



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on December 29, 2021

Former Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid Dead at 82

Active in politics for nearly 50 years, Nevada's former Democrat Senator Harry Reid [passed away from pancreatic](#) cancer on Tuesday. He left a legacy of violating the Constitution resulting in a much larger, more expensive, and more intrusive government for the rest of us.

And Democrats were only too happy to kiss the ring over his departure.

Current Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer called Reid "my leader, my mentor, one of my dearest friends. He's gone but [he] will walk by the sides of many of us in the Senate every day."



AP Images
Harry Reid

President Joe Biden effused: "I've had the honor of serving with some of the all-time great Senate Majority Leaders in our history. Harry Reid was one of them."

Former President Barack Obama joined the chorus: "The world is better because of what you've done."

Even Senator Minority Leader Republican Mitch McConnell kissed the ring:

Nevada and our nation are mourning [the passing of] a dedicated public servant and a truly one-of-a-kind U.S. Senator, my former colleague Harry Reid... he will rightly go down in history as a crucial, pivotal figure in the development and history of his beloved home state [Nevada].

Reid's career spanned nearly five decades, starting when he served in the Nevada Assembly in 1969. He then served as Nevada's lieutenant governor, and moved to represent the state in the U.S. House of Representatives before being elected to the U.S. Senate in 1987. He served five six-year terms, including as Senator Majority Leader from 2007 to 2015.

Two weeks before his passing, the state changed the name of its airport from McCarran International Airport to the Harry Reid International Airport.

Reid was completely a man of the world. He lauded his friends and abused his enemies. He called Republican President George W. Bush a "liar" and a "loser," and on the Senate floor called President Donald Trump a "human leech," and attacked Majority Leader Mitch McConnell for being what he called a "poster boy for Republican spinelessness." He even disparaged Obama as a "light-skinned" black man "with no Negro dialect unless he wanted to have one."

In 2012, Reid accused Republican presidential nominee Mitt Romney of not paying his taxes. Although PolitiFact awarded Reid's canard its "Pants on Fire" designation, Reid refused to apologize. When challenged over the blatant lie by CNN's Dana Bash, Reid justified it by saying, "Romney didn't win, did he?"

He ignored his oath of office to support and defend the Constitution of the United States, earning a



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[lifetime Freedom Index rating](#) from *The New American* of just 17 out of 100. He was instrumental in passing the \$787 billion 2009 Recovery Act. He pushed through ObamaCare in the Senate and the infamous Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act under which investors and Wall Street still suffer today.

He was never averse to violating the Constitution or the rules of the Senate. As majority leader he knew that ObamaCare wouldn't pass the Senate the regular way, so he used the controversial budget maneuver known as "reconciliation" to avoid a Republican filibuster.

He still needed all 60 Senate Democrats to pass the bill, but Senators Mary Landrieu of Louisiana and Ben Nelson of Nebraska balked. So Reid bought them off. In a deal known as "The Louisiana Purchase," Reid arranged for \$300 million in extra federal funds to be funneled to her state. In what is known as "The Cornhusker Kickback," Reid arranged for special treatment that would shield Nelson's Nebraska from having to pay for the newly eligible Medicaid enrollees that ObamaCare would create.

All of this violated the Constitution, which demands that all spending and budget bills must originate in the House of Representatives and not the Senate.

Reid enriched himself and his family along the way and, although his shady real-estate deals were frequently exposed publicly, he never suffered the indignity of prison time. All he was doing was taking advantage of a situation, just like Tammany Hall politician George Washington Plunkitt:

Everybody is talkin' these days about Tammany men growin' rich on graft, but nobody thinks of drawin' the distinction between honest graft and dishonest graft. There's all the difference in the world between the two. Yes, many of our men have grown rich in politics. I have myself. I've made a big fortune out of the game, and I'm gettin' richer every day, but I've not gone in for dishonest graft — blackmailin' gamblers, saloonkeepers, disorderly people, etc. — and neither has any of the men who have made big fortunes in politics.

There's an honest graft, and I'm an example of how it works. I might sum up the whole thing by sayin': "I seen my opportunities and I took 'em."

Just let me explain by examples. My party's in power in the city, and it's goin' to undertake a lot of public improvements. Well, I'm tipped off, say, that they're going to lay out a new park at a certain place.

I see my opportunity and I take it. I go to that place and I buy up all the land I can in the neighborhood. Then the board of this or that makes its plan public, and there is a rush to get my land, which nobody cared particular for before.

Ain't it perfectly honest to charge a good price and make a profit on my investment and foresight? Of course, it is. Well, that's honest graft. Or supposin' it's a new bridge they're goin' to build. I get tipped off and I buy as much property as I can that has to be taken for approaches. I sell at my own price later on and drop some more money in the bank.

Wouldn't you? It's just like lookin' ahead in Wall Street or in the coffee or cotton market. It's honest graft, and I'm lookin' for it every day in the year. I will tell you frankly that I've got a good lot of it, too.

Now Reid has moved on to his eternal reward, and his deeds during this life are between him and his maker.



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