally 49% to 49%. The Democrats do better among younger Americans and Republicans among older Americans. In 2006, the GOP won 38% of the voters aged 18–29.

Low-income voters tend to favor the Democratic Partywhile high-income voters tend to support the Republican Party. President George W. Bush won 41% of the poorest 20% of voters in 2004, 55% of the richest twenty percent, and 53% of those in between. In the 2006 House races, the voters with incomes over $50,000 were 49% Republican, while those under were 38%.

Republicans hold a large majority in the armed services, with 57% of active military personnel and 66% of officers identified as Republican in 2003.

Exit polls conducted in 2000, 2004, and 2006 indicate that about one quarter of gay and lesbian Americans voted for the GOP. In recent years, many in the party have opposed [same-sex marriage](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Same-sex_marriage), adoption by same-sex couples, inclusion of sexual orientation in federal hate crimes laws, the [Employment Non-Discrimination Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Employment_Non-Discrimination_Act), while supporting the use of the [don't ask, don't tell](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Don%27t_ask%2C_don%27t_tell) policy within the military. Some members of the party, particularly in the Northeast and Pacific coast, support [civil unions](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Civil_union) and adoption rights for same-sex couples. The opposition to gay rights largely comes from the socially conservative wing of the party.

**Education**

By 2008, the Republican advantage of the early 1980s among voters with a college degree or higher had disappeared. Barack Obama carried this demographic with 54.1 percent. He beat McCain 50-48 among those with bachelor’s degrees, and by a decisive 58-40 among the 17 percent of the 2008 electorate with post-graduate degrees.

The latest Pew studies indicate that Democrats hold an 8% advantage amongst all college educated voters and a 14% advantage amongst those with post-graduate education. Republicans still hold a 4% advantage amongst college educated men, however. Whites without a college degree now tilt decidedly toward the Republican Party – the GOP now holds a 54% to 37% advantage among non-college whites, who were split about evenly four years ago.

Republicans remain a small minority of college professors, with 11% of full-time faculty identifying as Republican.

**Ethnicity**

Currently, most of the Republican voter base is [Caucasian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White_American). While historically the party had been supporters of rights for African Americans since the 1860s, it lost its leadership position; the GOP has been winning under 15% of the black vote in recent national elections (1980 to 2008). The party has recently nominated African American candidates for senator or governor in Illinois, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Maryland, though none were successful. In the 2010 elections, two African American Republicans were elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. The Republican Party abolished slavery under [Abraham Lincoln](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abraham_Lincoln), defeated the [Slave Power](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Slave_Power), and gave blacks the vote during [Reconstruction in the late 1860s](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reconstruction_Era). Until the [New Deal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Deal) of the 1930s, blacks supported the GOP by large margins. Most black voters switched to the Democratic Party in the 1930s when the New Deal offered them employment opportunities, and major figures, such as Eleanor Roosevelt, began to support civil rights. They became one of the core components of the [New Deal Coalition](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Deal_Coalition). In the South, blacks were able to vote in large numbers after 1965, when a bipartisan coalition passed the [Voting Rights Act](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Voting_Rights_Act), and ever since have formed a significant portion (20-50%) of the Democratic vote in that region.

In recent decades, the party has been moderately successful in gaining support from [Hispanic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hispanic) and [Asian American](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asian_American) voters. George W. Bush, who campaigned energetically for Hispanic votes, received 35% of their vote in 2000 and 44% in 2004. The party's strong anti-communist stance has made it popular among some minority groups from current and former Communist states, in particular [Cuban Americans](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cuban_American), [Korean Americans](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Korean_American), [Chinese Americans](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_American), and [Vietnamese Americans](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vietnamese_American). The election of [Bobby Jindal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bobby_Jindal) as Governor of Louisiana has been hailed as pathbreaking. He is the first elected minority governor in [Louisiana](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louisiana) and the first state governor of [Indian](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Non-resident_Indian_and_Person_of_Indian_Origin) descent. In the 2008 presidential election, John McCain won 55% of white votes, 35% of Asian votes, 31% of Hispanic votes, and 4% of African American votes. In the 2010 House election, the GOP won 60% of the white votes, 38% of Hispanic votes, and 9% of the African American vote. According to [John Avlon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Avlon) in 2013, the Republican party is more diverse at the statewide elected official level than the Democratic Party, including Nevada Governor [Brian Sandoval](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brian_Sandoval) and South Carolina Senator [Tim Scott](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tim_Scott).

For decades, a greater percentage of white voters identified themselves as Democrats, rather than Republicans. However, since the mid-1990s whites have been more likely to self-identify as Republicans than Democrats.

