

NONPARTISAN CANDIDATE GUIDE: 2018 TENNESSEE SENATE RACE

	Marsha Blackburn (R)	Phil Bredesen (D)
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Abortion: Mostly ban or mostly legal?	Ban. Multiple votes to ban or restrict.	Legal, but hasn't made high priority.
Climate Change: Consider climate change a critical threat? Limit or tax production of greenhouse gases?	No. "The science around it is not a settled science." Applauded withdrawal from Paris Climate agreement.	Yes. "It's a serious issue." Supported US moving toward 25% renewable energy by 2025 , although thought Obama's Clean Energy Plan should have been passed by Congress, not regulation .
Courts: Support President Trump's Supreme Court choice of Brett Kavanaugh?	Yes. "Will make a fine Supreme Court Justice ... a strong constitutionalist."	Undecided. "Deserves a fair and timely confirmation hearing."
Economy: Support federal spending as a means of promoting economic growth?	Likely no. Has supported across-the-board federal spending cuts .	Yes. Empower TVA to help bring rural broadband internet access "just as they did with electricity."
Economy: Support President Trump's imposition of tariffs on Chinese steel and other products?	Still considering but "increasingly concerned these tariffs are a bad deal for Tennesseans."	No. "The same as a new tax on Tennesseans."
Economy: Address debt and deficit?	Promote "balanced budget...cut bureaucracy," and "across-the-board spending cuts."	"Pay for corporate tax cuts by closing loopholes," rather than adding \$1.5 trillion of debt .
Education: Provide public support for parents to choose private schools for their children?	Yes , has voted for vouchers.	No. Supports charter schools but "not wild about vouchers."
Environment: Support cutbacks in Environmental Protection Administration?	Yes. Has voted to cut budget. Also proposed merging with Dept of Energy and cutting budget.	No specific stand, but enacted major environmental regulations as governor .
Gay Rights: Can businesses withhold services to same-sex couples?	Yes. "People of faith should be free to practice their beliefs."	No. Gay people should not be subjected to indignities when seeking goods and services in an open market.
Gun Control: Support more restrictive gun control legislation?	No. Has opposed most gun regulations. But wants background check system to work properly and record appropriate red flags.	Some. Against banning semi-automatic weapons , but close gun show loophole, ban bump stocks and tighten background checks.
Healthcare: Support or Repeal Affordable Care Act (ACA), known as Obamacare?	Repeal. Support health savings accounts, Association Health Plans and purchases across state lines. Also ban Planned Parenthood receiving public funds for non-abortion health services.	Initially critical, but now supports with fixes: "Stabilize what we have." On Medicare for AI, might support some initial baseline coverage, then add or adjust from there.
Healthcare: Require people to work to receive Medicaid?	Give states option to require this.	No stand found.

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Immigration: Support DACA, allowing “Dreamers” who arrived illegally as children, then grew up in the US, to achieve legal status if meet certain conditions?	No. Deal with compassionately but DACA “offered the false hope of amnesty that led to a surge of illegal immigration.”	Yes. “Deporting them back to a country that’s not theirs and they don’t know would be a terrible un-American kind of thing to do.”
Immigration: Support path to citizenship for America’s 11 million illegal immigrants?	“No amnesty. We cannot have individuals get in the queue before others who have been going through the legal immigration process. Period.”	Maybe. “A more complicated problem,” “need to control borders,” but if “willing to learn English and pay their taxes and not have convictions for serious crimes... some sort of a path to become permanent residents and possibly citizens.”
Iran: Support Trump withdrawal from treaty limiting Iran’s nuclear capability in return for lifting economic sanctions?	Yes. “Aterrible deal that will put in jeopardy the safety, security and stability of generations to come.”	Unknown.
Marijuana: Legalize or decriminalize marijuana?	No. Has voted against loosening federal regulations.	Unclear on legalization but “federal government should give states the rights to make those decisions.”
Minimum Wage: Raise the federal minimum wage?	No. “A growing and competitive economy — not Washington mandates — will create an environment where companies compete...through better wages.”	Yes. Should at least keep pace with inflation. “Federal level is far more effective, as it avoids driving jobs from one community or state to another.”
Net Neutrality: Require internet providers to provide equal access to all?	No. “Tennesseans do not want government-controlled internet.”	Yes. “Should guarantee equal access for everyone.”
President Trump: Percentage of key House votes supporting Trump positions.	92% as of Sept 1.	N/A. Will work with Trump on areas good for TN, oppose areas that aren’t.
Renewable Energy: Support government subsidies for renewable energy?	No. Has voted no on related bills. Considers it inappropriate intervention in the economy.	Yes. Early advocate of developing this sector. “It seems beyond dispute that ‘green energy’ will be an area of vast importance and growth.”
Student debt: Refinance student loans at lower rates?	No. Voted against earlier proposal to refinance student loans.	Some level of support. “I’m someone who went to school with student loans, but they were much lower interest than these student loans and (had) longer pay-out times.”
Student Financial Aid: Should federal student financial aid, like Pell Grants, be increased?	Unknown.	Unclear, but earlier pushed for free community college tuition.
Taxes: Support President Trump’s tax cuts ?	Yes. “People can keep more of the money they earn throughout their lives.”	No. “They threw a few crumbs to the middle class to give these huge breaks to wealthier people and corporations.”

Other Senate candidates include Trudy Austin (I), [John Carico](#) (I), [Dean Hill](#), (I) [Kevin Lee McCants](#) (I), [Breton Phillips](#) (I), and [Chris Todd](#) (I). Due to limited space, we can only include candidates polling 15% or more, but encourage you to check them out.

Created by the [Campus Election Engagement Project](#), a nonpartisan effort to help college and university administrators, faculty, and student leaders engage their schools in the election. Key sites consulted included [Votesmart.org](#), [OntheIssues.org](#), [FactCheck.org](#), [Politifact.com](#), and public candidate statements. For guides to local races, see [Vote411.org](#) from the League of Women Voters and [Ballotready.org](#).