# FOREIGN POLICY

## USE OF FORCE – GENERAL

**New Yorker: Vice President Biden “Has Been A Strident Voice Of Skepticism About The Use Of American Force.”**  “Since entering the Administration, Biden has been a strident voice of skepticism about the use of American force. At times, that put him on the opposite side of debates from others in the Administration, including Hillary Clinton and Leon Panetta, Obama’s first C.I.A. director. Biden opposed intervention in Libya (as did Defense Secretary Robert Gates), arguing that the fall of Muammar Qaddafi would result in chaos; Biden warned the President against the raid that killed Osama bin Laden.” [New Yorker, [7/28/14](http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/07/28/biden-agenda)]

**New Yorker: Vice President Biden “Voted Against The Gulf War…Advocated NATO Air Strikes In The Balkans In 1993” And “Voted For The War” In Iraq in 2002.** “When he was in the Senate, Biden was a centrist Democrat who called on his party, at times, to back diplomacy with force. Though he voted against the Gulf War, in 1991, he advocated NATO air strikes in the Balkans in 1993 to stop the Serbian slaughter of Bosnians. In the run-up to the war in Iraq, in 2002, he pushed a resolution that would have allowed Bush to remove weapons of mass destruction in Iraq but not to remove Saddam Hussein. The resolution failed, and Biden voted for the war, a decision he regrets.” [New Yorker, [7/28/14](http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/07/28/biden-agenda)]

**Vice President Biden: “Bob Gates Has Been Wrong About Everything.”** “I asked what he made of Gates’s specific criticisms. He called Gates “a really decent guy” and then unloaded on him: ‘Bob Gates is a Republican, with a view of foreign policy that is, in many fundamental ways, different from mine. Bob Gates has been wrong about everything! Bob Gates is wrong about the advice he gave President Reagan about how to deal with Gorbachev! That he wasn’t real. Thank God the President didn’t listen to him. Bob Gates was wrong about the Balkans. Bob Gates was wrong about the bombing. Bob Gates was wrong about the Vietnam War, for Christ’s sake. You go back, and everything in the last forty years, there’s nothing that I can think of, major fundamental decisions relative to foreign policy, that I can think he’s been right about!’” [New Yorker, [7/28/14](http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/07/28/biden-agenda)]

## CONTRAST WITH OTHER DEMOCRATS

### CONTRAST WITH PRESIDENT OBAMA

**Foreign Policy Editor David Rothkopf: “Even When There Were Differences Of Opinion, Biden Was Seen As Being Loyal And Supportive Of The President.”** In a New Yorker profile of Vice President Biden, Rothkopf said: “While Biden has been a strong voice on foreign policy, it has never been asserted, as it was about Cheney, that he was trying to advance his own agenda. Even when there were differences of opinion, Biden was seen as being loyal and supportive of the President.” [New Yorker, [7/28/14](http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/07/28/biden-agenda)]

### CONTRAST WITH SECRETARY CLINTON

**Wall Street Journal’s William Galston: Vice President Biden “Is Well-Positioned To Wage A Left-Leaning Campaign On Foreign Policy.”** “Mr. Biden is well-positioned to wage a left-leaning campaign on foreign policy as well as economic issues. Although he voted for the Iraq-war authorization in 2002, he argued vehemently against the Bush administration’s surge in 2007, proposing instead the quasi-partition of Iraq into autonomous Kurdish, Sunni and Shiite zones. As vice president, he argued just as hard against Gen. David Petraeus’s proposal (backed by then-Secretary of State Clinton) for a massive military surge and nation-building policy in Afghanistan.” [William Galston column, Wall Street Journal, [7/23/14](http://online.wsj.com/articles/william-a-galston-the-big-2016-foreign-policy-debates-1406071181)]

## IRAN

### COMMENTS MILITARY ACTION AGAINST IRAN

**Wall Street Journal’s William Galston: Vice President Biden “Has Taken U.S. Military Action Against Iran Off The Table.”** “[Vice President Biden] has taken U.S. military action against Iran off the table, declaring that ‘war with Iran is not just a bad option. It would be a disaster.’” [William Galston column, Wall Street Journal, [7/23/14](http://online.wsj.com/articles/william-a-galston-the-big-2016-foreign-policy-debates-1406071181)]

### CRITICISM OF IRAN POLICY

**New Yorker: Former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates “Echoed A Conservative Talking Point Produced For The 2008 Presidential Campaign” To Attack Vice President Biden.** “In referring to Biden’s errors over ‘four decades,’ Gates echoed a conservative talking point produced for the 2008 Presidential campaign, when commentators sought to counter criticism of Sarah Palin’s inexperience in foreign affairs.” [New Yorker, [7/28/14](http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/07/28/biden-agenda)]

