

THADDEUS “TAD” JUDE

Tad Jude is a Republican candidate for Minnesota’s 2026 Secretary of State race. Jude has served in elected roles across Minnesota’s legislative, county, and judicial arenas for more than 50 years. He was the youngest person ever elected to MN’s House of Representatives in 1972, where he served as a Democrat for 10 years. Jude also served in the state Senate from 1983 until 1989. He served on the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners from 1989-1993. In 1992, after an unsuccessful primary challenge for the MN-06 Congressional seat held by Rep. Gerry Sikorski, Jude switched political parties and became a Republican. Jude was repeatedly defeated in campaigns for the Sixth district seat in 1994 and 1996. In 2010, he was elected to be the judge for Minnesota’s 10th Judicial District, a position he held until 2021. In 2022, he launched unsuccessful bids for attorney general and for Hennepin County Attorney. In 2024, Jude was defeated by Democrat Kelly Morrison in the MN-03 Congressional race. Jude lives in Maple Lake with his wife, Jacelyn.

Key findings:

Jude is a vocal Trump supporter and has parroted claims about election “doubts.” In February 2024, Jude said he voted for Trump twice and planned to support him again in the General Election that year. Jude said he believed the economy was stronger and the court system more politically balanced under Trump. Jude told KTSP, “I voted for Donald Trump in 2016, 2020. I believe he’s both for working people, for people who weren’t heard in Washington.” Jude called the January 6 Capitol riot a “very sad day” and said any attacks on law enforcement that day “had to be prosecuted”. According to the *Star Tribune*, when asked whether he believed Trump’s 2020 stolen election claims, Jude said, “Joe Biden is president, and I accept him as president.” However, Jude has pushed claims that there are doubts surrounding elections. In September 2025, after launching his campaign for secretary of state, Jude said, “It’s time to end the doubts plaguing our election system and rebuild confidence in every vote cast.” In a November 2025 Facebook post, Jude similarly stated: “It’s time to clean up our voter rolls, require photo IDs, and close the door to any doubt about the security of Minnesota’s elections.” In 2025, Jude also posted on X (formerly Twitter): “No more boxes of ballots left unattended in parking lots. Democracy hinges on free and fair elections.”

As Secretary, Jude said he would strengthen voter ID requirements, clean “outdated” voter rolls, audit election results, and coordinate with state and federal “partners.” Jude has said as secretary of state, he would “improve election integrity” by strengthening voter ID requirements, “cleaning up outdated voter rolls,” enhancing election system cybersecurity, establishing bipartisan election oversight, including over polls, counting, and “audits,” and coordinating with state and federal “partners” to “ensure fair and free elections in Minnesota.” Jude also said he would eliminate Minnesota’s vouching policy if elected.

BACKGROUND

Press & News: “Jude's public service record spans the legislative, county, and judicial branches.”

“Jude's public service record spans the legislative, county, and judicial branches. Tad was elected to the Minnesota House in 1972 at age 20. The youngest legislator in state history, he later served in both the House and Senate on public safety, transportation, anti-crime, and local government issues. As chair of the House Judiciary Committee, he authored many judicial reforms and helped establish the Minnesota Court of Appeals. He later served on the Hennepin County Board of Commissioners. Most recently, Jude served for 11 years as a district court judge in Minnesota's 10th Judicial District, presiding over thousands of cases.” [Osseo-Maple Grove-Champlin-Dayton Press, [9/21/25](#)]

2010-2021: Jude served as Judge for Minnesota's 10th Judicial District. “In 2010, Jude emerged victorious from a crowd of 24 well-qualified contenders to a position as District Court Judge for Minnesota's 10th Judicial District. This district includes Anoka and seven other counties. Jude was reelected in 2016, running uncontested.” [Tad Jude for MN Committee, accessed [3/12/26](#); Star Tribune, [1/31/22](#)]

- **2016: Jude was reelected uncontested.** “In 2010, Jude emerged victorious from a crowd of 24 well-qualified contenders to a position as District Court Judge for Minnesota's 10th Judicial District. This district includes Anoka and seven other counties. Jude was reelected in 2016, running uncontested.” [Tad Jude for MN Committee, accessed [3/12/26](#)]

December 1992: Jude left the Democratic Party and became an Independent-Republican. “Tad Jude, outgoing Hennepin County commissioner, announced Thursday that he has changed his political party allegiance and is now an Independent-Republican. The move raised few eyebrows. Jude, an outspoken abortion opponent who refused to support Bill Clinton for president, was accused by critics of being a ‘bad Democrat’ during his unsuccessful bid to unseat U.S. Rep. Gerry Sikorski in a Sixth District primary race.” [Star Tribune, 12/18/92]

2010: Jude was a workers’ compensation attorney who represented the Special Compensation Fund, a position he held for 15 years. “Tad Jude, 58, of Fridley is a workers' compensation attorney who represents the Special Compensation Fund, a position he has held for 15 years. He has previous private practice experience and was a Minnesota state representative for 10 years and a state senator for six.” [St. Paul Pioneer Press, 6/10/10]

