

ORRIN G. HATCH

FOUNDATION

Press Release

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SENATOR ORRIN G. HATCH

1934 – 2022

Salt Lake City, UT—The **Hatch Foundation** sadly announces the passing of Senator Orrin G. Hatch—the Chairman Emeritus of the Hatch Foundation, former President Pro Tempore of the United States Senate, and longest-serving Senator in Utah history (1977-2019). Senator Hatch passed away at 5:30 p.m. on Saturday, April 23, 2022 in Salt Lake City, Utah, surrounded by family.

Upon the Senator’s passing, the Hatch Foundation issued the following statements:

“Senator Orrin G. Hatch personified the American Dream,” **said Matt Sandgren, Executive Director of the Hatch Foundation**. “Born the son of a carpenter and plaster lather, he overcame the poverty of his youth to become a United States Senator. With the hardships of his upbringing always fresh in his mind, he made it his life’s mission to expand freedom and opportunity for others—and the results speak for themselves. From tax and trade to religious liberty and healthcare, few legislators have had a greater impact on American life than Orrin Hatch. He was a profoundly positive influence in the lives of those he served, whether they were the constituents he helped over four decades of casework, the hundreds of interns he sponsored in both Utah and DC, or the robust network of Hatch staffers who carry on his legacy to this day.

Senator Hatch touched the hearts of countless individuals, and I know I speak for all of them when I say he will be dearly missed.”

“A man of wisdom, kindness, character, and compassion, Orrin G. Hatch was everything a United States Senator should be,” **said A. Scott Anderson, Chairman of the Hatch Foundation.** “He exemplified a generation of lawmakers brought up on the principles of comity and compromise, and he embodied those principles better than anyone. In a nation divided, Orrin Hatch helped show us a better way by forging meaningful friendships on both sides of the aisle. Today, more than ever, we would do well to follow his example. May we honor Orrin’s memory by living as he lived—committed to our country, to our principles, and to each other.”

Senator Hatch is survived by his wife, Elaine, and their six children. Details regarding funeral arrangements will be forthcoming. For more information on the Senator’s legacy, click [here](#). To download his official photo, click [here](#). For an overview of both his Senate Service and his personal life, see below.

Senate Service

A member of the United States Senate for 42 years, Senator Orrin G. Hatch was the longest-serving Senator in Utah history. He served during the administrations of seven Presidents—four Republicans and three Democrats—and alongside nine Senate Majority Leaders—four Democrats and five Republicans. At the end of his term in January 2019, Senator Hatch was the ninth-longest-serving US Senator in American history.

Upon his retirement, Senator Hatch held the distinction of having passed more legislation into law than any other Senator alive. Through his relentless work ethic, Hatch earned a reputation as one of the most effective and bipartisan lawmakers of all time. In total, he sponsored or cosponsored more than 750 bills that became law.

Beyond the sheer volume of his legislative successes, Hatch authored or coauthored many of the most consequential laws of the past half century, including: the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, which helps protect the free exercise of religion for all Americans; the Drug Price Competition and Patent Term Restoration Act (also known as Hatch-Waxman), which created the modern generic drug industry; the State Children’s Health Insurance Program (or SCHIP), which provides health care for uninsured children from low-income families who do not qualify for Medicaid; and the Americans with Disabilities Act, which prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities.

In addition to the integral role he played in writing and passing critical federal legislation, Senator Hatch also helped pass numerous bills of particular importance to the people of Utah, including the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act and the Central Utah Project.

Throughout his service, Senator Hatch had the distinction of serving in numerous leadership positions. He was one of only a few Senators in history to serve as Chairman of three major Senate Committees: the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee (now called the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, 1981-1987), the Senate Judiciary Committee (1995-2001; 2001; 2003-2005), and the Senate Finance Committee (2015-2019). In total, Senator

Hatch spent 32 of his 42 years in Congress as either the Chairman or Ranking Member of a major committee—an unparalleled record.

Senator Hatch used these positions to advance measures to strengthen our economy, protect individual liberty, and safeguard America’s system of limited government under the Constitution. As Chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, Senator Hatch’s priorities included pro-growth tax reform, opening up foreign markets to American exports, and entitlement reform to ensure the long-term sustainability of Social Security and Medicare. His record of fiscal responsibility earned him the nickname “Mr. Balanced Budget” from President Reagan.