### DEFENSE OF IRAN POLICY

**Washington Post Fact Checker: Bob Gates Claimed That Vice President Biden Supported The Fall Of The Shah Of Iran In 1979, But “No Evidence Can Be Found To Support This Statement."** “BOB GATES: ‘He said that when the Shah fell in Iran in 1979, that that was a step forward for progress toward human rights in Iran.’ FACT CHECKER: No evidence can be found to support this statement, at least in news clips at the time and copies of the congressional record that we examined. Our colleagues at PolitiFact, who had earlier this year examined Gates’ claims, located a reference to the statement in a 2008 opinion article published in The New York Post by Amir Taheri, an Iranian-born conservative writer; we also found a similar statement made by Taheri in 2008 Forbes column. He did not respond to e-mail queries to provide evidence for his claim, so at this point we have to rate this as doubtful.” [Fact Checker, Washington Post, [7/22/14](http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/fact-checker/wp/2014/07/22/biden-versus-gates-foreign-policy-smackdown/)]

## ISRAEL

### DEFENSE OF ISRAEL POLICY

**U.S. Ambassador To Israel Ron Dermer: Biden Presented “The Single Most Succinct Understanding Of Israeli Political Reality Of Any Other Statement That I’ve Heard.”** “On a visit in 2011, Biden quoted his father saying, ‘There’s no sense dying on a small cross’—to urge Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to take a larger step toward peace in the Middle East. Ron Dermer, the Israeli Ambassador to the U.S., said, ‘We’re in Jerusalem, we’ve got a Catholic Vice-President, we’ve got a Jewish Prime Minister, and he’s telling him, ‘There’s no sense dying on a small cross.’ The Prime Minister starting laughing, and, I have to tell you, it is the single most succinct understanding of Israeli political reality of any other statement that I’ve heard.’” [New Yorker, [7/28/14](http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/07/28/biden-agenda)]

## RUSSIA

### COMMENTS ON PUTIN

**New Yorker: Vice President Biden Said To Russian President Vladimir Putin, “I’m Looking Into Your Eyes, And I Don’t Think You Have A Soul.”** “‘As I turned, I was this close to him.’ Biden held his hand a few inches from his nose. ‘I said, ‘Mr. Prime Minister, I’m looking into your eyes, and I don’t think you have a soul.’’” [New Yorker, [7/28/14](http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/07/28/biden-agenda)]

## IRAQ

### RELATIONSHIP WITH ABADI

**Associated Press: Iraqi Prime Minister Abadi Assured Biden Of “His Intent To Quickly Form A New Government That is Inclusive Of All Segments Of Iraqi Society And…Address The Concerns Of All Of Iraq’s Communities.”** “Biden and al-Abadi discussed military action against Islamic State and the importance of forming a new government in the fight against the terror group that has seized large areas of Iraq and Syria. Abadi reassured Biden of his intent to quickly form a new government that is inclusive of all segments of Iraqi society and that he is prepared to take concrete steps to addresses the concerns of all of Iraq's communities.” [Associated Press, [8/25/14](http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/wireStory/biden-iraqi-leaders-time-government-25122438)]

### RELATIONSHIP WITH MALIKI

**Vice President Biden In 2010: “I’ll Bet You My Vice Presidency Maliki Will Extend The [Status Of Armed Forces Agreement].”** Michael R. Gordon and retired Lieutenant General Bernard E. Trainor, in their book “The Endgame: The Inside Story of the Struggle for Iraq, from George W. Bush to Barack Obama,” described a video conference in October, 2010, in which Biden predicted that Maliki would sign on to a Status of Forces Agreement to keep U.S. troops on the ground. “Maliki wants us to stick around because he does not see a future in Iraq otherwise,” Biden said, according to the account. “I’ll bet you my vice presidency Maliki will extend the SOFA.” [New Yorker, [8/12/14](http://www.newyorker.com/news/daily-comment/breaking-maliki-biden)]

**USA Today: Vice President Biden’s “Phone Calls To Foreign Leaders…Spiked” In 2014, As His Portfolio “Includes Iraq, Ukraine And—Increasingly—Turkey.”** In an article about phone calls from the White House to foreign leaders during crises, USA Today reported: “Records also show how some nations rise and fall in importance and the evolving division of labor between Obama and his vice president, Joe Biden, whose phone calls to foreign leaders have also spiked this year. While Obama speaks most often with the leaders of the United Kingdom, Germany, Israel, France and Russia, Biden's portfolio includes Iraq, Ukraine and — increasingly — Turkey.” [USA Today, [7/28/14](http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2014/07/28/obama-phone-calls-foreign-leaders/13094721/)]

