

COUNCIL *on* FOREIGN RELATIONS

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John D. Rockefeller IV

Senator John “Jay” Rockefeller proudly served the people of West Virginia for fifty years. Rockefeller first came to West Virginia in 1964 as a 27-year-old VISTA volunteer serving in the small mining community of Emmons. Many of the lessons that Rockefeller learned in Emmons have shaped his public service career and led to his life-long commitment to improving the lives of West Virginians and all Americans.

As a senator, Rockefeller had an extensive and distinguished career fighting to improve healthcare, diversify and expand economic opportunities in West Virginia, and strengthen the lives of children and families. He coauthored legislation to improve educational opportunities for students, promoted STEM education and scientific innovation, and helped every school and library connect to the Internet.

Rockefeller, a former chairman of both the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence and the Senate Committee on Veterans’ Affairs, is also known for his strong national security credentials, support for our nation’s soldiers and veterans, and oversight of the country’s intelligence programs. As chairman of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation, Rockefeller also played a leading role in crafting and improving the country’s cybersecurity policies.

Rockefeller graduated from Harvard University in 1961 with a BA in Far Eastern Languages and History. In 1964, he came to Emmons, West Virginia, where he began his public service career. In 1966, he was elected to the West Virginia House of Delegates and to the office of West Virginia Secretary of State in 1968. He served as president of West Virginia Wesleyan College from 1973 to 1976. In 1976, Rockefeller was elected governor of West Virginia, and was re-elected in 1980. In 1984, he was elected to the U.S. Senate, and re-elected in 1990, 1996, 2002 and 2008, retiring at the end of his term in 2015. He has been a member of the Council on Foreign Relations since 1978.

Since 1967, Rockefeller has been married to Sharon Percy Rockefeller with whom he has four children: John, Valerie, Charles, and Justin. Jay and Sharon are also the proud grandparents of four granddaughters and two grandsons.