



Written by [Dennis Behreandt](#) on September 1, 2008

McCain Picks Palin for VP

Just a few years ago Palin was serving as mayor of the small Alaskan town of Wasilla (pop. 8,471), a community that is part of the Anchorage metro area.

Here are a few more facts from the file on Palin:

- As a high school athlete, she was head of her school's Fellowship of Christian Athletes.
- In college she studied journalism and politics at the University of Idaho.
- She is the mother of five children.
- In Alaska, she has directed officials to work on ways to reduce greenhouse gases to fight global warming.
- On social issues, she is pro-life and supports capital punishment, but admits to having smoked marijuana when it was legal in Alaska.
- She is active in outdoor sports, including hunting and fishing and is a life member of the NRA.



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As governor of Alaska, Palin has been fairly active, though she has shown that she is not afraid to wield power and that she is not necessarily opposed to big government — traits that may have endeared her to Senator McCain. During her tenure in office, she worked to keep a state-owned business, the Matanuska Maid Dairy, in operation, eventually replacing the entire membership of the Board of Agriculture and Conservation so that its new members could appoint new officials to the Alaska Creamery Board who would keep the state-owned dairy operational.

Her reasons for fighting to keep the state-run business in operation included the fact that it had just received \$600,000 in taxpayer aid from the state and that the dairy filled a crucial niche in keeping Alaskan dairy farmers in business. Nevertheless, small-government advocates would point out that government should not compete with business owners in the market by owning and operating businesses, and that government should likewise not engage in anti-competitive behavior by subsidizing some favored businesses — something, essentially, that was the primary purpose of the Matanuska Maid Dairy. So bad, in fact, was the dairy as a business, that when the state finally was forced to close the operation and sell its assets, it received no bids. Unlike the state, the free market knows a losing proposition when it sees one.

On taxing and spending in general, Palin has been a mixed bag. As mayor of Wasilla, according to Fred Barnes writing in the *Weekly Standard*, she "persuaded Wasilla voters to increase the local sales tax to pay for an indoor arena and convention center."

As governor, according to Barnes, Palin, who describes herself as "pro-business and pro-developmnet," has promised to cut spending, but she has also offered \$500 million in incentives to attract developers to build a new gas pipeline in the state.



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There may be much to like in Palin — her social conservatism, her pro-family background, and her faith — but like McCain, she doesn't seem to offer much to those who would like to roll back the size of government.



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