On the Senate Judiciary Committee, Senator Hatch was instrumental in fighting judicial activism and reshaping the federal courts. He participated in the confirmation of more than half of all federal judges who had ever served since our country’s origin and played a central role in 15 Supreme Court confirmation hearings. He also worked to enact tough anti-crime laws, civil justice reform, property rights protections, and numerous measures related to technological innovation and intellectual property. On the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, Senator Hatch was instrumental in passing laws to improve cancer and HIV/AIDS research, pharmaceuticals, dietary supplements, mental health, and children’s welfare.

In addition to his formal leadership positions, Senator Hatch was long regarded as an elder statesman who—even before his election by his colleagues as President Pro Tempore of the Senate—played a prominent role in revitalizing the Senate’s historic traditions, safeguarding its rules and precedents, and defending its institutional prerogatives. Because of Senator Hatch’s deep understanding of and support for the tech sector, in 2009, Senator Mitch McConnell appointed Senator Hatch Chairman of the Senate Republican High-Tech Task Force—a position he held for a decade, championing pro-growth, pro-innovation policies.

Senator Hatch received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from the President of the United States and numerous other awards and honors over the years, including 14 honorary degrees from institutions such as the University of Pittsburgh, the University of Maryland, Pepperdine University, the University of Utah, and Utah State University. In addition to honorary degrees, Senator Hatch received the National Intelligence Distinguished Public Service Medal from the Director of National Intelligence, Gold and Platinum Records from the Recording Industry Association of America for songs that he coauthored, the Canterbury Medal from The Becket Fund for Religious Liberty.

Senator Hatch credited his family and his deep religious faith as the key to his success. He and his wife, Elaine, were married for more than 60 years and were the proud parents of six children and dozens of grandchildren and great-grandchildren. He served as a Bishop and missionary in The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Life Overview

Orrin G. Hatch was born on March 22, 1934, in Homestead Park, Pennsylvania—just outside of Pittsburgh. His mother was a homemaker and his father was a union carpenter and plaster lather. In humble circumstances, they raised nine children in the aftermath of the Great Depression.

Hatch's childhood, though happy, was also marked by poverty and significant hardship. When Hatch was just ten years old, he was deeply impacted by the loss of his older brother, Jesse Hatch, who was killed in action in Europe during World War II. After Jesse's death, Hatch resolved to live two lives—one for himself and one for his brother.

This resolve drove Hatch to succeed in sports and other extracurricular activities. In high school, he played on the varsity basketball team, fought as an amateur boxer, and served as student body president. He brought his passion for music, athletics, and student government with him to Brigham Young University in 1952. To pay his way through college, Hatch worked as a janitor during the school year and as a journeyman lather in the summers. When he was nineteen years old, Hatch was called to serve a two-year mission for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Ohio and Indiana, which he described as one of the most formative experiences of his life.

Upon returning from his mission, Hatch married Elaine Hansen in the Salt Lake City Temple. He eventually earned a bachelor's degree in history from BYU and won a full honors scholarship to the University of Pittsburgh Law School, where he earned his law degree with honors in 1962.

After spending several years as a trial lawyer in Pittsburgh, Hatch moved to Utah in 1969. There, he distinguished himself as a trial lawyer and found great meaning in representing individuals in need: injured railroad workers, small businessmen, and many others who often could not pay for his services. Hatch represented them anyway.

It wasn't long before Hatch's friends and colleagues urged him to consider public service. He had never before run for public office when, on May 10, 1976, he filed to run for the United States Senate against three-term Democratic Senator Frank Moss. Although virtually unknown, Hatch overcame the odds to win the election, commencing one of the most prolific tenures in modern Senate history.

After retiring from the Senate in January 2019, Hatch devoted his time to building the [Orrin G. Hatch Foundation](#), a national policy think tank that seeks to foster civic participation, bipartisan dialogue, and commonsense solutions to the nation's most pressing problems. The [Foundation's mission](#) can be distilled in two words: *civility* and *solutions*, which were the twin pillars of Hatch's Senate service.

Hatch's legacy continues through the work of the Hatch Foundation and the lives of the countless people he impacted over many decades of public service.

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