

# 115th United States Congress

115TH CONGRESS ▾ DOMESTIC POLICY ECONOMIC POLICY FOREIGN POLICY

TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

The 115th  
United  
States

← 114th Congress

116th Congress →

**Congress** is the current meeting of the legislative branch of the United States federal government, composed of the Senate and the House of Representatives.

New members were elected on November 8, 2016. The 115th Congress convened on January 3, 2017, and will conclude on January 3, 2019.

## Leadership

### Senate

Position	Representative	Party
President of the Senate	Mike Pence	Republican
Senate Majority Leadership		
President pro tempore	Orrin Hatch	Republican
Senate Majority Leader	Mitch McConnell	Republican
Senate Majority Whip	John Cornyn	Republican
Senate Minority Leadership		
Senate Minority Leader	Chuck Schumer	Democratic
Senate Minority Whip	Dick Durbin	Democratic

### House of Representatives



### Features of Congress

#### Background

Federal Election  
Commission • Democratic  
Congressional Campaign  
Committee • National  
Republican Congressional  
Committee • Filing  
requirements for  
congressional candidates •  
Classes of United States  
Senators • Filling vacancies  
in the U.S. Senate •  
President Pro Tempore of  
the Senate • United States  
Speaker of the House •  
Filibuster

Position	Representative	Party
Speaker of the House	Paul Ryan	 Republican
House Majority Leadership		
House Majority Leader	Kevin McCarthy	 Republican
House Majority Whip	Steve Scalise	 Republican
House Minority Leadership		
House Minority Leader	Nancy Pelosi	 Democratic
House Minority Whip	Steny Hoyer	 Democratic

## Members

See also: *List of current members of the U.S. Congress*

## Partisan balance

### U.S. Senate Partisan Breakdown

Party	As of April 2018	After the 2018 Election
Democratic Party	47	<i>Pending</i>
Republican Party	51	<i>Pending</i>
Independent	2	<i>Pending</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

### U.S. House Partisan Breakdown

Party	As of April 2018	After the 2018 Election
Democratic Party	192	<i>Pending</i>
Republican Party	237	<i>Pending</i>
Vacancies	6	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>435</b>	<b>435</b>

## Special elections

See also: *Special elections to the 115th United States Congress (2017-2018)*

Special elections made up the bulk of Ballotpedia's congressional election coverage in 2017. Special elections to Congress occur when a legislator resigns or is removed from office. Depending on the specific state laws governing vacancies, a state can either hold an election within the same calendar year or wait until the next regularly scheduled election. In a presidential election year, such as 2016, it is normal for more special

### Sessions

116th Congress • 115th Congress • 114th Congress • 113th Congress • 112th Congress • 111th Congress • 110th Congress

### Analysis

Lifetime voting records • Net worth of United States Senators and Representatives • Staff salaries of United States Senators and Representatives • National Journal vote ratings



**115th Congress,  
2017-2018  
Issues**

### Domestic policy

Key votes • Energy and the environment • Healthcare • Immigration

### Economic policy and government regulations

Key votes • Budget • Financial policy • Taxes • Trade





elections to take place for members of Congress chosen for Cabinet positions.

## Foreign policy and national security

Key votes • Iran nuclear deal

## Announced special elections

The table below lists the announced special elections to the 115th United States Congress:

District	Prior Incumbent	Primary Date	General Election Candidates	Election Date	Winner	Partisan Switch?
<b>Michigan's 13th</b>	John Conyers Jr.	August 7, 2018	Pending	November 6, 2018	Pending	Pending
<b>Arizona's 8th</b>	Trent Franks	February 27, 2018	 Hiral Tipirneni  Debbie Lesko	April 24, 2018	Pending	Pending
<b>Ohio's 12th</b>	Patrick Tiberi	May 8, 2018	Pending	August 7, 2018	Pending	Pending
<b>U.S. Senator from Minnesota</b>	Al Franken	August 14, 2018	Pending	November 6, 2018	Pending	Pending
<b>U.S. Senator from Mississippi</b>	Thad Cochran	June 5, 2018	Pending	November 6, 2018	Pending	Pending

## Prior special elections

District	Prior Incumbent	Primary Date	General Election Candidates	Election Date	Winner	Partisan Switch?
<b>Kansas' 4th</b>	Mike Pompeo	N/A	 Ron Estes  Jim Thompson  Chris Rockhold	April 11, 2017	 Ron Estes	No
<b>Montana's At-Large</b>	Ryan Zinke	N/A	 Greg Gianforte  Rob Quist  Mark Wicks	May 25, 2017	 Greg Gianforte	No

<b>California's 34th</b>	Xavier Becerra	April 4, 2017	<span style="color: blue;">●</span> Robert Lee Ahn <span style="color: blue;">●</span> Jimmy Gomez	June 6, 2017	<span style="color: blue;">●</span> Jimmy Gomez	No
<b>Georgia's 6th</b>	Tom Price	April 18, 2017 <sup>[1]</sup>	<span style="color: blue;">●</span> Jon Ossoff <span style="color: red;">●</span> Karen Handel	June 20, 2017 <sup>[2]</sup>	<span style="color: red;">●</span> Karen Handel	No
<b>South Carolina's 5th</b>	Mick Mulvaney	May 2, 2017	<span style="color: blue;">●</span> Archie Parnell <span style="color: red;">●</span> Ralph Norman <span style="color: blue;">●</span> Five other candidates	June 20, 2017	<span style="color: red;">●</span> Ralph Norman	No
<b>U.S. Senator from Alabama</b>	Jeff Sessions	August 15, 2017	<span style="color: red;">●</span> Roy Moore <span style="color: blue;">●</span> Doug Jones <span style="color: purple;">●</span> Arlester McBride	December 12, 2017	<span style="color: blue;">●</span> Doug Jones	Yes
<b>Utah's 3rd</b>	Jason Chaffetz	August 15, 2017	<span style="color: red;">●</span> John Curtis <span style="color: blue;">●</span> Kathie Allen <span style="color: yellow;">●</span> Joe Buchman <span style="color: red;">●</span> Jason Christensen <span style="color: purple;">●</span> Sean Whalen <span style="color: purple;">●</span> Jim Bennett	November 7, 2017	<span style="color: red;">●</span> John Curtis	No
<b>Pennsylvania's 18th</b>	Tim Murphy	N/A	<span style="color: blue;">●</span> Conor Lamb <span style="color: red;">●</span> Rick Saccone	March 13, 2018	<span style="color: blue;">●</span> Conor Lamb	Yes

