

# In signal to military, Hillary Clinton picks Senator Tim Kaine as running mate

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Presumptive Democratic Party nominee Hillary Clinton selected Virginia Senator Tim Kaine as her vice presidential running mate on Friday. The announcement, made in advance of next week's Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia, was originally due to be made at a rally in Tampa, Florida but was instead delivered hours later over Twitter.

In selecting Kaine, Clinton is making clear that she plans on running a right-wing, pro-war campaign targeted at winning over the military and sections of the Republican Party dissatisfied with Trump, and particularly with the Republican candidate's attitude toward Russia. Clinton also wanted to repudiate any association with the issues of social inequality that motivated the widespread support for her main rival in the primaries, Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders.

Kaine is among the most hawkish figures among Senate Democrats. As governor of Virginia from 2006 to 2010, Kaine oversaw billions of dollars in cuts to the state budget. The state of Virginia is a major center for the military and defense industry, and is home to the Pentagon and the headquarters of the CIA.

Between 2009 and 2011, Kaine served as the head of the Democratic National Committee, the leadership body of the Democratic Party. He is close to Wall Street, having recently backed measures to deregulate banks.

As a Senator since 2013, Kaine has regularly called for increased US involvement in Iraq, Syria and Afghanistan. He has consistently supported the Obama administration's reckless brinkmanship against Russia and China, two nuclear-armed powers. He has repeatedly pushed for a Congressional resolution officially declaring war against the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) in order to clear the way for stepped-up US intervention.

Like Clinton, Kaine has also supported the creation of a no-fly zone in Syria, an action that would quickly provoke a confrontation with Russia.

Earlier this month, in the lead-up to the NATO summit in Warsaw, Poland, Kaine co-authored an open letter to President Barack Obama urging him to "carry a message to world leaders...[that] success in Ukraine and resistance to Russian aggression, including through the rotational deployment of NATO troops to Eastern Europe, are in the best interest of all member countries."

Kaine is also a member of the Senate Armed Services and Foreign Relations committees. He is the ranking Democrat on the Armed Services Readiness Subcommittee and the Subcommittee on State Department and USAID Management, International Operations and Bilateral International Development.

Kaine, a devout Catholic who spent time as a missionary in Honduras, opposed access to abortion early in his career. While he claims to be an opponent of the death penalty, he signed off on numerous executions during his tenure as governor.

In her speech before the Tampa rally, Clinton combined banalities with political complacency in her attacks on Republican candidate Donald Trump, who formally accepted the Republican nomination the night before.

As with previous speeches, Clinton portrayed American society under Obama—whose administration has become synonymous with inequality, repression and war in the minds of millions—in the rosier colors and promised more of the same. She treated the social distress and anger, upon which Trump has been able to capitalize, as politically illegitimate and essentially racially motivated. "The last thing we need is somebody running for president who talks trash about

America,” she said.

In the past few days the Clinton camp has focused, in particular, on comments Trump made to the *New York Times*, in which he raised the possibility that, as president, he would not necessarily start a war against Russia in the case of a Russian “attack” on one of the Baltic states that are members of NATO.

“Ronald Reagan would be ashamed. Harry Truman would be ashamed,” Clinton senior policy advisor Jake Sullivan responded Thursday morning. “Republicans, Democrats, and Independents who helped build NATO into the most successful military alliance in history would all come to the same conclusion: Donald Trump is temperamentally unfit and fundamentally ill-prepared to be our commander-in-chief.”

“When you say to an ally—who you have a treaty obligation to defend—‘We’re not sure we will,’ that is a very, very dangerous thing,” Kaine told reporters on Thursday. “We have American men and women spread throughout those countries right now in service who are there and are at risk.”

In other words, the Clinton-Kaine campaign boasts that, in contrast to the “unreliable” Trump, they are more willing to “keep America safe” by pursuing a confrontational policy whose logic leads inexorably to a nuclear exchange.



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