# 1NR---Kentucky RR---Round 2

## Cities

### Cities DA---2NC

#### Concede smart cities fail and are impossible.

#### Aff not solve. Case.

## Federalism

### Federalism DA---2NC

#### Concede that federalism is cooked in the status quo.

#### They didn’t read terminal to impact turn, but no uniqueness since federalism is impossible.

## Terms

### Impeachment---OV---2NC

Dem winning the House alone solves extinction. It reins in Trump through impeachment and holds Republicans accountable for a litany of abuses to democracy, the environment, global alliances, civil rights and rule of law, all of which are existential.

The DA outweighs:

1. Timeframe. Trump is abusing government structures now. That makes existential risks imminent and impossible to resolve.

2. Magnitude. Trump collapses every global structure that prevents existential risks, which outweighs on scope and turns case.

That’s Jackson.

### TC---Economy---2NC

Dems flip the economy:

#### They stop the bleeding in every way---Trump won’t veto.

Mitch Jackson 25. J.D., Western State College of Law, California Lawyer Attorneys of the Year (CLAY) Award, Attorney at Maneuver Mediation law firm. “The 2026 Midterms Could Save America — If We Show Up.” Uncensored Objection. 5/29/2025. https://mitchthelawyer.substack.com/p/the-2026-midterms-could-save-america

Protecting the Economy and the American Worker

Right now, a lot of Americans are struggling. Wages aren’t keeping up with the cost of living, healthcare bills are piling up, and people worry about their retirement savings or their small businesses. Instead of helping, Trump and the current Congress have been making it worse.

They passed massive tax giveaways for the ultra-rich and giant corporations, blowing up the deficit and then pointing to that deficit as an excuse to cut programs for everyone else. They’ve threatened to use the debt ceiling and budget showdowns as political weapons, even if that risks economic disaster or a government shutdown. And under Trump’s leadership, we’ve seen policy by chaos, trade wars announced on Twitter that hurt farmers and manufacturers, budget proposals that slash job training and education, and a general climate of uncertainty that makes it hard for businesses and families to plan for the future.

A Democratic majority in Congress would change the economic game in a hurry. Using the power of the purse, they can stop the bleeding and redirect funds to where they’re needed most. For example, instead of budget plans that cut Medicaid or Social Security (plans we’ve seen floated by the current leadership), Democrats would refuse to even consider such cruel cuts. They’d protect these vital programs so that seniors can retire with dignity and low-income families can have medical care and food on the table.

Congress writes the budget, and a Democratic Congress would write one that invests in America’s working people: funding for infrastructure projects that create good jobs, support for small businesses, and relief measures when economic hard times hit. If Trump vetoes those budgets, he’d be directly blocking aid to Americans, and I doubt even he would relish that fight when the public is watching.

Just as importantly, a Democratic Congress would hold the administration accountable for economic decisions. They could haul in officials from the Treasury or Commerce Department to ask tough questions: Why are you giving tax breaks to companies that ship jobs overseas? Why did you bail out a billionaire’s business and not help the little guy? Through oversight hearings, they can expose corruption or incompetence that makes our economy unfair. If, say, a cabinet member is giving favorable deals to cronies or wasting taxpayer money, a hearing can put a stop to it.

Think too about consumer protections. Under Trump, agencies that were supposed to protect consumers from things like bank fraud or unsafe products have been defanged. A Democratic majority can pass laws to restore those protections, or at the very least, use hearings and budget control to pressure agencies into doing their jobs. For instance, they could say, “We will not increase funding for the Commerce Department unless it actually enforces laws against price gouging,” making it clear that protecting the public is non-negotiable.

The economy isn’t some abstract thing — it’s our jobs, our savings, our bills every month. We need a Congress that prioritizes regular Americans, not the ultra-wealthy or big donors. A Democratic House and Senate would focus on things like raising the minimum wage, making healthcare and prescription drugs more affordable, and investing in communities that have been left behind. While Trump might oppose some of these policies, Congress can still push them forward and rally public support.

Even the act of passing a bill in Congress can set the agenda and force the debate onto turf that helps people. For example, imagine Congress passes a major infrastructure and jobs bill that also transitions us to cleaner energy (putting people to work and helping the planet). If Trump vetoes it, he has to explain to the American people why he’s against jobs and infrastructure, not a good look for him. And if he signs it because he feels pressure, well, then we’ve just gotten something positive done despite him.

Bottom line: Taking back Congress would mean an economy that works for us, not just the well-connected. It means when you’re worried about the price of insulin or the factory closing in your town, someone in power is actually responding with help, not tweets and excuses. It means instead of trickle-down nonsense, we get policies that lift up the middle class and those striving to get into it.

Our votes in 2026 can install leaders who fight inflation not by pointing fingers, but by addressing corporate greed where it exists, and who tackle unemployment by actually investing in job creation. We can have oversight that ensures emergency relief (for storms, pandemics, what have you) actually reaches communities, instead of disappearing into bureaucratic black holes or the pockets of the President’s friends. In short, a Democratic Congress can stop the harmful economic policies and start advancing a fairer, stronger economy for everyday Americans.

### TC---Leadership---2NC

Dems turn leadership:

#### Congress will restore alliances and stabilize the global order.

Mitch Jackson 25. J.D., Western State College of Law, California Lawyer Attorneys of the Year (CLAY) Award, Attorney at Maneuver Mediation law firm. “The 2026 Midterms Could Save America — If We Show Up.” Uncensored Objection. 5/29/2025. https://mitchthelawyer.substack.com/p/the-2026-midterms-could-save-america

Restoring America’s Standing in the World

The United States has long been a beacon of democracy and a leader on the world stage, not just because of our military or economic might, but because of the values we stood for.

We believed in freedom, human rights, and the idea that nations should work together for common good. By the time the midterms roll around, and looking back on his first two years of his second term, Donald Trump will have done incalculable damage to that reputation. He has publicly disparaged allies who have fought alongside us for decades while cozying up to authoritarian rulers who oppress their own people. He questions why we should support Ukraine in its fight for survival against aggression, sending chills through Eastern Europe and delighting the Kremlin. He withdraws from international agreements on a whim, whether it’s about climate, Iran’s nuclear program, or trade partnerships, leaving our allies feeling burned and our adversaries emboldened.

Some of his confidants have even hinted at pulling out of NATO or other drastic steps that would have been unthinkable a few years ago. The world is literally watching the American experiment teeter, wondering if we’ve abandoned the leadership role that has helped keep the world relatively stable and prosperous since World War II.

A Democratic Congress can’t single-handedly fix all the foreign policy issues, the President has a lot of control there, but it can make a significant difference. First, Congress has a say in war and peace. If Trump were to try launching some reckless military adventure or, conversely, if he tried to abandon allies in a way that Congress finds dangerous, they can step in. The Constitution gave Congress the power to declare war, and while that’s been murky in recent decades, a bold Congress can reassert itself.

For example, a Democratic majority could pass a law that the President cannot withdraw from NATO without Senate approval (this idea has been floated and has bipartisan support among those who value our alliances). That would put a legal barrier in front of any attempt by Trump to break up the Western alliance. Congress could also make clear that any funding for troop movements or base closures related to an alliance withdrawal won’t be approved.

Essentially, they hold the purse on defense spending, so if Trump wants to do something like yank U.S. troops out of South Korea or Germany overnight, Congress can condition funding on doing it responsibly (or not doing it at all).

Moreover, a Democratic Congress would support our allies through legislation and oversight. Take Ukraine: if Trump falters in supporting Ukraine against Russian aggression, Congress can appropriate aid directly.

In fact, in his first term, when Trump tried to extort Ukraine and hold up military aid (which led to his first impeachment), it was Congress that had approved that aid on a bipartisan basis and later insisted it go through. In 2025-2026, with more at stake, a Democratic majority could increase aid to Ukraine and attach it to must-pass bills, making it very hard for the President to stop it.

They can also pass sanctions on countries that commit human rights abuses or threaten global security, sanctions that the President might not like, but would be forced to implement if they pass with veto-proof majorities (and Democrats would certainly work to court the necessary Republican votes for things like standing up to dictators, many rank-and-file GOP members of Congress do actually support such measures, even if Trump does not).

On issues like climate change and pandemics, inherently global problems, Congress can ensure the U.S. participates in solutions. They could push funding for international climate finance (helping poorer countries transition to clean energy, which was something the previous administration committed to). They could fund the World Health Organization or other global health initiatives even if Trump tries to pull back from them, sending a signal that Americans don’t want to retreat from the world. They can invite foreign leaders to speak to Congress (as has happened historically), giving a platform to those who champion democracy and freedom.

Just picture, for instance, a joint session of Congress being addressed by a pro-democracy leader or a human rights advocate, reaffirming our values to the world. That image alone contrasts sharply with Trump’s photo ops with autocrats.

Another area: treaties. The Senate has to ratify treaties with a two-thirds vote. While reaching two-thirds is tough, a Democratic-led Senate can refuse to ratify any bad deals Trump might sign with authoritarians. Conversely, they can give advice on good agreements.

Even without formal treaties, there are informal alliances and statements Congress can make. A Democratic Congress might pass a resolution that the U.S. will always support Taiwan’s democracy, for example, putting pressure on the administration to maintain a firm stance there. Or they could demand the release of political prisoners abroad by tying foreign aid to human rights records.

Crucially, a Democratic Congress would restore the idea that American foreign policy should reflect American values. The world will hear a different message from Capitol Hill than the one coming from Trump’s X (or Truth Social or wherever). Congress can condemn atrocities like the slaughter of civilians by dictators, even if Trump stays silent or, worse, offers praise to those dictators. When President Trump was mute or praising Putin, remember that in his first term Congress still passed strong sanctions against Russia, showing the world at least part of the U.S. government stood on the right side. That needs to happen again, tenfold.

