



Lamar Alexander

United States Senator • Tennessee

U.S. Senator Lamar Alexander's Record of Achievement 2008

“Alexander has long championed Tennessee’s beauty and natural resources, and last spring proposed a ‘new Manhattan Project’ to achieve clean-energy independence. His plan deals innovatively with high gas and electric prices, clean air, climate change, problems with nuclear power and energy security, and could set a standard for pragmatic approaches to conservation.”

—*The Tennessean*

“...one of the most accomplished and respected public servants in Tennessee history”

—*Memphis Commercial Appeal*

“With the nation facing an uncertain future, it is good to have Alexander’s leadership and sense of direction in the U.S. Senate.”

—*Knoxville News Sentinel*

“He is sound, reliable, conservative, intelligent and independent-minded as he maintains close contact with the people of Tennessee in representing the Volunteer State in Washington.”

—*Chattanooga Times Free Press*

“His knowledge of the nation’s needs and many of his ideas for solutions are a valuable asset to the state and nation.”

—*Maryville Daily Times*

“Sen. Lamar Alexander is undoubtedly Tennessee’s elder statesman in Washington. He has earned this title – not only by being the state’s senior member of the Senate, but from his many years of competent and selfless public service.”

—*Johnson City Press*

In 2008 ...

This past year, with record-high gas prices dominating the news, Senator Lamar Alexander helped lead the effort to decrease America's dependence on foreign oil and to ease pain at the pump. Calling it a "find more, use less" strategy, he co-authored the **Gas Price Reduction Act** to increase American production by one-third, and reduce imported oil by one-third, by making it easier for millions of Americans to drive plug-in electric cars and trucks. Additionally, Alexander helped defeat legislation that would have extended a decades-long ban on offshore oil drilling, bringing the U.S. closer to energy independence. Alexander also led the effort to prevent legislation that would have imposed a 53-cent-per-gallon gasoline tax hike that would have cost a family traveling from Nashville to Gatlinburg an additional \$240 roundtrip for gas.

Senator Alexander also developed what he calls "a New Manhattan Project" to "put America firmly on the path to clean energy independence within a generation." In May 2008, he asked a gathering of scientists at Oak Ridge National Laboratory to identify the steps required over the next five years to meet the following challenges: making plug-in electric cars and trucks commonplace, carbon capture and storage a reality for coal-burning power plants, solar power cost-competitive with power from fossil fuels, and advanced biofuels cost-competitive with gasoline. The plan would also call for safely reprocessing and storing nuclear waste.

Senator Alexander led the successful bipartisan effort to update the GI Bill for a new generation of U.S. servicemen, servicewomen, and their families. Alexander worked with several other senators to improve the original proposal by including a provision in the final bill that allows military personnel to transfer their educational benefits to family members.

While the above-mentioned accomplishments were national in scope, Senator Alexander continued to get results in Washington for Tennessee, and especially for those Tennesseans who are struggling in today's tough economic times. First, to lighten the tax burden, the senator helped to implement a two-year extension of the state and local sales-tax deduction for Tennesseans, putting more than \$400 in the pockets of nearly 600,000 Tennessee taxpayers. Second, to improve healthcare in Tennessee, Alexander secured increased Medicaid compensation to area hospitals—such as UT Medical Center, Erlanger Hospital, Vanderbilt University Medical Center. He also secured compensation for the Regional Medical Center at Memphis (the MED) for their treatment of out-of-state residents.

And finally, to bring much-needed jobs and technological growth to Tennessee, Senators Alexander and Corker joined local elected officials and community leaders in successfully attracting a new Volkswagen auto-assembly plant to Chattanooga—bringing approximately 2,000 new jobs to the area and \$1 billion investment to the economy. Volkswagen's decision to come to Chattanooga keeps Tennessee on the road to becoming the number-one state in auto-supply jobs.