**President Obama “Has Largely Delegated [Iraq] Conversations To Biden,” Making Four Disclosed Calls To Iraqi Prime Minister Maliki Compared To Vice President Biden’s 64.** “[Duke professor and former national security staffer Peter] Feaver said Obama has ‘downgraded’ some key relationships, leaving them to Biden or the State Department. Bush had weekly video teleconferences with Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki, but Obama has largely delegated those conversations to Biden. The White House has disclosed four calls that Obama has made to Iraq during his presidency. Biden has made 64, partly because the vice president usually checks in with three different sectarian leaders in each round of calls: al-Maliki, Speaker of the Council of Representatives Salim al-Jabouri and Kurdish Regional President Masoud Barzani.” [USA Today, [7/28/14](http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2014/07/28/obama-phone-calls-foreign-leaders/13094721/)]

#### CRITICISM FOR RELATIONSHIP WITH MALIKI

**New Yorker’s Evan Osnos: Biden “Embraced” Iraqi Prime Minister Maliki Despite Fears That Maliki “Was Alienating Sunnis And Stoking The Return Of Open Sectarian Conflict.”** In an article about Vice President Biden’s relationship with Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, Evan Osnos of the *New Yorker* wrote: “Biden embraced the figure he decided was most likely to keep the country together, Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki, despite growing complaints from U.S. diplomats and advisers that Maliki was becoming a strongman who was alienating Sunnis and stoking the return of open sectarian conflict. Emma Sky, who was the chief political adviser to General Raymond Odierno, the commander of U.S. forces in Iraq, told me, ‘The White House became impatient,’ and that Biden decided that the best route ‘was to support Maliki as Prime Minister—and pressure and persuade the others to agree to this.’” [New Yorker, [8/12/14](http://www.newyorker.com/news/daily-comment/breaking-maliki-biden)]

**New Yorker: Vice President Biden “Considered Maliki The Only Viable Option” In Iraq, But His “Confidence In Maliki Proved Misplaced.”** Despite growing concern among American diplomats and allies in the region that the Iraqi Prime Minister was an increasingly sectarian and despotic figure, Biden considered Maliki the only viable option, and was confident that he would allow a contingent of U.S. forces to stay…But Biden’s confidence in Maliki proved misplaced. In 2011, Maliki refused to ask his parliament for immunity for American troops, and the U.S. ended the effort to leave forces in Iraq. In December, Biden visited Baghdad to mark the American withdrawal. He called Obama and thanked him ‘for giving me the chance to end this goddam war.’” [New Yorker, [7/28/14](http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/07/28/biden-agenda)]

**New Yorker: “Some Have Criticized The Administration For Investing So Much In Maliki, Or For Not Pushing Harder To Leave A Force That Might Have…Checked Maliki’s Sectarian Project**.” “His certainty is not universally shared. Though few American commanders or diplomats lament the end of a gruelling U.S. occupation, some have criticized the Administration for investing so much in Maliki, or for not pushing harder to leave a force that might have preserved American influence and checked Maliki’s sectarian project. Biden once believed that a stable, representative government in Baghdad was ‘going to be one of the great achievements of this Administration,’ as he said on CNN in 2010. His optimism has waned.” [New Yorker, [7/28/14](http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/07/28/biden-agenda)]

### FEDERALISM IN IRAQ

#### COMMENTS FROM VP BIDEN ON FEDERALISM IN IRAQ

**Vice President Biden: Iraq’s Security Depends “On Addressing The Alienation That Fuels Extremist Movements And Convincing Iraqis That Their Needs Can Be Met Through The Political Process Rather Than Through Violence.**” In an op-ed on Iraqi stability and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant appearing in the Washington Post, Vice President Joe Biden wrote: “There is no negotiating with ISIL. We have seen its appalling murders of U.S. journalist James Foley and countless other innocent people, its cruelty and its fanaticism. But even if there were no ISIL, Iraq’s survival would still depend on the ability of Iraqis to set aside their differences and unite in a common effort. Iraq’s security would still depend on addressing the alienation that fuels extremist movements and convincing Iraqis that their needs can be met through the political process rather than through violence.” [Joe Biden op-ed, Washington Post, [8/22/14](http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/vice-president-biden-iraqis-can-rout-isil-by-rising-above-differences/2014/08/22/0dcfdc06-2a12-11e4-958c-268a320a60ce_story.html)]