To everyday Americans, foreign policy can seem far away compared to the economy or rights at home. But it affects us intimately, jobs can be lost or created depending on trade policy, our sons and daughters might be called to fight if wars break out, terrorism can reach our shores if global stability falters, and of course things like pandemics and climate disasters ignore borders entirely. So having sane, steady leadership in international affairs is part of keeping Americans safe and prosperous.

A Democratic Congress will aim for that steadiness. They’ll push for consistent support of democracy abroad, which in turn makes us safer here (democracies tend not to go to war with each other, for example, and they’re more likely to trade fairly with us). They’ll also guard against any rash actions: for example, they could pass legislation requiring congressional authorization for certain military strikes, ensuring that no impulsive decision leads us into conflict without debate.

America’s word has to mean something again. Right now allies are unsure if we’ll keep our commitments, that makes them hedge their bets, and maybe cozy up to China or Russia because they think we’re unreliable. That’s bad for our influence and security.

By electing Democrats, we send a signal to the world that the United States is finding its way back to being a reliable partner and leader. It tells everyone watching that Trump’s brand of isolation and autocracy isn’t all there is to us, that the American people still believe in democracy and friendship across borders. We will have members of Congress traveling abroad, reassuring allies, attending climate summits or diplomatic meetings even if the White House won’t. They can be our ambassadors of goodwill, unofficially steering foreign policy toward engagement rather than retreat.

In short, flipping Congress will help stabilize the global ship that Trump has been rocking. It’s about making sure America’s foreign policy once again aligns with the ideals of democracy, human rights, and collective security that have long kept us and the world safer. And by doing so, we also protect our own democracy — because a world with more democracy and less authoritarian influence is a world where our system can thrive and not be undermined from outside. Our vote at home can literally reverberate globally. That’s the power we have in 2026.

### TC---Democracy---2NC

Dems turns democracy:

#### Midterms are our last shot. Otherwise, he’ll cement generational wins.

Stan Jones 8/4. Independent policy analyst and an award-winning journalist. “Opinion: The 2026 midterm elections may be our last chance to protect democracy.” Anchorage Daily News. 08/04/2025. https://www.adn.com/opinions/2025/08/04/opinion-the-2026-midterm-elections-may-be-our-last-chance-to-protect-democracy/

Many Americans still believe our democratic institutions will protect us from Donald Trump’s march toward authoritarian rule. But that belief is dangerously naïve. If Trump supporters retain control of Congress in 2026, he will be positioned to subvert future elections and entrench minority rule for a generation.

Trump has already shown how far he’s willing to go. He tried to overturn the 2020 election, pressured state officials to “find votes,” incited a violent mob to storm the Capitol, and continues to spread lies about election fraud. His allies in Congress and state legislatures have echoed those lies, laying the groundwork for future interference.

Now that he’s back in the White House, Trump is moving quickly. He’s surrounded himself with loyalists who won’t resist his agenda. Project 2025, a blueprint from the conservative Heritage Foundation, outlines plans to purge the federal bureaucracy, eliminate checks on executive power, and weaponize the Justice Department against political enemies. Trump has endorsed it — and begun implementing it.

But the real danger lies in what comes next. If Trump and his allies succeed in 2026 — by retaining control of Congress and installing loyalists in key state offices — they will be in position to subvert or overturn Democratic victories in 2028. They’ll rewrite election laws, suppress votes, and challenge results they don’t like. With Congress and the Supreme Court in Republican hands, Trump might be able to block or delay a Democratic win in the presidential election. With state legislatures under GOP control, he could pressure officials to send alternate slates of electors. The playbook is already written.

This isn’t speculation. It’s a continuation of what we’ve already seen. The difference is that next time, the system may not hold.

That’s why the 2026 midterms may be our last real chance to stop America’s slide into authoritarianism. If Democrats win back the House or Senate or both, they can block Trump’s most dangerous plans. If pro-democracy candidates win state races, they can protect the integrity of future elections. But if Republicans retain control, Trump will have a clear path to consolidate power and rig the system in his favor.

We can’t afford to sit this one out. The stakes are too high. This isn’t just about policy differences or partisan rivalry — whether you’re conservative or liberal, it’s about whether America remains a democracy.

If you love this country and you love democracy, then support pro-democracy candidates in the midterm elections with your money, your time, and your ballot. Donate. Volunteer. And, above all, vote.

The survival of the greatest democracy the world has ever known may depend on what happens in November of next year.

#### Dems solve every alternative cause.

Quardricos B. Driskell 25. Expert in religion and politics and race and politics and works as a lecturer in the Legislative Affairs program at GSPM. “If Democrats Don't Take Back the House in 2026, America Should Be Alarmed.” The Christian Recorder. 07/26/2025. https://www.thechristianrecorder.com/articles/if-democrats-dont-take-back-the-house-in-2026-america-should-be-alarmed/

As we approach the 2026 midterm elections and the start of the 119th Congress, Americans must confront a sobering reality: if Democrats fail to regain control of the House of Representatives, our democracy may face further erosion at the hands of extremism, gridlock, and a deepening assault on institutional norms. The stakes could not be higher.

Since reclaiming the House in 2022, Republicans have increasingly used their majority not to govern but to obstruct. Committee rooms have become arenas for political theater. Subpoenas are issued not in the pursuit of oversight but in the name of vengeance. Critical legislation—from reproductive rights and voting access to climate action and gun reform—has been held hostage by a far-right faction whose allegiance is not to the Constitution, but to conspiracy and power.

If this continues into the 119th Congress, the consequences will be dire.

First, a Republican-controlled House in 2026 would likely intensify efforts to delegitimize federal agencies, undermine the rule of law, and weaponize congressional investigations to damage political opponents. In recent sessions, we’ve already witnessed sham impeachments, threats to defund the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Department of Justice (DOJ), and coordinated attacks on public health institutions. Expect more of the same—if not worse—if another majority emboldens Speaker Johnson and President Trump.

Second, the ability to pass essential legislation will grind to a halt. The country faces urgent challenges: a warming planet, deepening inequality, an aging infrastructure, and a fragile healthcare system. But if Democrats do not regain control of the House, we can expect more manufactured shutdowns, debt ceiling brinkmanship, and resistance to common-sense solutions.

Third—and perhaps most ominously—a Republican House will continue its march toward authoritarianism. The 2026 midterms are not just about partisan advantage; they are about preserving democratic norms and rejecting a movement that has openly questioned the validity of elections, embraced political violence, and trafficked in white Christian nationalism. A Democratic House is the firewall we need to protect voting rights, defend judicial independence, and ensure a peaceful power transfer in 2028.

This is not about blind allegiance to any political party—I am not a Democrat. Rather, it is about supporting those prepared to govern with integrity, speak the truth, and uphold the ideals of a pluralistic democracy.

If Democrats fail to reclaim the House in 2026, the consequences could be profound. Vital reforms will stall, and the legislative branch may continue to descend into dysfunction. Those who thrive on chaos and exploit it for political gain will further erode the credibility and effectiveness of our government.

Let us be clear-eyed: the future of the Republic does not hinge on one election alone. But the 2026 midterms may determine whether we choose governance or grievance, democracy or demagoguery.

The House must be reclaimed—not simply for partisan advantage, but for preserving the American republic itself.

### TC---Climate---2NC

Dems turn the climate:

#### 2026 is the only shot to solve every environmental threat.

Mitch Jackson 25. J.D., Western State College of Law, California Lawyer Attorneys of the Year (CLAY) Award, Attorney at Maneuver Mediation law firm. “The 2026 Midterms Could Save America — If We Show Up.” Uncensored Objection. 5/29/2025. https://mitchthelawyer.substack.com/p/the-2026-midterms-could-save-america

Protecting Our Planet and Environment

We all want to leave our children and grandchildren a healthy planet, clean air to breathe, clean water to drink, and a stable climate so their futures aren’t defined by catastrophe. Unfortunately, under President Trump, environmental protection has been treated as an enemy of economic growth, when in reality it’s part and parcel of long-term prosperity.

Trump famously once called climate change a “hoax,” and his actions in office show he’s doubling down on that disregard. In these past two years, he has rolled back countless environmental regulations, giving polluters free rein. Protections that keep our water supplies safe, that limit toxic emissions from factories, that preserve public lands, many have been slashed or outright eliminated.

He pulled the United States out of international climate efforts and scoffed at the science as our nation endured record heatwaves, wildfires, and hurricanes. The current Republican-led Congress has mostly cheered him on, even holding hearings to mock renewable energy while pushing bills to expand drilling and mining without care for the consequences.

For those of us who cherish the natural beauty of America and simply want a livable world for our families, his first term as president and the last several months of Trump’s second term have been frightening. But here’s the good news: a Democratic majority in Congress would slam the brakes on this environmental destruction and set us on a saner path. Using its legislative power, Congress could block harmful initiatives and even force proactive measures on climate and conservation.

One immediate step: block the rollback of environmental regulations. A Democratic Congress can pass laws reinstating crucial safeguards Trump tore down. For instance, if the administration weakened rules on clean water (say, allowing more toxic run-off from factories into rivers), Congress can write those protections into law so they can’t be whimsically undone by executive fiat.

If the administration opened previously protected lands to oil and gas drilling, a Democratic majority could pass a law re-protecting those lands or at least requiring much stricter safety and environmental standards. Sure, Trump might veto some of these measures, but many environmental issues have bipartisan public support. It’s not outlandish to think of a scenario where enough Republican lawmakers join Democrats, due to public pressure, to override a veto on something like disaster relief funding that also invests in climate resilience.

The power of the purse again is crucial here. Suppose Trump tries to defund renewable energy research and instead subsidizes fossil fuels heavily. A Democratic-controlled Appropriations Committee can write budgets that do the opposite: boost funding for solar and wind energy projects, for electric vehicle infrastructure, for climate adaptation in vulnerable communities.

