

Senator Birch Bayh



Birch Bayh entered the Indiana state legislature in 1955, at the young age of 27. In 1959, Bayh was elected Speaker of the House, making him one of the youngest Speakers in Indiana's legislative history. While in the state legislature, Bayh and his colleagues introduced a wide range of legislation, including school reform and youth political participation.

A rising star in the Democratic party, Bayh captured the attention of the Young Democrats of Indiana and by 1961, he announced his candidacy for United States senate. He won the nomination and the seat. He served in the U.S. Senate from 1962-1981. He was assigned to the Public Works Committee and served on the Flood Control, Rivers and Harbors; Public Roads; and Public Buildings and Grounds subcommittees.

He also served on the Judiciary Committee and became the chair of the Subcommittee on Constitutional Amendments. Under Bayh's leadership in the Subcommittee on Constitutional Amendments, the Senate drafted the legislation that eventually became the 25th Amendment, which grants presidential power to the vice president if the president dies or is incapacitated. The 26th Amendment was also passed and ratified under Bayh's leadership.

During his 18 years in the Senate, Senator Bayh was an architect of both the 25th and 26th Amendments, becoming the only other American since James Madison to draft more than one successful Constitutional Amendment.

Sources: [Fordham Law Review: An Interview with Former Senator Birch Bayh](#)

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

[Indiana University: Birch Bayh Biography](#)

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