**Religious belief**

Religion has always played a major role for both parties but, in the course of a century, the parties' religious compositions have changed. Religion was a major dividing line between the parties before [1960](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_presidential_election%2C_1960), with Catholics, Jews, and Southern Protestants heavily Democratic, and Northeastern Protestants heavily Republican. Most of the old differences faded away after the realignment of the 1970s and 80s that undercut the New Deal coalition. Voters who attend church weekly gave 61% of their votes to Bush in [2004](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_presidential_election%2C_2004); those who attend occasionally gave him only 47%, while those who never attend gave him 36%. Fifty-nine percent of Protestants voted for Bush, along with 52% of Catholics (even though [John Kerry](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Kerry) was Catholic). Since 1980, large majorities of [evangelicals](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evangelism) have voted Republican; 70–80% voted for Bush in 2000 and 2004, and 70% for GOP House candidates in [2006](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_general_elections%2C_2006). Jews continue to vote 70–80% Democratic. Democrats have close links with the African American churches, especially the [National Baptists](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Baptist_Convention%2C_USA%2C_Inc.), while their historic dominance among Catholic voters has eroded to 54-46 in the 2010 midterms. The main line traditional Protestants (Methodists, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Disciples) have dropped to about 55% Republican (in contrast to 75% before 1968). The mainline denominations are rapidly shrinking in size. [Mormons](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mormons) in Utah and neighboring states voted 75% or more for Bush in 2000.

This map shows the vote in the 2004 presidential election by county. All major Republican geographic constituencies are visible: red dominates the map, showing Republican strength in the rural areas, while the denser areas (i.e., cities) are blue. Notable exceptions include the Pacific coast, New England, the [Black Belt](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_Belt_%28U.S._region%29), areas with high [Native American](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Native_Americans_in_the_United_States) populations, and the [heavily Hispanic](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File%3ANew_2000_hispanic_percent.gif) parts of the Southwest.

**Location**

Since 1980, geographically the Republican "base" ("[red states](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_states_and_blue_states)") is strongest in the [South](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Southern_United_States), the Midwest, and [Mountain West](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mountain_States). While it is currently weakest on the West Coast and Northeast, this has not always been the case; historically the northeast was a bastion of the Republican Party with [Vermont](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vermont) and [Maine](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maine) being the only two states to vote against [Franklin Roosevelt](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Franklin_Roosevelt) all four times. The [Midwest](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Midwestern_United_States) has been roughly balanced since 1854, with [Illinois](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Illinois) becoming more Democratic and liberal because of the city of Chicago (see below) and [Minnesota](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minnesota) and [Wisconsin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wisconsin) more Republican since 1990. [Ohio](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ohio) and [Indiana](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indiana) both trend Republican. Since the 1930s, the Democrats have dominated most central cities, while the Republicans now dominate rural areas and the majority of suburbs.

The South has become solidly Republican in national elections since 1980, and has been trending Republican at the state level since then at a slower pace. In 2004, Bush led Kerry by 70%-30% among Southern whites, who made up 71% of the Southern electorate. Kerry had a 70-30 lead among the 29% of the voters who were black or Hispanic. One-third of these Southern voters said they were white evangelicals; they voted for Bush by 80-20; but were only 72% Republican in 2006.

The Republican Party's strongest focus of political influence lies in the [Great Plains](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Plains) states, particularly [Oklahoma](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oklahoma), [Kansas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kansas), [Nebraska](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nebraska), [South Dakota](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Dakota), and [North Dakota](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_Dakota), and in the [Mountain states](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mountain_states) of [Idaho](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Idaho), [Wyoming](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wyoming), and [Utah](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Utah) (Utah gave George W. Bush more than 70% of the popular vote in 2004). These states are sparsely populated with few major urban centers, and have majority white populations, making it extremely difficult for Democrats to create a sustainable voter base there. While still remaining notably Republican, [Montana](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Montana#Politics) is the only state in the region with a more moderate lean. Unlike the South, these areas have been strongly Republican since before the party realignments of the 1960s. The Great Plains states were one of the few areas of the country where Republicans had any significant support during the [Great Depression](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Depression).