They can insert language in spending bills that says “no funds shall be used to implement” some destructive policy (like, say, mining in the Grand Canyon or drilling off the coastline if that were on the table). The president would then face a stark choice when signing budgets: accept those pro-environment directives or be responsible for shutting down the government to get his way. A smart Congress can often win that game of chicken, especially when the public overwhelmingly favors protecting the environment.

Oversight is another piece of the puzzle. Right now, if an oil company has a cozy relationship with regulators or if a cabinet official is literally a former oil lobbyist letting his friends pollute, there’s scant oversight. A Democratic majority would haul those people in for questioning.

They’d demand accountability from agencies like the Environmental Protection Agency, which under Trump’s appointees has been more about protecting polluters than the environment. Picture a hearing where community members from a town with poisoned water get to confront the officials who eased up on regulations, that kind of real accountability can force change that no amount of behind-the-scenes pleading ever will.

Congress can also investigate the ties between big polluters and policy decisions, exposing any corruption or undue influence. When these matters are brought to light, Americans get angry (as we should) and demand better. That creates a powerful impetus for reform.

A Democratic Congress can also bring the U.S. back into global leadership on climate change. While Trump might not want to rejoin the Paris Climate Agreement or other global accords, Congress can work diplomatically by forming committees or delegations that coordinate with international allies. They can pass resolutions stating America’s commitment to these causes, showing the world that Trump doesn’t speak for all of us on this.

They could even condition certain trade deals or foreign aid on environmental standards, effectively nudging us back into cooperation with world efforts. For instance, the Senate can refuse to ratify any international agreement that weakens environmental protections, and push the administration to negotiate stronger environmental terms in trade deals.

Let’s not forget disaster preparedness and response. As climate change fuels more extreme weather, we need a government that helps, not one that denies what’s happening. A Democratic majority would prioritize funding for FEMA and other emergency services, and they’d likely be more aggressive in scrutinizing whether disaster responses (to hurricanes, wildfires, floods) are effective and equitable. If some communities aren’t getting the help they need because of incompetence or bias, you can bet a congressional investigation would be on it, forcing improvements.

The environment might not always dominate headlines, but it underpins everything, our health, our economy, our very lives. By saving our environmental protections and investing in clean energy, a Democratic Congress would also be saving countless American lives and livelihoods, not to mention preserving the country’s natural heritage.

We owe it to future generations to act as responsible stewards of the planet. Right now we’re headed in the opposite direction; 2026 is our chance to correct that course. If you care about the air your children will breathe or the water they’ll drink, if you care about your community not being underwater or on fire or hit by one superstorm after another, then using your vote to bring in a Congress that believes in science and accountability is absolutely essential.

### Link Uniqueness---2NC

#### 9. Working class voters are turning against Trump

Katie Glueck, 8-12. National political reporter @ The New York Times. Previously Chief Metro political correspondent. “These Are the Voters Who Should Scare Democrats Most.” The New York Times. 8-16-2025. https://www.nytimes.com/2025/08/12/us/politics/democrats-working-class-voters.html

Working-class voters like Mr. Teachey, who supported Joseph R. Biden Jr. in 2020 but either backed President Trump last year or, as Mr. Teachey did, skipped the 2024 presidential election, help explain why Democrats lost pivotal swing counties like Bucks, and vividly illustrate how the traditional Democratic coalition has eroded in the Trump era.

Now, Democrats hope to bring these voters back into the fold for the midterm elections in 2026, betting on a backlash to Mr. Trump and his party’s far-reaching moves to slash the social safety net.

But in interviews with nearly 30 predominantly working-class voters who supported Mr. Biden in 2020 before defecting or struggling deeply with their choices last year, many had a stinging message for the Democratic Party.

Just because we have misgivings about Mr. Trump, they say, it doesn’t mean we like you.

“I think I’m done with the Democrats,” said Desmond Smith, 24, a deli worker from Smithdale, Miss., and a Black man who said he backed Mr. Biden in 2020 at the height of the racial justice protests. But last year, disillusioned by what he saw as the party’s overemphasis on identity politics and concerned about illegal immigration, he voted for Mr. Trump.

Asked how Democrats could win him back, he said, “Fight for Americans instead of fighting for everybody else.”

An in-depth post-election study from Pew Research Center suggests that about 5 percent of Mr. Biden’s voters in 2020 switched to Mr. Trump in 2024, while roughly 15 percent of those voters stayed home last year. Mr. Trump retained more of his 2020 voters than Democrats did, a crucial factor in winning the election.

Polling on the current attitudes of those Biden defectors is limited, but it is clear the Democratic brand, broadly, continues to struggle. A Wall Street Journal poll released in late July found that the party’s image was at its lowest point in more than three decades, with just 33 percent of voters saying they held a favorable view of Democrats.

“They’re doing nothing to move their own numbers because they don’t have an economic message,” said John Anzalone, a veteran Democratic pollster who worked on that survey.

“They think that this is about Trump’s numbers getting worse,” he added. “They need to worry about their numbers.”

Certainly, anger with Mr. Trump, an energized Democratic base and the headwinds a president’s party typically confronts in midterm elections could help propel Democrats to victory next year.

#### 10. Trump has been silent about labor

Batya Ungar-Sargon 24. Opinion editor at Newsweek. "The Rise of the Pro-Worker Republican." American Compass. 11-18-2024. https://americancompass.org/the-rise-of-the-pro-worker-republican

O’Brien was greeted with the same pointed questions that greet anyone willing to admit that the Democrats have become the party of the rich, while Trump’s MAGA movement has inherited America’s multi-racial working class. “What has Donald Trump ever done for labor?” the naysayers asked. “His signature accomplishment was a tax cut for the rich!” O’Brien had the last laugh when Trump announced his pick for Secretary of Labor on Friday. Indeed, Trump’s cabinet is shaping up to be one of the sharpest breaks from the desires of Wall Street (and the Wall Street Journal editorial board) imaginable.

#### 11. He needs to deliver on his promises

Leslie Bolden, 8-13. ““Done With The Democrats”: Working-Class Voters Feel Abandoned By The Party.” AOL (Originally Tampa Free Press). 8-13-2025. https://www.aol.com/news/done-democrats-working-class-voters-223420894.html

Maya Garcia, a restaurant server from California who voted for Biden in 2020 but sat out the 2024 election, expressed a similar financial anxiety. She told the NYT that while Democrats "talk a lot about us emotionally," they fail to provide a clear plan for economic stability. "What are we going to do financially?" she asked, adding, “I understand that you want, you know, equal rights and things like that. But I feel like we need to talk more about the economics.”

The NYT report also touches on the complex political landscape for those who supported Trump's "America First" platform. Kyle Bielski of Arizona, who connected with this message in 2024, admitted he feels the president is not fully delivering on those promises. “We’re getting into more stuff abroad and not really focusing on economics here,” he said, questioning if the president is "holding true to anything that he’s promised."

A Democratic pollster, John Anzalone, candidly told the NYT that the party's biggest problem is its lack of an economic message. “They think that this is about Trump’s numbers getting worse,” he said, "They need to worry about their numbers.” This stark warning comes as some Democrats are urging the party to move away from left-wing messaging and reclaim a more center-left identity.

### AT: Midterm Not Matter---2NC

#### 1. Link comes first. Our link evidence says that a genuine pro-Worker GOP could realign American politics and lock Republicans into winning every future election.

#### 2. Democratic win in the midterm solves OUR impact.

#### 3. Wrong. 2026 is the only chance to stave off authoritarianism before 2028.

Hanna Rosin 25. Interview with Garry Kasparov, Chess world champion who runs the Renew Democracy Initiative; and Anne Applebaum; Senior Fellow at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies and the SNF Agora Institute. "‘2026 Is the Battlefield’." Atlantic. 9-21-2025. https://www.theatlantic.com/podcasts/archive/2025/09/radio-atlantic-live-from-the-atlantic-festival-2026-is-the-battlefield/684291/

Rosin: Okay. I’m gonna ask you a question that I don’t wanna ask you, and then I’m gonna close my eyes as you answer: 2026?

Kasparov: Most fateful election in American history.

Rosin: Most what?

Kasparov: Most fateful election in American history. If Democrats do not retake the House, 2028 will be a formality. That’s it. You know, then I’m afraid the show, Autocracy in America, the show will be shut down.

Applebaum: Hanna and I will run it in the underground.

Rosin: Yes. We’ll run it in the underground.

Applebaum: In this room.

[Audience laughter]

Rosin: What? Okay, 2028 then?

Applebaum: 2028 is too far.

Kasparov: 2026. This is the battlefield. You have to make sure that the Congress, that Article I of the Constitution, will take a stand against Donald Trump.

And by the way, I believe the Democrats should actually start work on it now. There are five Republicans—there are five members of the House that separate, you know, Donald Trump from pushing his agenda. Three of the GOP members, they are retiring. So make them an offer they cannot reject. All you need, you need five votes. And it’s, again: Be active. Try. Offer them speakership.

#### 4. And, Dem win now builds a winning coalition for the Presidency.

Tanner Stening 25. Professor of Political Science. "Can progressives and moderates bridge the growing divide in the Democratic Party?." Northeastern Global News. 2-20-2025. https://news.northeastern.edu/2025/02/20/democrat-midterms-2028/

But there is also the danger in overstating the Republican victories in 2024, says Costas Panagopoulos, distinguished professor of political science at Northeastern and co-author of “Battleground: Electoral College Strategies, Execution, and Impact in the Modern Era.”

Panagopoulos and Beauchamp note that the momentum swings over the last several cycles still point to a narrowly divided electorate — and a sense that “anything can happen” over the next four years.

The party of the president tends to lose congressional seats between presidential elections. Indeed, every House flip since 1955 has occurred during the midterm elections, data shows.

“If history is any guide, the Democrats will have an advantage in House elections in 2026 — and, given how razor-thin the Republican majority is, there is a good chance that the Democrats can flip the House in the midterm elections,” Panagopoulos says. “But that is not a guarantee.”

