



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on December 8, 2014

Cassidy Replaces Landrieu; GOP Gains Nine Senate Seats

The Louisiana runoff election on Saturday for U.S. Senate was closer than many polls indicated, with Congressman Bill Cassidy (shown) defeating three-term incumbent Senator Mary Landrieu by 56 percent to 44 percent. Coupled with Republican victories in two Louisiana House districts, Republicans will have 54 votes in the new Senate (out of 100) and 246 votes in the new House of Representatives (out of 435). Remarkably, Democrats will be [without a single governor or U.S. senator](#) across nine Old South states, from the Carolinas to Texas.



Louisianans didn't so much vote *for* Cassidy as they voted *to get rid of* Landrieu, once considered one of the Democrat Party's strongest incumbents. She has been a staunch supporter of most of Obama's policies, including ObamaCare, and Cassidy successfully tied her votes to the increasingly unpopular president. When her "Hail Mary" pass — her Senate legislation to approve the Keystone Pipeline — failed to garner even enough of her own party's votes, followed by the Democrat Finance Committee's decision not to fund her runoff campaign, it was game over for Landrieu.

Pollsters calculated that 97 percent of campaign advertising supported Cassidy, without exposing much of his voting record. All Louisianans wanted, it appeared, was a change, even if it might turn out to be pocket change.

Cassidy himself, an Illinois native, made very few public appearances during the runoff, not wanting to expose himself too much to the angry electorate and perhaps spoil his chances at beating the incumbent.

A last-ditch effort to blunt Cassidy's almost 20-percent polling advantage merely served to close the gap slightly. Charges made by third parties that Cassidy had "double-dipped," receiving money for helping at a charitable hospital while a member of the House — even if they had substance — turned out to be too little, too late.

As expected, Republican National Committee Chairman Reince Priebus was delighted with Saturday's outcome, claiming in a sound bite likely to be repeated endlessly next year that the new Republican Party-controlled Senate will, among other things, pass some "pro-jobs legislation that was stalled in the Senate when Democrats were in control." He added:

Bill Cassidy will be a champion for policies that create jobs and grow the economy, especially building the Keystone Pipeline.

And as a doctor treating the uninsured, he has seen firsthand how ObamaCare has hurt healthcare in this country, and [he] will work toward market-driven, patient-centered reforms.

But will he? A representative of Louisiana's Sixth Congressional District since 2009, Cassidy has left a trail of votes that may shed light on how much of an improvement he will be, if any, over Landrieu.



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First things first. Well before entering politics, Cassidy was a Democrat. He supported Michael Dukakis for president in 1988 and donated money to the 1992 presidential campaign of Massachusetts Democrat Senator Paul Tsongas. In 2002, he also supported Mary Landrieu's 2002 Senate campaign financially, for which he later expressed regret, claiming that his support was a "youthful indiscretion." Cassidy was 45 at the time.

In May, Cassidy voted "no" on an amendment that would have prohibited the indefinite military detention of any person, including Americans, detained under the government's Authorization for the Use of Military Force. Representative Adam Smith (a Democrat from the state of Washington) introduced the amendment, noting that such detention violates the Sixth Amendment which, among other things, includes the "notice of accusation clause" ("the accused shall ... be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation") and the "confrontation clause" ("the accused shall ... be confronted with the witnesses against him"). It also, said Smith, "is an enormous amount of power to give the Executive: to take someone and lock them up without due process.... I believe [it] places liberty and freedom at risk in this country."

Perhaps not having read the Sixth Amendment and therefore not being aware of the safeguards against executive overreach it put in place, Cassidy went along with the Republicans and helped to vote it down, 230 to 191.

Compounding his error on the very same day, Cassidy voted against an amendment to "sunset" the 2001 Authorization for the Use of Military Force 12 months after the enactment of the 2015 National Defense Authorization Act, otherwise known as the NDAA. As noted by constitutional experts at The John Birch Society, "[The NDAA] gives the president almost unlimited powers to invade countries, overthrow governments and assassinate people under the pretext of waging the 'war on terror.'"

Cassidy joined 232 of his fellow Republicans in voting the amendment down, thus securing in place not only the granting of these powers to the executive branch, but also confirming the House's illegitimate relinquishing of its own constitutional responsibilities in doing so.

Over the last six years, then, Cassidy has created a voting record which, according to *The New American's* Freedom Index, has ranged from 56 to 71 out of a possible 100 in following the limitations provided by the Constitution, the same document that he swore to uphold and defend three different times while a member of the House.

That Landrieu cared even less about following the Constitution during her three terms is beside the point. Cassidy has already cast himself as a loyal Republican Party follower, even when the party goes astray and violates precious rights belonging to American citizens. In other words, Cassidy is no Tea Partier and certainly not a constitutional statesman.

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