



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on July 5, 2016

## Iowa Senator Joni Ernst on Trump's VP Short List

Iowa Republican Senator Joni Ernst, one of just a very few being currently vetted for Donald Trump's running mate for vice president, [met with The Donald on Monday](#). Also in attendance were Paul Manafort, Trump's chief campaign strategist, and Reince Priebus, chairman of the Republican National Committee (RNC). Following the meeting, Ernst told reporters:



I had a good conversation with Donald Trump today, and we discussed what I am hearing from Iowans ... and the best path forward for our country.

Nothing was said about her being offered the slot, but she did add:

I will continue to share my insights with Donald about the need to strengthen our economy, keep our nation safe, and ensure America is always a strong, stabilizing force around the globe.

Trump also met with Governor Mike Pence of Indiana and plans to have Tennessee Republican Senator Bob Corker appear with him at a campaign event in North Carolina on Tuesday. Trump also praised Senator Tom Cotton of Arkansas on Twitter over the weekend. Others being vetted for the VP slot include former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, and Alabama Senator Jeff Sessions.

Ernst checks many of the boxes that Manafort no doubt has created during the vetting process. Among them: someone with political experience and savvy; someone from an important state in the national elections; someone who resonates with reluctant party members who remain nervous about Trump's commitment to conservative values and positions; and finally, someone who may appeal to Trump's weakest demographic: women.

Aside from the obvious fact that Ernst is the only woman being vetted, she is from a swing state, and clarifies in abundance much of the conservative values that Trump's suspicious supporters are seeking. She is a veteran, having spent 14 months in Kuwait in 2003-04 as a company commander during the Iraq War. She has proposed eliminating the Internal Revenue Service, the Department of Education, and especially the Environmental Protection Agency. She would eliminate the DOE "not just because it would save taxpayer dollars [the agency's budget has virtually exploded, from \$32 billion in 2009 to \$73 billion in 2016], but because I do believe our children are better educated when it's coming from the state."

She opposes the federal minimum wage, arguing that that decision should be left to the states. She co-sponsored a bill ordering Iowa to ignore any federal laws which "are directly in violation of the Tenth Amendment." Speaking in September 2013 to the Iowa Faith & Freedom Coalition, Ernst said that Congress shouldn't even bother passing laws "that the states would consider nullifying," complaining that "200-plus years of federal legislators [have been] going against the Tenth Amendment's states' rights."



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She has urged the nullification of certain EPA regulations on coal-fired power plants while complaining that because of President Obama's recess appointments in 2014, he has "become a dictator."

She has railed against ObamaCare, saying it is imposing "an additional tax of \$1.2 trillion on the American people over the next decade and I believe we need to eliminate [it and] replace it with free market alternatives."

In addition she is pro-life, believing that life begins at conception, and she holds an A rating from the National Rifle Association, of which she is a life member.

According to The New American's "Freedom Index" (a congressional scorecard that rates congressmen based on their adherence to constitutional principles), she rates a 65 out of 100 based on her record through the end of 2015. This is a vast improvement over the record of her predecessor, Tom Harkin, who sported a lifetime rating of just 14.

Ernst is the dark horse in the race, largely unknown outside of Iowa and certainly unknown and unacknowledged by the mainstream media. For all of the right reasons (no pun intended), she could be Trump's pick when he announces it next week, before the start of the Republican convention in Cleveland on Monday, July 18.

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