1995: Jude was hired to work in Gov. Arne Carlson’s Labor and Industry Department. “The Carlson administration has hired unsuccessful 6th District congressional candidate Tad Jude for a post in the Labor and Industry Department, the second time recently that a defeated IR congressional hopeful has landed an administration job. [...] Earlier this year, IR Gov. Arne Carlson named Bernie Omann to his personal staff to handle political matters. Omann lost a bid for the 7th District congressional seat against U.S. Rep. Collin Peterson. Omann also tried to unseat Peterson two years earlier. According to the Employee Relations Department, Jude begins his new job of planning director in Labor and Industry on Feb. 22 at an annual salary of \$49,402. Jude said he would be working on workers' compensation legislation, a major part of Carlson's agenda this year.” [St. Paul Pioneer Press, 2/18/95]

Jude earned undergraduate degree from the University of St. Thomas in 1972 and his law degree from William Mitchell College of Law in 1977. “Jude earned his undergraduate degree from the

University of St. Thomas and his law degree from William Mitchell.” [St. Paul Pioneer Press, 6/10/10; Tad Jude for MN Committee, accessed [3/12/26](#)]

1971- 1977: Jude was a member of the 523rd Army Security Agency in the Army Reserve. “Jude was a member of the 523rd Army Security Agency member in the Army Reserve.” [Tad Jude for MN Committee, accessed [3/12/26](#); CNN, Candidates Guide, [1996](#)]

2026: Jude was commander at the American Legion Post 303. “Jude remains deeply engaged in various community organizations and initiatives. He currently serves as a commander at the American Legion Post 303.” [Tad Jude for MN Committee, accessed [3/12/26](#)]

Jude was once named MN Chamber of Commerce Citizen Legislator of the Year. “Jude has been recognized for his outstanding achievements by being named the MN Chamber of Commerce Citizen Legislator of the Year, a testament to his dedication to serving his constituents and the broader business community.” [Tad Jude for MN Committee, accessed [3/12/26](#)]

2026: Jude sat on the board of Action for Children/Zambia and past boards include: Northwest YMCA, Catholic Charities of St. Paul/Minneapolis, and Jodi’s Network of Hope. “He actively participated on the Northwest YMCA Board, Catholic Charities of St. Paul/Minneapolis Board, Senior Community Services Board, and Jodi’s Network of Hope Board. He also sits on the Action for Children/Zambia Board, which is committed to global humanitarian efforts.” [Tad Jude for MN Committee, accessed [3/12/26](#)]

2026: Jude was a MN Sheriff’s Association Public Safety member. “Jude is a MN Sheriff’s Association Public Safety member. West Hennepin Human Services recognized Jude as a Citizen of Distinction. MADD has recognized his work in the areas of illegal alcohol and drug addiction.” [Tad Jude for MN Committee, accessed [3/12/26](#)]

Jude lives in Maple Grove, MN. “Tad Jude lives in Maple Grove, is married to Jacelyn, and is a father, grandfather, small business owner, and Commander of American Legion Post 303.” [Osseo-Maple Grove-Champlin-Dayton Press, [9/21/25](#)]

Jude was born December 13, 1951 in St. Cloud. [CNN, Candidates Guide, [1996](#)]

Electoral History

1973- 1983: Jude served in Minnesota’s House of Representatives. “Jude was elected to serve in the Minnesota House of Representatives from 1973-1983 and then served in the Minnesota Senate from 1983-1989.” [Crow River News, 6/11/24]

- **Jude was elected at 20 years old, making him the youngest person ever elected to the state House. Jude served in the legislature as a member of the DFL Party.** “Jude has a long history in Minnesota politics. Elected at just 20-years-old, the Maple Grove resident became the youngest ever legislator elected to the Minnesota House of Representatives where he served for 10 years before being elected to the Minnesota Senate, serving all terms as a member of the DFL party.” [St. Cloud Times, 2/22/24]

- **During his time in the legislature, Jude chaired the House Judiciary Committee.** “During his time in the legislature, Jude was the chairman of the House Judiciary Committee and worked to convert abandoned railways to public trails as well as developed a composting site in Hennepin County.” [St. Cloud Times, 2/22/24]

1983- 1989: Jude served in the Minnesota Senate. “Jude was elected to serve in the Minnesota House of Representatives from 1973-1983 and then served in the Minnesota Senate from 1983-1989.” [Crow River News, 6/11/24]

1989-1993: Jude served as a Hennepin County commissioner. “As a Democrat, Jude served five terms in the state House and two more in the Senate before leaving the Legislature to run for the Hennepin County Board. [...] Career: State legislator (1973-89); Hennepin County commissioner (1989-93) ...” [Star Tribune, 9/6/94]

1992: Jude lost Democratic primary challenge for sixth Congressional district seat held by Rep. Gerry Sikorski. “Rep. Gerry Sikorski, who wrote nearly 700 bad checks at the now-defunct House bank, barely won a tough Democratic primary battle Tuesday. [...] Sikorski, a five-term House member and onetime abortion foe who now supports abortion rights, had 34,941 votes, or 49 percent, to 32,898 votes, or 46 percent, for Hennepin County Commissioner Tad Jude with all precincts reporting.” [Associated Press, 9/16/92]

1994: Jude lost race for 6th Congressional district seat for a second time. “Republican control of the 6th CD would be short-lived once again, however, as Grams’ 1994 U.S. Senate run left the 6th ripe for the picking. Despite running in an election cycle in which the GOP netted 54 seats nationwide, DFLer Bill Luther eked out a 550-vote victory over Republican Tad Jude.” [MinnPost, 7/6/10]

