

Background on the Senator-elect's statements, positions, and record on diplomacy, international assistance, and U.S. international affairs programs.

A former San Antonio public school teacher first elected to the Texas House in 2018, Senator-Elect James Talarico connects international engagement to Texans' security and livelihoods, saying "**For Texans, foreign policy isn't foreign**," adding the importance of "**Restoring American leadership on the world stage with smart diplomacy, strong alliances, and a foreign policy that keeps Texans safe**." He rejects efforts to shut America off from the world, arguing that isolation makes the country weaker and less secure.

Talarico grew up in Round Rock, Texas and holds degrees from the University of Texas at Austin, Harvard University, and the Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary.

ON DIPLOMACY AND U.S. INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE:

- On his campaign website, Talarico pledges to "Ensure the State Department is fully funded and staffed, reverse the unlawful dismantling of the U.S. Agency for International Development, and restore investments in programs that combat violence, famine, disease, and human suffering — recognizing that these investments are strategic to America's interests."
- "I'm committed to working in partnership with our foreign allies and engaging in diplomacy that will help us prevent attacks on American soil and avoid unnecessary wars," he says, describing development investments as "strategic to America's interests."
- In a Rio Grande Valley forum, Talarico urged diplomatic and economic pressure on Mexico over cross-border water obligations, saying, "We should use our diplomatic leverage and lean on our trade relationship to ensure that Mexico, our neighbor, is upholding its part of our water treaty agreement."
- Drawing on his seminary background Talarico said, "I believe democracy is a Christian value…and that umbrella is the idea that people should be able to govern themselves and that we should be able to resolve our conflicts non-violently."

ON U.S. NATIONAL SECURITY:

- On Venezuela, Talarico has been critical of the Trump Administration's military action, stating on MSNBC, "This new war is just the latest example of how billionaires run this country, run this economy, run this government, and now run our foreign policy. As U.S. Senator, I will never vote to send someone's son or daughter to war to make billionaires richer."
- On security and relations in the Western Hemisphere, Talarico said, "The metaphor I've used is that our southern border should be like our front porch. There should be a giant welcome mat out front and a lock on the door. We can both welcome the stranger, welcome immigrants who want to contribute to this economy, who want to live the American dream, who want to make us stronger and richer, and we can keep people out who mean to do us harm."

ON GLOBAL ECONOMIC ENGAGEMENT:

- His rural platform calls for removing tariffs on agricultural equipment and fertilizer and addressing retaliatory tariffs affecting agricultural exports. His foreign-policy platform also supports trade partnerships with "strong protections for American workers."
- In a July 2026 speech, Talarico expanded on his opposition to tariffs, saying, "Higher tariffs mean fewer jobs. It also means higher prices for working people. And I think we have to repeal these crazy tariffs. We've got to get some common sense back into our trade policy, back into our economic policy."

ON RUSSIA'S WAR IN UKRAINE:

- Talarico calls for "more — not less — cooperation" with NATO, the European Union, and other allies. On Ukraine, he supports measures allowing the United States, Ukraine, and European partners to "negotiate from a position of strength," protect Ukraine's long-term security, and "hold Russia accountable for the cost of its aggression."
- At an October 2026 CNN Town Hall, Talarico said about Ukraine, "I think we learned back in the Second World War that when we failed to stand up to an aggressor in Europe that comes back to haunt us and we need to strengthen Ukraine. We need to strengthen our NATO allies as they stand up to Russian aggression… I think what we're doing in Ukraine is a good investment. I think it will save us money in the long run." He added that the prospect of resuming Russian oil purchases, "to enable and appease Vladimir Putin is a mistake."

ON CONFLICT IN THE MIDDLE EAST:

- In a March 2026 interview, criticizing the Iran war, Talarico said, "We can support the democracy movement in Iran. We can prevent Iran from getting a nuclear weapon. Both should absolutely be priorities of our foreign policy. But it should be done through our partnerships with allies. It should be done using our economic strength through our intelligence community. But this kind of military intervention, without much forethought, without much explanation, to me, just reminds me of the forever wars."
- Talarico said on MSNBC, "I would vote to end this disastrous war in Iran as quickly as possible. You know, as a millennial, I saw how military disasters, like the Iraq war, robbed this nation of young lives, of billions of dollars, and of our moral standing around the world. And I think this administration is making the exact same mistakes in Iran."
- In an October 2026 CBS News interview, Talarico urged rebuilding regional alliances "to bring Iran back to the negotiating table, open up the Strait of Hormuz, and ensure that Iran doesn't get a nuclear weapon."
- In October 2023, Talarico voted for Texas House Resolution 10, "reaffirming Texas' support for Israel and its right to defend its citizens" following Hamas' October 7 attack.
- Talarico's platform states "Israel has the right to defend its people," and calls for using "all of America's financial and diplomatic leverage to secure a two-state solution that disarms Hamas, establishes a democratic Palestinian state, halts Israel's illegal settlements, and respects the sovereignty of both nations," and calls for "stopping offensive weapons sales to the Netanyahu government while supporting defensive systems like the Iron Dome."