



# Timothy Tendentious

September 16, 2025

Democratic Senator Tim Kaine—most noted, till now, for being the first Timothy to run for the U.S. vice presidency—said something interesting last week.

And that may indeed be a significant first.

Sen. Kaine [expressed his shock](#) at something said by Riley Barnes, nominated to serve as Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. Mr. Barnes had confessed to the belief that “all men are created equal because our rights come from God, our Creator; not from our laws, not from our governments.”

Horri-fying!

“The notion that rights don’t come from laws and don’t come from the government, but come from the Creator,” said the Virginia senator, aghast, “that’s what the Iranian

government believes. It’s a theocratic regime that bases its rule on Shi’a law and targets Sunnis, Bahá’ís, Jews, Christians and other religious minorities....”

Our First Failed Tim\* is trying to advance an argument: the Iranians, believing “that they understand what natural rights are from their Creator” do bad things, so the idea must be wrong.

Presumably, however, Tim Kaine would not argue that Thomas Jefferson, when he wrote the famous words “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all Men are ... endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights,” was hell-bent on persecuting religious minorities. The senator surely knows that Jefferson was a daring proponent of religious freedom.

Generally, the idea of natural rights was used in the West to *extend* religious freedom.

Kaine must also know that folks like him who hold to legal positivism—thinking that rights only come from governments—include some of the worst persecutors of religious people in human history.

This is Common Sense. I’m Paul Jacob.

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\* Our Second Failed Tim is of course Minnesota Governor Tim Walz, who unsuccessfully ran alongside Vice President Kamala Harris in the 2024 election.