In the 22 midterm elections from 1934 to 2018, the incumbent’s party lost 28 House seats and four Senate seats on average, data shows. Should the Democrats perform well in the midterms, it will help them build back a coalition capable of challenging the Republicans in 2028.

Even if the Democrats manage to take back some congressional seats, experts maintain that a center-left politics with concessions to the right will likely set the tone.

“I doubt the coming months or years will allow the progressives to shine,” Johnson says. “I think the centrists in the party will work hard to maintain control and moderate the party message.”

The story of the 2024 election, Panagopoulos says, was voters’ frustration with persistent inflation and higher prices during the Biden years — a fact compounded by slowdown in wage growth in certain sectors. Exit polling data showed that roughly 75% of voters reported that inflation had caused “moderate or severe hardship” during that year.

Panagopoulos says if there is one thing the Democrats can learn from President Donald Trump, it was the fact that he “relentlessly” engaged while out of office.

“Trump spent the past four years blasting Biden and Democrats, particularly on the economy,” he says.

“Democrats could take a page from that playbook right now and not wait until the election is closer to make their case to voters,” he says.

### Uniqueness---AT: Too early---2NC

#### It’s not too early---Dems have the lead but it’s close

Nathan L. Gonzales, 25. Elections Analyst @ Roll Call. Editor & Publisher @ Inside Elections LLC. Previously Political Analyst and On-air contributor at CNN and CNNI. MA Political Management @ The George Washington University. “Initial 2026 House race ratings show more Republicans in Toss-up seats.” Roll Call. 3-10-2025. https://rollcall.com/2025/03/10/house-midterm-elections-race-ratings/

ANALYSIS — Even though the midterms are 20 months away, it’s not too early to project that the headliner of the 2026 elections will be the fight for the House majority.

Republicans’ three-seat Senate majority and a dearth of competitive races puts next year’s battle for the Senate on a side stage compared with the House elections. After gaining a seat in 2024, House Democrats need to gain just three seats to claim the majority next year.

According to Inside Elections’ initial individual House race ratings of the 2026 cycle, the fight for the majority looks to be a close, district-by-district battle. But cycles, particularly midterms, can evolve and sometimes even change dramatically.

The initial 2026 House battleground consists of 64 seats rated as either Toss-up (10 races), Tilt (13), Lean (22) or Likely (19), with two or three races in Ohio currently outstanding over a pending new congressional map.

The initial playing field is disproportionately Democratic turf, with the party defending 34 vulnerable seats compared with 30 currently in GOP hands. That makeup aligns with the high correlation between presidential results and House outcomes and the fact that there are 13 Democrats who represent districts where President Donald Trump finished ahead of Kamala Harris and just three Republicans who represent districts where Harris beat Trump.

But Republicans are defending a disproportionately larger share of the Toss-up races. Seven House Republicans are in races rated a Toss-up, including Reps. Juan Ciscomani (Arizona’s 6th District), Gabe Evans (Colorado’s 8th), Mariannette Miller-Meeks (Iowa’s 1st), Tom Barrett (Michigan’s 7th), Ryan Mackenzie (Pennsylvania’s 7th) and Jen Kiggans (Virginia’s 2nd). The contest for New York Rep. Mike Lawler’s 17th District is also rated a Toss-up, and the seat would be even more vulnerable for Republicans if he vacates it to run for governor.

On the Democratic side, Reps. Adam Gray (California’s 13th District), Derek Tran (California’s 45th) and Don Davis (North Carolina’s 1st) also start in Toss-up races, but they might soon have company from colleagues in the Buckeye State.

Ohio’s 15 districts are not included in the initial Inside Elections ratings because of redistricting anticipated this cycle. Democratic Reps. Marcy Kaptur (9th District) and Emilia Sykes (13th) will either be at some or significant risk, depending on the new lines. It’s also possible that Democratic Rep. Greg Landsman in the 1st District is vulnerable as well, but that’s less likely.

Kaptur won reelection last fall by less than a point, and Sykes did so by just more than 2 points, so it wouldn’t take a lot for state Republican mapmakers to make their races more difficult. But the political environment could be better for Democrats next year compared with 2024. At this stage, in a more neutral political environment, Democrats can’t afford to lose any of their own seats.

Under the current conditions, the race for the House majority should be very close. But cycles have a way of evolving, and battlegrounds can shift in size and makeup, particularly in midterms.

For example, in February 2009, the initial House battleground consisted of 33 seats, including 10 held by Republicans and 23 held by Democrats. By the end of the 2010 cycle, the battleground had ballooned to 109 competitive seats, including 100 held by Democrats. Republicans gained 63 seats that cycle in response to President Barack Obama’s first years in office and perceived Democratic overreach with the Affordable Care Act.

In February 2017, at the beginning of Trump’s first midterm election cycle, the House battlefield consisted of 43 seats — 28 held by Republicans and 15 by Democrats. But by the end of the 2018 cycle, the number of competitive seats had doubled to 89 seats. Republicans were dramatically on the defensive, with 81 vulnerable seats compared with Democrats’ eight, and Democrats gained a net of 41 seats that cycle to flip the chamber.

With Trump’s aggressive first few weeks in office, history may repeat itself.

Typically, midterm elections go poorly for the president’s party, particularly in the House. Winning parties in presidential election years prematurely declare a mandate and overreach, and voters respond by sending more members of the “out” party to Washington as a check and balance.

Support for Trump’s policies on government efficiency, tariffs and foreign policy will wane if his actions start to hurt people’s everyday lives. Economic decline or instability and questions about national security would likely excite Democratic voters, turn off independents and temper GOP enthusiasm. Republicans already have the challenge next year of turning out Trump voters when Trump isn’t on the ballot.

GOP lawmakers are currently confident they are acting well within a mandate voters gave their party in 2024, but there could be increased tensions between Trump and Republicans on Capitol Hill later in the cycle. House Republicans are poised to take the brunt of voter dissatisfaction if the president’s policies don’t go well, because Trump doesn’t have to face voters in 2026.

#### Voters and donors are already making up their minds.

Chris Brennan 25. National Columnist for USA Today. "Midterms aren't as far away as you think. The fight has already started.." USA TODAY. 4-11-2025. https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/columnist/2025/04/11/democrats-congress-midterms-2026-election/83014650007/

Trump is already promising big midterm wins. Not so fast.

Chris Pack, a longtime Republican political consultant and spokesperson for Defending America, told me the super PAC was set up in 2023 to help Fitzpatrick fend off a primary challenger from the right. I asked him if it felt like the midterms were off to an early start. He agreed.

"It's definitely become a full-contact sport," Pack told me. "And it seems there's no longer an off-season."

Kondik said money flooding into races early accelerates the cycle to where it hardly starts or stops.

"There's so much money in the political system that it's never too early to see attacks," Kondik said. "There really is effectively a permanent campaign for the House."

With the cycle already churning, Fitzpatrick and other potentially vulnerable Republicans will face certain scrutiny from voters and special interests looking to see how close to ‒ or distant from ‒ he is to a controversial president who could serve as an effective deadweight on his campaign.

#### It’s always campaign season.

Cami Mondeaux 25. Congressional correspondent for the Deseret News. "An early look at the 2026 midterm elections." Deseret News. 6-21-2025. https://www.deseret.com/politics/2025/06/21/sneak-peek-to-2026-elections/

The Big Idea: An early look at the 2026 midterm elections

It’s more than a year until Election Day on Nov. 3, 2026. But for those unaccustomed to Washington, D.C., an important note: It’s always campaign season in the nation’s capital.

Both chambers of Congress will be up for grabs next fall, and both parties are already strategizing on how they’re going to defend their slim majorities or topple their opponents to regain at least a sliver of control.

It could be too early to determine which issues will be the selling points for next year. After all, voters historically have short-term memories and it’s often the biggest news cycle closest to Election Day that sways opinions the most.

But it’s clear that Republicans and Democrats are already trying to make their jobs easier for when campaign season begins in earnest — especially for those in the most vulnerable seats.

### Dems Win---2NC

#### Dems win now:

#### 1. Generic ballot polling. 53% of voters want Dems in power.

#### That’s confirmed by the most recent polling.

G. Elliott Morris 25. 9-23-25. American data journalist formerly at FiveThirtyeight. “New poll: Percent saying America on the "wrong track" hits new high”. https://www.gelliottmorris.com/p/new-poll-voters-to-blame-republicans-for-shutdown

The generic ballot: a modest Democratic edge, slightly narrower than August

If the 2026 U.S. House elections were today, 47% of adults say they’d vote for the Democratic candidate in their congressional district, whereas 42% say they’d vote for Republicans (11% undecided) — a D+5 advantage. The margin is the same (5 points) among registered voters. That’s a touch smaller than last month’s D+8 (49–41) among adults, but within a zone of normal month-to-month variation.

This month, we added a question about how likely voters are to cast their ballot in next year’s elections. Among the most engaged voters (those saying they are definitely or very likely to vote), the margin is still D+5 (50–45). We also asked voters to rate their interest in the election on a scale from 1 to 10: Among the 10-out-of-10 voters, Democrats lead 55–41 (just 4% undecided) in the generic ballot. That mirrors the Democratic edge in recent special elections for Congress and state legislatures.

Among those rating their interest 6–9, Republicans inch ahead 48–46 (within the margin of error), while low-interest respondents have many undecided (roughly four in ten).

The national mood grows more pessimistic

The public remains deeply dissatisfied with the direction of the country. In our September survey, 28% of adults say the U.S. is “on the right track” compared to 60% who say it’s “off on the wrong track” (12% don’t know). That’s significantly more negative than August’s reading (33/57).

Persistent pessimism typically harms the party that holds national power — which, in a Trump-era environment, helps explain why the president’s issue ratings remain net negative and why Democrats keep a modest lead on the generic ballot.