In November 2008, U.S. Senator Alexander was elected to his second term in the Senate, and by his peers as the **Senate Republican Conference Chairman**. This position of prominence in Senate leadership gives him—and thus, Tennesseans—a stronger voice in shaping national policy, especially as it pertains to Tennessee. He also serves on the prestigious **Senate Appropriations Committee**, which has jurisdiction over federal spending; on the **Environment and Public Works Committee**, which is responsible for clean air issues and the Tennessee Valley Authority; on the **Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee**; and on the **Committee on Rules and Administration**.

Senators Alexander and Joseph Lieberman (D-Conn.) co-host a **Weekly Bipartisan Breakfast**, which offers senators from both parties the opportunity to discuss the challenges of the day in a private, relaxed setting. The meetings, begun by Alexander and now in their second year, have been attended by as many as 40 senators at one time and are the only regular bipartisan gatherings for members of their kind.

This past year, Senator Alexander also:

- Accomplished the following on behalf of the state of Tennessee:
 - Alexander led a months-long fight to gain Senate approval of Bishop William Graves' nomination to the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) Board of Directors after Democratic Senate leaders tried to block the nomination. Graves is the only Memphian and only African-American ever to serve on the TVA board.
 - Alexander successfully blocked efforts to ship thousands of tons of toxic mercury to Oak Ridge for storage at the Y-12 nuclear weapons plant. Alexander beat back efforts to force Y-12 to store the nation's excess mercury by inserting language into the Mercury Ban Export Act that protects Y-12 and the rest of the Oak Ridge Reservation of the Department of Energy.
 - Alexander helped secure approximately \$30 million per year for Tennessee hospitals. Alexander also secured \$500,000 to upgrade the emergency room of The MED in Memphis and secured a commitment from Senate leaders to pass legislation that would provide a "MED Fix" to reimburse the hospital for treating thousands of Medicaid patients from Mississippi and Arkansas each year.

In 2008, Senator Alexander was the principal sponsor of 3 pieces of legislation that became law and 7 pieces of legislation that passed the Senate. He made 872 visits to Tennessee counties in his first term. Senator Alexander:

- Was principal sponsor (or lead Republican sponsor) of 3 legislative proposals that are now law:

- **Teach For America Act** – to increase the number of recent college graduates of all backgrounds and academic majors who commit two years to teach in urban and rural public schools. Became law as part of the Higher Education Reauthorization and College Opportunity Act of 2008.
- **Combat Illegal Logging Act** – to curtail illegal logging as an important step towards protecting the nation’s timber industry and its workers while lessening the global environmental impact of deforestation. Became law as part of the 2008 Farm Bill.
- **Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) Payments for Tennessee Hospitals** – with Senator Corker, secured language in the Medicare Improvements for Patients and Providers Act of 2008 that extended Tennessee’s DSH payments for 18 months (until December 31, 2009). These payments compensate hospitals – like UT Medical Center, Erlanger Hospital, Vanderbilt University Medical Center, and the Regional Medical Center at Memphis (The MED) – that treat large numbers of Medicaid and uninsured patients. The legislation allocates approximately \$30 million per year for Tennessee hospitals.
- Was principal sponsor (or lead Republican sponsor) of 7 pieces of legislation that passed the Senate:
 - **Protecting English in the Workplace** – to take funds used by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to sue employers that require their employees to speak English, and instead use to money to teach English to adults. Passed the Senate as part of the Budget Resolution for Fiscal Year 2009.
 - **Conservation by the Federal Government** – resolution urging the President to require all federal departments and agencies to reduce their daily consumption of gasoline and other fuels.
 - **American Eagle Day** – resolution declaring June 20, 2008 as “American Eagle Day” and celebrating the recovery and success of the national symbol.
 - **Lady Vols** – resolution congratulating the 2008 University of Tennessee (UT) Lady Vols basketball team for winning the 2008 NCAA Division I Women’s Basketball National Championship.
 - **TVA 75th Anniversary** – resolution commending the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) for 75 years of service in the areas of energy, environment stewardship and economic development across a seven-state service area.
 - **Charter schools** – resolution supporting the goals of National Charter Schools Week from May 5 through May 9, 2008 and congratulating charter schools and their students, parents, teachers, and administrators across the United States for their ongoing contributions to education.