- **Star Tribune: Jude lost to U.S. Rep. Bill Luther by 550 votes “in a bitter, hotly contested election.”** “A Republican who had served as a Democrat in the state Legislature for 10 years before switching parties, Jude lost to Luther by 550 votes in a bitter, hotly contested election.” [Star Tribune, 11/1/96]

1996: Jude lost rematch against U.S. Rep. Bill Luther in MN-06 Congressional District. In November 1996, Jude lost the race for the Sixth Congressional District seat held by DFL U.S. Rep. Bill Luther. Luther earned 56% of the vote to 44% gained by Jude. [The New York Times, 11/7/96]

2010: Jude won one of the most crowded judicial elections in state history to become 10th District judge, topping 23 other candidates. “The attorney who won one of the most crowded judicial elections in Minnesota history said on Wednesday that the race probably served as an educational tool and that voters now better understand what judges do. Tad Jude, a Fridley attorney and a former state legislator, topped 23 other candidates and will replace retiring Judge Tom Armstrong in the 10th Judicial District in Stillwater.” [Star Tribune, 11/4/10]

- **2016: Jude was reelected uncontested.** “In 2010, Jude emerged victorious from a crowd of 24 well-qualified contenders to a position as District Court Judge for Minnesota's 10th Judicial District. This district includes Anoka and seven other counties. Jude was reelected in 2016, running uncontested.” [Tad Jude for MN Committee, accessed [3/12/26](#)]

- **2021: Jude stepped down from the bench after a decade.** “Jude stepped down from the bench at the end of last year, capping a decade as a judge in Stillwater.” [Star Tribune, [1/31/22](#)]

May 2022: Jude dropped bid for attorney general after political newcomer Jim Schultz as endorsed at the state Republican convention. “Concerns about election integrity and crime were at the forefront as Minnesota Republicans gathered Friday for their state convention, where they endorsed political newcomer Jim Schultz for the attorney general race and Kim Crockett to be secretary of state. [...] Some delegates said Tad Jude, who has been a district judge, Hennepin County commissioner and state legislator, was the most experienced choice for the attorney general endorsement. But Jude dropped out of the fight after a couple rounds of balloting and endorsed Schultz.” [Star Tribune, 5/14/22]

August 2022: After dropping out of the AG race months earlier, Jude launched campaign for Hennepin County Attorney. “Seven candidates vying for the office of Hennepin County attorney are making the first primary for the seat in the 21st century perhaps the most competitive ever. [...] Tad Jude, 70, of Maple Grove, is a former Washington County judge, state legislator and county commissioner. He said there needs to be a crackdown on crime while filling the gaps for the mentally ill and juveniles in the system. A former DFL state representative, Jude switched parties in 1992, and more recently he sought the GOP endorsement for state attorney general.” [Star Tribune, 8/6/22]

2024: Jude lost election for MN’s 3rd Congressional District to Democrat Kelly Morrison. “The voters of Minnesota’s Third Congressional District are sending Kelly Morrison to Washington, D.C. Morrison, the DFL candidate who previously served in the Minnesota Senate, won the race against Republican Tad Jude for the open U.S. House seat. According to unofficial results from Minnesota Secretary of State, with around 85% of precincts reporting, Morrison garnered 213,027 votes (59.16%), compared to Tad Jude’s 146,652 votes (40.73%).” [Osseo-Maple Grove-Champlin-Dayton Press, 11/5/24]

Business Ownership

2026: Jude said he was instrumental in “founding three active small businesses.” Jude’s campaign website stated, “Tad developed a reputation for tireless door-knocking on tens of thousands of homes in his district. In addition to his public service, Jude has been instrumental in founding three active small businesses.” [Tad Jude for MN Committee, accessed [3/12/26](#)]

Jude listed as the manager of Jude Building LLC. A March 2026 search of Minnesota’s business entity filings found that Tad Jude was listed as the manager of a firm called Jude Building LLC. The firm, which listed Jude’s address as its “Principal Executive Office,” was formed in 2002. It was active and in good standing as of March 2026. [Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State, Business Filings search, accessed [3/12/26](#)]

Jude tied to a firm called “Tad Jude & Sons Company.” A March 2026 search of Minnesota’s business entity filings showed that an entity called “Tad Jude & Sons Company” was registered at a home previously owned by Jude. “Thaddeus J Jude” is also listed on the filings as the company’s CEO. The business was active and in good standing as of March 2026. [Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State, Business Filings search, accessed [3/12/26](#)]

Star Tribune: Jude once worked as an attorney for a “family-owned tobacco and candy wholesale distributing firm.” In 1994, a Star Tribune article described Jude as an “attorney for family-owned tobacco and candy wholesale distributing firm”. [Star Tribune, 9/6/94]