**Vice President Biden: The U.S. Would Offer Training And Assistance To Support The Establishment Of “Functioning Federalism” As The Governing Model For Iraq.**  In an op-ed on Iraqi stability and the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant appearing in the Washington Post, Vice President Joe Biden wrote: “Another approach that is emerging is a ‘functioning federalism’ under the Iraqi constitution, which would ensure equitable revenue-sharing for all provinces and establish locally rooted security structures, such as a national guard, to protect the population in cities and towns and deny space for ISIL while protecting Iraq’s territorial integrity. The United States would be prepared to offer training and other forms of assistance under our Strategic Framework Agreement to help such a model succeed.” [Joe Biden op-ed, Washington Post, [8/22/14](http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/vice-president-biden-iraqis-can-rout-isil-by-rising-above-differences/2014/08/22/0dcfdc06-2a12-11e4-958c-268a320a60ce_story.html)]

**Then-Senator Biden: The Best Way Forward In Iraq Would Be To “Maintain A United Iraq By Decentralizing It, Giving Each Ethno-Religious Group…Room To Run Its Own Affairs.”** In a 2006 op-ed for the New York Times with Leslie Gelb about the best way forward in Iraq, then-Senator Biden wrote: The idea, as in Bosnia, is to maintain a united Iraq by decentralizing it, giving each ethno-religious group — Kurd, Sunni Arab and Shiite Arab — room to run its own affairs, while leaving the central government in charge of common interests.” [Joe Biden op-ed, New York Times, [5/1/06](http://www.nytimes.com/2006/05/01/opinion/01biden.html?pagewanted=all)]

**Then-Senator Biden: Iraq Should “Establish Three Largely Autonomous Regions” Which “Would Each be Responsible For Their Own Domestic Laws, Administration, And Internal Security.”** In a 2006 op-ed for the New York Times with Leslie Gelb about the best way forward in Iraq, then-Senator Biden wrote: “The first [step] is to establish three largely autonomous regions with a viable central government in Baghdad. The Kurdish, Sunni and Shiite regions would each be responsible for their own domestic laws, administration and internal security. The central government would control border defense, foreign affairs and oil revenues. Baghdad would become a federal zone, while densely populated areas of mixed populations would receive both multisectarian and international police protection.” [Joe Biden op-ed, New York Times, [5/1/06](http://www.nytimes.com/2006/05/01/opinion/01biden.html?pagewanted=all)]

**Then-Senator Biden: The Iraqi “Constitution Must Be Amended To Guarantee Sunni Areas 20 Percent (Approximately Their Proportion Of The Population) Of All Revenues” From The Central Government.** In a 2006 op-ed for the New York Times with Leslie Gelb about the best way forward in Iraq, then-Senator Biden wrote: “The second element would be to entice the Sunnis into joining the federal system with an offer they couldn't refuse. To begin with, running their own region should be far preferable to the alternatives: being dominated by Kurds and Shiites in a central government or being the main victims of a civil war. But they also have to be given money to make their oil-poor region viable. The Constitution must be amended to guarantee Sunni areas 20 percent (approximately their proportion of the population) of all revenues. [Joe Biden op-ed, New York Times, [5/1/06](http://www.nytimes.com/2006/05/01/opinion/01biden.html?pagewanted=all)]

**Then-Senator Biden: The U.S. Should Increase American Aid To Iraq But Condition That Aid On “Protection Of The Rights Of Women And Ethno-Religious Minorities.”** In a 2006 op-ed for the New York Times with Leslie Gelb about the best way forward in Iraq, then-Senator Biden wrote: The third component would be to ensure the protection of the rights of women and ethno-religious minorities by increasing American aid to Iraq but tying it to respect for those rights. Such protections will be difficult, especially in the Shiite-controlled south, but Washington has to be clear that widespread violations will stop the cash flow. [Joe Biden op-ed, New York Times, [5/1/06](http://www.nytimes.com/2006/05/01/opinion/01biden.html?pagewanted=all)]

**Then-Senator Biden: “[A] Substantial Long-Term American Military Presence” In Iraq “Would Do Terrible Damage To Our Armed Forces, Break American And Iraqi Public Support For The Mission And Leave Iraqis Without Any Incentive To Shape Up.”** In a 2006 op-ed for the New York Times with Leslie Gelb about the best way forward in Iraq, then-Senator Biden wrote: Fourth, the president must direct the military to design a plan for withdrawing and redeploying our troops from Iraq by 2008 (while providing for a small but effective residual force to combat terrorists and keep the neighbors honest). We must avoid a precipitous withdrawal that would lead to a national meltdown , but we also can't have a substantial long-term American military presence. That would do terrible damage to our armed forces, break American and Iraqi public support for the mission and leave Iraqis without any incentive to shape up. [Joe Biden op-ed, New York Times, [5/1/06](http://www.nytimes.com/2006/05/01/opinion/01biden.html?pagewanted=all)]

