



November 14, 2024

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** NCSHA Members  
**FR:** NCSHA Policy and Government Affairs Team  
**RE:** 2024 Election Analysis House Supplement and Senate Update

**House Republicans Eke Out a Small Majority**

The latest election results show Republicans will have a small majority in the House of Representatives at the start of the next session of Congress. How much control this gives them will be determined over time, but it will at least likely give them the ability to elect a Republican Speaker and elect committee chairs and other key leadership positions that set the agenda. Perhaps most importantly for affordable housing, it gives them stronger footing to enact budget and tax legislation through the reconciliation process, which enables the Senate to pass legislation with a simple majority instead of having to overcome a filibuster with at least 60 votes.

Depending on how several still-uncalled House races turn out, the House majority will be precariously thin, especially considering the potential impact of Republican House member resignations for Presidential appointments or other reasons, illnesses, and other absences. The ability of the Republicans to work their will legislatively will depend upon maintaining a numerical advantage and extraordinary party unity (which was not evident during the last two sessions of Congress).

This memorandum outlines what we know now about how the election results will affect the House and updates our previous analysis of how the election will affect the Senate.

**Republicans Retain House Control**

At the time of writing, Republicans had just won the 218 seats needed to remain in the House majority. Democrats have won 209 seats, eight seats are still undecided, and one seat has been vacated by Representative Matt Gaetz's (R-FL) resignation and will not be filled for some time as a special election is held. It is expected that the Republican majority will be similarly narrow to last Congress and could be even narrower at the beginning of this year as several Republican House members join the Trump Administration. The House will have more than 50 new members next Congress.

## House Leadership Mostly Stable

Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA) was nominated Wednesday by House Republicans to serve as Speaker again next Congress. Several more conservative House Republicans have suggested they may seek to run a challenger against Johnson on the House floor in January, but Johnson is expected to prevail. Steve Scalise (R-LA) and Tom Emmer (R-MN) are expected to remain as Majority Leader and Majority Whip, respectively. Representative Lisa McLain (R-MI) was chosen as the new Republican Conference Chair. Current Conference Chair Elise Stefanik (R-NY) is stepping down from her role to serve as Trump's ambassador to the United Nations.

House Democrats will hold their leadership elections November 19 and 20. Hakeem Jefferies (D-NY) is expected to remain as Minority Leader. Minority Whip Katherine Clark (D-MA) and Democratic Caucus Chair Peter Aguilar (D-CA) also are expected to maintain their positions.

## House Committee Leadership

**House Ways and Means Committee.** Representative Jason Smith (R-MO) will maintain his position as Ways and Means Committee Chairman and Representative Richard Neal (D-MA) will continue to serve as Ranking Member in the 119<sup>th</sup> Congress. Smith has long been preparing for major tax legislation in 2025 when much of the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act expires. Last Spring, he set up 10 "Tax Teams," including one focused on community development issues such as affordable housing, to begin fleshing out the House Republican tax policy plan. This early preparation should help Smith meet his goal of advancing tax legislation in the first quarter of the year.

Ways and Means Committee members Brad Wenstrup (R-OH), Earl Blumenauer (D-OR), Dan Kildee (D-MI), and Drew Ferguson (R-GA) did not seek reelection to the 119<sup>th</sup> Congress and thus will not be returning to the committee. Committee ratios, and thus the number of seats on the committee afforded to each party in the next Congress, will depend largely on the ultimate size of the GOP majority.

**House Financial Services Committee.** Current Chair Patrick McHenry (R-NC) is retiring. Four long-time committee Republicans are vying to replace him: Andy Barr (KY), French Hill (AR), Bill Huizenga (MI), and Frank Lucas (OK). Barr and Hill are generally viewed as the front runners, while Lucas has served on the committee the longest.

Maxine Waters (D-CA) will remain as Ranking Member. Waters has long championed increased federal investments in affordable housing and programs to expand access to homeownership. She also recently expressed a desire to work with committee Republicans to develop bipartisan legislation.

Warren Davidson (R-OH) and Emanuel Cleaver (D-MO) are, as of now, expected to maintain their leadership positions on the Housing and Insurance Subcommittee. Davidson could seek a different subcommittee gavel if one opens after a new chair is elected.