- **Jude’s grandfather started Jude Candy and Tobacco in 1935 in Maple Lake, MN. Jude’s father took over the business in 1953 and expanded it.** “Bernard Jude started Jude Candy and Tobacco in 1935 in the garage of his Maple Lake home. While Bernard was on the road supplying candy, tobacco, snacks and juices to businesses in Central Minnesota, his wife, Celia, stayed at home to answer the company phone and keep the books. Their son, Victor, joined the company after World War II and took control of the business when his father died of a heart attack in 1953 while servicing an account in Brooten, MN. Victor worked to expand Jude Candy & Tobacco while also serving as a state representative, state senator, and the father of 11 children with his wife, Ruth.” [The Maple Lake Messenger, [8/5/10](#)]
- **Jude Candy and Tobacco later became “Jude Vending and Advantage Paper” and the majority of the business was sold in 2010.** “Jude Candy and Tabacco started in Maple Lake in 1935. This eventually became Jude Vending and Advantage Paper. The majority of the company was sold to Bernicks in St. Cloud in 2010. However, the library is still getting its paper products from Jude vending located in Maple Lake.” [WJON, [10/11/24](#)]
- **1996: St. Paul Pioneer Press wrote that Jude ran a “family snack vending business.”** “Jude, 44, of Fridley, has a law degree and runs a family snack vending business.” [St. Paul Pioneer Press, 10/15/96]
- **2026 State business records tied Tad Jude to “Jude Vending.”** A March 2026 search of Minnesota’s business entity filings found a firm called “Jude Vending” that appeared to be connected to Jude. The business was active and in good standing as of March 2026. [Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State, Business Filings search, accessed [3/12/26](#)]
- **Jude Vending’s website listed Peter Jude as the company’s president.** “My name is Peter, and I am the third generation of Jude's to own this business. My grandfather, Bernard, started our family business out of the garage of his home. After WWII, my father, Victor, became involved in the company and expanded it to where he had to build a new warehouse.” [Jude Vending, accessed [3/12/26](#)]

Family

Jude is married to Jacelyn and together they shared a blended family of nine children. “Tad is married to Jacelyn and is the proud father of three children, contributing to a blended family of nine. Jude remains grounded in his commitment to serving others and making a meaningful difference in the lives of those around him.” [Tad Jude for MN Committee, accessed [3/12/26](#)]

- **Jude had three children and six stepchildren.** “He has three children and six stepchildren.” [Star Tribune, 9/20/24]

Jude and his previous wife Gail adopted an orphan from Ukraine. “John has been an adventure in the lives of Tad and Gail Jude and their family. He is an orphan from Ukraine. The Judes weren't likely adoptive parents. At the time, they had five boys ages 2 to 15, but they were intrigued by the stories of

youngsters languishing in the orphanages of Eastern European countries and the former Soviet Union.” [Star Tribune, 10/10/94]

Jude’s father was a legislator and was defeated for reelection to the state Senate in 1972 on the same day Jude was elected to the Minnesota House. “Jude grew up in a political world. His father was a legislator and was defeated for reelection to the state Senate in 1972 on the same day Tad was elected to the Minnesota House. The younger Jude was the youngest person ever elected to the Legislature, turning 21 between his election and swearing-in.” [Star-Tribune, 6/1/92]

- **Vic Jude was a member of MN’s legislature for 17 years before his eventual defeat and he was as chairman of the Wright County DFL in the 1950s.** “It’s safe to say that politics runs in Vic Jude’s family. His father, Bernard, was mayor of Maple Lake, Minn. Vic was a 17-year member of the Minnesota Legislature, and his son, Tad, of Fridley, was a longtime legislator and Hennepin County commissioner. [...] Jude, of Maple Lake, was chairman of the Wright County DFL and treasurer of the party’s state central committee when he was elected to represent Wright County in the House in 1956. He served until 1966, when he was elected to the Senate. He was defeated in a close election in 1973, the year Tad was elected to the Legislature.” [Star Tribune, 8/17/94]

Jude’s grandfather was once mayor of Maple Lake, MN. “It’s safe to say that politics runs in Vic Jude’s family. His father, Bernard, was mayor of Maple Lake, Minn. Vic was a 17-year member of the Minnesota Legislature, and his son, Tad, of Fridley, was a longtime legislator and Hennepin County commissioner.” [Star Tribune, 8/17/94]

Jude is the nephew of Dr. James Jude, who helped develop cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). “He is the nephew of Dr. James Jude, a key figure in the development of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).” [Tad Jude for MN Committee, accessed [3/12/26](#)]

PHILOSOPHY

Jude said he voted for President Trump twice and believed the economy was stronger and the court system more politically balanced under Trump. “Jude said he voted for former President Donald Trump twice and will support whoever is on the Republican ticket this fall. The economy was stronger under Trump, he said, and the court system became more politically balanced.” [Star Tribune, [2/21/24](#)]

- **Jude said Trump was “for working people” and for people “who weren’t heard in Washington.”** “While Congressman Dean Phillips is running for president due to Joe Biden’s age, Jude said he will support Donald Trump despite his age and legal issues. “I voted for Donald Trump in 2016, 2020. I believe he’s both for working people, for people who weren’t heard in Washington,” he said.” [KTSP.com, [2/23/24](#)]
- **2024-2025: Jude was a member of Congressional nominating committee that recommended candidates to Trump for vacancies in Minnesota.** “Today, Congressman Tom Emmer (MN-06), along with Congressman Pete Stauber (MN-08), Congresswoman Michelle Fischbach (MN-07), and Congressman Brad Finstad (MN-01) announced that a nominations committee will reconvene to interview and recommend candidates to President Trump for the United States

district judge of the United States District Court for the District of Minnesota. [...] In November 2024, Congressman Emmer led the Minnesota Republican delegation in forming a nominations committee to assist in making recommendations to President Trump for U.S. Attorney, U.S. Marshal, and other vacancies that may arise in Minnesota. [...] Returning Committee members include: [...] Tad Jude, former judge in Minnesota's Tenth Judicial District" [Press release, Office of Congresswoman Michelle Fischback, [11/20/25](#)]