**Conservatives, moderates, liberals, and progressives**

Republican "conservatives" are strongest in the South, Mountain West and Midwest, where they draw support from social conservatives. The moderates tend to dominate the party in New England, and used to be well represented in all states. From the 1940s to the 1970s under such leaders as [Dwight D. Eisenhower](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dwight_D._Eisenhower), [Richard Nixon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Nixon) and [Gerald Ford](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gerald_Ford), they usually dominated the presidential wing of the party. Since the 1970s, they have been less powerful, though they are always represented in the cabinets of Republican presidents. In [Vermont](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vermont), [Jim Jeffords](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jim_Jeffords), a Republican Senator became an [independent](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Independent_%28politician%29) in 2001 due to growing disagreement with President Bush and the party leadership. In addition, moderate Republicans have recently held the governorships in several [New England](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_England) States, while [Lincoln Chafee](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lincoln_Chafee), a former moderate Republican senator is currently the independent governor of Rhode Island. Senators [Olympia Snowe](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Olympia_Snowe) and [Susan Collins](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Susan_Collins), both of Maine, and Senator [Scott Brown](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scott_Brown) of [Massachusetts](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Massachusetts) are notable moderate Republicans from New England. From 1991 to 2007, moderate Republicans served as governors of Massachusetts. Prominent Republican moderates since the party's foundation in 1854 have included [Benjamin Harrison](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benjamin_Harrison), [William McKinley](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_McKinley), [George Bush Jr.](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Bush_Jr.), [George Bush Sr.](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_Bush_Sr.), [Bob Dole](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bob_Dole), [Mitt Romney](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mitt_Romney), [Rudolph Giuliani](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rudolph_Giuliani), and [Richard Riordan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Richard_Riordan).

Some well-known conservative radio hosts, including national figures such as [Rush Limbaugh](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rush_Limbaugh), [Sean Hannity](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sean_Hannity), [Glenn Beck](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glenn_Beck), [Neal Boortz](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neal_Boortz), [Laura Ingraham](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Laura_Ingraham), [Michael Reagan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Reagan), [Howie Carr](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Howie_Carr), and [Michael Savage](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Savage_%28commentator%29), as well as many local commentators, support Republican causes, while vocally opposing those of the Democrats.

Traditionally, the Republican Party has included a liberal wing made up of individuals who, like members of the liberal wing of the Democratic Party, believe in the power of government to improve people’s lives. During the Progressive Era, many of the leading liberal reformers were Republicans, such as [Theodore Roosevelt](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theodore_Roosevelt), [Charles Evan Hughes](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charles_Evan_Hughes), [George W. Norris](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/George_W._Norris), [Hiram Johnson](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hiram_Johnson), and [Fiorello La Guardia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fiorello_La_Guardia). In contemporary politics, however, liberalism is no longer as strong a force as it once was within the Republican Party. Prominent liberal Republicans of the Twentieth Century included [Nelson Rockefeller](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nelson_Rockefeller), [John Lindsay](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Lindsay), [Jacob Javits](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jacob_Javits), [Thomas Dewey](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Dewey), [Wendell Willkie](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wendell_Willkie), [Alf Landon](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alf_Landon), [Robert McNamara](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_McNamara), and [Robert La Follette](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_La_Follette).

Some long time Republicans have spoken out for more steeply [progressive taxation](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Progressive_taxation) than mainstream GOP leaders have supported. These include [Bruce Bartlett](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bruce_Bartlett), [Paul O'Neill](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_O%27Neill_%28Secretary_of_the_Treasury%29), [David Stockman](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Stockman), and [Sheila Bair](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sheila_Bair). Similarly, Republican *Wall Street Journal* opinion columnist [Peggy Noonan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peggy_Noonan) has called for a renewed focus on jobs instead of debt and deficit.

**Trends**

As of 2004[[update]](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Republican_Party_(United_States)&action=edit), the Republican Party had remained fairly cohesive, as both strong [economic libertarians](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economic_liberalism) and [social conservatives](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_conservatism_in_the_United_States) opposed the Democrats, whom they saw as the party of bloatedand more secular, liberal government. Yet, some libertarians have argued that the GOP's policies have grown increasingly restrictive of personal liberties, and has contributed to increasing [corporate welfare](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corporate_welfare) and [national debt](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_debt). Some social conservatives have expressed dissatisfaction with the party's support for economic policies that they see as sometimes in conflict with their moral values.

In January 2013, the Republican Party's favorability ratings reached an all-time low of 33% as measured by [Pew Research Center](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pew_Research_Center), and only 25% approved of the GOP leadership. In February 2013, a follow-up poll showed that 62% of Americans polled and 65% percent of independent voters think that Republicans are "out of touch with the American people."