In addition to McHenry, Representatives Blaine Luetkemeyer (R-MO), Bill Posey (R-FL), Alex Mooney (R-WV), and Wiley Nickel (D-NC) will not be returning next Congress. Luetkemeyer had been substantially involved in housing issues during his tenure on the committee.

**House Appropriations Committee.** Chair Tom Cole (R-OK) and Ranking Member Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) secured reelection and are likely to retain their leadership roles on the committee. Nine current committee members will retire from Congress at the end of the session; of these, only one, Jennifer Wexton (D-VA), serves on the Transportation, Housing, and Urban Development (THUD) Subcommittee. Openings on other subcommittees may affect leadership and composition of the THUD Subcommittee, however. Current Defense Subcommittee Chairman Ken Calvert (R-CA) would require a waiver of caucus rules to remain in that position; if unsuccessful, current THUD Subcommittee Chairman Steve Womack (R-AR) could be in consideration to chair the Defense panel. Meanwhile, current THUD Subcommittee Ranking Member Michael Quigley (D-IL) has previously served on the State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs (SFOPS) Subcommittee and may seek to return to a leadership role there with the retirement of outgoing SFOPS Ranking Member Barbara Lee (D-CA).

### **UPDATE on Senate Committees and Republican Leadership**

In the 119<sup>th</sup> Congress, the United States Senate will be controlled by the Republican party, which picked up four seats to secure a clear majority in the chamber. Senator John Thune (R-ND) has won the support of his caucus to succeed Senator Mitch McConnell (R-KY) as Senate Majority Leader, while Senator Chuck Schumer (D-NY) has expressed interest in continuing to lead his caucus in the minority.

**Senate Banking Committee.** Current Chair Sherrod Brown (D-OH) lost his reelection bid. Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) will become Ranking Member after two more senior Senators, Jack Reed (D-RI) and Mark Warner (D-VA), decided to keep their leadership posts on other committees. Warren will likely make affordable housing a focus of her committee work. Earlier this year, she introduced legislation, the American Housing and Economic Mobility Act, that would have authorized nearly \$550 billion for federal rental housing programs and established a down payment assistance program for first-generation home buyers.

**Senate Appropriations Committee.** Current Chair Patty Murray (D-WA) and Vice Chair Susan Collins (R-ME) are likely candidates to continue to lead the committee, although Republican Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) may make an effort to claim the gavel after stepping down from his leadership position. Five committee members — Senators Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Martin Heinrich (D-NM), Jon Tester (D-MT), Chris Murphy (D-CT), and Deb Fischer (R-NE) — were up

for reelection; among these, Senator Tester lost his bid, while Senator Baldwin won hers. Two Senators — Joe Manchin (I-WV) and Kyrsten Sinema (I-AZ) — on the committee retired this cycle; replacements will be determined at a later date based on the overall composition of the Senate and party rules for committee assignments.

Neither Senate THUD Appropriations Subcommittee Chair Brian Schatz (D-HI) nor Ranking Member Cindy Hyde-Smith (R-MS) faced reelection this cycle; however, Senator Schatz may move to the Ranking Member position of the Senate Armed Services Committee in the wake of Senator Tester's defeat, in which case potential Ranking Members of Senate THUD include Senators Chris Coons (D-DE), Chris Murphy (D-CT), and Chris Van Hollen (D-MD).

### **Lame-Duck Session**

One of the most immediate questions Congress must answer in the aftermath of the election is what to do during the post-election period, or "lame-duck" session, between now and when the new Congress takes over in January. Among the most pressing legislative priorities are disaster relief, Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 appropriations, and defense programs authorization. The current continuing resolution (CR) allowing federal programs to continue operating expires December 20. To keep government programs running after then, Congress needs to pass another CR or enact appropriations legislation to fund the government for the remainder of FY25. Congress is expected to enact supplemental disaster appropriations legislation to provide relief for damage caused from recent hurricanes, which will likely take precedence over full FY25 appropriations. The most likely outcome therefore is a disaster supplemental coupled with a short-term CR extending the funding deadline to a new date early next year, likely in February or March. Disaster relief legislation could include some tax code changes, including disaster-related or other housing tax program changes.