

The New Members of Congress

BY AUBREE ELIZA WEAVER, TAYLOR MILLER THOMAS | 01/08/2025 05:00 AM EST

PRO POINTS

- **Elections will need to be held to replace lawmakers who have resigned or plan to do so to serve in the Trump administration:** Former Rep. Matt Gaetz (R-Fla.) and Reps. [Elise Stefanik](#) (R-N.Y.) and Mike Waltz (R-Fla.). Vice President-elect JD Vance's and Sen. Marco Rubio's Senate seats, in Ohio and Florida, respectively, will be filled by gubernatorial appointments.
- **As of Jan. 2, there are 66 first-year House members and 12 first-year senators in the 119th Congress.**
- **There are 21 first-term women, two fewer than the number elected to their first term in the 2022 midterm elections, according to Rutgers University's Center for American Women and Politics.**

HOW WE GOT HERE

Among the new members, the freshmen class of the 119th Congress will include at least 40 Democrats — 34 in the House and six in the Senate — and 38 Republicans — 32 in the House and six senators.

Several winners made congressional history:

- › Rep. [Sarah McBride](#) (D-Del.) is the first transgender woman, and first transgender person overall, elected to the U.S. Congress.
- › Sen. [Angela Alsobrooks](#) (D-Md.) is the first Black woman to represent Maryland in the U.S. Senate.
- › Sen. [Lisa Blunt Rochester](#) (D-Del.) is both the first Black person and first woman to represent Delaware in the upper chamber.
- › Sen. [Andy Kim](#) (D-N.J.) became the first Korean American in the Senate when he was sworn in early at the tail end of the 118th Congress.
- › Sen. [Ruben Gallego](#) (D-Ariz.) is Arizona's first Latino senator, after his battleground win over Republican Kari Lake, who was endorsed by Donald Trump.
- › Sen. [Bernie Moreno](#) (R-Ohio) is the first Hispanic lawmaker to represent Ohio in Congress, as well as the first senator born in South America.
- › Rep. [Julie Johnson](#) (D-Texas) is the first openly LGBTQ+ congressperson from Texas — and the South, at large.
- › Rep. [Emily Randall](#) (D-Wash.) is the first openly LGBTQ+ Latina in Congress.

WHAT'S NEXT

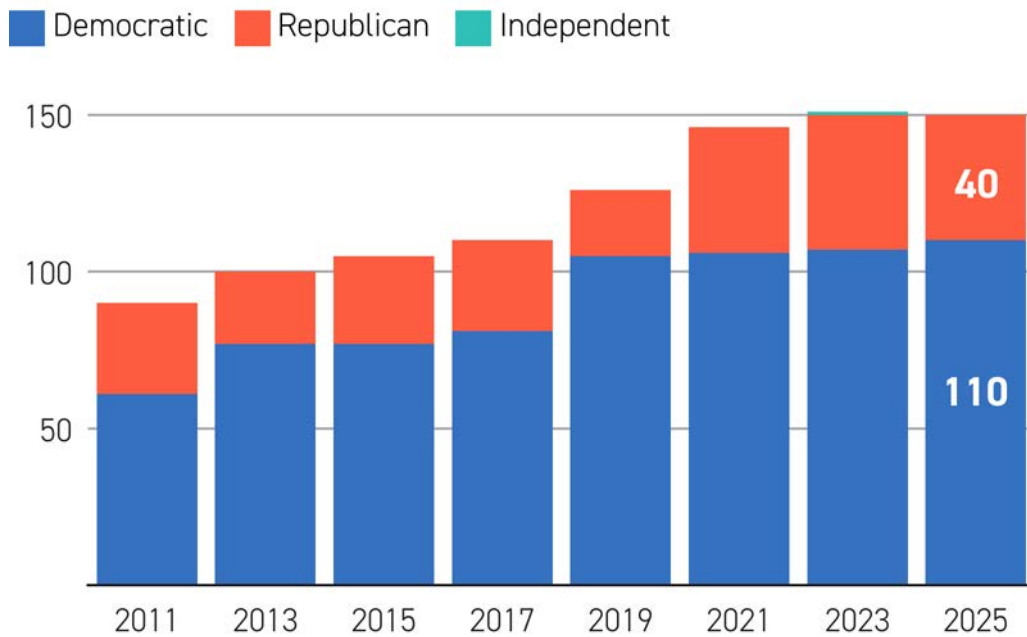
The new Congress officially convened on Jan. 3, 2025. Over the lame duck session, new members-elect were busy with their transitions to

Washington, D.C. – including hiring staff, selecting offices in the U.S. Capitol office buildings and finding locations for satellite offices in their districts.

There are currently two special elections expected to fill vacant seats in the 119th Congress – both in Florida. Voters will head to the ballot box on April 1 to replace former Rep. Matt Gaetz, who resigned from Congress after President-elect Donald Trump announced that he planned to nominate the Republican as attorney general. Gaetz has since dropped out of the running. Floridians will also need to vote on a new representative to replace GOP Rep. Mike Waltz, who has been tapped by Trump to serve as national security adviser.

Fewer women in 119th Congress than historic 118th Congress

Women in Congress by party, by Congress start year



Note: 119th Republican total includes Elise Stefanik, who has been appointed to serve as U.N. ambassador.