#### 2. Empirics. Electoral conditions and polling are similar to 2018, when there was a Blue Wave.

#### 3. Threshold is low. Dems need to flip only a few seats to solve our impacts.

#### 4. Their margin is improving among groups that Trump won in 2024.

Ronald Brownstein 9-21. Senior Political Correspondent at CNN. "For the GOP majority to survive 2026, Trump must do something Obama could not.” CNN. https://www.cnn.com/2025/09/21/politics/trump-midterm-election-voters-gop-2026-analysis

Donald Trump’s greatest success in the 2024 election may pose the greatest threat to Republicans in the 2026 contest.

Trump won reelection last year largely because he succeeded in turning out a large pool of infrequent voters, many of them younger non-white men without a college degree. Now, the GOP faces the challenge of mobilizing those voters to come out again for a midterm election, when far fewer of them have typically voted.

“That’s the big question of this cycle: How do we turn out this base that turned out so strong last cycle?” said Mike Marinella, press secretary for the National Republican Congressional Campaign Committee.

Trump’s test closely resembles the Democratic dilemma during Barack Obama’s two terms in the White House. Obama also benefited from a strong turnout among irregular voters, particularly in his initial victory in 2008. But Democrats struggled to mobilize his voters during the two midterm elections of his presidency, which contributed to crushing losses in both 2010 and 2014.

Republicans are not defending nearly as many vulnerable House and Senate seats now as Democrats were then, so the GOP’s downside risk isn’t as great. But because the Republican majorities in both chambers are so thin, even much smaller losses next year than the Democrats endured during the Obama mid-terms could cost the GOP its majorities, particularly in the House.

Marinella said Republicans are confident of holding support next year from the infrequent voters who fueled Trump’s victory in 2024. But public polls consistently show that his job approval rating, particularly for handling the economy, is now running well below his 2024 vote share with several of the key groups that moved toward him — particularly Hispanics, young men, and non-white voters who did not attend college.

That’s boosting Democratic confidence that Republicans will struggle in the midterm election to mobilize the low-propensity voters who supported the president in 2024 — and to maintain his elevated support among those who do come out. “With these key groups, we see the kind of backsliding you would observe if you are looking at a poor election for Republicans,” said Erica Seifert, senior director of Navigator Research, a Democratic polling consortium.

#### Prefer Brownstein.

Bill Kristol 18. Founder and editor-at-large of The Weekly Standard; co-founded the Project for the New American Century with Robert kagan; member of the Policy Advisory Board for the Ethics and Public Policy Center; director of the Foreign Policy Initiative. 6/27/2018. “RONALD BROWNSTEIN II TRANSCRIPT.” https://conversationswithbillkristol.org/transcript/ronald-brownstein-ii-transcript/.

KRISTOL: Hi, I’m Bill Kristol. Welcome to CONVERSATIONS. I’m joined today by Ron Brownstein, senior editor at The Atlantic, senior political analyst at CNN. In my opinion, one of the best analysts of American politics.

BROWNSTEIN: Thank you, Bill, good to be here.

KRISTOL: A rare combination of detailed, granular understanding of electoral matters and the big historical sweep. So, I’ve now put a big burden on you here…

BROWNSTEIN: Thank you, thank you. Well, we are living in a big – we are in a big sweep right now, right.

KRISTOL: …to live up to this introduction.

#### 5. Democrats win now. Their vote threshold will be big enough to overcome redistricting.

Nate Cohn 25. Chief political analyst for The New York Times. "If Redistricting Goes as Expected, Which Party Will Come Out Ahead?" NYT. 8-31-2025. https://www.nytimes.com/2025/08/31/upshot/redistricting-analysis-2026-midterms.html

The next phase of the redistricting war is starting to come into focus.

Indiana, Missouri, Ohio and perhaps Florida — all Republican-controlled states — seem likely to join Texas and California in attempting to redraw their congressional maps, according to my New York Times colleagues. By their tally, Republicans could carve out up to seven more House seats where they would be favored to win.

It’s too soon to be sure if these states will follow through, let alone whether it would mark the end of this cycle’s redistricting battles. Other states could join; a legal challenge to Utah’s map and a challenge to Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act also loom. But suppose that this is where the redistricting war goes next, and where it ends. If so, how much would the new maps tilt the playing field toward Republicans?

Ultimately, the most important question is whether redistricting prevents the party that wins the national popular vote from winning control of the House. If the popular vote winner is still likely to prevail, then gerrymandering, however odious, hasn’t necessarily left one party at an undemocratic disadvantage overall.

By this measure, the House map was fundamentally fair in 2024: Despite plenty of gerrymandering, the winner of the popular vote was reasonably likely to win the most seats. But if the new maps are enacted in all of these states, Democrats will need to win the national popular vote by two or three percentage points to be favored to retake the House, according to projections based on recent congressional and presidential election results.

A two-to-three-point structural advantage for the G.O.P. is meaningful, but pretty modest. With Democrats leading by four points in the national generic ballot polls today, the party would still be favored to win next year’s midterm election. The Republicans wouldn’t stand much of any chance at all of surviving a so-called “wave” election, like in 2018, when Democrats won the House popular vote by seven points.

But while Democrats would be favored if the election were held tomorrow, the race for the House would be significantly more competitive on the new maps. Even if the Democrats won, the likeliest outcome would be a piecemeal seat-by-seat battle in which control of the chamber would come down to a fairly small number of seats. The race might not be called for days. Democrats wouldn’t have much margin for error: A few mediocre Democratic recruits, some ill-timed retirements, an unexpected demographic shift or even plain bad luck in contests with razor-thin margins could be enough to give Republicans control even if the G.O.P. loses the popular vote by a modest margin.

And if the Democrats’ popular vote advantage turns out to be much less than four points, the new maps could give the Republicans the advantage. Democrats, for instance, might not be able to get away with their own version of the G.O.P.’s disappointing “red ripple” election in 2022 and still win. They might not win if 2026 is like the narrow Democratic victory from 2020, either. Indeed, each of the last three congressional elections was decided by three points or less in the national popular vote, with the winner prevailing by less than seven seats.

To make these estimates, I did something a little unusual: I drew hypothetical districts for the four red states that are most likely to redraw their maps next, based on my colleagues’ reporting. In general, I tried to take the cleanest possible approach. In Missouri, Ohio and Indiana, this meant drawing a total of four new safely Republican districts without endangering any incumbents. Things were messier in Florida.

The Times reported that Republicans want to target two Democratic seats in South Florida, but I found it difficult to draw two new safely Republican districts, at least not without potentially endangering an incumbent. I drew two new Trump districts, but one voted for Joe Biden and could be quite competitive — especially in the Democratic-leaning years that Republicans might hope to survive through new maps.

The difficulty of drawing two new safely Republican districts in South Florida illustrates one important lesson from these estimates: It is not a given that Republicans would actually pick up seven seats from these maps. On average, our analysis shows Republicans would gain about 5.2 seats, not seven, as several would remain competitive. This might seem insignificant, but it’s not — not when there are so few competitive districts nationwide.

As I mentioned a few weeks ago, two of the competitive districts that Republicans targeted in Texas already voted for President Trump and won’t tilt that much more toward the G.O.P. after being redrawn, so they could easily remain competitive. Similarly, two potential Democratic-leaning districts in California and at least one of two new Republican districts in Florida seem likely to be at least somewhat competitive. It’s worth noting that most of these potentially competitive districts have relatively large Hispanic populations, and Democrats can plausibly hope that Hispanic voters will collectively snap back to the left next November.

And while I was able to draw four new Republican districts in Ohio, Indiana and Missouri that were noncompetitive, that’s not guaranteed — not until new maps are released.

Beyond the maps themselves, there is no shortage of uncertainty in such projections, and oddly enough, uncertainty itself is vital to Democratic chances. Democrats have a much better chance to overcome a structural disadvantage if they pull off even a few surprising wins (if you have a long memory, think of Democratic wins in Oklahoma’s Fifth District, South Carolina’s First or New York’s 11th back in 2018, or in Washington’s Third, Ohio’s Ninth or Alaska’s at-large district in 2022). If recent history is any indication, there will be a few surprises, eroding the G.O.P. edge. If not, Republican chances go up.

At risk of belaboring the point, these details will matter with so few competitive districts. We won’t have every detail until long after the ink dries on the new maps.

### Link---2NC

#### The plan flips the midterm and cements a long-term realignment that turns working class voters into a core Republican constituency:

#### 1. The aff is a huge win. Sectoral bargaining reshapes the American economy and is a hand out to union bosses that drive political engagement and donate to campaigns.

#### Those voters are key and are looking for a concrete win from Trump.

Kelly Rissman 25. US News reporter @ The Independent, covering politics and crime. Previously Vanity Fair, BuzzFeed, the BBC. Master’s degree in journalism @ Northwestern University. “President Donald Trump and his White House are influencing GOP congressional candidates and advising who to run and who to stand down as Republicans try to keep control of both chambers of Congress in midterm elections next year.” The Independent. 7-27-2025. https://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/americas/us-politics/trump-midterms-republican-control-b2796910.html

President Donald Trump and his White House are influencing GOP congressional candidates and advising who to run and who to stand down as Republicans try to keep control of both chambers of Congress in midterm elections next year.

The White House is strategizing to make sure Republicans win enough seats and is putting together “a 2027 policy agenda” so Trump, who plans to join candidates on the campaign trail, can explain what continued GOP control of the House, Senate and the White House could look like, a White House official told Politico.

This strategy includes telling which Republican candidates to run for office and which to “stay put,” the official said.

For example, Iowa Republican Rep. Zach Nunn was weighing a gubernatorial run when the president told him to “stay put,” the outlet reported. Nunn this month announced he was running for re-election.

