2026 Midterm Election Results: Key Takeaways

November 2026

The November 3 midterm elections delivered significant Democratic gains across federal and state elections, ending Republican control of Congress and establishing divided government for the remainder of President Trump's second term.

Balance of Power

Associated Press results as of November 14, 2026

- **U.S. Senate:** 55 Democrats (including two independents who caucus with Democrats), 44 Republicans, and one race uncalled in Alaska (leans democrat). Democrats flipped eight Republican-held seats to secure the majority.
- **U.S. House:** 256 Democrats, 169 Republicans, and 10 races uncalled. Democrats secured the 218 seats needed for a majority and flipped approximately 45 Republican-held districts.
- **Governors:** 30 Democrats and 20 Republicans, reversing the pre-election 26–24 Republican advantage. Democrats flipped six governorships: Alaska, Georgia, Iowa, Nevada, Ohio, and Texas.

Key Election Takeaways

- **Democratic gains extended well beyond traditional battlegrounds.** Democrats flipped Republican-held Senate seats in Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Mississippi, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, and Texas. Notable outcomes included former Senator Sherrod Brown reclaiming an Ohio seat, former North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper winning the state's open Senate seat, and pediatrician Annie Andrews winning in South Carolina. House gains were similarly widespread, including competitive districts in Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, Iowa, North Carolina, and Texas, several of which had supported President Trump in 2024.

- **Affordability and healthcare costs were central voter concerns.** According to the AP Voter Poll, concerns about inflation, everyday expenses, government corruption, and the war in Iran weighed heavily on voters. KFF's post-election analysis found that approximately six in ten voters were very concerned about healthcare costs. In seven key Senate battlegrounds, roughly two-thirds of voters expressing strong concern about healthcare costs supported the Democratic candidate. Voters also gave Democrats a 20-percentage-point advantage over Republicans when asked which party was better equipped to address healthcare (50% versus 30%).

- **Republican messaging struggled to overcome dissatisfaction with the administration.** Despite Republican emphasis on immigration enforcement and the administration's economic agenda, voter concerns about rising costs, tariffs, and the war in Iran remained prominent. Early exit polling also indicated Republican losses among younger voters, Latino voters, and independents relative to President Trump's 2024 performance. The results were not necessarily a broad endorsement of the Democratic Party: AP polling found continued dissatisfaction with both parties, while approximately seven in ten voters said Congress was not providing sufficient checks and balances on the presidency.

- **Redistricting did not deliver the anticipated Republican advantage.** Republican-led efforts to redraw congressional maps in states including Texas, Florida, Ohio, and North Carolina largely failed to produce the intended electoral gains. In Texas, Republicans won only one of five seats targeted through redistricting, while Democrats flipped two Republican-held districts. Democratic incumbents also retained several districts redrawn to favor Republicans. Meanwhile, California's Democratic-led redistricting effort helped flip five Republican-held seats. The results underscored the limits of partisan mapmaking amid substantial shifts in voter preferences. (AP News)

- **The election brought historic gains in representation.** Keisha Lance Bottoms became the first Black woman elected governor in U.S. history, while Deb Haaland became the first Native American woman elected governor. Peggy Flanagan became the first Native American woman elected to the U.S. Senate, Abdul El-Sayed became the first Muslim senator, and Chris Pappas became the first openly gay male senator. Additional milestones included Texas electing its first Latina governor, Gina Hinojosa, and Florida electing its first Black governor, Republican Byron Donalds.

- **Several newly elected officials bring clinical and public health experience.** South Carolina elected pediatrician Dr. Annie Andrews to the Senate, while Michigan elected Abdul El-Sayed, a physician-trained epidemiologist and former public health director. Newly elected House members include pediatrician Dr. Richard Pan of California, former Army surgeon Dr. Adam Hamawy of New Jersey, and emergency room nurse Mitchell Berman of Wisconsin. Republicans also elected neurosurgeon Dr. John Cowan in Georgia. At the state level, Ohio elected Dr. Amy Acton, a physician and former state health director, as governor. These additions will bring more direct healthcare and public health experience into federal and state policymaking. (NPR)

Congressional Lame-Duck Session: Key Priorities

Congress returned for its lame-duck session on November 9 with a crowded legislative agenda and limited time before the new Congress convenes in January. Some congressional Republicans are pushing for a third budget reconciliation package to advance additional GOP priorities before losing control of Congress. While discussions have centered on defense funding, spending reductions, and the debt ceiling, Republican healthcare proposals involving price transparency and prescription drug costs have previously been raised as potential reconciliation provisions. However, no agreed-upon healthcare package has emerged, and narrow Republican margins, internal divisions, and the limited legislative calendar make passage uncertain.