Source: Rutgers Center Center for American Women and Politics
Taylor Miller Thomas/POLITICO

New York Democratic Gov. Kathy Hochul will need to call a special election as well, to replace GOP Rep. Elise Stefanik after she was selected by Trump to serve as ambassador to the United Nations – a post that does not require Senate confirmation. Stefanik has not yet

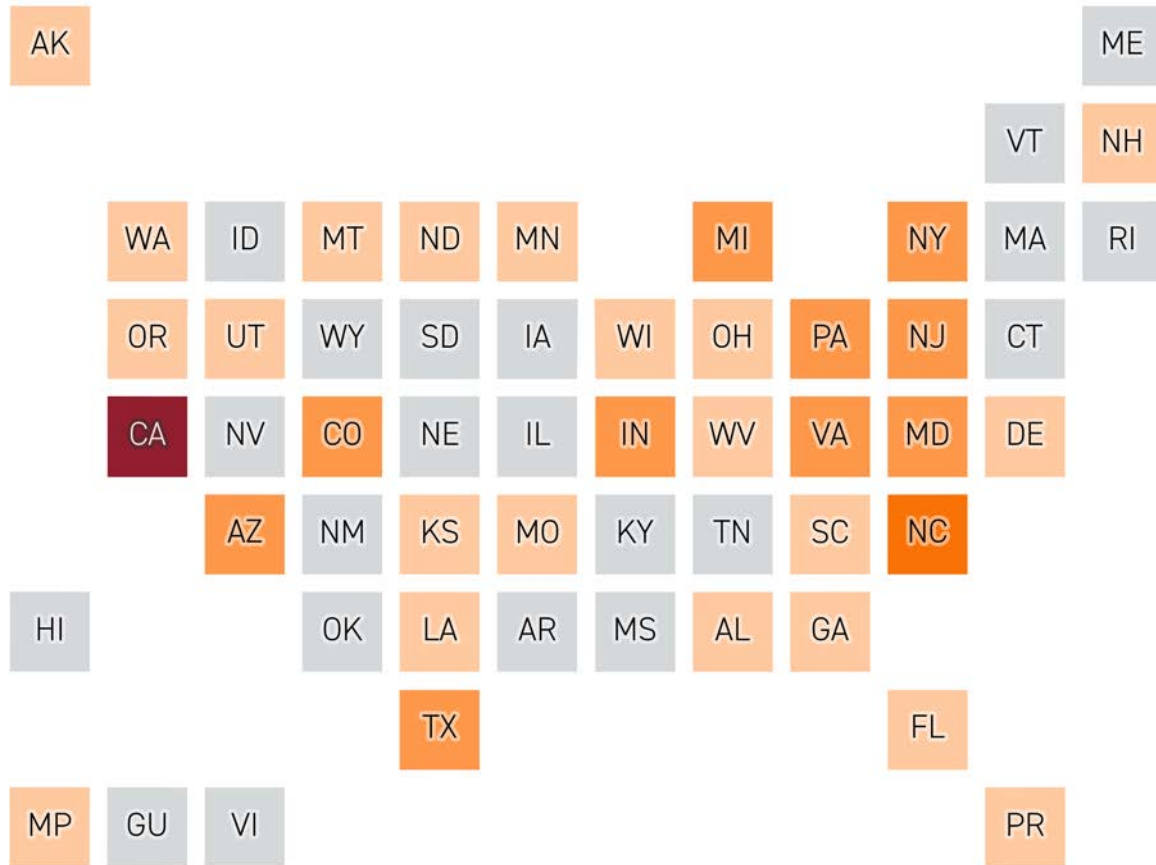
formally submitted her resignation, but once she does, Hochul will have [90 days to hold a special election](#).

Another two seats will need to be filled via appointment by other governors: Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine will need to find a replacement for Republican senator and Vice President-elect JD Vance, while Florida GOP Gov. Ron DeSantis will need to appoint someone to fill the vacancy left by Trump's pick for secretary of State, Sen. Marco Rubio.

California, North Carolina lead by highest number of first-year members

First-year House and Senate freshmen by state delegation

1-2 3-4 5 10



Source: The Associated Press
Taylor Miller Thomas/POLITICO



POWER PLAYERS

- **Sens. Adam Schiff (D-Calif.) and Andy Kim (D-N.J.):** The two senators were sworn in on Dec. 9 after being appointed by their respective governors to finish out the 118th Congress, and formally began their full six-year terms in the current session. Schiff replaces former Sen. Laphonza Butler, who took over after Sen. Dianne Feinstein's death in September. Kim succeeds Sen. George Helmy, who served three months by appointment after longtime Democratic Sen. Robert Menendez resigned following a corruption conviction.
- **Govs. Mike DeWine and Ron DeSantis:** Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine will need to appoint a senator to replace Vice President-elect JD Vance, while Florida Governor is tasked with finding a replacement for Sen. Marco Rubio, whom President-elect Donald Trump has tapped to serve as his secretary of State.
- **Rep. Sarah McBride:** The Delaware Democrat is both the first transgender woman and the first transgender person overall to serve in Congress. With transgender rights poised to be a marquee health, military, education and social policy in the new Congress, McBride's election has already spurred action from Republicans. Rep. Nancy Mace (R-S.C.) led the push to bar McBride from using women's restrooms in the Capitol, and has already offered several bills on the subject — such as moving to restrict bathroom usage for transgender people in places that receive federal funding and penalize doctors who perform gender-affirming care.