**Then-Senator Biden: “Under An International Or United Nations Umbrella, We Should Convene A Regional Conference To Pledge Respect For Iraq's Borders And Its Federal System.”** In a 2006 op-ed for the New York Times with Leslie Gelb about the best way forward in Iraq, then-Senator Biden wrote: “Fifth, under an international or United Nations umbrella, we should convene a regional conference to pledge respect for Iraq's borders and its federal system. For all that Iraq's neighbors might gain by picking at its pieces, each faces the greater danger of a regional war. A "contact group" of major powers would be set up to lean on neighbors to comply with the deal.” [Joe Biden op-ed, New York Times, [5/1/06](http://www.nytimes.com/2006/05/01/opinion/01biden.html?pagewanted=all)]

#### CRITICISM FOR FEDERALISM COMMENTS FROM PUNDITS

**New Yorker: In 2006, Biden’s Plan For Partitioning Iraq Received “Almost All Negative” Attention, With Commentators Saying It Could Lead To “Disintegration” Or “Ethnic Cleansing.”** Referencing then-Senator Biden and former New York Times foreign affairs correspondent Leslie Gelb in 2006, the New Yorker reported: “They hatched an idea for a federal system incorporating three semi-autonomous regions, for Shiites, Sunnis, and Kurds, based partly on Biden’s experience with the division of Bosnia. They published the idea in an Op-Ed in the Times in May, 2006. ‘It got a lot of attention—almost all negative,’ Gelb recalled. Foreign-policy commentators said that it would lead Iraq to disintegration, or, worse, ethnic cleansing.” [New Yorker, [7/28/14](http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/07/28/biden-agenda)]

#### DEFENSE OF FEDERALISM COMMENTS FROM PUNDITS

**Al-Monitor On Then-Senator Biden’s 2006 Plan For Regional Autonomy In Iraq: “Today, The Point Iraq Has Reached And The Debate In Washington On Iraq Have Vindicated Biden.”** “Today, the point Iraq has reached and the debate in Washington on Iraq have vindicated Biden. Just as Biden said, the basic issue of Iraq is not terror organizations but the sectarian conflict and consequent social, political and economic questions that make the country a fertile ground for terror organizations. These are not questions that can be solved by American soldiers and solely by the United States, as Biden said. [Al-Monitor, [8/21/14](http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/politics/2014/08/turkey-iraq-usa-isis-biden-syria.html)]

**Brookings Institution Expert Michael O’Hanlon On Biden’s Partition Plan: “It’s Not A Crazy Idea, It Never Was Crazy, And It May Still Be A Necessary Fallback.”** “‘I watched this with great interest to see how Joe would react,’ Gelb said. ‘Because, under that kind of pressure, with everybody telling you, ‘You’re wrong,’ politicians just run for the hills. He never did at all. Not one iota.’ (I asked Michael O’Hanlon, a foreign-policy expert at the Brookings Institution, his view of the proposed federal system. He said, ‘It’s not a crazy idea, it never was crazy, and it may still be a necessary fallback.’)” [New Yorker, [7/28/14](http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/07/28/biden-agenda)]

**Politico: Vice President Biden’s “Judgment On Iraq’s Capacity To Stay United Now Looks Almost Prescient.”** While Biden may have taken a beating repeatedly in recent years for some foreign policy calls he’s made, his judgment on Iraq’s capacity to stay united now looks almost prescient.” [Politico, [6/13/14](http://www.politico.com/story/2014/06/joe-biden-iraq-107858.html)]

**HEADLINE: “Turns Out, Joe Biden Was Right About Dividing Iraq.”** [National Journal, [1/30/14](http://www.nationaljournal.com/magazine/turns-out-joe-biden-was-right-about-dividing-iraq-20140130)]

### WITHDRAWAL FROM IRAQ

#### COMMENTS ON WITHDRAWL FROM IRAQ

**Vice President Biden: Because Iraqi Leaders Didn’t Resolve “How The Hell They’re Gonna Live Together…It Wouldn’t Have Mattered If We Stayed There.”** “[N]otwithstanding all of the hundreds of hours I and others spent with each of their leaders, they didn’t resolve a core problem of how the hell they’re gonna live together. And it wouldn’t have mattered if we stayed there.” [New Yorker, [7/28/14](http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/07/28/biden-agenda)]

## AFGHANISTAN

### ROLE IN SHAPING AFGHANISTAN POLICY

**President Obama: “On The Foreign-Policy Front, I Think Joe’s Biggest Influence Was In The Afghanistan Debate.”** [New Yorker, [7/28/14](http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/07/28/biden-agenda)]