Some lame-duck priorities include:

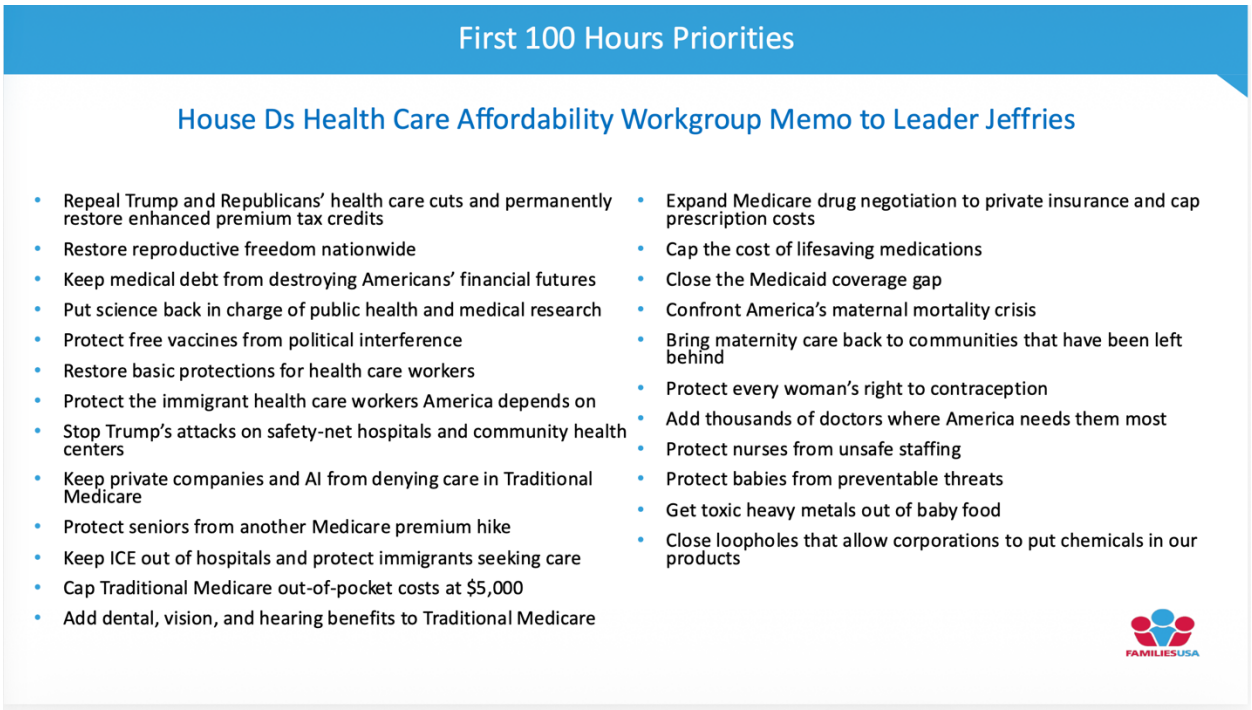
- **FY27 Appropriations:** Government funding expires December 11. Congress must approve full-year appropriations or another continuing resolution (CR) to avoid a shutdown. A short-term extension into 2027 would shift remaining funding negotiations to the incoming Democratic-controlled Congress.
- **National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA):** Congress is working to finalize the annual defense policy bill, although disagreements over the war in Iran, defense spending, and other provisions could complicate negotiations.

- **Senate Confirmations:** Senate Republicans are seeking to confirm outstanding judicial and executive branch nominees, including HHS nominees, before losing control of the chamber in January.
- **Other Expiring Programs:** Congress faces deadlines involving surface transportation programs, agricultural programs under the Farm Bill, and the National Flood Insurance Program. Short-term extensions may be necessary if broader reauthorization agreements cannot be reached.
- **Permitting Reform:** Lawmakers are also pursuing bipartisan legislation to streamline federal permitting for energy and infrastructure projects, although disagreements over environmental protections and the scope of the legislation remain.

120th Congress: Healthcare Policy Priorities

With Democrats taking control of both chambers in January, healthcare affordability is expected to be a central focus of the 120th Congress. Congressional Democrats have identified reversing Medicaid provisions enacted under the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA) and restoring enhanced Affordable Care Act (ACA) premium tax credits as early priorities. A September 2026 memo prepared for House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries by the Cost-of-Living Healthcare Working Group outlines additional proposals for the first 100 hours, 100 days, and first year of the new Congress.

Of note, the working group's first 100 hours priorities include expanding Traditional Medicare to cover dental, vision, and hearing services. ANOHC will continue monitoring developments and share updates and potential opportunities for member engagement as the legislative agenda takes shape.



120th Congress: Congressional Leadership Updates

- **U.S. Senate Majority Leader:** Not yet selected. Sens. Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) are competing for the position. Senate Democrats are scheduled to hold leadership elections on December 1.
- **U.S. Senate Minority Leader:** Sen. John Thune (R-SD) was re-elected on November 10 and will continue leading Senate Republicans.
- **U.S. House Democratic Leadership:** Rep. Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY) is seeking the speakership, with Democratic leadership elections scheduled for November 18-19. The full House will formally elect its speaker in January.
- **U.S. House Minority Leader:** Rep. Jim Jordan (R-OH) was elected on November 10, defeating Rep. Steve Scalise (R-LA), 106-73. Jordan will succeed Speaker Mike Johnson as the House Republican leader in the new Congress.

The following assignments are **anticipated for the 120th Congress but have not yet been formally finalized**. One notable development is Sen. Rand Paul's November 11 announcement that he intends to become the top Republican on the Senate HELP Committee.

Committee	Expected Chair	Expected Ranking Member
Senate HELP	Bernie Sanders (I-VT)	Rand Paul (R-KY)
Senate Finance	Ron Wyden (D-OR)	Mike Crapo (R-ID)
House Ways and Means	Richard Neal (D-MA)	Jason Smith (R-MO)
House Energy and Commerce	Frank Pallone (D-NJ)	Brett Guthrie (R-KY)