

TOP HITS

SOCIAL ISSUES

Abortion

- Romney says he changed his mind on abortion meeting with Harvard stem cell researcher – Romney claims the doctor said scientists “kill” embryos after 14 days, but doctor later said Romney “mischaracterized my position.”
- Months after his “conversion,” Romney stated his commitment to upholding Massachusetts’ abortion laws and appointed pro-choice judge to state district court.
- In October 2005, Romney signed bill expanding family planning services, including abortion counseling and morning-after pill.
- In December 2005, Romney “abruptly ordered his administration to reverse course ... and require Catholic hospitals to provide emergency contraception medication to rape victims.”
- Romney health insurance plan expanded access to abortion, required Planned Parenthood representative on state panel.
- Romney endorsed legalization of abortion pill RU-486 access during his 1994 Senate race and backed federal funding of abortion, saying “I think it’s important that people see me not as a pro-life candidate.”
- In 1994 and 2002, Romney confirmed his support for Roe v. Wade decision and forcefully positioned himself as pro-choice in 1994 Senate race, saying “you will not see me wavering on that.”
- Romney has refused to comment on bill pending in South Carolina legislature requiring that abortion doctors offer pregnant women option of viewing ultrasound.

Gay Rights

- Romney endorsed Rep. Barney Frank’s Employment Nondiscrimination Act in 1994.
- In 1994, Romney called “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy first step toward having gays and lesbians “able to serve openly and honestly in our nation’s military” and said he would provide “more effective leadership” on gay rights issues than Ted Kennedy.
- In 2003, *The Washington Times* reported Romney “would support a Vermont-style civil union law in Massachusetts.”
- As governor, Romney said health coverage benefits and hospital visitation rights should be provided to gay couples.
- Romney promised to make gay partnership benefits a “hallmark of my leadership as governor” and has said he would attend gay weddings if invited.
- Romney publicly opposed Boy Scouts’ ban on homosexuals in 1994 and 2002 campaigns.
- In 2002, Romney backed hate crimes legislation that included sexual orientation provisions.
- In 2007, Romney praised gay parent who confronted him over gay marriage issue, but in 2005 remarked to South Carolina audience that some gay couples “are actually having children” and called it “wrong.”

Gun Control

- In 1994 Senate race, Romney backed Brady bill and assault weapons ban, saying “I don’t line up with the NRA” and “that’s not going to make me the hero of the NRA.”

- Romney called Clinton crime bill “a big step forward.”
- As governor, Romney quadrupled gun licensing fees and vowed not to “chip away” at tough gun laws
- In 2004, Romney signed permanent state-level ban on assault weapons that was mirrored after federal assault weapons ban.
- In January 2006, Romney said he owned a gun – then two days later admitted he did not and the gun belonged to his son.
- Romney bragged about being member of the NRA but later revealed he didn’t join until August 2006, just before launching his presidential campaign.
- Romney recently said he’s “been a hunter pretty much all my life” but later admitted he hunted only twice in his life, later clarifying remarks by claiming he has hunted “small varmints ... more than two times.”
- In 2006 press conference, Romney claimed he had been hunting “many times” after returning from quail hunt in Georgia.

ECONOMIC ISSUES

- State spending increased at well over rate of inflation under Romney’s watch, estimated at 24% - more than \$5 billion – over Romney’s final three years.
- Under Romney, Massachusetts dramatically underperformed the rest of the nation in terms of job growth.
- Romney has been criticized by experts for failing to deliver on issues of business development and economic growth after selling himself as the “CEO governor.”
- 2006 report issued by quasi-public Massachusetts Technology Collaborative warned the state was losing its grip as leader in “innovation economy” and that tech job was alarmingly slow.
- Romney left his successor to fill a budget deficit exceeding \$1 billion.
- Romney raised state fees and taxes more than \$700 million per year, according to independent experts.
- Romney raised fees by roughly \$500 million in his first year alone, a figure that was highest in the nation.
- Romney quadrupled gun licensing fees and raised fees on first responders, real estate transactions, the blind, golfers and many others.
- Massachusetts’ state and local tax burden rose more than 7% during Romney’s administration.
- Romney refused to endorse the Bush tax cuts in 2003, telling the state’s all-Democrat congressional delegation he wouldn’t be a cheerleader for the plan.
- Romney implemented three rounds of tax changes (which he referred to as “closing loopholes”) which increased business taxes by an estimated \$400 million per year.
- Massachusetts’ corporate tax climate now ranks 47th in the nation, according to the Tax Foundation.
- Romney proposed – then backed away from – a new internet tourism tax that would levy higher taxes on users of sites like Orbitz and Travelocity.
- Romney enrolled Massachusetts in multistate compact aiming to end moratorium on internet sales taxes.
- Romney took no position on estate tax issue in 2002 and signed 50% increase in state cremation fee, which observers called “hidden tax on the dead.”

