

Jamie Raskin

Jamie Raskin is a professor of constitutional law at American University's Washington College of Law and Director of its Program on Law and Government and its Marshall-Brennan Constitutional Literacy Project. He is also a Democratic State Senator in Maryland representing Silver Spring and Takoma Park and serving on the Senate's Judicial Proceedings Committee.

Professor Raskin has written dozens of essays and law review articles and several books, including the 2003 Washington Post Bestseller *Overruling Democracy: The Supreme Court versus the American People*, an analysis of conservative judicial activism and its effect on political democracy, and *We the Students*, which analyzes Supreme Court decisions affecting America's students and has been called "the bible of the new movement for constitutional literacy." In 1999 Raskin founded the Marshall-Brennan Constitutional Literacy Project, which has sent hundreds of law students at seven different law schools into public high schools to teach thousands of students a semester-long course in constitutional literacy.

Professor Raskin is an active pro bono lawyer, and has successfully represented high school students facing censorship, Greenpeace, unions defending their free speech rights, Ross Perot in his suit to be included in presidential debates, and Cindy Sheehan in her effort to get charges dropped when she was arrested at the 2006 State of the Union Address in the Capitol building for wearing an anti-war T-shirt. He was also one of the lawyers in *Alexander v. Daley* arguing that the disenfranchisement of citizens of Washington, D.C. violates Equal Protection. Professor Raskin was the first Chairman of Maryland's Higher Education Labor Relations Board and wrote the rules through which more than 7,000 Marylanders gained collective bargaining rights.

In September 2006, in his first bid for public office, Raskin won 67% of the vote in the Democratic Primary for State Senate from Maryland's District 20, toppling a 32-year incumbent, and in November of that year captured 99% of the vote in the general election. Now a member of the Maryland Senate's Judicial Proceedings Committee, the Joint Committee on the Chesapeake Bay and Coastal Regions, the Joint Committee on Legislative Ethics and the Joint Committee on Federal Relations, Senator Raskin saw more than a dozen of his bills passed into law in his first legislative session, including a farm-to-schools program to get locally grown fresh farm food into public school cafeterias, Maryland's first statewide civil rights law giving victims of discrimination the right to a jury trial and compensatory damages, a consumer safety law protecting automobile purchasers, a law giving tenants facing a condo conversion the right to purchase their units and to be notified of the purchase price six months in advance, a law establishing September 17 as Constitution and Bill of Rights Day in Maryland, and the National Popular Vote law, which made Maryland the first state in the Union to adopt a plan for a nationwide interstate compact to cast every state's electoral college votes for the winner of the national popular vote.

The Washington Post has described Raskin as the Senate's "authority on constitutional issues," the Silver Spring Voice recently called him the "whiz kid" of the General Assembly, and the Takoma Voice, in its "Best of the Best" readers choice issue, named him Montgomery County's 2007 "Most Responsive Elected Official." PolitickerMD.com recently named him "Maryland's Smartest Legislator."

A *magna cum laude* graduate of Harvard College and Harvard Law School, where he was an Editor of the Harvard Law Review, Senator Raskin speaks French and is learning Spanish. He lives with his wife Sarah, Maryland's Banking Commissioner, and their three children, Hannah, Tommy and Tabitha, in Takoma Park, Maryland.

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