## On the issues

Throughout the course of the 115th Congress, we will be curating statements and reactions by members of Congress on a variety of different policy areas and topics. Click on a tile below to read about what members of the 115th Congress have said about the following issues.







See also: *Key votes: 115th Congress, 2017-2018*

As of March 23, 2018, members of the 115th United States Congress had introduced 9,614 pieces of legislation, and 584 of those received a vote. Ballotpedia identified 57 of those votes as *key votes*—votes that help citizens understand where their legislators stand on major policy issues.<sup>[3]</sup>

## Congressional committees

### U.S. Senate

#### Congressional committees (Senate)

Page:
United States Senate Committee on Veterans' Affairs
United States Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship
United States Senate Committee on Rules and Administration
United States Senate Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate Committee on Intelligence (Select)
United States Senate Committee on Indian Affairs
United States Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs
United States Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
United States Senate Committee on Finance
United States Senate Committee on Environment and Public Works
United States Senate Committee on Ethics (Select)
United States Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources
United States Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation
United States Senate Committee on Budget
United States Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
United States Senate Committee on Armed Services

<b>Page:</b>
United States Senate Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
United States Senate Committee on Aging (Special)

## **U.S. House**

### **Congressional committees (House)**

<b>Page:</b>
United States House of Representatives Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources
United States House of Representatives Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives Committee on Ways and Means
United States House of Representatives Committee on Veterans' Affairs
United States House of Representatives Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure
United States House of Representatives Committee on Small Business
United States House of Representatives Committee on Science, Space, and Technology
United States House of Representatives Committee on Rules
United States House of Representatives Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
United States House of Representatives Committee on Natural Resources
United States House of Representatives Committee on Judiciary
United States House of Representatives Committee on Intelligence (Permanent Select)
United States House of Representatives Committee on House Administration
United States House of Representatives Committee on Homeland Security
United States House of Representatives Committee on Foreign Affairs



Page:
United States House of Representatives Committee on Financial Services
United States House of Representatives Committee on Ethics
United States House of Representatives Committee on Energy and Commerce
United States House of Representatives Committee on Education and the Workforce
United States House of Representatives Committee on Budget
United States House of Representatives Committee on Armed Services
United States House of Representatives Committee on Agriculture

## Joint committees

### Congressional committees (Joint)

Page:
United States Congress Joint Committee on Taxation
United States Congress Joint Economic Committee
United States Congress Joint Committee on the Library
United States Congress Joint Committee on Printing

## Confirmation process

*See also: Confirmation process overview for Donald Trump's Cabinet nominees*

The 115th Congress was tasked with confirming President Donald Trump's Cabinet nominees. Before a presidential Cabinet nominee could be confirmed by the U.S. Senate, he or she was required to pass several rounds of investigation and review, beginning with the submission of a personal financial disclosure report and a background check. The nominee was then evaluated in a committee hearing, which allowed for a close examination of the nominee and his or her views on public policy. Supporters and opponents of the nominee were also able to testify.<sup>[4]</sup> Following the closing of committee hearings, most committees had a set amount of time before a vote was taken on whether the nominee was reported to the Senate favorably, unfavorably, or without recommendation.<sup>[4]</sup>

## Analysis

### Switching chambers

At the beginning of the 115th Congress, 50 of the 100 members of the U.S. Senate had previously

served in the U.S. House of Representatives. This included 27 of 52 Senate Republicans, 22 of 46 Senate Democrats, and one of the two independents who caucused with the Democrats.

## Salary

As of 2018, members of Congress are paid \$174,000 per year. Senate majority and minority leaders, as well as the president pro tempore, receive \$193,400. The speaker of the House receives \$223,500.<sup>[5]</sup>

Some historical facts about the salary of United States Congress members:

- In 1789, members of Congress received a \$6 per diem.<sup>[5]</sup>
- In 1874, members of Congress earned \$5,000 per year.<sup>[5]</sup>
- In 1990, members of Congress earned \$98,400 per year.<sup>[5]</sup>
- From 2000-2006, the salary of a member of the United States Congress increased every year, going from \$141,300 to \$165,200 in that time span.<sup>[5]</sup>

## Demographics

The 115th Congress surpassed the 114th Congress as the most diverse Congress in the nation's history.

There are three black, four Hispanic, and three Asian senators. There are also 21 women and one openly LGBTQ member of the Senate. Overall, 26 percent of the Senate is made up of women or minorities, and the remaining 74 percent is white men. There are 94 racial or ethnic minorities in the House and 83 women, as well as six openly LGBTQ members. Overall, 34 percent of the House is made up of women or minorities, and the remaining 66 percent is white men.<sup>[6]</sup>

Over 90 percent of Congress identify as Christians, while roughly six percent of members are Jewish. There are also three Buddhists, three Hindus, two Muslims, and one Unitarian Universalist. Only one member of Congress, Rep. Kyrsten Sinema (AZ-9), describes herself as unaffiliated with any religion.<sup>[7]</sup>