

**LEGISLATOR**

US Representative


**MIKE CAPUANO (D-MA-07)****IN OFFICE**


Up for re-election in 2016


**9th Term**


Re-elected in 2014


**CONTACT**

 **Email** [Contact Form](http://capuano.house.gov/contact/email.shtml)  
<http://capuano.house.gov/contact/email.shtml>

 **Web** [capuano.house.gov](http://capuano.house.gov)  
<http://capuano.house.gov>

 **Twitter** [@mikecapuano](https://twitter.com/mikecapuano)  
<https://twitter.com/mikecapuano>

 **Facebook** [View on Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/RepMichaelCapuano)  
<https://www.facebook.com/RepMichaelCapuano>

 **DC Office** 1414 Longworth House  
Office Building

## BGOV BIOGRAPHY

By Brian Nutting, Bloomberg News

Mike Capuano favors a strong federal government role in American life, including spending on infrastructure, education and job training, a dependable social safety net, assistance in making homeownership possible for the middle class, and consumer, environmental and civil rights protections.

He's a solid backer of the Democratic Party positions, and belongs to the Congressional Progressive Caucus, a group of more than 60 of the most liberal Democrats in the House. He would have preferred that the 2010 health-care law have included a public option -- a government-run insurance program.

Capuano was raised in a blue-collar town, attended an Ivy League college and has served on Capitol Hill since 1999. Long-time colleagues and friends have described him as being able to balance being an Ivy-educated, inside-the-Beltway power player with a regular-guy persona who refers to working-class people as "us."

During his tenure as mayor of the town of Somerville, the Boston Globe said Capuano is a "self-described 'in your face kind of guy.'"

When Capuano was waging an unsuccessful campaign for election to the Senate in 2009, he told the Worcester Telegram & Gazette: "On the issues that are important, climate control, health care, war and peace and civil liberties, if you aren't fighting, what are you doing there? I fully admit I am probably more passionate on more issues than most people. It's because I take it seriously."

He told the newspaper that he had the same attitude when he began his political career as an alderman in Somerville, saying that he was passionate then when he argued about fixing potholes. "It's a serious problem if the pothole is in front of your house," he said.

Capuano sits on the Financial Services Committee, where he has worked on behalf of homeowners who faced foreclosure after the housing bubble burst, pushed for more funding for low-income housing and rental assistance, and advocated on behalf of beleaguered government-sponsored enterprises Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, albeit with some structural

changes.

He also has a seat on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, where he has posts on the Highways and Transit and Aviation subcommittees and is the ranking Democrat in the 114th Congress on the railroads subcommittee.

He says he has helped Massachusetts get more than \$5 billion in federal transportation dollars over the years, working against the reticence of many lawmakers who were leery of sending more money to Massachusetts after big overruns in Boston's infamous "Big Dig" project.

Capuano favors federal spending on big infrastructure projects. He voted for the 2009 economic stimulus bill and he told the Worcester newspaper that year that he would back a second round.

"The best way to do it is for the government to do it directly," he said of creating jobs with stimulus money by funding construction of roads and bridges, improving the rail system and building schools. "We have to do countercyclical spending in down times because no one else is going to do it."

He devoted efforts to some projects not likely to pay off back home, as a founder of the Congressional Caucus on the Sudan. In addition, he co-founded another bipartisan group, the Congressional Former Mayors Caucus.

Capuano is an ally of Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi. In 2006, just after Democrats had won control of the House, Pelosi named Capuano to head a transition team to prepare for the party's majority role in the 110th Congress.

In 2007, he was named chairman of the House Special Task Force on Ethics Enforcement, leading to the 2008 approval of a resolution creating an Office of Congressional Ethics that involved non-members in ethics matters for the first time.

He's been a member of the Democratic Steering and Policy for many years, including in the 114th Congress.

#### Early Years

Capuano was born and reared in the largely blue-collar town of Somerville, a Boston suburb just north of Cambridge. His father, a decorated and disabled veteran of World War II, was the first Italian-American elected to the Somerville Board of Aldermen. He recalls his father's advice that government officials should pay attention to the needs of individuals and not just focus on larger matters.

Capuano went to Dartmouth College and then got a law degree back home in Boston. He specialized in tax law and served as a legal counsel for the joint tax committee of the Massachusetts legislature for six years. Then he joined a Boston law firm.

Capuano was a Somerville alderman for six years over two separate stints, initially representing the same district that his father once had, and ran for mayor three times, finally winning on his third attempt in 1989, 10 years after his first try.

He was mayor for nine years, developing a reputation as a hands-on leader who was able to reduce the size of classes in Somerville schools as the town transitioned to a more upscale status.