Jude called the January 6 Capitol riot a "very sad day" and said any attacks on law enforcement that day "had to be prosecuted". "But Jude called the Jan. 6, 2021, riot at the U.S. Capitol a 'very sad day' and said he believes any attacks on law enforcement that day 'had to be prosecuted.' Asked if he believes Trump's baseless claim that the 2020 election was illegitimate, Jude said: 'Joe Biden is president, and I accept him as president.'" [Star Tribune, [2/21/24](#)]

December 1992: Jude changed political parties and became an Independent Republican. Jude was previously accused of being a "bad Democrat" by critics. "Tad Jude, outgoing Hennepin County commissioner, announced Thursday that he has changed his political party allegiance and is now an Independent-Republican. The move raised few eyebrows. Jude, an outspoken abortion opponent who refused to support Bill Clinton for president, was accused by critics of being a 'bad Democrat' during his unsuccessful bid to unseat U.S. Rep. Gerry Sikorski in a Sixth District primary race." [Star Tribune, 12/18/92]

- **Jude: "I have found that the Republican Party is far more open, more mainstream, closer to the philosophy that I learned from Hubert Humphrey and more accommodating to alternative viewpoints".** "Jude said yesterday that he agrees with his critics and would be more comfortable as a Republican. 'I have found that the Republican Party is far more open, more mainstream, closer to the philosophy that I learned from Hubert Humphrey and more accommodating to alternative viewpoints,' he said." [Star Tribune, 12/18/92]
- **Pioneer Press: Jude "switched parties, saying he could not support President Clinton."** "He lost a DFL primary race to former Congressman Gerry Sikorski in 1992, then switched parties, saying he could not support President Clinton." [St. Paul Pioneer Press, 10/15/96]

MPR: Jude was elected to the state House over 50 years ago, "running as a Hubert Humphrey-inspired Democrat." "He won election to the Minnesota House more than 50 years ago running as a Hubert Humphrey-inspired Democrat. 'He (Humphrey) had a real good connection with working men and women and mainstream Minnesotans,' Jude said in an interview last week. 'And I would like to emulate that type of connection with mainstream Minnesotans.' After switching to the GOP, he ran twice unsuccessfully for Congress in the 1990s." [Minnesota Public Radio, 3/1/24]

2024: Jude criticized Gov. Tim Walz's performance in the vice-presidential debate and said Walz had "tarnished the enviable reputation of Minnesota public service". In an October 2024 Facebook post, Jude wrote, "My statement on the Vice-Presidential debate: 'As a lifelong Minnesotan and longtime observer of Minnesota politics and politicians going back to the days of Vice President Hubert Humphrey, I have to say Tim Walz came off as a bit of an oaf and was an embarrassment to Minnesota in the Vice-Presidential debate. However, the civility of the candidates was good and should be commended. In 90 minutes last night and over the last four years as Governor, Tim Walz has tarnished the enviable reputation of Minnesota public service with his weak, incoherent responses to real problems

facing people today. Last night, Governor Walz fumbled badly. Tim Walz is no Vice President Hubert Humphrey, and for that, I am sad for Minnesota today.” [Facebook, Posted [10/2/24](#)]

Jude: “Some of our elected leaders imply they are the saviors of democracy in America, yet seek to diminish our rights, our democratic institutions, and to gain more and more control over our lives.” “Some of our elected leaders imply they are the saviors of democracy in America, yet seek to diminish our rights, our democratic institutions, and to gain more and more control over our lives. Much of this effort is aimed at taking down challengers seeking political office. As your candidate for Minnesota’s next Third District Congressman, I am working to create an efficient and accountable government with transparency and common-sense deregulation.” [Facebook, Posted [8/7/24](#)]

2024: Jude criticized Democrats for blackballing Congressman Dean Phillips for challenging Biden. “When current Congressman Dean Phillips announced his run against President Joe Biden, he was met with rejection from the national media and partisan politicians, all stemming from the Biden/Harris administration. Dean Phillips had the audacity to challenge a sitting president of his own party on an important issue at the proper time and place. Unfortunately, his own party wasn’t interested in debates and worked to keep him off the ballot. Phillips has yet to receive an apology for the blackballing he endured for attempting to give voters a choice in the Democratic process.” [Facebook, Posted [8/7/24](#)]

2024: the National Rifle Association gave Jude an A rating in their political scorecard. In an October 2024 Facebook post, Jude wrote, “The National Rifle Association just released their political scorecard, and they’ve given me an A rating based on my support for the Second Amendment. Thank you, NRA!” [Facebook, Posted [10/9/24](#)]

- **1994-1995: : Jude received \$12,400 from the NRA’s PAC.** “Among Minnesota House members, Gutknecht was the leading recipient - \$7,450 in NRA PAC contributions for his 1994 campaign and \$5,450 in 1995. Republican Tad Jude collected \$9,900 in 1994 before losing to Democrat Bill Luther. Jude received \$ 2,500 in 1995.” [Star Tribune, 3/23/96]

St. Paul Pioneer Press: “Jude has long been a vocal anti-abortion figure.” [St. Paul Pioneer Press, 2/18/95]