“After prayerful consideration with his family and the strong support from President Trump, Zach is more committed than ever to maintaining the Republican majority and advancing the America First Agenda,” the congressman’s campaign spokesperson said. The president has also publicly endorsed Nunn.

The president also advised Michigan GOP Rep. Bill Huizenga to avoid running for Senate. Trump instead publicly backed Senator Mike Rogers this week, saying he “has my Complete and Total Endorsement — HE WILL NOT LET YOU DOWN!”

Earlier this month, Trump met with Iowa Senator Joni Ernst to encourage her to run for re-election, Politico previously reported. Questions about Ernst’s political future swirled after her viral remark about proposed Medicaid cuts: “We all are going to die.”

“President Trump is the unequivocal leader of the Republican Party — just look at those who have bet against him in the past because they are no longer around,” White House press secretary Karoline Leavitt told Politico. “The President will help his Republican friends on Capitol Hill get reelected, and work to pick up new seats across the country.”

Democrats are likely hoping for a repeat of the 2018 midterms, when they destroyed Republicans’ trifecta by taking control of the House during Trump’s first term.

​​“I’m sure there’s some memories from 2018, but it’s all about these last two years of his presidency and his legacy, and he doesn’t want the Democrats nipping at his heels all the time for the last two years,” Tony Fabrizio, the pollster for Trump’s 2016 and 2024 campaigns, told Politico.

Trump has acknowledged the power he has to influence voters. He recently suggested holding rallies for candidates, two White House officials told the outlet.

The president reportedly told one of the officials last week: “We’re going to have to campaign in the states and really get out there a lot, huh? Because really, it’s just me that can pull them out in a lot of places.”

Republican strategists have said they plan to use the threat of Trump’s third impeachment, should Democrats take the House, to compel voters.

“We know what the stakes are in the midterm elections,” John McLaughlin, a Trump pollster, told NBC News this week. “If we don’t succeed, Democrats will begin persecuting President Trump again. They would go for impeachment.”

The White House also plans to use its 2024 campaign strategy as a guide, targeting young and working-class voters that came out to support Trump in droves.

“One of the main strategies is to put Trump on the ballot in the midterms,” one of the White House officials told Politico. “We’ll have a midterm agenda that we’re running on. Not only here’s what we’ve done, but here’s what we’re going to do next.”

#### 2. Failure to act risks alienating potential allies, especially as Trump’s anti-worker undercuts the party’s populist message. The plan cements temporary political gains into a durable realignment that GUARANTEES GOP success for decades. That’s Press.

#### 3. Coalition building. A concrete win durably realigns new voters to the party.

Josh Boak & Zeke Miller 24. Josh Boak – White House and economic policy @ The Associated Press. Previously Politico, The Fiscal Times, Chicago Tribune. MS Journalism, Columbia University. Zeke Miller – White House @ The Associated Press. Ex-President of the White House Correspondents Association. Previously TIME, Business Insider. "How Trump Is Winning Over Union Members." Associated Press. 11-23-2024. https://www.inc.com/associated-press/how-trump-is-winning-over-union-members/91023789

Working-class voters helped Republicans make steady election gains this year and expanded a coalition that increasingly includes rank-and-file union members, a political shift spotlighting one of President-elect Donald Trump’s latest Cabinet picks: a GOP congresswoman, who has drawn labor support, to be his labor secretary.

Oregon Rep. Lori Chavez-DeRemer narrowly lost her bid for a second term this month, despite strong backing from union members, a key part of the Democratic base but gravitating in the Trump era toward a Republican Party traditionally allied with business interests.

“Lori’s strong support from both the Business and Labor communities will ensure that the Labor Department can unite Americans of all backgrounds behind our Agenda for unprecedented National Success — Making America Richer, Wealthier, Stronger and more Prosperous than ever before!” Trump said in a statement announcing his choice Friday night.

For decades, labor unions have sided with Democrats and been greeted largely with hostility by Republicans. But with Trump’s populist appeal, his working-class base saw a decent share of union rank-and-file voting for Republicans this year, even as major unions, including the AFL-CIO and the United Auto Workers, endorsed Democrat Kamala Harris in the White House race.

Trump sat down with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters union leadership and members this year, and when he emerged from that meeting, he boasted that a significant chunk of union voters were backing him. Of a possible Teamsters endorsement, he said, “Stranger things have happened.”

The Teamsters ultimately declined to endorse either Trump, the former president, or Harris, the vice president, though leader Sean O’Brien had a prominent speaking slot at the Republican National Convention.

Kara Deniz, a Teamsters spokesperson, told the Associated Press that O’Brien met with more than a dozen House Republicans this past week to lobby on behalf of Chavez-DeRemer. “Chavez-DeRemer would be an excellent choice for labor secretary and has his backing,” Deniz said.

The work of the Labor Department affects workers’ wages, health and safety, ability to unionize, and employers’ rights to fire employers, among other responsibilities.

On Election Day, Trump deepened his support among voters without a college degree after running just slightly ahead of Democrat Joe Biden with noncollege voters in 2020. Trump made modest gains, earning a clear majority of this group, while only about 4 in 10 supported Harris, according to AP VoteCast, a sweeping survey of more than 120,000 voters nationwide.

Unions and the election

Roughly 18 percent of voters in this year’s election were from union households, with Harris winning a majority of the group. But Trump’s performance among union members kept him competitive and helped him win key states such as Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin.

Chavez-DeRemer was one of few House Republicans to endorse the “Protecting the Right to Organize” or PRO Act, which would allow more workers to conduct organizing campaigns and add penalties for companies that violate workers’ rights.

The measure would weaken “right-to-work” laws that allow employees in more than half the states to avoid participating in or paying dues to unions that represent workers at their places of employment.

Trump’s first term saw firmly pro-business policies from his appointees across government, including those on the National Labor Relations Board. Trump, a real estate developer and businessman before winning the presidency, generally has backed policies that would make it harder for workers to unionize.

During his recent campaign, Trump criticized union bosses, and at one point suggested that UAW members should not pay their dues. His first administration did expand overtime eligibility rules, but not nearly as much as Democrats wanted, and a Trump-appointed judge has since struck down the Biden administration’s more generous overtime rules.

He has stacked his incoming administration with officials who worked on the Heritage Foundation’s “Project 2025” blueprint, which includes a sharp swing away from Biden’s pro-union policies.

“Chavez-DeRemer’s record suggests she understands the value of policies that strengthen workers’ rights and economic security,” said Rebecca Dixon, president and CEO of National Employment Law Project, which is backed my many of the country’s major labor unions. “But the Trump administration’s agenda is fundamentally at odds with these principles, threatening to roll back workplace protections, undermine collective bargaining, and prioritize corporate profits over the needs of working people. This is where her true commitment to workers will be tested.”

Other union leaders also issued praise, but also sounded a note of caution.

“Educators and working families across the nation will be watching … as she moves through the confirmation process,” the president of the National Education Association, Becky Pringle, said in a statement, “and hope to hear a pledge from her to continue to stand up for workers and students as her record suggests, not blind loyalty to the Project 2025 agenda.”

AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler welcomed the choice while taking care to note Trump’s history of opposing polices that support unions.

“It remains to be seen what she will be permitted to do as secretary of labor in an administration with a dramatically anti-worker agenda,” Shuler said.

#### 4. Democratic votes. That directly flips core groups from Dems.

Stef W. Kight 25. Congressional reporter @ Axios. Previously freelance writer at NowThis and Veer Magazine. “Scoop: GOP fight coming over labor unions.” Axios. 1-29-2025. https://www.axios.com/2025/01/30/senate-republican-josh-hawley-pro-labor-bill-chavez-deremer

Sen. Josh Hawley (R-Mo.) is aiming to be the first Republican in decades to sponsor major, pro-union labor reform, Axios has learned.

Why it matters: GOP leaders see an opportunity for a new, working-class coalition, which includes more union outreach. It's a major shift, and fault lines are already forming over President Trump's pro-labor Cabinet nominee, former Rep. Lori Chavez-DeRemer.

Zoom in: Hawley has been quietly circulating draft legislation that would prevent employers from stalling union contract negotiations — keeping the process to months, not years, according to a copy obtained by Axios.

He is looking for a Democratic co-sponsor.

The senator pitched his bill at a dinner Tuesday night with Teamsters president Sean O'Brien and a small group of Republican senators — Roger Marshall of Kansas, Jim Banks of Indiana, and Ohio's Bernie Moreno and Jon Husted, sources familiar said.

"We look forward to advancing meaningful legislation for working people this Congress," Hawley's office told Axios.

Zoom out: The effort comes as some Republicans express hesitancy about Chavez-DeRemer.

Sen. Rand Paul (R-Ky.) told NBC News he is not going to support her, "I think she'll lose 15 Republicans," Paul said, describing her as "very pro-labor."

Sen. Ron Johnson (R-Wis.) told NBC News he found the nomination "concerning."

But she is expected to pick up Democratic support, including from fellow Oregonian Sen. Jeff Merkley, who told local reporters of his plans to back her.

What they're saying: Others in the party see the nomination as a way for Republicans to win over more of the historically Democratic union voting bloc.

Chavez-DeRemer's nomination "came about by Sean [O'Brien] and I working together with the President," Sen. Markwayne Mullin (R-Okla.) told Axios. He said she is the "perfect balance" as a former Republican lawmaker and strong pro-labor voice.

Mullin and O'Brien have become friends after going viral for challenging each other to a fight mid-hearing.

"I think the Republican Party is expanding. I think a lot of that's due to President Trump, and I think that that she should be a solid nomination," Marshall told Axios. He also expressed willingness to back pro-union legislation.