In 1998 he was elected to the House, winning an open-seat election to succeed Democrat Joseph Kennedy -- the son of Robert F. Kennedy -- who had retired. He prevailed in a 10-candidate Democratic primary and cruised to victory in the general election.

In 2009, after the death of Democratic Senator Edward M. Kennedy, Capuano entered the special election race to succeed him. He lost by a large margin in the Democratic primary to the state's attorney general, Martha Coakley.

Because the election was in the middle of a term, he didn't have to give up his seat in the House. The Senate defeat didn't harm his electoral prospects in the 8th District in 2010 -- he was unopposed in the primary and Republicans didn't field a candidate in November. In fact, Republicans fielded a candidate against Capuano only once since 1998, in 2012.

#### Personal Note

In Washington, Capuano roomed with New York Democrat Anthony Weiner, a fellow member of the Class of 1998, for many years. Asked about Weiner after the Twitter lewd picture scandal that led to Weiner's resignation in 2011, Capuano told The New York Times that Weiner "obviously did something incredibly stupid that, honestly, I still don't understand."

Updated April 8, 2015

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## BIO FROM REPRESENTATIVE'S WEBSITE

From the Representative's Website

## Bloomberg GOVERNMENT

Michael Everett Capuano is serving his ninth term as a Representative in Congress for Massachusetts' Seventh District, which includes Chelsea, Everett, Randolph, Somerville, half of Cambridge and Milton and approximately 75% of Boston. He is the senior Massachusetts member on the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee and the Financial Services Committee. He was named to the House Ethics Committee in 2013.

When Democrats took back a majority in the House, Mike was appointed to head the Transition by Leader Nancy Pelosi. He was also appointed to chair the Special Task Force on Ethics Enforcement, which resulted in the establishment of the Office of Congressional Ethics, and what the Washington Post called 'a significant improvement over the current process.' In March of 2008, his resolution establishing an Office of Congressional Ethics passed, involving non-Members of the House in ethics matters for the first time in history.

Mike works for his constituents on local, national and international levels. He has successfully protected the state's share of federal transportation dollars. For example, in a 2012 multi-year highway funding bill, Massachusetts was one of only four states to receive an increase in total annual funding. Mike's measure establishing a nationwide tunnel safety inspection program became law in 2012. In 2015, the Federal Transit Administration made its nearly \$1 billion federal funding commitment to the Green Line Extension official with the signing of a Full Funding Grant Agreement (FFGA), something Mike has been working on for years.

Moved by the story of a young man forced out of school and into hiding after telling authorities of a crime he witnessed, Mike filed the "Young Witness Assistance Act" to create a grant program at the Department of Justice for locally developed juvenile witness assistance initiatives. Mike also succeeded in passing a law to require Medicare coverage for vision rehabilitation services. These services help restore safety and independence to seniors who suffer from vision loss.

Mike co-founded and co-chairs the Congressional Caucus on Sudan and South Sudan. He has emerged as a leading Congressional voice, traveling to the region, securing \$50 million for peacekeepers and advocating for a strong response to the humanitarian crises there.

Prior to serving in Congress, Mike was the Mayor of Somerville, MA from January of 1990 through January of 1999. He was born in Somerville to Andrew Capuano of Somerville and Rita Garvey Capuano of Allston-Brighton and Dorchester. He graduated from Somerville High School, received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Dartmouth College in 1973, and a law degree from Boston College Law School in 1977. He passed the Massachusetts Bar in 1977.

Mike is married to Barbara Teebagy Capuano. Barbara also graduated from Somerville High School, received a Bachelor of Science degree from Boston State College in 1974 and earned her MBA from Babson College in 1976. Barbara became a Certified Public Accountant in 1978. They have two sons, Michael and Joseph.

## PERSONAL PROFILE

### COMMITTEES

[House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure](#)

[House Committee on Ethics](#)

[House Committee on Financial Services](#)

### CAUCUSES

[Congressional Caucus on Empowerment Zones and Empowered Communities](#)

[Congressional Former Mayors Caucus](#)

[Congressional Bicameral High-Speed and Intercity Passenger Rail Caucus](#)

Birthdate 01/09/1952

Birthplace Somerville, MA

Political Party Democratic Party

Marital Status Married

Spouse Barbara Teebagy Capuano

Family 2 children

### PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

#### Education

Dartmouth College  
Bachelor's Degree 1973

Boston College  
JD 1977

1977 - 1979 Alderman, City of Somerville  
MA 1978 - 1984 Chief Legal Counsel, State of Massachusetts  
1985 - 1989 Alderman at Large, City of Somerville  
MA 1990 - 1998 Mayor, City of Somerville  
MA 01-03-1999 - Present Representative:Massachusetts, (US)House of Representatives