- **After the U.S. Supreme Court’s 1973 Roe v. Wade decision, Jude pushed for a resolution calling for a federal law nullifying the ruling.** “A freshman legislator in 1973 when the U.S. Supreme Court made most abortions legal, Jude quickly pushed for a resolution calling for a federal law nullifying the court’s ruling. Since then, he repeatedly has been embroiled in emotional battles over abortion, in the Legislature and more recently on the Hennepin County Board.” [Star Tribune, 9/6/94]
- **2024: Jude said he supported the U.S. Supreme Court’s Dobbs decision.** “Jude, meanwhile, supports former president Trump and the Supreme Court’s Dobb decision, which allowed individual states to set their own abortion policy. Since the decision was handed down, 14 states have enacted near-total abortion bans, while four states – Georgia, South Carolina, Florida and Iowa –have banned abortion past roughly six weeks of pregnancy.” [MinnPost.com, 9/10/24]
- **In 1988, Jude proposed an amendment directing law enforcement agencies to investigate women who received abortions.** “According to the Senate Journal for April 13, 1988, Jude

proposed an amendment to a resolution condemning the bombing and arson of facilities where abortions are performed. Jude's amendment had the effect of directing law-enforcement agencies to investigate not only those who bomb the facilities, but also those who committed violence against 'unborn babies.' His amendment was approved initially, but the resolution was reconsidered two days later and Jude's amendment was removed. Jude said he doesn't agree with 'the spin' that feminists put on these votes. 'I have not supported property-tax dollars going for elective abortions and they don't like that,' he said." [Star Tribune, 6/3/92]

2024: Jude praised decision to dismiss charges against officer Ryan Londregan over the killing of Ricky Cobb II. "Former District Court Judge and current 3rd Congressional District candidate, Tad Jude, acknowledged the decision of County Attorney, Mary Moriarty, to dismiss second degree murder charges against Ryan Londregan in the death of Ricky Cobb II. 'It's about time. Mr. Londregan was clearly acting with authorized use of force by a peace officer' Jude said. [...] Jude agrees with Moriarty's decision to dismiss the case 'But it should never have been filed in the first place' Jude concluded." [Facebook, Posted [6/3/24](#)]

- **State trooper Londregan was charged with second -degree murder and manslaughter after fatally shooting a black driver during a routine traffic stop.** "A Minnesota trooper who fatally shot a Black man during a routine traffic stop last July has had the charges against him dismissed. Ryan Londregan, the white state trooper accused of killing Ricky Cobb II, 33, had faced charges of second-degree unintentional murder, first-degree assault and second-degree manslaughter. He previously pleaded not guilty." [ABC News, [6/3/24](#)]

CONTROVERSIES

2011: Jude recused himself from a case that was already one year into proceedings after a city official discover Jude's previous attorney-client relationship with one party's counsel. "A Washington County District Court judge has recused himself from a case - a year into proceedings - after the recent revelation that he has a previous attorney-client relationship with one party's counsel. In his motion seeking removal of Judge Tad Jude, Grant City Council member Steve Bohnen said the judge should have disclosed the relationship, which dates back to the early 1990s. Instead, Bohnen said he discovered it himself. Bohnen suggested Jude would not be able to rule impartially against the firm that once got Jude off the hook for criminal charges. Bohnen's motion was filed with the court Tuesday. Jude filed his recusal order Wednesday, offering no explanation or response to Bohnen's assertions. A call to Jude's law clerk seeking comment from the judge was not returned Wednesday afternoon. The case Jude was overseeing centers on campaign signs." [St. Paul Pioneer Press, 10/11/11]

1995: Jude was indicted after being accused of knowingly running a false campaign ad that blamed his opponent for the kidnapping and rape of a Minnesota woman and her daughters. "A candidate who lost a 1994 Congressional bid has been indicted for a campaign advertisement that indirectly blamed his opponent for the kidnapping and rape of a Minnesota woman and her two daughters. The advertisement asserted that the opponent, Bill Luther, had blocked a crime bill in the Minnesota Legislature that could have kept a serial rapist in prison. The indictment, issued by a Hennepin County grand jury on Tuesday, accused the losing candidate, Tad Jude, of participating in the preparation or dissemination of false campaign material, a violation of state law. The offense, a gross misdemeanor, is punishable by a maximum of one year in jail and up to \$3,000 fine. The commercial featured a police officer who said that the crime bill could have prevented the 1990 rapes and that sending Mr. Luther to Congress 'would be a crime.'" [The New York Times, 11/30/95]

- **The indictment accused Jude of “intentionally participated in the preparation or dissemination of political campaign material, knowing it is false.” Jude faced up to one year in jail.** “The indictment said Jude ‘intentionally participated in the preparation or dissemination of political campaign material, knowing it is false.’ [...] The charge against Jude is a gross misdemeanor and carries a sentence of up to a year in jail and up to a \$ 3,000 fine. There are no sentencing guidelines on gross misdemeanors.” [Star Tribune, 11/29/95]
- **1996: The charges were thrown out after a judge ruled that the state law used to indict him was unconstitutional.** “Charges that Tad Jude and his campaign manager ran a false political ad were thrown out Friday by a judge who ruled that a state law used to indict them was unconstitutional. Jude, a Republican, had been indicted on the basis of his 1994 campaign for the suburban Sixth District seat in Congress, which he lost to DFLer Bill Luther by 549 votes. In throwing out the indictment, Hennepin County District Judge Robert Lynn ruled that a clause in Minnesota's Fair Campaign Practices Law violates the First Amendment and that the law is also preempted by the Federal Election Campaign Act.” [Star Tribune, 3/2/96]