#### That’s key to win the midterm.

Daivd Morgan and Bo Erickson, 25. “Republicans embrace Trump's populist tax push with midterms in mind.” Reuters. 5-16-2025. https://www.reuters.com/world/us/republicans-embrace-trumps-populist-tax-push-with-midterms-mind-2025-05-15/

After weeks of pressure from the president's MAGA base, Republicans in the U.S. House of Representatives are advancing legislation that includes tax breaks for workers who rely on tips and overtime pay, allows people to deduct interest on loans for U.S.-made cars, and proposes government-funded $1,000 MAGA savings accounts for U.S. children born between 2025 and 2028.

They have reason to do so: voters in households earning between $30,000 and $100,000 a year swung heavily in Trump's favor in November, and the party will need their support in next year's midterm elections, when Democrats will seek to retake control of Congress.

"My priority has been to deliver for the working class and working families, and that is in fact what this bill will do," said Republican Representative Jason Smith, chair of the tax-writing House Ways & Means Committee, who noted that he grew up living in a trailer in southern Missouri.

The message is a far cry from the free-market priorities Republicans prided themselves on a decade ago, and combined with Trump's tariff regime and executive order to cut drug prices, shows the encompassing sway that his populism now holds over the party.

White House spokesperson Harrison Fields described the House bill as "vital relief" for families. "The No Tax on Tips, Overtime, and Social Security policies — are all included in the House bill, and the administration is going to continue to push these and other critical priorities through the legislative process," Fields said.

Democrats question how much the bill will really help working-class Americans. Based on a nonpartisan Joint Committee on Taxation analysis, they calculate that people making less than $50,000 per year would get $263 in tax relief while those making over $1 million would get more than $81,000.

"There's no reason we can't focus this tax relief on the people that are out there working hard for a living and not the Elon Musks of the world," said Representative Lloyd Doggett, a Democratic tax writer from Texas.

Republican lawmakers acknowledged the support of working-class voters will be critical to their chances of protecting their 220-213 House majority and 53-47 Senate edge next year.

"They're vitally important," Republican Senator Markwayne Mullin of Oklahoma told Reuters. "We expect them to play a vital role in the midterms."

#### 5. Trump. He’ll campaign on even a left-wing proposal like the plan as a win.

Batya Ungar-Sargon 24. Opinion editor at Newsweek. "The Rise of the Pro-Worker Republican." American Compass. 11-18-2024. https://americancompass.org/the-rise-of-the-pro-worker-republican

Trump hasn’t been shy to adopt the best ideas from both sides—even from progressives. Recall that it was progressives who used to support tariffs, and progressives who used to support controlling the border and deporting illegal immigrants to protect wages. In both his first term and what he promises for a second, Trump has taken on the old guard of the Republican Party—which has historically preferred free trade and trickle-down economics—to wage political warfare on the entrenched, credentialed caste of both parties, a program that steadily bore fruit until the pandemic.

“There are many pro-worker Republicans who are moving the party away from the corporatist elites,” O’Brien told me. “And workers are taking notice. During the campaign, we watched Democrats cozy up with Big Tech and lean further into corporate mega-donors. They raised more than a billion bucks but it cost them the election.”

Both Trump and O’Brien showed immense leadership simply by listening to what their constituents—the people who elected them to serve—were asking for, and following through, rather than lecturing them or lying to them. Both were willing to take on an establishment that told them to sell out workers, either to the Chamber of Commerce or to the peccadilloes of a Democratic Party that abandoned labor to cater to the cultural concerns of the elites and the economic interests of the dependent poor.

That Trump has married his proposed tariffs and hawkish immigration policy with such an aggressively pro-labor secretary for the Department of Labor shows how serious he is about representing the working-class Americans who gave him his victory.

The lesson here is clear: Democratic elites need to stop lecturing people who have much less than them and start listening to the people who used to be their voters. They can start by taking a page out of the playbook used by Sean O’Brien, who chose to meet workers where they are at and demand for them a seat at the table—whichever table that may be.

Needless to say, that move paid off.

“Trade unionism and democracy are one and the same—they’re won by those who show up. And they’re preserved by those who refuse to give up,” O’Brien told me. “The 2024 election created an opportunity for both parties to do the right thing and work with us to protect workers. Time will tell who really shows up and follows through.”

### AT: Trump Steals (Kilgore)---2NC

#### Each warrant is wrong:

#### 1. Rigging an election is impossible. Be serious.

George Ayoub 25. "Free, fair and safe elections still work • Nebraska Examiner." Nebraska Examiner. 8-25-2025. https://nebraskaexaminer.com/2025/08/25/free-fair-and-safe-elections-still-work/

If you believe our elections are rigged — and that we should do something extreme and inane such as abolish mail-in ballots and voting machines — step over to your local county election office and sign up to work. See for yourself. Put some experience where that conspiratorial narrative is.

You’ll learn plenty about our election process, not the least of which is that rigging, perverting or stealing a single vote requires an inordinate amount of planning, subterfuge and sophistication few voters have. The math on such malfeasance — in person or by mail— is undeniable, too.

Voter fraud incidents remain infinitestably small.

You will also discern that rigging, perverting or stealing a general election in the United States via mail-in ballots or voting machines is virtually impossible — even if conspiracists insist mules are involved, foreign countries are feverishly rewriting lines of voting machine code and non-citizens are casting ballots from prison camps in our backyard.

#### 2. If he merely limits turnout, that hurts Republicans.

Quinta Jurecic 25. Staff writer. "Trump Has No (Legal) Power to Mess With the Election." 8-21-2025. The Atlantic. https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2025/08/trump-mail-voting-election-machines/683934/

Yet if the goal is to corruptly tilt elections toward the Republican Party—“you’re not going to have many Democrats get elected,” Trump promised when detailing his plans to end mail-in voting in the Oval Office—the president’s mental model may be out-of-date. In the Trump era, the Republican coalition has come to rely on voters who follow politics less closely, vote less frequently, and are more likely not to cast a ballot if doing so is difficult. Limiting access to voting might have been politically helpful to Republicans in the past, but seems not to be now. That may be especially true in lower-turnout contests such as midterms, in which Democrats may see an advantage thanks to a more politically engaged voter base.

During the 2024 election, Trump’s campaign staff seems to have been able to convince him to be quiet about his hatred of voting by mail long enough to increase Republicans’ use of mail-in ballots. As the 2026 midterms draw closer, his advisers may have to struggle to contain him once again, whether or not he moves forward with an executive order. The risk created by Trump’s attacks on mail-in ballots is less that Trump will actually succeed in limiting access to the franchise and that such limitations will actually tilt the playing field toward Republicans, and more that the president will—as he did in 2020—kick up enough doubt and confusion that a significant number of Americans no longer trust an election’s results.

#### 3. Same with redistricting. It backfires and helps Dems.

Charlie Hunt 25. Associate Professor of Political Science, Boise State University. "3 reasons Republicans’ redistricting power grab might backfire." Conversation. 8-8-2025. https://theconversation.com/3-reasons-republicans-redistricting-power-grab-might-backfire-262553

The gerrymandering drama in Texas – and beyond – has continued to unfold after Democratic state legislators fled the state. The Democrats want to prevent the Republican-controlled government from enacting a mid-decade gerrymander aimed at giving Republicans several more seats in Congress.

The Texas GOP move was pushed by President Donald Trump, who’s aiming to ensure he has a GOP-controlled Congress to work with after the 2026 midterm elections.

Other Republican states such as Missouri and Ohio may also follow the Texas playbook; and Democratic states such as California and Illinois seem open to responding in kind.

But there are a few factors that make this process more complicated than just grabbing a few House seats. They may even make Republicans regret their hardball gerrymandering tactics, if the party ends up with districts that political scientists like me call “dummymandered.”

Democrats can finally fight back

Unlike at the federal level, where Democrats are almost completely shut out of power, Republicans are already facing potentially consequential retaliation for their gerrymandering attempts from Democratic leaders in other states.

Democrats in California, led by Gov. Gavin Newsom, are pushing for a special election later this year, in which the voters could vote on new congressional maps in that state, aiming to balance out Democrats’ losses in Texas. If successful, these changes would take effect prior to next year’s midterm elections.

Other large Democratic-controlled states, such as Illinois and New York – led by Gov. J.B. Pritzker and Gov. Kathy Hochul, respectively – have also indicated openness to enacting their own new gerrymanders to pick up seats on the Democratic side.

New York and California both currently use nonpartisan redistricting commissions to draw their boundaries. But Hochul recently said she is “sick and tired of being pushed around” while other states refuse to adopt redistricting reforms and gerrymander to their full advantage. Hochul said she’d even be open to amending the state constitution to eliminate the nonpartisan redistricting commission.

It’s unclear whether these blue states will be successful in their efforts to fight fire with fire; but in the meantime, governors like Hochul and Pritzker have welcomed the protesting Democratic legislators from Texas, in many cases arranging for their housing during their self-imposed exile.

Dummymandering

Another possible problem for either party looking to gain some seats in this process stems from greediness.

In responding to Democrats’ continued absence from Texas, Gov. Greg Abbott threatened even more drastic gerrymanders. “If they don’t start showing up, I may start expanding,” Abbott said. “We may make it six or seven or eight new seats we’re going to be adding on the Republican side.”

But Abbott might think twice about this strategy.

Parties that gerrymander their states’ districts are drawing lines to maximize their own advantage, either in state legislatures or, in this case, congressional delegations.

When parties gerrymander districts, they don’t usually try to make them all as lopsided as possible for their own side. Instead, they try to make as many districts as possible that they are likely to win. They do this by spreading groups of supportive voters across several districts so they can help the party win more of these districts.

But sometimes the effort backfires: In trying to maximize their seats, a party spreads its voters too thin and fails to make some districts safe enough. These vulnerable districts can then flip to the other party in future elections, and the opposing party ends up winning more seats than expected.

This phenomenon, commonly referred to as “dummymandering,” has happened before. It even happened in Texas, where Republicans lost a large handful of poorly drawn state legislative districts in the Dallas suburbs in 2018, a strong year for Democrats nationwide.