# TRUSTWORTHINESS

## PLAGIARISM

**New Yorker: Vice President Biden Has A “Record Of Exaggerations And Plagiarism” And “The Costs Of That Weakness Have Been Steep.”** Looking over the record of his exaggerations and plagiarism, I came to see them as the excesses of a man who wants every story to sing, even at the risk of embarrassment. The costs of that weakness have been steep, but Biden has only fitfully acknowledged them. When he announced his withdrawal from the Presidential race in 1987, he conceded his mistakes but also cast blame on ‘the environment of Presidential politics that makes it so difficult to let the American people measure the whole Joe Biden and not just misstatements that I have made.’” [New Yorker, [7/28/14](http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/07/28/biden-agenda)]

# SENATE TENURE

## CLARENCE THOMAS NOMINATION HEARINGS

### CRITICISM FROM LIBERALS

**New Yorker: “Biden Enraged Liberal Supporters” During Thomas Nomination Hearings By Shielding Thomas From Testimony Corroborating Sexual Harassment.** “In 1991, Biden ran the hearings on Clarence Thomas’s nomination to the Supreme Court. Biden enraged liberal supporters by not allowing the testimony of women who might have buttressed Anita Hill’s accusations of sexual harassment. Though Biden ultimately voted against him, Thomas won by a narrow margin, fifty-two to forty-eight. Biden, who omitted the Thomas hearings from his memoir, told Jane Mayer and Jill Abramson, for their book on the hearing, ‘Strange Justice,’ that he had acted in ‘fairness to Thomas, which in retrospect he didn’t deserve.’” [New Yorker, [7/28/14](http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/07/28/biden-agenda)]

# RELIGIOUS EXEMPTIONS

## SUPPORT FOR RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION

### COMMENTS ON CONTRACEPTIVE MANDATE

**New Yorker: “Biden Objected To An Administration Plan To Require Catholic Hospitals And Other Institutions To Cover Contraceptives.”** “In 2011, Biden objected to an Administration plan to require Catholic hospitals and other institutions to cover contraceptives under the Affordable Care Act, saying that it would cost them working-class votes.” [New Yorker, [7/28/14](http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2014/07/28/biden-agenda)]

# VOTING RIGHTS

## COMMENTS ON VOTER SUPRESSION

**Vice President Biden: “Moves To Limit The Right To Vote Are…Pure Politics, Masquerading As Attempts To Combat Corruption.”** "These moves to limit the right to vote are nothing more than pure politics, masquerading as attempts to combat corruption where there is none.” [AP, [7/23/14](http://www.startribune.com/politics/national/268324122.html)]

**Vice President Biden:The Supreme Court Has Focused “On The Right Of Wealthy Individuals To Contribute Unlimited Sums Of Money In The Name Of Free Speech” Instead Of “Protecting The Right Of An Elderly Veteran…[To] Speak At The Ballot Box.”** “In the past few years, the Supreme Court decisions have seemed to focus more on the right of wealthy individuals to contribute unlimited sums of money in the name of free speech rather than on protecting the right of an elderly veteran to exercise his ultimate right speak through the ballot box.” [Speech, NAACP Convention, 7/23/14]

**Vice President Biden to NAACP: “This Is Not Your Father’s Republican Party.”** “And we had five decades, five decades of bipartisan action. Democrats, Republicans, governors, senators, congressman. Five decades of making it easier for Americans to vote. The 1965 Voting Rights Act; in 1971, the 26th Amendment expanding the voting rights of people 18-21. 1984, the Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act, which guaranteed access to federal elections for the disabled. 1990, a joint effort led by Republicans to see to it that we expanded the act further to guarantee that all elections were available. 1993, the Voting Right Registration Act, referred to as the Motor Voter Act, which gave us the right to register when we had our automobiles inspected. 2002, the Help America Act, which passed 357-48 in the House and 92-2 in the Senate after the debacle in Florida. But those days appear to be over. This is not your father’s Republican Party.”

