

Who Is Mike Pence?

Note: *After this article was written, Republican Donald Trump announced he was postponing his running mate announcement in the wake of the terrorist attack in Nice, France.*

(Reuters) – Republican Donald Trump will name Indiana Governor Mike Pence as his vice presidential running mate on Friday, U.S. news organizations reported on Thursday.

Here are five facts about Pence, a Republican who previously served in the U.S. House of Representatives:

Latecomer on Trump Bandwagon

Pence did not initially support Trump.

Shortly before Indiana's Republican primary election in May, Pence endorsed Trump's rival, U.S. Senator Ted Cruz of Texas. Pence praised Trump at the time, but he compared Cruz to former Republican President Ronald Reagan and called him a "principled conservative."

Trump won the state anyway, and Cruz dropped out of the Republican race. Trump and Pence have since met to discuss the running mate position.

Well-Connected With Donors

Pence has strong ties to billionaire donors Charles and David Koch, including current and former staff members who have worked for them.

After saying he was primarily self-funding his campaign during the Republican primaries, Trump has been holding fundraisers during the general election, with support from the Republican National Committee. The New York businessman comes to the money race at a considerable disadvantage, however, compared with Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton.

A Social Conservative

Pence sometimes describes himself as “a Christian, a conservative and a Republican, in that order.”

Pence in 2015 signed a religious freedom law that critics said opened the door to anti-gay discrimination. When he was in Congress, he opposed repealing the military’s “Don’t Ask Don’t Tell” policy on sexual orientation.

He also has pushed restrictive abortion regulations and has pushed for Congress to defund Planned Parenthood, a nonprofit women’s health provider that performs some abortions.

Critic of Wall Street Bailout

He was a vocal opponent of the 2008 Wall Street bailout.

In September 2008, Pence, then a U.S. House member, argued against the \$700 billion package to stabilize the U.S. financial system, saying it would “nationalize almost every bad mortgage in America.”

Pence also said the Dodd-Frank financial reform legislation passed in 2010 would hurt jobs. Trump has vowed to dismantle Dodd-Frank, though he has not said how he would replace it.

Opposition to Syrian Refugees

Pence opposed allowing Syrian refugees coming to the United States to settle in Indiana.

In November 2015, the governor directed state agencies to suspend the resettlement of Syrians there. A family that was supposed to arrive in December was instead sent to Connecticut. A federal judge later ruled the order “clearly discriminates” against refugees from a particular country.

However, Pence tweeted disapproval in 2015 for plans to ban Muslims from entering the United States, an idea Trump has

advocated. Pence called it “offensive and unconstitutional.”

(Editing by Caren Bohan and Jonathan Oatis)

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