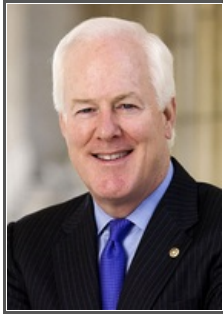


LEGISLATOR

US Senator

JOHN CORNYN (R-TX)**IN OFFICE**

Up for re-election in 2020

LEADERSHIP POSITION

Senate Republican Whip

3rd Term

Re-elected in 2014


SENIORITY RANK**30**


Out of 100

CONTACT

 **Email** [Contact Form](http://www.cornyn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?p=ContactForm)
<http://www.cornyn.senate.gov/public/index.cfm?p=ContactForm>

 **Web** www.cornyn.senate.gov/public
<http://www.cornyn.senate.gov/public>

 **Facebook** [View on Facebook](http://www.facebook.com/sen.johncornyn)
<http://www.facebook.com/sen.johncornyn>

 **DC Office** 517 Hart Senate Office Building

BGOV BIOGRAPHY

By Brian Nutting and Greg Giroux, Bloomberg News

John Cornyn has steadily moved up the leadership ladder in the Senate, and in the 113th Congress he ascended to the No. 2 spot -- minority whip -- in that chamber's Republican hierarchy.

He has posted a record as a Republican Party loyalist with a conservative philosophy about the role of government. Cornyn's Senate website describes him as "an articulate and powerful voice for conservative values" and his lifetime score from the American Conservative Union on key Senate votes through 2012 was 93 percent.

Cornyn insists that government spending must be reduced and says that "tax cuts did not create our fiscal problems, and so it is axiomatic that tax increases will not solve our fiscal problems alone." He has signed the "no new taxes" pledge sponsored by the anti-tax advocacy group Americans for Tax Reform.

Notwithstanding all that, the Texas senator nevertheless finds himself having to defend his conservative bona fides in the face of rumblings about a Tea Party-backed primary election challenge in 2014. Cornyn has been compared with his colleague from the Lone Star State, first-term Republican Ted Cruz, who immediately made a splash in the 113th Congress as an aggressive champion of conservative values, both in his votes and in his rhetoric.

Some early reviewers of Cornyn's actions in the 113th thought they detected a move to the right, pointing to his votes against the confirmation of John Kerry as secretary of State and against renewal of the Violence Against Women Act, in which he was in the minority of his party. Cornyn disagreed with that characterization, saying he has always had a conservative record, and his staff pointed to ratings by National Journal indicating that he was the second most conservative senator in 2012.

Cornyn blames President Barack Obama for the series of fiscal crises that developed in recent years, and said in early 2013, "It may be necessary to partially shut down the government in order to secure the long-term fiscal wellbeing of our country, rather than plod along the path of Greece, Italy and Spain. President Obama needs to take note of this reality and put forward a plan to avoid it immediately."

Cornyn's election by his colleagues as minority whip showed that the Republicans' failure to take control of the Senate in the 2012 elections wasn't a disqualifier for advancement. He was chairman of the National Republican Senatorial

Bloomberg GOVERNMENT

Committee in the two previous election cycles -- 2009-2010 and 2011-2012. Republicans picked up six Senate seats in 2010 before losing two in 2012 -- an election campaign in which the GOP had held high hopes for a Senate takeover.

Committee Posts

To take the minority whip post in the 113th Congress, Cornyn had to relinquish a couple of committee assignments -- on Armed Services and Budget. He retained his seats on the Judiciary and Finance committees.

In 2009, as a member of the Judiciary Committee, he briefly delayed the confirmation of Eric Holder as attorney general. In 2012, he called on Holder to resign, saying the attorney general had failed to investigate serious national security leaks of information and had mishandled the probes of the Fast and Furious federal gun-trafficking operation that resulted in government-provided guns being used in crimes in Mexico, including in the death of a Border Patrol agent. "You've violated the public trust, in my view, by failing and refusing to perform the duties of your office," Cornyn said of Holder.

In addition to his vote against Kerry in 2013, Cornyn also opposed the nominations of Jacob Lew as Treasury secretary and Chuck Hagel as secretary of Defense. He had urged Obama to withdraw the nomination of Hagel, a former Senate GOP colleague.

On the Judiciary Committee, Cornyn has been involved in immigration issues. In 2013, he argued that more should be done to tighten border security before Congress considers a comprehensive overhaul of immigration laws.

"I think there has to be some conditions satisfied," he told a forum in Texas. "One is that people need to know we've done everything we can do to secure the border."