* **Vice President Biden: “We Are In A Hailstorm Of New Attempts By States And Localities To Limit Ballot Access.”** “We are in a hailstorm of new attempts by states and localities to limit ballot access without the full protection of the law… Laws modeled after one in NC, which imposed a new photo ID requirement, shortened early voting, and eliminated same-day registration for early voting. Laws like the one in OH and WI, which shortened the early voting period and limited the time polls would be open, cutting evening hours and eliminating most weekend early voting. These were laws passed by Democrats and Republicans.” [Speech, NAACP Convention, 7/23/14]

### EFFORTS TO DISENFRANCHISE AFRICAN AMERICANS

**HEADLINE: “How Joe Biden Is Trying To Bring Black Voters To The Polls.”** [National Journal, [7/23/14](http://www.nationaljournal.com/domesticpolicy/how-joe-biden-is-trying-to-bring-black-voters-to-the-polls-20140723)]

**vice President Biden: “Seven Out Of 10 States With The Highest African American Turnout In 2008 Have Since Passed Laws To Restrict The Vote.”** Seven out of 10 states with the highest African American turnout in 2008 have since passed laws to restrict the vote; nine out of the 12 states with highest Hispanic populations in America have passed laws to restrict the vote. Thirteen states have introduced bills to make it harder to register to vote—the very issue that sparked Bloody Sunday in Selma 49 years ago. We crossed that bridge. We can’t go back. We cannot go back.” [Speech, NAACP Convention, 7/23/14]

* **Vice President Biden: Fighting Back Against Voting Restrictions Is “About The Right Of The American People To Choose Who They Want To Be Their Leaders.”** It’s not about Barack and me—it’s about the people’s right to speak. Let me give you the example. President Obama and I won the state of Florida by 73,000 votes, and in Florida, we won the African American vote by a margin of 1,125,000. Here’s what that means—I want you to think about this so you don’t think I’m just reliving old fights of the past. That means that if only 6% of those African American voters in Florida who voted were prevented from casting their ballots because of changes in polling places, requirements for IDs, etc. If only 6% had not voted, we would have lost Florida. We would have lost Florida…The election could have been different in result than it was. Again, it’s not about Barack and me, it’s about the right of the American people to choose who they want to be their leaders.” [Speech, NAACP Convention, 7/23/14]

### WEEKEND AND EARLY VOTING

**Vice President Biden To NAACP: Restrictions On Early Voting And Weekend Voting Mean That “You Can’t Vote After Church” And You May Need “To Travel 25 Miles To Vote On Election Day.”** “That means you can’t vote after church. That means women who take two buses to get to work in Cleveland have to take off time from work or choose between caring for her children and voting for her future. Grandmothers in Alabama, who came up under Jim Crow. Many of whom don’t have a car or a license, are being stripped of their vote unless they can make a 10 mile journey to a state ID office. Many of which are only open twice a week. Athens, GA is considering eliminating half of its polling places, replacing them with two early voting centers inside police stations. Baker Co, GA, which is predominantly African American and high poverty, is considering eliminating 4 of its 5 polling places, requiring voters to travel 25 miles to vote on election day.” [Speech, NAACP Convention, 7/23/14]

# JOBS

## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

### COMMENTS ON WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

**Vice President Biden: “The Free Enterprise System” Will Help Us Develop “The Most Sophisticated Workforce In The World” But Federal And State Governments Can “Connect The Dots.”** In an article about Vice President Biden’s visit to Goodwin College in Connecticut to highlight workforce development programs, the Hartford Courant wrote: “‘We can, we can, we can have the most educated, the most sophisticated workforce in the world,’ Biden said. ‘The federal government's not going to do this, the state government's not going to do this. It's the free enterprise system. But what we can do is connect the dots.’” [Hartford Courant, [8/20/14](http://www.courant.com/business/hc-biden-visits-connecticut-20140820,0,4247335.story)]

### ROLE IN SHAPING PROGRAMS UNDER OBAMA

**HEADLINE: “Congress And Biden Aim For Job Training That Actually Leads To Jobs”** [National Public Radio, [7/23/14](http://www.npr.org/2014/07/23/334091696/congress-and-biden-aim-for-job-training-that-actually-leads-to-jobs)]

**National Public Radio: President Obama Signed The Workforce Innovation And Opportunity Act, Which “Streamlines And Updates The Nation’s Job Training Programs.”** “Something pretty remarkable happened Tuesday afternoon in a small windowless auditorium next door to the White House. President Obama signed a new law: the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. It streamlines and updates the nation's job training programs and was 11 years overdue. The bill got overwhelming bipartisan support in both the House and Senate.” [National Public Radio, [7/23/14](http://www.npr.org/2014/07/23/334091696/congress-and-biden-aim-for-job-training-that-actually-leads-to-jobs)]

* **National Public Radio: The Act Aims To “Better [Match] Training To Employer Needs” And “Encourages More Apprenticeships And On-The Job Training.”** “When an unemployed or dissatisfied worker seeks out job training through a government program, the hope is to get a new job in a field where workers are in demand. But the nation's workforce development system hasn't always succeeded in matching the training with the work. The act aims to fix that by better matching training to employer needs. It encourages more apprenticeships and on-the-job training. The measure of success will no longer be just how many people sign up for help, but also how many actually get jobs.” [National Public Radio, [7/23/14](http://www.npr.org/2014/07/23/334091696/congress-and-biden-aim-for-job-training-that-actually-leads-to-jobs)]

