



*Mark Steven Kirk*  
Class of 1977

**MARK STEVEN KIRK** was elected to the United States Senate on November 2, 2010, winning a special election to serve the final weeks of President Barack Obama's Senate term in addition to winning a regular six-year term starting January 3, 2011.

Born in Champaign, Illinois, Kirk graduated from New Trier High School in Winnetka and attended the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México. He then enrolled at Cornell University, where he graduated cum laude with a B.A. in History. After completion of his undergraduate studies, Kirk obtained a Master's Degree from the London School of Economics and a Juris Doctorate from Georgetown University.

In 1989, Kirk was commissioned as an Intelligence Officer in the United States Navy Reserve. Over his career, Kirk served in Operation Northern Watch and was awarded a Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal for his service in Operation Allied Force. From December 2008 to January 2009, Kirk became the first sitting House member to deploy to an imminent danger area since 1942 when he served as special advisor for counter-narcotics in Kandahar, Afghanistan. In 2013, Kirk retired from the Navy with the rank of Commander.

In January 2012, Kirk suffered an ischemic stroke and underwent surgeries at Northwestern Memorial Hospital to relieve swelling in his brain. After nearly a year of intensive recovery and rehabilitation, Kirk triumphantly returned to work by climbing the 45 steps of the U.S. Capitol on January 3, 2013.

Kirk was elected to the United States House of Representatives in 2000 and went on to serve five terms representing the people of Illinois' 10th Congressional District in Congress. On November 29, 2010, Kirk was sworn in as United States Senator from the state of Illinois.

He serves on the Committees on Appropriations, Banking, Housing and Urban Development and Health, Education, Labor and Pensions as well as the Special Committee on Aging.

