

U.S. Senate

Ricketts seeks a full term against independent Dan Osborn; no Democratic nominee (the state party backs Osborn). October 2026 polls ranged from Osborn +1 to Ricketts +5.

Dan Osborn

INDEPENDENT · CHALLENGER

Navy veteran, steamfitter and former union local president who led the 2021 Kellogg's strike; 2024 independent Senate candidate.

Pete Ricketts

REPUBLICAN · INCUMBENT

U.S. Senator since 2023; governor of Nebraska 2015–2023 and former TD Ameritrade executive.

Where the candidates stand on the issues Pope Leo XIV has raised, in their own words and votes. Bracketed numbers link to sources. We do not rate, score, or endorse candidates.

WAR & PEACE

POPE LEO XIV *Leo invited citizens of every country involved in the war with Iran to contact their leaders and members of Congress “to work for peace and to reject war and violence.”* Remarks at Castel Gandolfo, Apr. 7, 2026 (Vatican News via The Good Newsroom)

DAN OSBORN

Calls for “ending the war in Iran and cutting off aid to Israel until they end their aggression against Gaza”; says no U.S.-made weapon should be used on a school or hospital.

[1] Osborn: Protect the Good Life

PETE RICKETTS

Said Iran’s leaders “would certainly use” nuclear weapons and opposed Sen. Tim Kaine’s Iran war powers resolution, saying Kaine “is trying to limit the president’s ability to protect us.”

[1] 10/11 Now: Ricketts on Iran: ‘Up to the president to decide’

VOTING RECORD

No Iran war powers resolution (H.Con.Res. 86), June 2026
No Iran war powers resolution (H.Con.Res. 89), Sept. 2026
Yes Russia sanctions bill (H.R. 5334), Aug. 2026

AI & THE DIGNITY OF WORK

POPE LEO XIV *“No one can be reduced to productivity, to cognitive performance, or to mere data.”* Magnifica Humanitas presentation, May 25, 2026

DAN OSBORN

Former union president who says AI data centers are raising utility bills and companies are cutting jobs because of AI; wants guardrails on data centers and their water use, and more accessible trade schools and apprenticeships.

[1] Osborn: Protect Our Paychecks

[2] Osborn: Protect the Good Life

PETE RICKETTS

No public position found.

THE POOR & THE SAFETY NET

POPE LEO XIV *The preferential choice for the poor is “a source of extraordinary renewal both for the Church and for society.”* Dilexi Te, Oct. 4, 2025

DAN OSBORN

Criticizes Ricketts’s vote for the 2025 law’s Medicaid cuts; supports protecting Medicaid home-care waivers, Medicaid drug-price negotiation, no cuts to Social Security or Medicare, and a middle-class tax cut.

[1] Osborn: Protect Our Paychecks, Social Security and Healthcare

PETE RICKETTS

Voted for the 2025 reconciliation law (One Big Beautiful Bill Act), including its Medicaid and SNAP changes.

[1] Senate Roll Call Vote 372 (2025): H.R. 1 passage

VOTING RECORD

Yes One Big Beautiful Bill Act (H.R. 1), July 2025 — tax cuts with Medicaid and SNAP changes

LIFE OF THE UNBORN

POPE LEO XIV *Abortion “cuts short a growing life and refuses to welcome the gift of life.”* [Address to the Diplomatic Corps, Jan. 9, 2026](#)

DAN OSBORN

Says he is “personally pro-life” but that government should not make health decisions for people; his campaign has said he would support restoring Roe-era protections.

[1] Osborn: Defend Our Freedoms and the Constitution

[2] Semafor: Union leader Dan Osborn looks for a Nebraska upset

PETE RICKETTS

Says “life begins at conception” and in 2022 opposed exceptions for rape and incest: “they’re still babies too.”

[1] Newsweek: Ricketts vows total abortion ban if Roe overturned

VOTING RECORD

Yes Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act (S. 6), Jan. 2025 — vote to advance the bill (failed, 52–47; 60 needed)

THE DEATH PENALTY

POPE LEO XIV *Someone who opposes abortion but favors the death penalty “is not really pro-life.”* [AP via PBS NewsHour, Sept. 30, 2025](#)

DAN OSBORN

No public position found.

PETE RICKETTS

Supports capital punishment. As governor he vetoed the Legislature’s 2015 repeal (overridden) and helped fund the 2016 referendum that restored it; Nebraska carried out an execution in 2018 during his tenure.

[1] Wikipedia: Pete Ricketts (death penalty)

IMMIGRANTS & REFUGEES

POPE LEO XIV *“Defending human life also includes welcoming, protecting and assisting immigrants.”* [Letter on the 250th Anniversary of the United States, June 25, 2026](#)

DAN OSBORN

Calls for “meaningful immigration reform,” more immigration lawyers and judges, a streamlined process and vetting; supported the 2024 bipartisan border bill’s 1,500 additional border agents.

[1] Semafor: Union leader Dan Osborn looks for a Nebraska upset

PETE RICKETTS

Voted for the Laken Riley Act (January 2025), requiring detention of migrants charged with theft-related crimes; endorsed by the National Border Patrol Council.

[1] Senate Roll Call Vote 7 (2025): Laken Riley Act

[2] Chadron Radio: Border Patrol Council endorses Ricketts

VOTING RECORD

Yes Laken Riley Act (S. 5), Jan. 2025 — requires detention of undocumented immigrants charged with theft and certain crimes

Yes Secure America Act (S. 2), June 2026 — reconciliation funding for ICE and Customs and Border Protection

RELIGIOUS LIBERTY & EDUCATION

POPE LEO XIV *Religious freedom is “the right of every person to worship according to conscience.”* [Letter on the 250th Anniversary of the United States, June 25, 2026](#)

DAN OSBORN

No public position found.

PETE RICKETTS

No campaign statement found. See voting record below.

VOTING RECORD

Yes One Big Beautiful Bill Act (H.R. 1), July 2025 — created a federal tax credit for donations to K–12 scholarship organizations

CARE FOR CREATION

POPE LEO XIV *“We cannot love God, whom we cannot see, while despising his creatures.”* [AP, Oct. 1, 2025](#)

DAN OSBORN

Calls for protecting the Ogallala Aquifer from data-center water demands and supports year-round E15 as an alternative market for farmers.

[1] Osborn: Protect the Good Life

[2] Osborn: Fight Like Hell for Rural Nebraska

PETE RICKETTS

As governor opposed the Clean Power Plan and supported the Keystone XL pipeline; has opposed Biden-era vehicle-emissions regulations and expansion of the Waters of the U.S. rule.

[1] Wikipedia: Pete Ricketts (environment)

VOTING RECORD

Yes Resolution overturning EPA approval of California vehicle-emission rules (H.J.Res. 87), May 2025

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