



What does John Kasich believe? Where the candidate stands on 10 issues

BY SARAH MCHANEY July 21, 2015 at 10:21 AM EDT



Potential Republican 2016 presidential candidate Ohio Governor John Kasich speaks at the First in the Nation Republican Leadership Conference in Nashua, New Hampshire, April 18, 2015. Photo by Brian Snyder/Reuters

He is the grandson of coal miners and immigrants and a prodigy politician who talked his way into a [meeting with then-President Richard Nixon at age 18](#) and won his first election at age 24 (state senate). John Kasich spent nearly two decades in Congress and won re-election as Ohio governor by a whopping 30 points last year. He helped write the country's first balanced budget in decades (1997), worked as a television contributor for Fox, wrote three New York Times bestsellers and once was [kicked out of a Grateful Dead concert](#) for

trying to get on stage. Here is where John Kasich stands on 10 key issues.

Climate Change: Climate change is real. The EPA should not regulate emissions.

In 2012, Kasich said [he believes climate change](#) is real and is a problem. In the same speech, the Republican asserted that the Environmental Protection Agency should not regulate emissions, but that states and private companies should work to contain carbon output from coal-burning power plants. The Ohio governor indicated [this year that he is concerned about protecting jobs](#) while protecting the environment.

Criminal Justice: Less prison time for nonviolent offenders. Focus on rehabilitation and treatment.

Prison and criminal justice reform have both been themes for Kasich as Ohio governor. This includes a 2012 bill making it [easier for ex-felons to get work](#) and a 2011 bill that [favors rehabilitation over prison](#) for people convicted of nonviolent crimes. The Republican candidate has sharply criticized prisons as holding too many people who are mentally ill and advocates increased treatment for mental disorders.

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Education: Continue Common Core. Cut education spending.

The Ohio governor has [defended the Common Core](#) education standards written by state education superintendents and local principals and has criticized its opponents as politically-motivated. Kasich has long [pushed ideas for education reform](#), including promotion of occupational choices earlier starting in elementary school and a plan to [dramatically overhaul funding formulas](#) to give poor districts and charter schools more resources. In crafting his state's budget, Kasich used his veto power to [cut more than \\$84 million of funding](#) from public schools.

Immigration: Allow undocumented immigrants to stay in the country legally. A path to citizenship is not preferable but may be part of compromise.

Speaking at a forum in Iowa in June, Kasich said that he believes undocumented immigrants who otherwise follow the law [should be allowed to gain a legal status](#). The Ohio governor told the audience that he prefers a legal status that does not lead to citizenship, but said that a "path to citizenship" may be part of compromise talks. That is a change from his 2010 stance. Then, Kasich told the Columbus Dispatch that [he opposed any legal status](#) for undocumented residents and wanted to end the practice of granting U.S. citizenship to all children born in the country.

Obamacare: Keep the federal Medicaid expansion. Repeal and replace the rest of the Affordable Healthcare Act.

As governor, Kasich [adopted the Medicaid expansion](#) offered by the Affordable Care Act and [pointed to Ronald Reagan's expansion of Medicaid](#) to defend his decision. The Ohio Republican has called for the rest of [Obamacare to be repealed and replaced](#). In late 2014, the [Associated Press reported comments](#) that indicated Kasich believed the law was unlikely to be repealed. The governor's staff asked for a correction.

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Social issues: It's time to move on from the same-sex marriage debate. Ban abortions after

20 weeks, with an exception if the life of the mother is in danger.

Following the June Supreme Court ruling upholding same-sex marriage across the country, Kasich told CBS' Face the Nation, that he believes in traditional marriage but "the court has ruled and [it's time to move on.](#)"

Kasich is a firm abortion opponent. In June 2013 the Ohio governor signed into law a bill to [ban most abortions after 20 weeks](#) of pregnancy, allowing an exception only if the life of the mother is in danger. The same legislation cut funding to Planned Parenthood and [also required women to undergo an ultrasound](#) before getting an abortion. In 2015, Kasich indicated [he was uncomfortable with a proposal](#) that would have banned abortions as early as six weeks.

Taxes: Cut income and corporate taxes. Close some loopholes. Raise other taxes, including a state tax on fracking.

As governor of the Buckeye State, Kasich has [proposed moving away from income taxes](#) and moving toward increasing consumption taxes, including sales taxes. He also pushed for [an increase in the taxes on fracking](#). The state legislature did not pass his proposals. As president, Kasich has said he [would like to lower corporate taxes](#) and pay for that by ending some current corporate tax breaks.

Unions and workers: Limit union powers, especially for public employees.

During his first year as governor, Kasich pushed for a bill that would [curb collective-bargaining for public employees](#). Ohio voters rejected the idea in a state referendum and Kasich has not returned to it.

Iran and Israel: Iran deal raises concerns.

Following the announcement of the proposed nuclear deal between Iran, the U.S. and multiple other countries, a Kasich spokesman told reporters that the governor was [concerned about the proposal](#). The Republican [candidate attended Netanyahu's speech](#) to Congress and said [the U.S. should not pressure Israel](#) into peace negotiations.

Islamic State and Iraq: Put U.S. boots on the ground to fight ISIS.

Kasich believes that in order to defeat ISIS, the U.S. will eventually [have to put combat troops on the ground](#). In addition, the Midwestern governor has called for a better international plan to battle the group.

Kasich: 'You have to have a vision'



Watch NewsHour Special Correspondent Jeff Greenfield's interview on the road in New Hampshire with Kasich from February 1.