- **Shaken Baby Syndrome** – resolution designating the third week of April as National Shaken Baby Syndrome Awareness Week.
- Was principal sponsor of the following legislation that has passed out of committee:
 - **Green McAdoo National Historic Site Study Act** – to require a study on the feasibility of designating the first desegregated public high school in the South – the Green McAdoo School of Clinton, Tennessee – as a unit of the National Park System. Passed as part of a package of public lands bills approved by the Energy and Natural Resources Committee.
 - **Teacher Incentive Fund** – to provide \$97.3 million for the Teacher Incentive Fund to reward outstanding school leaders and teachers who demonstrate their ability to impact student achievement. Passed the Senate Appropriations committee as part of the Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill for Fiscal Year 2009.
- Was principal sponsor (or lead Republican) on legislation that will help shape debate during the 111th Congress:
 - **GI Bill Fairness Act** – to ensure that all veterans and servicemen and women receive fair treatment under the new GI Bill regardless of what state they live in or what school they attend, by providing a uniform amount to all veterans that attend a private institution of higher education based on the highest in-state tuition of any public institution in the country.
 - **Optional One Page Flat Tax Act** - to create an optional 17 percent federal flat tax with a single-page form. Americans would have the option of choosing this tax over the current income tax and its multi-page forms.
 - **Tax Incentives for Small Business** – to make permanent bonus depreciation and small business expensing tax provisions from the 2008 stimulus plan.
 - **Make Tax Cuts Permanent and Reform Death Tax** – to permanently set capital gains, dividends, and death tax rates at 15 percent and to reform the death tax.
 - **Sick Nuclear Workers** – to reform the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program (EEOICPA) to ensure compensation for the families of sick former nuclear workers won't be taken away in cases where sick workers or their eligible survivors die before their claims are processed. Offered as an amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2009.
 - **Ban the Importation of Low-Level Nuclear Waste** – to ban the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) from authorizing importation of certain low-level foreign-generated nuclear waste.

- **Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Management Act** – to help schools protect the more than 2.2 million children nationwide, including 41,000 Tennesseans, who suffer from life-threatening food allergies.
 - **No Unfunded Federal Mandates Amendment** – to allow local communities to avoid unfunded collective bargaining mandates if they certify those mandates would lead to higher taxes, cuts in services, or would otherwise compromise public safety. Offered to the Public Employee-Employer Cooperation Act.
 - **Strengthening American Citizenship Act** – helps and encourages legal immigrants who are prospective citizens to learn English, American history and our way of government. Provides grants of up to \$500 for English language courses to legal immigrants, and allows those who become fluent in English to become citizens after four years of living in the U.S. rather than five. Codifies the Oath of Allegiance, giving it the same standing as the Pledge of Allegiance and the National Anthem.
- Cosponsored and helped pass into law numerous pieces of legislation, including:
 - **Emmett Till Unsolved Civil Rights Crime Act** – to ensure that unsolved murders from the Civil Rights era can be thoroughly investigated.
 - **Appalachian Regional Development Act Amendments of 2008** – to improve efforts to promote economic development and raise the standard of living in financially underserved areas of Appalachia, and to add Lawrence and Lewis Counties to the Appalachian Regional Commission.
 - **PROTECT Our Children Act of 2008** – to create a nationwide network of highly trained law enforcement experts to track down and prosecute child predators who exploit children.
 - **Securing Adolescents From Exploitation-Online Act (SAFE Act)** – to make significant improvements to an existing law that requires Internet service providers to report apparent child pornography on their systems to a “CyberTipline,” a central reporting mechanism for child sexual exploitation that serves as a “911 for the Internet.”
 - **Paul Wellstone and Pete Domenici Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act** – to provide better health insurance coverage for those living with mental illness by requiring insurance companies that choose to provide mental health coverage do so at a cost and with limitations comparable to that of other medical and surgical benefits offered by the plan.
 - **Timber Tax Act** – to lower the tax rate on certain gains from timber that has been held for at least 15 years in order to help the environment, preserve open spaces, and keep jobs in the United States by making our forest products industry more competitive internationally. Became law as part of the 2008 Farm Bill.

