



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on February 15, 2013

## N.J. Senator Lautenberg to Retire, Opens Way to Newark Mayor Cory Booker

When Frank Lautenberg, the liberal senior Democratic Senator from New Jersey, [announced](#) on Thursday that he wouldn't be running for reelection in 2014, some said it signaled the end of a long and illustrious career. Lautenberg rejoined:



This is not the end of anything, but rather the beginning of a two-year mission to pass new gun safety laws, protect children from toxic chemicals, and create more opportunities for working families in New Jersey.

While I may not be seeking reelection, there is plenty to do before the end of this term and I'm going to keep fighting as hard as ever for the people of New Jersey in the U.S. Senate.

After joining a small bookkeeping company, Automatic Payrolls, in 1949 as its only salesman, Lautenberg [helped the owner go public in 1961](#) and made himself rich in the process. The company changed its name to Automatic Data Processing (ADP) in 1957 and now processes paychecks for about 10 percent of America's workforce and sponsors the ADP National Employment Report and the ADP Small Business Report.

In 1982, Lautenberg saw an opportunity to run for the Senate from New Jersey and, [with \\$3 million of his own money](#), won the election. He has won reelection every year since (with a brief hiatus) and was thinking about running again in 2014 until health problems began to slow him down.

In February 2010, Lautenberg was diagnosed with cancer of the blood at Mount Sinai Medical Center in New York but, after undergoing chemo, he was [pronounced cancer-free in June](#) in that same year. However, episodes of the flu that turned into bronchitis this winter led him to conclude that his time in the Senate was drawing to a close. A close friend, Jim McQueeny, said, "He was not decided before the sickness [but] when he got sick a couple of times too close together, he started to think more deeply about it." Lautenberg turned 89 in January, making him the oldest member of the Senate.

He considers [his biggest achievement](#) as passing a smoking ban on airplanes, which has morphed over time into bans on smoking in restaurants and other public places. As an active interventionist into people's private behaviors with little concern about constitutional restraints on such actions, Lautenberg led the way to reduce to 0.08 percent the legal limit on blood-alcohol content, to raise the drinking age to 21, and to ban the ownership of guns by people convicted of domestic violence, no matter how trivial. As Larry Pratt explained in his book, [On the Firing Line](#), with this intrusion,

Lautenberg federalizes state laws dealing with husband and wife relationships and even those of parent and child — that's all covered under the term "domestic."

Lautenberg's measure means that if one were convicted of any kind of domestic violence misdemeanor (a slap, a foul mouth, spanking of a child), one is forever prohibited from owning a



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gun....

Who is affected [the most] by the Lautenberg gun ban? An increasingly large number of women are being kept from owning their best means of self-defense. This is because police are more and more arresting both partners in a domestic dispute and getting domestic misdemeanor convictions against both the man and the woman.

In an ironic twist, when Lautenberg collapsed in his Cliffside, New Jersey, apartment in February 2010, prior to being diagnosed with cancer, he demanded to be taken to Mount Sinai Medical Center. As former New Jersey Judge Andrew Napolitano [noted at the time](#):

When he called an ambulance and it arrived, he directed the driver to bring him to Mt. Sinai Hospital in New York City. That direction is today [in February 2010] perfectly lawful. [But under ObamaCare, for which Lautenberg voted] an ambulance would be forced to take a patient to the hospital closest to the patient; in Sen. Lautenberg's case, a small community hospital a few blocks from his apartment. Sen. Lautenberg voted for [ObamaCare] that would have denied him the free choice that probably saved his life.

He apparently doesn't care.

In August 2012, he and Rep. Carolyn McCarthy (D-N.Y.) introduced bills in the Senate and House called the "Stop Online Ammunition Sales Act," which among other things would require a photo ID for all private citizens buying ammunition online, effectively banning all online or mail order purchases. [As noted by the National Rifle Association](#) (NRA), starting in 1968, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (BATF) was required to keep such records but Congress repealed these requirements "after the BATF itself said the restrictions had quote 'no substantial law enforcement value unquote.'"

His voting record in the Senate reflects this same disconnect from reality and a steely determination to ignore the Constitution in any of his deliberations whatsoever. With a Freedom Index Rating of just 20, a few of his recent votes confirms this. He has supported the interventions by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) at every turn and has beaten back any attempts to rein in the agency. He voted for aid to North Korea, and approved aerial inspections by the EPA to inspect agricultural operations for offenses. He approved massive highway infrastructure spending and student loan interest rate guarantees, along with support of the [DISCLOSE Act](#), which would have required campaign donors to reveal personal information.

He voted against extending the Bush tax cuts, but for more power to the Homeland Security Agency to create a National Cybersecurity Council. And he voted for the continuing resolution to keep the government spending going through March 13 this year. And those are just some his more recent votes.

Those preparing to breathe a sigh of relief that such a hard-core totalitarian is packing up and leaving the Senate next year shouldn't. Lautenberg is already giving his blessing to his presumed replacement, current Newark Mayor [Cory Booker](#). An establishment Democrat, Booker is a graduate, predictably, of Stanford University and Yale Law School, and was a Rhodes Scholar at Oxford University. He has close ties to the Obama administration and was invited to chair Obama's new White House Office of Urban Affairs in 2009, but he turned it down. Booker, nevertheless, was selected to speak at the 2012 Democratic National Convention in support of the president's reelection. Booker had already established a committee to support his run for Lautenberg's seat even before Thursday's announcement.

Following that announcement Booker said:



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[Senator Lautenberg] has been a champion for the people of New Jersey for decades and his legacy of service will improve the lives of all Americans for years to come.

On a personal note, Senator Lautenberg has been a strong model of leadership and service to me since before I even considered entering elected office.

The Democratic revolving door for liberal Senators to represent the people of New Jersey continues to circle to the left.

*A graduate of Cornell University and a former investment advisor, Bob is a regular contributor to The New American and blogs frequently at [www.LightFromTheRight.com](http://www.LightFromTheRight.com), primarily on economics and politics. He can be reached at [badelman@thenewamerican.com](mailto:badelman@thenewamerican.com).*



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