

KYRSTEN SINEMA

b. July 12, 1976

CONGRESSWOMAN

“How often can you say a kid who was homeless is going to Congress?”

**Kyrsten Sinema
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Sinema was born to a Mormon family in Tucson, Arizona. Her parents divorced and her mother remarried. When her stepfather lost his job, the family moved into an abandoned gas station without running water or electricity.

Despite many hardships, Sinema graduated at 16 as valedictorian of her high school. By 18 she had earned a bachelor's degree from Brigham Young University on a full scholarship. She subsequently earned a master's degree, a law degree and a doctorate—all from Arizona State University.

From 1995 to 2002, Sinema was employed as a school social worker, helping struggling families. In 2000 she lobbied at the state capitol against budget cuts in her school district. The visit inspired her interest in politics. Running as an Independent, her first bid for the State Legislature was unsuccessful.

Sinema subsequently registered as a Democrat. In 2005 she was elected to the Arizona State House of Representatives, where she served for a year as the assistant minority leader for the Democratic Caucus. She was elected to the Arizona State Senate in 2010 and to the U.S. House of Representatives in 2012.

In office, Sinema worked for the adoption of the Dream Act, a proposal that gives illegal immigrants conditional residency, and actively campaigned against two voter referenda that sought to ban same-sex marriage and civil unions in Arizona. In 2013 she co-sponsored the bipartisan LIBERT-E Act, which sought to prevent the NSA's mass collection of electronic information from innocent Americans.

Sinema was named Legislator of the Year by the Stonewall Democrats, the Arizona Public Health Association and the National Association of Social Workers. She received Planned Parenthood's CHOICE Award, and in 2010 was named to TIME magazine's list of 40 Under 40.

In addition to politics, Sinema has served as an adjunct instructor at the Arizona State University School of Social Work. In 2013 she completed an Ironman Triathlon and summited Mount Kilimanjaro.



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