1996: Minnesota’s Court of Appeals upheld decision that dismissed the indictment. “The Minnesota Court of Appeals has upheld a Hennepin County District Court decision that dismissed an indictment against Tad Jude for running a false campaign ad against Bill Luther in the 1994 Sixth District congressional campaign. DFLer Luther narrowly defeated Republican Jude. Tuesday's decision is likely to add fuel to this year's race, in which the two men have squared off again. [...] The Appeals Court said that a single phrase in the state law on false campaign statements is "unconstitutionally overbroad" and added that the prosecutor may have improperly instructed the grand jury when it used the language.” [Star Tribune, 10/6/96]

1996: Federal Election Commission audit found that Jude used illegal contribution funneled through his father’s trust to fund 1994 Congressional campaign. “An infusion of \$50,000 into Tad Jude's 1994 congressional race in Minnesota was an illegal contribution from his mother, not a personal loan as he reported, federal campaign auditors say. Jude said the money came from his share of his father's trust; his father died earlier in 1994. But the audit by the Federal Election Commission concluded that the Republican wasn't entitled to money from his father's trust at the time. The money actually came from a trust controlled by his mother, Ruth, and was funneled through the father's trust to Jude, the audit said. Trust money was not to be distributed to any of the Jude children until their mother died, the audit said. ‘The candidate did not have legal and rightful title or an equitable interest to any portion’ of the father's trust, the audit said.” [St. Paul Pioneer Press, 5/1/96]

SOS CAMPAIGN

September 2025: Jude announced candidacy for Secretary of State. “Minnesotans deserve a Secretary of State who values transparency and accountability.” “Tad Jude, a former district court judge and Republican leader with decades of experience in Minnesota government, announced his candidacy for Minnesota Secretary of State in the 2026 election. He said his campaign will prioritize voter integrity, transparency, and public confidence in election administration. ‘After many years of service to our great state, I'm stepping forward to protect the integrity of our elections,’ Jude said. ‘Minnesotans deserve a Secretary of State who values transparency and accountability. It's time to end the doubts plaguing our election system and rebuild confidence in every vote cast.’” [Osseo-Maple Grove-Champlin-Dayton Press, [9/21/25](#)]

Jude: “As Secretary of State, I will implement safeguards to ensure only eligible citizens vote while keeping the process accessible and secure for everyone.” “Jude highlighted concerns he has raised about voter roll maintenance, audits, and the lack of cooperation with law enforcement and the Department of Justice. He criticized the current administration's approach as insufficiently transparent and pledged a different direction. ‘As Secretary of State, I will implement safeguards to ensure only eligible citizens vote while keeping the process accessible and secure for everyone,’ he said. ‘This is about preserving the foundation of our democracy.’” [Osseo-Maple Grove-Champlin-Dayton Press, [9/21/25](#)]

Jude said he brought “the judgment and skills to secure our elections and strengthen Minnesota’s small business economy.” Jude’s campaign website stated: “With experience as a legislator, county commissioner, judge, and small business owner, Tad brings the judgment and skills to secure our elections and strengthen Minnesota’s small business economy. He’s spent his career earning trust by upholding the law without bias or political agenda. As Secretary of State, he’ll deliver secure elections, responsive service, and the clear, commonsense transparency Minnesotans deserve.” [Tad Jude for MN Committee, accessed [3/12/26](#)]

Jude suggested Secretary Steve Simon “had something to hide” by refusing to provide sensitive voter data to the U.S. Department of Justice. “In a September interview with a St. Cloud radio station, Jude suggested Simon ‘had something to hide’ from federal law enforcement officials. ‘Why don’t we have a secretary of state who wants to cooperate with the ... Department of Justice?’ Jude said, echoing the sentiments of other Minnesota Republicans. Simon has argued that the department's request for sensitive voter registration data, including names, dates of birth, driver's license numbers and the last four digits of their Social Security numbers, is ‘not normal’ or legal under federal and state laws. That spat escalated into a lawsuit in the fall.” [Star Tribune, 12/11/25]

- **Jude described Simon’s tenure as “insufficiently transparent” and pledged to take the office in a different direction.** “He described current Secretary of State Steve Simon’s tenure as ‘insufficiently transparent,’ and he pledged a different direction for the office. ‘As Secretary of State, I will implement safeguards to ensure only eligible citizens vote while keeping the process accessible and secure for everyone,’ Jude said. ‘This is about preserving the foundation of our democracy.’” [Alpha News, [9/22/25](#)]

ELECTIONS & VOTING

Jude: “Minnesotans deserve elections that are free, fair, and secure, and confidence that their vote truly matters.” On his campaign website, Jude wrote, “Minnesotans deserve elections that are free, fair, and secure, and confidence that their vote truly matters. Our democracy depends on it. It’s time to make Minnesota’s elections the gold standard in the nation by delivering the accessibility, accuracy, and accountability voters deserve.” [Tad Jude for MN Committee, accessed [3/12/26](#)]

Voter Fraud

Asked if he believed Trump’s 2020 stolen election claims, Jude said, “Joe Biden is president, and I accept him as president.” “But Jude called the Jan. 6, 2021, riot at the U.S. Capitol a ‘very sad day’ and said he believes any attacks on law enforcement that day ‘had to be prosecuted.’ Asked if he

believes Trump's baseless claim that the 2020 election was illegitimate, Jude said: 'Joe Biden is president, and I accept him as president.'" [Star Tribune, [2/21/24](#)]