With Democrats poised for a strong 2026 midterm election against an unpopular president, this is a lesson Republicans might need to pay attention to.

There’s not much left to gerrymander

One of the main reasons dummymandering happens is that there has been so much gerrymandering that there are few remaining districts competitive enough for a controlling party to pick off for themselves. This important development has unfolded for two big reasons.

First, in terms of gerrymandering, the low-hanging fruit is already picked over. States controlled by either Democrats or Republicans have already undertaken pretty egregious gerrymanders during previous regular redistricting processes, particularly following the 2010 and 2020 censuses.

Republicans have generally been more adept at the process, particularly in maximizing their seat shares in relatively competitive states such as Wisconsin and North Carolina that they happen to control.

But Democrats have also been successful in states such as Maryland, where only one Republican serves out of nine seats, despite the party winning 35% of the presidential vote in 2024. In Massachusetts, where Democrats hold all eight seats, Republicans won 37% of the presidential vote in 2024.

There’s also the fact that over the past half-century, “gerrymanderable” territory has become more difficult to find regardless of how you draw the boundaries. That’s because the voting electorate is more geographically sorted between the parties.

This means that Democratic and Republican voters are segregated from each other geographically, with Democrats tending toward big cities and suburbs, and Republicans occupying rural areas.

As a result, it’s become less geographically possible than ever to draw reasonable-looking districts that split up the other party’s voters in order to diminish the opponents’ ability to elect one of their own.

#### Either way, it won’t impact the election.

Mark Z. Barabak 25. "Redistricting fight assumes closer midterm than history shows." L.A. Times. 9-21-2025.

Another thing Democats have going for them is the passion of their voters, who’ve been flocking to the polls in off-year and special elections. The Downballot, which tracks races nationwide, finds Democratic candidates have far surpassed Kamala Harris’ 2024 performance, a potential harbinger of strong turnout in 2026.

Those advantages are somewhat offset by a GOP edge in two other measures. Republicans have significantly outraised Democrats and have limited the number of House members retiring. Generally speaking, it’s tougher for a party to defend a seat when it comes open.

In short, for all the partisan passions, the redistricting wars aren’t likely to decide control of the House.

“Opinions of the economy and Trump’s handling of it, the popularity (or lack thereof) of Republicans’ signature legislation” — the tax-cutting, Medicaid-slashing bill passed in July — as well as “partisan enthusiasm to vote are going to be more determinative to the 2026 outcome than redistricting alone,” Amy Walter, the Cook Report’s editor-in-chief, wrote in a recent analysis.

In other words, control of the House will most likely rest in the hands of voters, not scheming politicians.

Which is exactly where it belongs.

### Dems Internal---2NC

#### Dems constrain trump.

#### They end funding and gut his individual propositions.

#### A dem house majority means they can IMPEACH him, which ousts him forever.

#### Even the THREAT is sufficient because it deters them. Jackson.

#### Full throttle now.

Ed Kilgore 25 – “Trump Bets He Can Have His Extremism — and the Midterms, Too,” 9/14, https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/opinion/trump-bets-he-can-have-his-extremism-and-the-midterms-too/ar-AA1McsIe

This was a particularly fraught decision for Trump because his idea of “policy accomplishments” involved a vast expansion of presidential power, an inevitably controversial mass-deportation program, a return to protectionist economic strategies, and relentless threats of Mafia-style retribution against his enemies and critics. Given his incredibly high regard for his own uniqueness and his history of disdain for the Republican Party, it would have been the most natural thing in the world for Trump to write off the midterms and plan to leave the White House in 2029 after infuriating and betraying as many allies and voters as possible.

Within moments of his second inauguration, Trump pursued a course of unprecedented extremism that suggested he would be fine with vast midterm losses, deliberately alienating voting blocs (Latinos, younger voters, inflation-sensitive voters) that had moved in the GOP’s direction in 2024 and exhibiting indifference to public opinion generally (a bit disguised by his habit of asserting vast popularity absent, or even against, any evidence).

But then something surprising began happening: Trump started showing considerable personal interest in his party’s midterm prospects, interfering in Republican primaries to promote the most electable options (notably by shoving Marjorie Taylor Greene out of a Senate race) and making sure the White House is as focused on 2026 as he is.

The standard take on Trump’s motivation for this sudden decision to care about his party’s fate is that it’s actually all about himself: He’s worried about being investigated or even impeached by a Democratic House. But given the absence of any evidence that past Democratic House investigations or impeachments inhibited him even a bit, there’s a more lurid possibility: He’s convinced a rabid pursuit of a maximalist agenda is compatible with a successful midterm win and long-term Republican success.

This is consistent with Trump’s longtime belief in a base-first political strategy. If the GOP base wasn’t already completely under Trump’s thrall coming out of the 2024 elections, he’s probably heat-seared his bond with them by the audacity and thrilling hatefulness of his conduct since returning to the White House. You can debate all day long whether the second Trump administration bears the characteristic marks of an authoritarian regime. But without any question, the 47th president’s relationship with his supporters is ducelike. His biggest power grabs please them most, as is evidenced by the rapturous GOP rank-and-file reaction to the idea of sending troops into major U.S. cities to combat a nonexistent crime wave.

But even Trump seems to understand that this might not be enough to reverse the historic pattern of the White House party losing House seats in midterms. And that is why a big part of his own “pivot to the midterms” has been an effort to skew the results with a national gerrymandering effort that effectively increases the GOP House majority from a few seats to perhaps a dozen. To be very clear, this is something that would not have happened without Trump’s personal intervention; in some cases, he’s had to drag state-level Republicans kicking and screaming into this effort, and there will be collateral damage among Republican U.S. House members (especially in California, where Gavin Newsom’s retaliatory gerrymander could extinguish five GOP incumbents) who are sacrificing their own careers to the Leader’s cause.

If changing the geographical landscape isn’t enough to maintain the Republican trifecta, Trump is clearly planning to shift the issue landscape as well by doing everything possible to keep the public focus on topics he believes favor him and his party, including immigration, crime, and national security (or rather “war-fighting”). This last topic remains quite literally an unfired bullet in his chamber. A Wag the Dog scenario of preelection wars or rumors of wars is an ever-present possibility.

Trump has resolved the second-term president’s dilemma by refusing to choose at all between chewing up political capital to get things done and trying to win the midterms. He’s riding two horses past a fork in the road he refuses to acknowledge. After violating almost every existing political (and legal) norm since his reelection, he’s now seeking to extend the wild MAGA party for at least two more years by revving up his base to a state of great excitement, cheating as much as he can, and lying about conditions in the country in order to give himself additional opportunities to keep the opposition (and the courts) off balance.

The scarier question is what Trump will do if (as still appears likely) his efforts fall short. Will he simply reject the midterms results as fraudulent, as he did in 2020? Will he seek to overturn a Democratic House victory via the courts, state-election certifiers, or mass disturbances? Or will he turn to his faithful subaltern Mike Johnson and instruct the outgoing Speaker to refuse to seat every Democrat who’s won a close race? And will the U.S. Supreme Court again look the other way? The 2026 midterms could be Trump’s wildest ride yet.

#### It ends partisan legislation and imposes oversight.

Elaine Kamarck 25. "What history tells us about the 2026 midterm elections." Brookings. 8-28-2025. https://www.brookings.edu/articles/what-history-tells-us-about-the-2026-midterm-elections/

Since reentering the White House in January, President Trump has enjoyed the support of narrow but unified Republican majorities in both the House and the Senate. This has enabled him to win significant legislative victories while minimizing potentially troubling congressional oversight.

If Republicans lost control of either chamber in 2026, the legislative phase of Trump’s presidency would end (unless he and the Democratic opposition pivoted toward an unlikely bipartisanship), and a stream of oversight hearings would put his administration on the defensive. For a president whose approval rests in part on his ability to move swiftly and decisively, this would be a major setback.

What are the odds that this will happen? Here’s what we know about midterms.

House elections differ structurally from Senate elections. The most obvious and consequential difference is that while every House member faces the voters every two years, only one-third of the senators do, and there is no guarantee that these senators in the aggregate will represent the actual balance between the parties.

#### That’s uniquely powerful in constraining Trump’s foreign policy.

Albin Aronsson & Björn Ottosson 25. \*Deputy Programme Manager for NOTS and a Researcher in FOI’s Department for International Security Policy; Master’s degree in War Studies from King’s College London. \*\*Programme Manager for NOTS and a Senior Researcher in FOI’s Department for International Security Policy; PhD in Political Science from Stockholm University. “Drift or Abandonment? Exploring How US Domestic Politics and External Realities may affect US Security Engagement in Europe 2025–2029.” Swedish Ministry of Defense. August 2025. https://www.foi.se/rest-api/report/FOI-R--5777--SE

Democratic opposition forms an additional line of resistance. While Republicans may control the executive branch, Democrats in Congress, particularly in the Senate and House committees on Foreign Affairs, Armed Services, and Intelligence, can leverage procedural tools, public hearings, and legislative oversight to scrutinise or stall controversial initiatives. During Trump’s first term, for example, bipartisan coalitions, often led or backed by Democrats, moved to block or constrain certain foreign policy moves. In 2023, Congress passed legislation prohibiting the president from unilaterally withdrawing the United States from NATO without Senate approval, reflecting concerns over Trump’s repeated criticisms of the alliance and signalling institutional commitment to transatlantic security.25

Furthermore, Democratic governors, attorneys general, and state-level actors have historically mobilised legal and political opposition to federal directives, especially on immigration, climate, and human rights, extending resistance beyond Washington and into the broader federal system. This multi-tiered resistance can constrain, delay, or reshape presidential foreign and security policy, even when the executive branch seeks to centralise control. Needless to say, if the Democrats win in the 2026 midterms, especially if they gain a majority in the House of Representatives, this resistance will likely become considerably more effective, with enhanced capacity to investigate, block, or amend executive actions across a range of foreign and security policy areas.