**National Public Radio: Vice President Biden Spent Time “Traveling Around The Country” To Witness Training Programs, And “White House Officials Say Biden’s Work Gives The Administration A Head Start In Implementing The Act.”** At the same time Congress was working out the details of the bill, Vice President Joe Biden was traveling around the country, looking at what works and what doesn't. Back in March, he visited New Hampshire, where an innovative on-the-job training program has helped nearly 700 people get new jobs since 2010. There he stopped at XMA Corp., a small manufacturer that has hired about a half-dozen people so far using the program…‘So it really is connecting an individual with an opening and the skill required to fill that opening," [Biden] said. "It's that basic, but it's hundreds of thousands of jobs available.’ That's exactly what the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act aims to do, and White House officials say Biden's work gives the administration a head start in implementing the act.” [National Public Radio, [7/23/14](http://www.npr.org/2014/07/23/334091696/congress-and-biden-aim-for-job-training-that-actually-leads-to-jobs)]

# INFRASTRUCTURE

## COMMENTS ON INFRASTRUCTURE INVESTMENT

### HIGHWAY SPENDING BILL

**Vice President Biden: Instead of Stopgap Funding Measures, “We Need A Fulsome Solution…To Highways And Highway Infrastructure.”** After explaining the historical importance of transportation funding in a YouTube video, Vice President Biden “offered a starkly different perspective of the transportation funding debates in Congress today. He said lawmakers needed to think about the impact of underinvestment in infrastructure before they settle for temporary stopgap measures. ‘Businesses go where they can increase productivity,’ Biden said. ‘Productivity relates with how rapidly they can get things to market, how cheaply they can get to market, and how often they can get to market. That's infrastructure.’ Biden said he hoped lawmakers would approve the temporary transportation funding bill, but then give serious consideration to the Obama's administration's four-year, $302 billion proposal. ‘I know the Congress is in the process of coming up with a stopgap measure and how they're able to get it down,’ he said. ‘But in the meantime, we think we need a fulsome solution, at least it relates to highways and highway infrastructure.’” [The Hill, [7/23/14](http://thehill.com/policy/transportation/213155-biden-uses-white-board-to-push-for-highway-funding)]

**Vice President Biden: “We Have To Invest In Infrastructure” To Attract More Businesses.** “We have to invest in infrastructure. Highways, airports, railroads, canals. Because businesses locate where they have easy access to get their materials to facilities, and where they can quickly and cheaply, in the fastest market, get their product to market. And they can’t do that without infrastructure.” [Speech, National Urban League, 7/24/14]

**Vice President Biden Touted An American Society Of Engineers Estimate That “Between Now And 2020, American Infrastructure Needs An Additional Estimate Of $3.6 Trillion.”** “The American Society of Engineers has done extensive studies. They said that between now and 2020, American infrastructure needs an additional investment of $3.6 trillion to meet our needs…and even if we do a portion of that, that means tens of thousands, millions of good paying jobs, jobs you can raise a family on, jobs you can live on.” [Speech, National Urban League, 7/24/14]

### GAS TAX

#### COMMENTS SUPPORTING THE GAS TAX

**The Hill: Vice President Biden “Ripped Congress For Passing Only A Short-Term Transportation Funding Extension, Saying, ‘Hell, Congress Can’t Even Decide On A Gas Tax To Keep The Highway System Going.’”** “Vice President Biden on Wednesday ripped Congress for passing only a short-term transportation funding extension, but in doing so muddled the administration's position on the issue. ‘Hell, Congress can’t even decide on a gas tax to keep the highway system going,’ Biden said in remarks criticizing the Congress's inability to write policy.” [The Hill, [8/6/14](http://thehill.com/policy/transportation/214535-biden-rips-congress-for-short-term-highway-bill)]

#### CRITICISM FOR SUPPORT OF GAS TAX

**The Hill: Vice President Biden “Appeared To Criticize Congress For Not Agreeing To A New Gas Tax To Pay For The Funding” For America’s Highway System, But “The [Obama] Administration Actually Opposes Raising The Tax.”** “Biden's comments appeared to criticize Congress for not agreeing to a new gas tax to pay for the funding. The bill approved by Congress keeps the 18.4 cents-per-gallon rate that can't keep up anymore with highway spending. The administration actually opposes raising the tax, however. The Obama administration prefers to close corporate tax breaks to increase highway funding.” [The Hill, [8/6/14](http://thehill.com/policy/transportation/214535-biden-rips-congress-for-short-term-highway-bill)]