

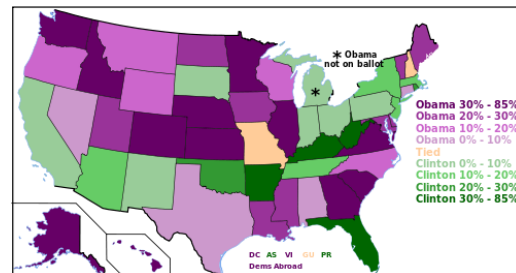
The Obama Administration

The 2008 Election

New York Senator Hillary Clinton was the **first** former First Lady and the **first** female from a major political party (Democrat) to run for President.

Illinois Senator Barack Obama (Democrat) was the **first** African American to be considered as a major presidential candidate.

In the early 2008 primaries, Obama won Iowa, Clinton won New Hampshire setting the stage for debates and campaign travel by both candidates.



Arizona Senator John McCain was the Republican front-runner over his opponent, **Mike Huckabee** from Arkansas.

In February 2008, **Ralph Nader** announced his nomination as a third-party candidate under the Independent Party. In 2000, when Nader ran under the Green Party, he was blamed for taking votes away from the Democratic Party.



Senator Clinton fell behind in the polls but refused to quit up and until the Democratic Convention, when Barack Obama was their nominated candidate for president. Both Obama and Clinton brought thousands of **new voters** into the election campaign, especially younger voters, African Americans, and Hispanics.

Barack Obama chose **Senator Joseph Biden of Delaware** as his vice-presidential running mate while John McCain chose **Sarah Palin, Governor of Alaska** as his vice-presidential running mate.



In the election Ralph Nader received close to 700,000 popular votes but did not receive any Electoral votes. McCain conceded as Obama received 365 Electoral Votes (68%) while he only received 173. Democrats also controlled both the House of Representatives and the Senate.

Domestic Issues during the Obama Administration

Obama inherited an economic crisis and knew that an enormous **stimulus plan** was needed to restore stability in the nation.

- Bank failures and companies requiring assistance created his “bailout” program
- TARP (Troubled Asset Relief Program) where \$ 700 billion was put into failing banks
- The Big Three in the auto industry, Ford, Chevrolet, and Chrysler received taxpayer loans
- Efforts were made to stop home foreclosures

The Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009 was the first law signed into law by Obama. The Ledbetter pay discrimination case went back to 1998 and then overturned by the Supreme Court due to too much time passing between the discrimination and the filing. Obama’s **Fair Pay Act** ended the issues of timing for filing a pay discrimination suit and named the Act after Lilly Ledbetter.

In March 2010, President Obama signed into law the **Health Care Reform Bill**, which would later be called the **Affordable Care Act** or **Obamacare**. This law has been challenged many times but repeal by Republicans has remained unsuccessful.

Other domestic issues faced were:

- Millions of dollars from the government stimulus plan was marked for states to improve **education**
- Stimulus dollars were used to help repair the nation’s **infrastructure**
- In the spring of 2013, bipartisan legislature made progress on new **immigration** legislation. It is still to be debated or voted on in the house.
- **Social Security reform** was made but did not receive congressional approval
- Ideas were submitted to help **stop the police violence** against African Americans. Equal treatment under the law was proposed for peaceful demonstrations.

In the **2010 Congressional elections**, the Republican Party won back control in the House of Representatives. **John Boehner** of Ohio became the new Speaker of the House while **Nancy Pelosi**, the former Speaker, became the Minority Leader. The Republican Party gained back some seats in the Senate but the Democrats still had the majority vote. These Republican gains were due to a protest against some of the president’s policies such as the U.S. involvement in the wars in **Iraq and Afghanistan**, the failure to reduce the federal deficit, consistently high unemployment, the passage of the Health care Reform Bill, and the failure to adopt immigration reform.

The Election of 2012 saw President Obama face no opposition for the Democratic Party nomination. His Republican opponent was **Mitt Romney**, the former Governor of Massachusetts.

Obama defeated Romney, winning a majority of both the Electoral College and the popular vote. **Obama won 332 electoral votes and 51.1% of the popular vote compared to Romney's 206 electoral votes and 47.3%.**



The Foreign Issues Facing the Obama Administration

Similar to presidents before him, President Obama had to face problems with **wars and political unrest in the Middle East** and the threats that they made to national security and foreign policy.

Obama began to withdraw troops from **Iraq** and by October 2011, there were less than 39,000 soldiers in the region. In December 2011, the war in Iraq was officially over. At the same time the number of U.S. troops in **Afghanistan** was increased to 100,000. The war in Afghanistan was seen as necessary due to the once-defeated **Taliban** starting to regain power and control in the country. The United States position was that the Afghan government must be helped in its effort to maintain stability against the Taliban and other terrorist organizations such as **al Qaeda** and **ISIS** (often called by Obama as **ISIL**).

The **Syrian Civil War** was of great concern to Obama as thousands of civilians, women, and children were being killed and the refugee problem was increasing daily. President Obama pledged that the United States would accept some of the estimated 11 million Syrian refugees. This turned into a political debate as some feared that terrorists may use this opportunity to enter America.

ISIS (Islamic State of Iraq) or **ISIL** (Islamic State of Iraq and Levant) wanted to create a hardline Islamic state that includes both Iraq and Syria. As the Syrian Civil War escalated, heavy fighting between ISIS and the United States took place in eastern Syria.

Arab Spring took place in 2011 as a result of uprisings against established and often dictatorial governments in **Tunisia** and then spreading into Egypt, Yemen, Bahrain, Libya, Syria, and other regions. As part of a NATO mission, the United States participated in attacks in **Libya** to assist rebels removing from power the longtime dictator **Muammar Gadhafi**. In October 2012, a terrorist attack took place at an American mission in **Benghazi**, Libya. The American ambassador and three other people were killed. The surprise attack caused a series of congressional hearings regarding U.S. security measures. The Committee's eight-hundred page report, which wrapped up a two-year, seven-million-dollar investigation, specifically reprimanded the State Department, then under **Secretary of State Hillary Clinton**; the Pentagon, headed at the time by Defense Secretary Leon Panetta; and the C.I.A.



As a result of both the issues related to domestic and foreign policies, the **2014 Midterm Elections** saw the **Republican Party control both houses** in Congress. President Obama now had more difficulty to pass and enact and of his political agenda during his second term in office.

Obama's two-terms in office was to end with the **Presidential Election of 2016** which saw **Hillary Clinton** win the Democratic Party nomination over **Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont**. The Republican Party nominated **Donald J. Trump**, a New York self-proclaimed billionaire, businessman, land-developer and television personality. Clinton would win the popular vote but **Trump won the Electoral Vote 306 to 232** and the Obama presidency would come to an end.