He said that once the border was made more secure, he would be willing to consider giving illegal aliens a pathway to legal status -- not citizenship. According to ABC News, he said: "Someone after a certain period of time on probation could work here and they could stay in the United States, but not necessarily be a citizen."

Early Years

Cornyn's father was in the Air Force and the family moved around a lot. He went to high school in Japan and to college in San Antonio, Texas, where his family had settled. In 1984, after practicing law in San Antonio, he won election to a state district court judgeship. He served in that post for six years, and then moved up the judiciary ladder, winning election to the state Supreme Court and serving there for six years as well. In 1998 he was elected Texas attorney general, besting Democrat Jim Mattox by 10 percentage points.

Four years later, when Republican Senator Phil Gramm decided not to seek re-election, Cornyn entered the race and handily won a five-candidate primary against little-known opponents. In the general election, aided by his ties to then-President George W. Bush and Bush's chief political adviser, Karl Rove, Cornyn defeated the Democratic candidate, former Dallas mayor Ron Kirk, by 12 percentage points. He won re-election in 2008 by the same margin.

In his first Senate term, Cornyn was named chairman of the Judiciary Committee's Subcommittee on the Constitution, which approved proposed constitutional amendments to outlaw flag-burning and to authorize Congress to take steps to replace members if a large number of lawmakers were killed. The measures didn't advance through the Senate.

In 2006 he was elected vice chairman of the Republican Conference, and he became the chairman of the campaign committee two years later.

Updated March 21, 2013

BIO FROM REPRESENTATIVE'S WEBSITE

From the Senator's Website

Senator Cornyn was born in Houston on February 2, 1952, the second of three children of Gale and John Cornyn, both native Texans.

Senator Cornyn's father was a B-17 pilot in World War II and served our country faithfully for 31 years. Raised as he was in a military family, Senator Cornyn traveled a great deal growing up. At various points, he and his family lived in Houston, El Paso, and San Antonio, Texas; Biloxi, Mississippi; Kensington, Maryland; and Tokyo, Japan.

In 1973, Senator Cornyn earned a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism from Trinity University in San Antonio. He earned his Juris Doctor from St. Mary's University School of Law in 1977.

While serving as a Justice on the Texas Supreme Court, Senator Cornyn earned his Master of Laws degree from the University of Virginia in 1995.

Senator Cornyn ran for state district judge in Bexar County in 1984 to fight the "good ole boy" system and restore the reputation of fair and impartial justice to the courthouse. As Judge of Texas' 37th District Court, Senator Cornyn primarily presided over civil law suits, including domestic relations cases.

In 1990, Senator Cornyn was elected to the Texas Supreme Court and brought his successful record of reform from San Antonio to Austin to combat corruption.

After eight years pursuing reform of the judicial branch of Texas government, Senator Cornyn answered the call to help reform the executive branch. In 1998, he became the first Republican elected Attorney General of Texas since Reconstruction and was sworn in by Governor George W. Bush. As Attorney General, Senator Cornyn was the state's chief law enforcement officer and worked to enforce child support, consumer protection, improve crime victim services, and investigate and prosecute selected criminal cases.

In 1977 at the age of 25, Senator Cornyn met his future wife, Sandy Hansen, on a blind date. They were married in 1979 and have two daughters, Danley and Haley.

Sandy Cornyn is the Treasurer of the Spouses of the Senate Club, a group that meets weekly while the Senate is in session. Sandy is also a member of the Texas Federation of Republican Women and the Austin Republican Women's Club. She is a member of Congressional Families Action for Cancer Awareness. Sandy is also active in International Club I, which consists of spouses of members of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of the United States Government, as well as those of the Washington Press and Diplomatic Corps, and promotes goodwill and international understanding.

PERSONAL PROFILE

COMMITTEES

[Senate Committee on Finance](#)

[Senate Committee on the Judiciary](#)

CAUCUSES

[Texas Shale Oil and Gas Caucus](#)

[TEX-21 Congressional Caucus](#)

[Congressional Ports-to-Plains Caucus](#)

Birthdate 02/02/1952

Birthplace Houston, TX

Political Party Republican Party

Marital Status Married

Spouse Sandy

Family 2 children

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Education

Trinity University

Bachelor's Degree 1973

St Mary's University of San Antonio Texas

JD 1977

University of Virginia

LIm 1995

1984 - 1990 District Judge, County of Bexar TX
 1990 - 1997 Member, (TX)Supreme Court
 1999 - 2002 Attorney General, State of Texas
 2002 - 2013 Senator:Texas, (US)Senate
 2007 - 2009 Vice Chair, Senate Republican Conference
 2009 - 2012 Chairman, Natl Republican Senatorl Cmte
 2013 - Present Majority Whip/Senator:Texas, (US)Senate