In March 2013, National Committee Chairman Reince Priebus gave a stinging report on the GOP’s failures in 2012, calling on the party to reinvent itself and officially endorse immigration reform. He said, "There’s no one reason we lost. Our message was weak; our ground game was insufficient; we weren’t inclusive; we were behind in both data and digital; and our primary and debate process needed improvement." He proposed 219 reforms, including a $10 million marketing campaign to reach women, minorities and gays; a shorter, more controlled primary season; and better data collection and research facilities. On March

**State and territorial parties**

* [Alabama Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alabama_Republican_Party)
* [Republican Party of Alaska](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republican_Party_of_Alaska)
* [Arizona Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Arizona_Republican_Party)
* [Republican Party of Arkansas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republican_Party_of_Arkansas)
* [California Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/California_Republican_Party)
* [Colorado Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Colorado_Republican_Party)
* [Connecticut Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Connecticut_Republican_Party)
* [Republican State Committee of Delaware](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republican_State_Committee_of_Delaware)
* [Republican Party of Florida](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republican_Party_of_Florida)
* [Georgia Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georgia_Republican_Party)
* [Hawaii Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hawaii_Republican_Party)
* [Idaho Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Idaho_Republican_Party)
* [Illinois Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Illinois_Republican_Party)
* [Indiana Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indiana_Republican_Party)
* [Republican Party of Iowa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republican_Party_of_Iowa)
* [Kansas Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kansas_Republican_Party)
* [Republican Party of Kentucky](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republican_Party_of_Kentucky)
* [Republican Party of Louisiana](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republican_Party_of_Louisiana)
* [Maine Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maine_Republican_Party)
* [Maryland Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maryland_Republican_Party)
* [Massachusetts Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Massachusetts_Republican_Party)
* [Michigan Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michigan_Republican_Party)
* [Republican Party of Minnesota](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republican_Party_of_Minnesota)
* [Mississippi Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mississippi_Republican_Party)
* [Missouri Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Missouri_Republican_Party)
* [Montana Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Montana_Republican_Party)
* [Nebraska Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nebraska_Republican_Party)
* [Nevada Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nevada_Republican_Party)
* [New Hampshire Republican State Committee](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Hampshire_Republican_State_Committee)
* [New Jersey Republican State Committee](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_Jersey_Republican_State_Committee)
* [Republican Party of New Mexico](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republican_Party_of_New_Mexico)
* [New York Republican State Committee](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_York_Republican_State_Committee)
* [North Carolina Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_Carolina_Republican_Party)
* [North Dakota Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/North_Dakota_Republican_Party)
* [Ohio Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ohio_Republican_Party)
* [Oklahoma Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oklahoma_Republican_Party)
* [Oregon Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oregon_Republican_Party)
* [Republican State Committee of Pennsylvania](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republican_State_Committee_of_Pennsylvania)
* [Rhode Island Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rhode_Island_Republican_Party)
* [South Carolina Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Carolina_Republican_Party)
* [South Dakota Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Dakota_Republican_Party)
* [Tennessee Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tennessee_Republican_Party)
* [Republican Party of Texas](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republican_Party_of_Texas)
* [Utah Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Utah_Republican_Party)
* [Vermont Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vermont_Republican_Party)
* [Republican Party of Virginia](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republican_Party_of_Virginia)
* [Washington State Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Washington_State_Republican_Party)
* [West Virginia Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_Virginia_Republican_Party)
* [Republican Party of Wisconsin](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republican_Party_of_Wisconsin)
* [Wyoming Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wyoming_Republican_Party)
* [Republican Party of American Samoa](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republican_Party_of_American_Samoa)
* [District of Columbia Republican Committee](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/District_of_Columbia_Republican_Committee)
* [Guam Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republican_Party_%28Guam%29)
* [Northern Mariana Islands Republican Party](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republican_Party_%28Northern_Mariana_Islands%29)
* [Republican Party of Puerto Rico](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republican_Party_of_Puerto_Rico)
* [Republican Party of the Virgin Islands](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republican_Party_of_the_Virgin_Islands)

**See also**

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|  | [***Politics portal***](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portal%3APolitics) |
|  | [***Conservatism portal***](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portal%3AConservatism) |
|  | [***United States portal***](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Portal%3AUnited_States) |

* [Factions in the Republican Party (United States)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Factions_in_the_Republican_Party_%28United_States%29)
* [List of African American Republicans](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_African_American_Republicans)
* [List of Republican and Conservative-leaning Celebrities](http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=List_of_Republican_and_Conservative-leaning_Celebrities&action=edit&redlink=1)
* [List of United States Republican Party presidential tickets](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_United_States_Republican_Party_presidential_tickets)
* [Log Cabin Republicans](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Log_Cabin_Republicans)
* [Political party strength in U.S. states](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Political_party_strength_in_U.S._states)
* [Republican In Name Only](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republican_In_Name_Only)
* [South Park Republican](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/South_Park_Republican)
* [Libertarian Republican](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Libertarian_Republican)
* [International Democrat Union](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/International_Democrat_Union)

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