FOREIGN POLICY

- Romney has no foreign policy experience.
- Though generally described as a supporter of the president's policy in Iraq, Romney came under fire in April 2007 for advocating "secret" withdrawal timetable similar to proposal by Sen. Mark Pryor (D-AR).
- In June 2007, Romney stepped up his criticism of the Bush Administration's Iraq policy by publicly denouncing the White House's comparison of future troop presence in Iraq to our current presence in South Korea.
- Romney hedged on endorsing troop surge and has been criticized for not talking enough about Iraq.
- During June 2006 presidential debate, Romney incorrectly claimed weapons inspectors were not allowed to enter Iraq before the 2003 U.S. invasion.
- When Romney finally endorsed the president's troop surge proposal, he unintentionally endorsed larger surge than was proposed by calling for extra regiment in Anbar province.
- Romney said capturing Osama bin Laden would result in "very insignificant increase in safety" for America and such effort was "not worth moving heaven and earth and spending billions of dollars" to catch one person.
- After calling for economic divestment from Iran, Romney was embarrassed by revelation that the Italian branch of Bain & Company – firm where Romney started as young consultant and served as CEO in early '90s – received \$2.3 million contract from National Iranian Oil Company in 2004.
- Bain Capital, the private equity firm that made Romney his fortune, currently owns a chemicals and paint company called SigmaKalon that operates an office in Tehran.
- Romney has made favorable comments about plan offered by Sen. Joe Biden (D-DE) to split Iraq into thirds.
- Romney has proposed doubling the size of the Guantanamo Bay detention facility and supports "enhanced interrogation techniques."
- Romney called Cuban president Fidel Castro a "monster" and has taken hard line against the dictator, but mistakenly employed signature Castro slogan while speaking to largely Hispanic audience in Miami this year.
- Romney praised 2005 plan by Citgo Petroleum Corp. – ultimately controlled by the Venezuelan government and President Hugo Chavez – to provide low-income Massachusetts residents with discounted heating oil.

DOMESTIC POLICY

Campaign Finance Reform

- In 2002, Romney proposed installing 10 percent tax on private donations to political campaigns.
- Romney praised McCain at campaign rally shortly before 2002 election, saying he shared McCain's "values"
- Romney once proposed capping spending on elections, abolishing PACs and "tightening regulations."
- *National Review's* Ramesh Ponnuru said Romney once held campaign finance positions "to the left of McCain-Feingold."

Immigration

- In November 2005, Romney said McCain immigration plan was "quite different" from amnesty and called plan "reasonable."

- Romney in 2005: “I think an amnesty program is what – which is all the illegal immigrants who are here are now citizens, and walk up and get your citizenship. What the president has proposed, and what Senator McCain and Cornyn have proposed, are quite different than that.”
- In March 2006, Romney supported “path toward citizenship” for illegal immigrants.
- Romney in 2006: “Those that are here paying taxes and not taking government benefits should begin a process towards application for citizenship.”
- Romney in 2006: “The 11 million or so that are here are not going to be rounded up and box-carted out of America.”
- Romney’s current immigration stance is at odds with top FL Republicans like Jeb Bush, Charlie Crist and Mel Martinez as he places emphasis on Florida in quest for GOP nomination.
- Romney mischaracterized former Gov. Jeb Bush’s immigration position, comparing his own initiative to let state police arrest illegal immigrants to a more limited, terrorism-focused program initiated by Bush in wake of 9/11 attacks.
- Romney has failed to clearly articulate any plan for dealing with the estimated 12 million illegal immigrants in the U.S.
- For more than a decade, Romney used services of company heavily reliant on illegal immigrant labor to perform landscaping duties at his home.
- While Romney was governor, state of Massachusetts approved government contract for New Bedford firm raided in early 2007 for massive immigration law violations.

Environment and Energy

- In 2003, Romney said, “I think the global warming debate is now pretty much over.”
- As governor, Romney was open to “regional cap and trade” system to address global warming – saying “now is the time to take action” – but later pulled Massachusetts out of regional agreement on same day he announced he would not seek reelection.
- In 2004, a Romney press event announcing new state policy to combat global warming was marred by his refusal to admit global warming is actually happening.
- As candidate for governor, Romney proposed increasing excise taxes on vehicles with high gas mileage – otherwise known as an “SUV tax.”
- Romney has been open to raising the federal gas tax in the past and has not ruled it out in the future.
- In 2007 television appearance, Romney refused to rule out a carbon tax or carbon caps if elected president.
- Romney teamed with Sen. Ted Kennedy to oppose renewable energy project on Cape Cod known as “Cape Wind.”

