

Senator Jennings Randolph



Senator Randolph is known as the “Father of the 26th Amendment” due to his dedication and commitment to lowering the voting age to 18. Randolph served as a West Virginia Congressman, both as a member of the House of Representatives (from 1933-1947) and as a Senator (from 1958-1985). Throughout his forty-year career in Congress, Senator Randolph introduced legislation to lower the voting age from 21 to 18 *eleven times*. Beginning in 1942, Senator Randolph, then a member of the House of Representatives, was persistent in his efforts to expand voting rights to young Americans who were “old enough to fight and die for their country, but not old enough to vote for the leaders who were sending them to these conflicts.”

On the subject of youth enfranchisement, Randolph said, “I believe that our young people possess a great social conscience, are perplexed by the injustices which exist in the world and are anxious to rectify these ills.” Without Senator Jennings Randolph’s unwavering commitment that spanned over forty years, Americans aged 18-20 would not have the opportunity to be part of the national conversation and see their issues at the forefront of the political agenda. Randolph wrote the version of the 26th amendment that was ultimately passed by Congress and subsequently ratified.

Sources: [Biographical Directory of the United States Congress](#)

[West Virginia Agribusiness Council: Jennings Randolph “Father of the 26th Amendment”](#)

[New York Times: Senator Jennings Randolph of West Virginia Dies at 96](#)

Photo Source: [congress.gov – Biographies](#)