- **National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom Reauthorization Act** – to reauthorize a competitive grant program for museums and other institutions to research, display and collect artifacts about the history of the Underground Railroad. Became law as part of the Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008.
- **Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail Study Act** – to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a study to determine the suitability and feasibility of extending the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail to include additional sites associated with the preparation and return phases of the expedition, including sites in Tennessee. Became law as part of the Consolidated Natural Resources Act of 2008.
- **American Veterans Disabled for Life Commemorative Coin Act** – to mint coins in commemoration of veterans who became disabled for life while serving in the Armed Forces of the United States.
- **Prioritizing Resources and Organization for Intellectual Property Act** – to protect American innovation and combat piracy/counterfeiting by strengthening enforcement of intellectual property rights.
- **Rebate Checks to Seniors, Veterans and Widows of Veterans** – amendment to February 2008 bipartisan stimulus package that expanded eligibility for rebate checks to seniors, veterans, and the widows of veterans.
- Cosponsored the following legislation that passed the Senate:
 - **Military Voting Protection Act** – to provide new tools to ensure that completed absentee ballots from members of the Armed Forces make it home in time to be tallied.
 - **Combat Methamphetamine Enhancement Act** – ensures that pharmacy customers are not able to purchase large quantities of cold medicine over the counter that could be used to produce meth.
- Cosponsored the following legislation that passed out of committee:
 - **Civil War Battlefield Preservation Act** – to protect historic Civil War battlefields throughout the nation, including many sites in Tennessee.
- Cosponsored other significant legislation, including:
 - **Secure America through Verification and Enforcement (SAVE) Act** – to increase border security, improve the existing voluntary employer verification system while making it mandatory, and strengthen state and local law enforcement efforts to reduce illegal immigration.

- **Gas Price Reduction Act (“Find More, Use Less”)** – to lower gas prices and reduce dependence on foreign oil by finding more American energy now (increasing U.S. production by one third through offshore exploration and western states’ oil shale) and using less (reducing imported oil by one third by making it easier for millions of Americans to drive plug-in electric cars and trucks).
- **Homeownership, Manufacturing, and Economic Growth (HOME) Act** – to respond to the economic and housing crises by promoting home ownership, manufacturing, and economic growth.
- **In-Sourcing Brainpower with Green Cards** – to help create good jobs in the U.S. by making it easier for foreign students who graduate from U.S. universities with advanced degrees in science, technology, engineering, and math to obtain green cards if they have job offers from U.S. employers.
- **Security Against Foreclosures and Education (SAFE) Act** – to provide relief to families suffering from the housing mortgage crisis, including: tax credits for home buyers; \$10 billion in bond authority for the refinancing of distressed subprime mortgages; loan counseling funds to help families avoid foreclosure; updated Truth in Lending requirements so consumers better understand the loans they are considering; and extension of foreclosure protection for veterans from 90 days to 6 months. Similar proposals became law as part of the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008.
- **Tax Credits for Home Buyers** – to provide a \$15,000 tax credit over three year for the purchase of a single-family newly constructed home, a foreclosed home, or a home where foreclosure is pending. A modified version of this proposal became law as part of the Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008.
- **OPEN FOIA Act of 2008** – to require Congress to clearly state in new legislation any proposal to provide for additional exemptions to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).
- **Improve Military Survivors’ Compensation** – to increase compensation for approximately 59,000 survivors of service members who died because of service-related illnesses or disabilities by repealing the requirement that veterans’ disability dependency and indemnity compensation (DIC) payments be offset from Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP) annuities.
- **Iran Counter-Proliferation Act** – to impose tougher economic sanctions on Iran for its pursuit of a nuclear weapons program.
- **Child Custody Protection Act** – to make it a federal offense to transport a minor across state lines for an abortion if doing so is intended to circumvent a parental notification or consent statute in the minor’s home state.

