

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

A two-term Iowa State Representative and two-time Paralympic gold medalist in wheelchair basketball for Team USA, Senator-elect Josh Turek said "**I was not only representing my family or my community or my state... I am representing my entire country**."

He has emphasized access to overseas markets for farmers and supported state assistance for refugee resettlement. Turek has served since 2023 as a member of the Iowa House of Representatives where he is Ranking Member of the Health and Human Services Appropriations Subcommittee and a member of the Natural Resources and Veterans Affairs committees. He has a bachelors degree from Southwest Minnesota State University and an MBA from DeVry University.

ON U.S. GLOBAL LEADERSHIP AND AMERICA'S ROLE IN THE WORLD:

- On foreign policy, Turek has said, "Whether it's from the agriculture industry, economic industry, veterans, foreign affairs, I'm willing to sit down with anyone to have a conversation about ways that we can put together bipartisan policy to move the ball forward."

ON U.S. INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE:

- On the ability for Iowa farmers to feed the world, Turek said, "As you look at the world's population continuing to grow... we have an enormous opportunity to be the breadbasket and the breadwinners along with energy."
- Turek emphasized his own experience running a non-profit with programs in the U.S. and overseas, saying, "One thing is that I had been doing for more than a decade, myself and my best friend Ryan Martin, we had been running a nonprofit for disabled kids and running adaptive sports camps for kids. We ran camps both in the U.S. and then out of the country, just to try to be a role model to the next generation."

ON GLOBAL HEALTH:

- On domestic and global health systems, Turek said, "I've lived in multiple places and seen different things. I've seen how different health care systems operate, how that affects, you know, the disabled communities and the community at large."
- In an August 2026 interview, Turek described seeing people with disabilities "completely ostracized" in parts of North Africa, the Caribbean, and South America because of a "complete and total lack of infrastructure," adding that these experiences "fundamentally altered and shaped my political ideology."

ON GLOBAL ECONOMIC ENGAGEMENT:

- Asked about tariffs, Turek said, “Our farmers need, more than any other group, need open trade, need open markets... We certainly need strategic tariffs and tariffs to protect American jobs and to protect American manufacturing, but not off the backs of the agricultural industry and not off the backs of small family farms.”
- In a September 2026 interview, Turek called for congressional authority over tariffs, saying, “The power of the tariffs were meant to be by the Constitution in the hands of the legislature,” and “I think that we should repeal the tariffs.”
- At an October 2026 debate, he identified tariffs he would oppose, saying, “One I’m against, the chaotic tariffs that we’ve seen with Canada,” citing imported fertilizer inputs and adding, “one I would really like to see end is the 10% tariffs on soybeans.”
- In a June 2026 interview, he criticized U.S. financial support for Argentina in the context of China’s soybean purchases, stating, “The Trump administration gives 20 billion dollars to Argentina so the Chinese can buy their soybeans. Meanwhile, our Iowa soybean farmers are upside down and it’s bad federal policy.”

ON RUSSIA'S WAR IN UKRAINE:

- Asked about a U.S. role in Ukraine, Turek said, “That is a sovereign country that has been invaded by a foreign power... and that is an area where we should support.”
- At an October 2026 Senate debate, Turek opposed buying Russian diesel even to reduce fuel costs, stating, “I don’t think it should be at the expense of benefiting the economy of someone like Vladimir Putin who we clearly cannot trust.”

ON CONFLICT IN THE MIDDLE EAST:

- In a May 2026 debate, Turek said, "In the United States Senate, I will do everything that I can to prevent us from going into these unnecessary forever wars. We're spending $1 billion a day in this conflict with Iran. Meanwhile, we've got closing schools and hospitals and roads here in Iowa, a real America first approach, a real Iowa first approach is, let's take care of our citizens here."
- On Iran, Turek added, "I think we need to end this war in Iran. And let's get back to diplomacy. I certainly don't want to see Iran have a nuclear weapon, but we have to end this war. And one of my primary goals, I'm going to fight to end this war in the U.S. Senate day one,” and has said he wants to “pass the War Powers Act immediately.”
- Asked about U.S. support for Israel, Turek said, “The events of October 7th were horrific, and Hamas is certainly a terrorist organization. Israel is one of the few functioning democracies in the Mideast. But I think that one thing that we can all agree upon, regardless of where we sit on the political spectrum, is that you do not want to see any unnecessary killing of civilians and children... And my thought is that there should be no taxpayer dollars going to any organization, group, regime that is not abiding by international law."
- Turek added during an interview that Israel “certainly had the right to defend itself,” but described its response in Gaza as “disproportionate,” arguing that “any sort of support or arm sales comes with the insurance that we’re adhering to international law,” particularly for “offensive weapons.”