Health Care

- Romney changed positions on importing cheaper prescription drugs from Canada – first supporting it, now opposing it.
- Romney called rate of growth of prescription drug costs “outrageous” and said Medicare drug benefit passed in 2003 was too expensive and criticized the Bush Administration for failing to enact broader reforms.
- Romney’s health insurance reform plan has been assailed by conservative health care experts as “a gourmet recipe for runaway spending” and praised by Ted Kennedy, Hillary Clinton and John Kerry.

- Romney once called his state's health insurance law a "once in a generation" achievement.
- *Wall Street Journal* said Romney oversold virtues of healthcare plan, imposed government mandate and now distances himself from own policy.
- Plan is encountering higher costs and more bureaucracy than Romney promised, as officials warn costs must be controlled or the program will be unsustainable.
- Plan will cost millions more than anticipated while exempting 20% of uninsured from coverage mandate.
- Romney health plan expanded access to abortion, required Planned Parenthood representative on state policy panel.

BUSINESS RECORD

- Romney spent most of his business career as CEO of private equity firm Bain Capital – as of June 2007 he maintained an investor's stake in the company.
- Bain Capital has been criticized for relentless focus on bottom line at expense of workers and jobs.
- Romney describes himself as a "business legend" in his campaign ads and once said of himself: "I'm basically in the investor's Hall of Fame."
- Bain Capital and Bain & Co. employees donated at least \$171,000 to Romney's presidential campaign in Q1 2007 and gave tens of thousands more in support of his previous political activities.
- Bain Capital financed 1988 buyout with junk bonds issued by Drexel Burnham – when SEC filed charges against the firm and CEO Michael Milken, Bain Capital maintained their business relationship; Romney later reminisced about "the glorious days of Drexel Burnham."
- In 2004, Bain & Co. received a multi-million dollar contract from the National Iranian Oil Company.
- Romney sat on board of directors of Bain portfolio company Damon Clinical Laboratories, which in 1996 was fined over \$100 million for Medicare fraud committed during Romney's tenure.
- Bain Capital owned company named Ampad that purchased an Indiana paper plant, fired its workers and offered to bring them back at drastically reduced salary and benefits – the firings became an issue in the 1994 Senate race when workers blamed Romney for their situation and appeared in Kennedy campaign ads.
- After Romney became governor, Bain Capital teamed up with Chinese appliance maker Haier Group in 2005 in effort to purchase Newton, IA-based Maytag Corp. and send jobs overseas.
- At least two Bain Capital companies – Stream International and Modus Media – focused on outsourced technical support services, expanding facilities abroad while contracting operations in the United States.
- Bain Capital operated steel company called GS Industries which went bankrupt in 2001 after years of labor strife, closing a plant in Kansas City and laying off over 700 workers.

POLITICAL ISSUES

- In late 2002, Romney described himself as "a progressive-on-social-issues governor of Massachusetts."
- Romney left the state GOP weaker than when he took over as governor, with the party described as being "at its weakest point in years."
- During 1998 panel on urban issues, Romney addressed need for Boston business communities to work together and claimed "Hillary Clinton is very much right, it does take a village."
- In 1994, Romney opposed the Contract with America without even reading it.

- Romney has made political contributions to Democratic candidates, saying he places friendship above politics.
- Romney appeared in 2003 TV ad endorsing Democrat Rocky Anderson – who has been outspoken in calling for President Bush’s impeachment over Iraq war – for reelection as Salt Lake City mayor; Romney featured an Anderson testimonial in his own TV ads while running for governor in 2002.
- Romney proclaimed he wasn’t a Republican during the Reagan years, saying “I was an independent during the time of Reagan-Bush. I’m not trying to return to Reagan-Bush.”
- Romney was an independent until deciding to run for the Senate in 1994.
- Romney voted for Paul Tsongas in the 1992 Democratic presidential primary.
- Romney has surrounded himself with policy advisers – like Gregory Mankiw, Vin Weber, Kerry Healey, Bill Weld and more – who do not share his beliefs on key issues.
- Top Romney campaign aides and surrogates have ties to several recent Washington ethics scandals.
- Romney’s spending decisions as chairman of the Republican Governors Association during 2006 election cycle “raised eyebrows” in light of his presidential aspirations.