In 2025, Jude said: "It's time to end the doubts plaguing our election system and rebuild confidence in every vote cast." "Tad Jude, a former district court judge and Republican leader with decades of experience in Minnesota government, announced his candidacy for Minnesota Secretary of State in the 2026 election. He said his campaign will prioritize voter integrity, transparency, and public confidence in election administration. 'After many years of service to our great state, I'm stepping forward to protect the integrity of our elections,' Jude said. 'Minnesotans deserve a Secretary of State who values transparency and accountability. It's time to end the doubts plaguing our election system and rebuild confidence in every vote cast.'" [Osseo-Maple Grove-Champlin-Dayton Press, [9/21/25](#)]

2025: Jude said it was time to "close the door to any doubt about the security of Minnesota's elections." "It was a pleasure visiting with friends in Rice County earlier this week. Without question, we are all united in our desire to put an end to fraud in Minnesota. It's time to clean up our voter rolls, require photo IDs, and close the door to any doubt about the security of Minnesota's elections." [Facebook, Posted [11/6/25](#)]

Jude: "No more boxes of ballots left unattended in parking lots. Democracy hinges on free and fair elections." In September 2025, Jude tweeted, "... No more boxes of ballots left unattended in parking lots. Democracy hinges on free and fair elections." [X, @TadJude_MN03, [9/25/25](#)]

2026: Jude called for "smart coordination" with state & federal officials to "keep Minnesota's elections free & fair". Jude's campaign website stated: "Tad's Five Pillars of Election Integrity: Secure voter ID standards (prevent fraud while ensuring access for eligible voters), Accurate, up-to-date voter rolls (regular list audits & maintenance), Strong cybersecurity election systems protection (24/7 monitoring & rapid response), Independent, bipartisan oversight (polls, counting, audits), Smart coordination with state & federal partners (keep Minnesota's elections free & fair)". [Tad Jude for MN Committee, accessed [3/12/26](#)]

Audits

2026: Jude supported election audits. Jude's campaign website stated: "Tad's Five Pillars of Election Integrity: Secure voter ID standards (prevent fraud while ensuring access for eligible voters), Accurate, up-to-date voter rolls (regular list audits & maintenance), Strong cybersecurity election systems protection (24/7 monitoring & rapid response), Independent, bipartisan oversight (polls, counting, audits), Smart coordination with state & federal partners (keep Minnesota's elections free & fair)". [Tad Jude for MN Committee, accessed [3/12/26](#)]

Voter Registration

Jude said one of his key priorities as secretary of state would be eliminating vouching. In February 2026, Jude posted on Facebook, "Eliminating vouching is one of my key pillars for restoring election integrity in MN. We don't allow vouching in banking or for travel, so why is it allowed in our elections? This means vouching occurred among 5.5% of all voters who registered on Election Day in 2024 in St. Louis County. There is no reason to allow vouching in elections." [Facebook, Posted [2/17/26](#)]

Voter ID

If elected Secretary, Jude said he would prioritize strengthening voter ID requirements. According to a Jude campaign press release, “Jude's platform includes five key priorities to improve election integrity: Strengthening voter ID requirements, including photo IDs, Regular audits of voter registration lists to remove inaccuracies and keep rolls current, Enhancing election system cybersecurity, Bipartisan election oversight to increase transparency across party lines, Cooperation with federal partners to ensure fair and free elections in Minnesota”. [Press release, [9/12/25](#)]

Jude said requiring voter ID, cleaning up outdated voter rolls, and “ending practices like vouching” would help the state get “back on track”. In a Facebook post, Jude wrote, “We all know that election integrity isn’t optional. Requiring an ID to vote, cleaning up outdated voter rolls, and ending practices like vouching to establish eligibility aren’t ‘nice ideas,’ they are the first steps in getting our state back on track. We can clean up Minnesota, and it starts with securing the vote.” [Facebook, Posted [1/15/26](#)]

Voter Rolls

If elected to be secretary, Jude said he would conduct “regular audits of voter registration lists to remove inaccuracies and keep rolls current”. “Jude's platform includes five key priorities to improve election integrity: strengthening voter ID requirements (photo IDs), regular audits of voter registration lists to remove inaccuracies and keep rolls current, enhancing election system cybersecurity, bipartisan election oversight to increase transparency across party lines, and cooperation with federal partners to ensure fair and free elections in Minnesota. ‘Minnesota has a proud tradition of high voter turnout, and we must match it with unassailable integrity.’ [Osseo-Maple Grove-Champlin-Dayton Press, [9/21/25](#)]

Retention Elections

2014: Jude criticized proposal to establish retention elections for judges in Minnesota, calling it a “well-intentioned-but-half-baked idea”. In an op-ed, Jude wrote, “Haven't we had enough constitutional amendments proposed in Minnesota for a while? An example of a well-intentioned-but-half-baked idea for a constitutional amendment is the proposal for retention elections for judges. [...] Minnesota's judicial system is seen in high esteem across the country. Supporters for retention elections are arguing for a constitutional amendment for a problem that is nonexistent. Even if there was a problem, this does not mean that Minnesota should go the way of Iowa. Iowa, which has retention elections for judges, has not avoided problems. Minnesotans are cautious and thoughtful. Minnesotans love liberty and treasure the rights upheld under the U.S. and state constitutions. One of those rights is that of a fair and impartial court, which is separate, equal and independent of the other branches of government. Let's just give it a rest on half-baked constitutional amendments.” [St. Cloud Times, 3/30/14]