

Nebraska (NE-02)

US House of Representatives

THE ISSUES

**DON
BACON**

REPUBLICAN • INCUMBENT



**TONY
VARGAS**

DEMOCRAT



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ABORTION Ban or legal?	Ban. Calls “being pro-life” his “main thing.” In 2021 sponsored a proposed federal ban of abortion with no exceptions. In 2022 said the only exception should be saving the mother’s life. In 2024 signed a legal brief supporting the right of states to ban hospitals from providing emergency abortions.	Legal. Voted against bills limiting abortion access. Will vote “to codify the protections earned from Roe v. Wade into federal law.” “In Congress, I’ll continue fighting to keep reproductive health care safe, legal, and accessible.”
CLIMATE CHANGE Should climate change be a top priority?	Mixed. Said Donald Trump shouldn’t have withdrawn from Paris Climate Agreement. Voted against the Inflation Reduction Act’s climate initiatives as not “effective.” Wants “all of the above” options: fossil fuels, nuclear, geothermal, solar, and wind.	Yes. “Climate change is a serious threat ”; calls replacing fossil fuels with renewable energy sources “an environmental and economic necessity.” We must “more aggressively address a changing climate.”
CRIMINAL JUSTICE How to ensure effectiveness and fairness in law enforcement?	Voted against the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act. Sponsored a bill to support law enforcement and condemn defunding or dismantling local law enforcement.	“I’ve voted to fund our police every year since taking office— even when members of my party didn’t.” Is also “ inspired by [those] who are fighting for equity, transparency, due process at every level.” Will “fight for” an end to police brutality and violence.
ECONOMY Decrease or increase government investment in, and regulation of, the economy?	Decrease. “ Free-market principles , not centralized government planning...drive economic growth, innovation and prosperity.” “ I am working to ease the cost of living, cut taxes, and reduce our national debt.”	Increase. Wants better-paying jobs, a middle-class tax cut, an expanded child tax credit, lower costs for healthcare, drugs, and child care, and paid family leave. Supported bills to make housing more affordable.
EDUCATION Limit teaching about racism and gender identity?	Yes. Voted for the Parents Bill of Rights, designed to let parents inspect teaching materials in public schools. Opposes “Congress... micromanaging our schools.”	No. Voted against a Nebraska bill to make K–12 teachers and librarians liable for obscenity charges related to materials in schools. Says teachers can talk with children about racism.
ENVIRONMENT Loosen or tighten environmental regulations?	Mixed. Supported repeal of the Stream Protection Rule against dumping mining waste into waterways. Voted to allow oil and gas leasing in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Voted to invest \$1.2 trillion in infrastructure ; including greenhouse gas emission reductions.	Tighten. “ I’m committed to policies combatting climate change, protecting our natural resources, and growing our clean energy job sector.” Crack down on polluters leaching chemicals into soil and water. Increase penalties for environmental disasters from fracking and drilling.

ISSUES	BACON (R)	VARGAS (D)
GUN RULES Loosen or tighten gun regulation?	Loosen. Voted against the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act; did not support “the Red Flag portion.” Voted no on raising the age for buying semiautomatic rifles. Sponsored a bill to let gun owners sue if they were wrongfully denied a gun purchase.	Tighten. “ Passing common sense gun control laws is the most immediate step we can take to protecting our kids and communities. I’m ready to take on the gun lobby in Congress.” In 2022 wanted expanded background checks and a federal ban on assault weapons.
HEALTHCARE Increase or decrease government support for healthcare?	Decrease. Voted in 2017 to repeal the Obamacare, the Affordable Care Act. “Medicare for All would be a disaster .”	Increase. “Everyone deserves access to quality, affordable health care.” Secured \$6.5 million for Nebraska clinics and “fought to expand Medicaid.” Wants lower costs for healthcare and medications.
IMMIGRATION How to handle immigration? Support a path to citizenship for “DACA” participants brought to the US as children?	In 2021: “ Create a safer clear legal pathway to emigrate to our country, while maintaining law and order at the border.... Congress must provide a legal way forward for DACA and TPS recipients.”	DACA recipients “need permanent protection. We need new leadership in D.C that cares about solving problems—not playing partisan, political games with people’s lives.”
LABOR Make it easier or harder for unions to organize?	Harder. Voted against the PRO Act, which would strengthen unions, protect workers’ right to unionize, and overturn “right to work” laws, which allow employees in a unionized workplace to not pay union dues.	Easier. Organized labor “gave our family a slice of the American Dream.” “ I will continue to honor workers and labor unions by fighting for better working conditions, better wages, and an America that works for working families.”
LGBTQ RIGHTS Limit or expand LGBTQ rights?	Limit. Voted against the Equality Act. Equal protections for LGBTQ citizens must also respect and protect “religious groups who hold traditional views of marriage.”	Expand. Ban gay conversion therapy. Told trans community, “ I’m sorry our legislature didn’t... stand up for you and your health care rights. This fight is not over.”
MARIJUANA Ban or legal?	Mixed. Says recreational use should not be legal, but sponsored the SAFE Banking Act of 2019, to protect banks that serve cannabis sellers. In 2022 voted against de-criminalizing marijuana and erasing federal convictions.	Legal. Decriminalize marijuana at the federal level. Promoted a Nebraska medical marijuana initiative.
MINIMUM WAGE Raise the federal minimum from \$7.25 per hour?	No. In 2019 voted no on Raise the Wage Act. “It’s a state issue ... Nebraska has a higher minimum wage [now \$12 , will be \$15 in 2026] than the federal minimum wage.”	No position found.
SOCIAL SECURITY Cut Social Security and/or raise the retirement age?	Likely yes. In 2018 said raise retirement age. A member of the Republican Study Committee, which proposes raising the retirement age.	Likely no. Supported a Nebraska bill to reduce taxes on Social Security income.
STUDENT FINANCIAL AID Support lowering interest on student loans and/or forgiving them?	No. “Biden’s federal student loan cancelation plan is a ‘ robin-hood ’ in reverse where the working man and woman is paying for the wealthiest in our society.”	Yes. “ I applaud the Biden Administration for continuing to deliver badly needed debt relief to Americans with student loans.”
TAXES Should corporations and wealthier individuals pay less or more taxes?	Less. In 2017 voted for the Trump tax cuts, reducing taxes for the wealthy and including the largest corporate cut in US history.	More. “Donald Trump engineered massive tax cuts for the wealthy When I get to Congress, I’ll vote for a middle-class tax cut.”
VOTING RULES Make voting harder or easier? And should the district have separate electoral college vote?	Harder. In 2021 voted against voting rights act. In 2024 voted to require citizenship proof to vote. Would change state law to merge this Congressional district with all of Nebraska into winner-take-all Electoral College votes.	Easier. Secure the right to vote, eliminate barriers to voting. “ Strengthen voting rights and improve ballot access.” Would preserve state law so this Congressional district keeps its own Electoral College vote.

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