

DAVID CICILLINE

b. July 15, 1961

U.S. CONGRESSMAN

“The American people deserve to know who will stand up and speak out for those on the margins of society.”

He is the chair of the Congressional LGBTQ+ Equality Caucus.

David N. Cicilline is a Democrat representing Rhode Island's 1st District in the U.S. House of Representatives. Previously, he served two terms as the mayor of Providence, Rhode Island, and four terms in the Rhode Island House of Representatives. He was the first openly gay mayor of an American state capital and the fourth openly gay member of Congress.

A native of Providence, Cicilline is the son of a Jewish mother and an Italian Catholic father. Cicilline regards himself as a practicing Jew. His father was a well-known attorney who had been an aide to Mayor Joseph Doorley Jr. and defended members of the mafia.

As an undergraduate at Brown University, Cicilline started a political club, the College Democrats, with fellow student John F. Kennedy Jr. Cicilline received his B.A. in political science in 1983. He earned his J.D. from Georgetown University Law Center, then worked as an attorney for the Public Defender Service in Washington, D.C.

In 1996, after a failed senatorial bid, Cicilline won a seat in the Rhode Island House of Representatives. He came out publicly in 1999, insisting his sexuality was irrelevant to the campaign. He described himself as a “candidate who happens to be gay rather than a gay candidate.”

In 2002 Cicilline ran for mayor of Providence and won by landslide, carrying 84% of the vote. He became the city's first openly gay mayor and the country's first openly gay mayor of a state capital. He won reelection in 2006 by nearly an identical margin. As mayor, he cofounded a bipartisan gun-control coalition, Mayors Against Illegal Guns.

Cicilline was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 2010. He became the fourth openly gay member of Congress.

Throughout his political career, Cicilline has championed the rights of the middle class, vulnerable populations and the LGBTQ+ community. He has worked to ensure affordable health-care access and to protect social security and Medicare. Among countless other initiatives, he has authored the Assault Weapons Ban, introduced the Automatic Voter Registration Act and co-sponsored multiple pieces of environmental legislation.

After the Supreme Court's 2015 decision legalizing same-sex marriage, Cicilline proposed the Equality Act to prohibit LGBT discrimination nationwide. In 2018 he co-authored the Gay and Trans Panic Defense Prohibition Act to prevent lawyers from using victims' LGBTQ+ identity to justify crimes against them.

Cicilline serves as chair of the Congressional LGBTQ+ Equality Caucus, chairman of the House Antitrust Subcommittee and vice chair of the Congressional Progressive Caucus. In January 2021 House Speaker Nancy Pelosi named Cicilline a co-manager of the second impeachment trial of Donald J. Trump.

© OFFICE OF CONGRESSMAN CICILLINE

lgbt[™]
HISTORY
MONTH

www.lgbtHistoryMonth.com

Copyright © 2021 – A Project of Equality Forum