



Congressman Jared Polis

2nd District, Colorado | 501 Cannon HOB, Washington, D.C. 20515 | (202) 225-2161

Biography

Congressman Jared Polis of Boulder was elected to Congress in 2008 and represents the Second Congressional District of Colorado. To date, he is the first openly gay male elected to Congress as a freshman.

A Boulder native, born to parents active in the 1960s peace movement, Congressman Polis believes we need to build upon the legacy and idealism of our parents and is working in Congress to pragmatically create a peaceful, prosperous, and safe world for generations to come.

In the Congress, Polis serves on the House Rules Committee and the House Democratic Steering and Policy Committee and is a Democratic Caucus Regional Whip. He is a charter member and vice-chair of the Sustainable Energy and Environmental Coalition, the Chair of the Immigration task-force of the Progressive Caucus, and an honorary Co-Chair of Third Way.

While attending Princeton University, Polis co-founded his first company, American Information Systems, and has since launched several successful business ventures, including: bluemountain.com, Proflowers.com and other online start-ups; a chain of movie theaters that screen first-run Hollywood films dubbed or subtitled in Spanish, including Cinema Latino in Aurora, CO; and most recently, Aquacopia. He has been named an "Entrepreneur of the Year" by Ernst and Young and one of America's "Top Ten Young Entrepreneurs" by Success Magazine.

After his early and successful start in the business sector, Polis quickly came to realize and value the important role education plays in our economy. He feels that education is the only meaningful, long-term stimulus initiative we can make to invest in and reinvigorate the American economy.

With this in mind, he ran for and won a seat on the Colorado State Board of Education in 2000 and served as the youngest Chairman in the history of the Board. During his six-year tenure, Polis strongly advocated school reform and enhancing educational opportunities. He played an instrumental role in the passage of Amendment 23 to improve state funding for public schools in Colorado and chaired the Board's Online Education Task Force.

Also in 2000, Polis founded the Jared Polis Foundation to improve and expand access to education by awarding micro-grants to teachers and schools that have shown outstanding commitment to their community in education. The Foundation's Community Computer Connection program refurbishes and donates more than 3,500 computers a year to schools and non-profit organizations that serve disadvantaged students.

Polis has also founded two innovative charter schools to help meet the needs of Colorado's underserved students. In 2004, seeing the difficulty faced by older immigrant youth in mainstream public schools, he established and served as the superintendent of the New America School. Today, the New America School operates four campuses in Colorado and plans to open a campus in New Mexico to extend the benefits of English literacy and a high school liberal arts education to all students. In the fall of 2005 he co-founded the Academy of Urban Learning to address the challenges faced by teens who struggle with homelessness or unstable living conditions.

Polis has served as the co-chairman of the Colorado Commission on High School Improvement, co-chair of the Colorado State Board of Education Online Education Task Force, and Chairman of the National Association of State Boards of Education's Commission on Financial and Investor Literacy.