- **Combat Veterans Debt Elimination Act** – relieves grieving families from having to repay GI Bill educational loans owed by members of the armed forces or veterans who die as a result of combat-related injuries incurred after September 11, 2001.
- **Medicare Fraud Prevention Act** – to increase the maximum criminal sentence for Medicare fraud from five years to ten years and double civil fines to \$20,000 per claim.
- **Biennial Budgeting and Appropriations Act** – to help eliminate wasteful spending by requiring Congress to adopt a two-year budget resolution and two-year appropriations bills, so that Congress could spend most of its time every other year focusing on oversight and getting rid of programs and spending we don't need.
- **Mercury Emissions Control Act** – to require power plants to reduce mercury emissions by 90 percent by 2015.
- **National Language Act of 2008** – to declare English the national language of the United States.
- **Clean Energy Investment Bank Act** – to create a Clean Energy Bank, modeled after the Export-Import Bank and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, to speed the development of clean energy technologies.
- **National Park Centennial Fund Act** – to create a new source of funding for the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and other national parks across the country as part of the “Centennial Challenge” celebrating the 100th anniversary of the National Park System in 2016.
- **National Guard and Reserve Retired Pay Equity Act** – to allow more members of the National Guard and Reserve to draw their retirement pay before the age of 60.
- **Oversight of Union Bosses** – to provide more effective oversight of unions by strengthening penalties and enforcement of the Labor Management Reporting and Disclosure Enforcement Act .
- **Enhancement of Recruitment, Retention, and Readjustment Through Education Act** – expand GI Bill educational benefits for Tennessee veterans, reservists and active-duty servicemen and women.
- **Title VII Fairness Act** – to promote fair pay and combat workplace discrimination by extending the time limit workers have to file suit for employment discrimination in cases where they cannot reasonably be expected to know they have been discriminated against. This legislation was a response to a U.S. Supreme Court decision in 2007 that ruled that workers filing suit for pay discrimination under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 must do so within 180 days of the actual decision to discriminate against them.

- **FDA Food Safety Modernization Act** – to give the FDA new authorities, tools and resources to comprehensively reform the agency’s food safety efforts.
- **Civil Rights History Project Act** – to establish a joint project between the Library of Congress and the Smithsonian Institution to collect, organize and archive oral histories of key individuals involved in the Civil Rights movement.

For a complete list of legislation sponsored and cosponsored by Senator Alexander, please visit: <http://thomas.loc.gov>

Was honored for his legislative work by numerous groups, including:

- Champion of National Security from the Center for Security Policy
- Guardian of Small Business Award from the National Federation of Independent Businesses
- 2008 National Geographic Legislator Award
- Champion of Science Award from the Science Coalition
- Esteemed Friend of Nurse Practitioners and Their Partners from the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners
- U.S. Chamber of Commerce Spirit of Enterprise Award
- American Chemical Society Public Service Award for 2008
- National Association of Community Health Centers’ 2008 Distinguished Community Health Superhero
- Award of Appreciation from Tennessee State University
- Congressional Leadership Award from the Semiconductor Industry Association
- 2008 Gold Medallion Award for Excellence in Education Policy from the Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities Association
- National Guard’s Charles Dick Medal of Merit Award
- National Alliance for Public Charter Schools’ 2007 Champion for Charters Award