



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on November 20, 2020

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The Battle for Control of Congress Is Serious Business

The 2020 presidential election somewhat overshadowed the very important contests for the 435 seats in the House of Representatives, and the 35 seats that were up for election in the Senate. As the dust has settled, it appears the Republicans gained several seats in the House — albeit still short of a majority in that body — and also appear likely to keep their majority in the Senate. Democrats in Congress and in the mainstream media had been confidently predicting a “blue wave” that would gain them seats in the House and enable them to capture the Senate.



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It did not happen. Instead, the composition of the next Congress will illustrate the deep political and social divisions that exist in the country. While Republicans in Congress exhibit less-than-stellar dedication to the principles embedded in our federal Constitution, the Democrats have lurched far to the left in the past few years, openly and brazenly advocating radically changing our established form of government.

With the Democrats’ House majority being diminished, and if the Republicans do keep the Senate by winning at least one of two senatorial run-off contests in Georgia on January 5, the most radical goals of the present leadership of the Democratic Party will be stymied for the next two years. We can expect millions of dollars to be poured into the twin Senate contests in Georgia.

If all members of Congress took their oath of fidelity to the Constitution of the United States as seriously as it is taken by Representative Thomas Massie, a Kentucky Republican, our country would be much better off. Massie came under intense criticism from both sides of the aisle — both Democrats and Republicans — and even from President Donald Trump this past year when he insisted that the Constitution be followed (by insisting on a quorum), even during the time of the coronavirus pandemic.

Fortunately, Massie was among those Republicans who coasted to an easy victory, both in his primary, and in the general election, but we must face a harsh reality. Very few members of Congress, in either the House or the Senate, consistently follow the limitations placed upon them by the Constitution they swear to uphold. The Constitution is quite clear. Only Congress can make law. Article I, Section 1 states, “All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and a House of Representatives.”

This tells us two things. One, presidents who often arrogantly claim to make law via executive orders are not following the Constitution. And two, federal bureaucrats are not constitutionally empowered to make laws, either. And neither are federal judges. Also, even Congress is not allowed, under the Constitution, to make laws on any matters except those which are “herein granted.”



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The House of Representatives

On election day, the Democrats had been confidently predicting increasing their House majority of 232 (218 being the minimum number for a majority in the House) and re-taking the Senate, in which the Republicans held an advantage of 53-47. This would enable them to enact a package of radical ideas designed to make it more difficult for Republicans to regain the House or Senate for the foreseeable future. Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer of New York had vowed to add Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia as states, which he presumes would add an additional four senators to the Democratic totals, and more members of the House.

Schumer was supported in this publicly announced goal by many other leading Democrats. After Schumer vowed to pack the Supreme Court with new members — with the intended result of giving the Democratic president the ability to nominate and the Democratic Senate to name jurists that would be compliant with the political ideology of the present Democratic Party — Democratic presidential nominee Joe Biden refused to say whether he would support such legislation. In fact, Biden basically said the voter really had no right to know until after the election. When Biden added that he would favor massive tax increases, and that he desired to phase out the oil and gas industry, control of Congress was seen by many voters as highly important to the future of the country.

In the aftermath of the election, some Democrats were quite angry at how radical proposals such as socialism and “defund the police” not only kept them from adding to their majority, but almost cost them the House and kept them from taking the Senate. Representative Abigail Spanberger (D-Va.) was narrowly reelected in her district, but during a post-election conference call of House Democrats, Spanberger, in profanity-laced remarks, told her colleagues they should quit talking about socialism, and that calls to defund the police nearly cost her reelection.

Other Democrats disagreed, however, and advocated doubling down on embracing socialism and continuing attacks upon local police as systemically racist. In fact, the “Squad” of hard-core leftists, led by Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York, an avowed socialist, appears to have added more members to its group — Jamal Bowman of New York; Cori Bush of Missouri; and Mondaire Jones of New York. With reduced numbers of Democrats in the House, it is expected that this radical group will wield even more clout in the Democratic Party in the next Congress.

Among the Democratic incumbents who went down to defeat in the 2020 elections was Representative Kendra Horn of Oklahoma. Horn had won an upset victory over an incumbent Republican in 2018 — the first time that a Democrat had won Oklahoma’s 5th congressional district since 1974. She lost to Republican State Senator Stephanie Bice. Horn was not atypical of the Democrat who runs in places such as Oklahoma as something of a “moderate,” but then winds up supporting most of the Democratic agenda. She even voted to impeach President Trump, despite the fact that there was no evidence that Trump had committed any impeachable offense and he had overwhelmingly won the state in 2016 (and would win it again in 2020).

In Minnesota, Republican Michelle Fischbach ousted Democratic Representative Collin Peterson. Among Republican incumbents to win was Representative Ann Wagner in a St. Louis suburb, despite a fierce Democratic effort. In Arkansas, Democrat Joyce Elliott went down to defeat to Republican Representative French Hill, in the Little Rock suburbs.



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One of the more interesting victors was Madison Cawthorn of North Carolina, a Republican who, at just 25 years of age, is the youngest Republican ever elected to Congress. “Cry more, lib,” Cawthorn tweeted after his victory by more than 50,000 votes. Cawthorn spoke at the Republican National Convention this past summer, gaining attention for having overcome a severe automobile accident in 2014, which had left him partially paralyzed.

Another Republican victory came in Florida, where Byron Donalds, an African American, won with over 60 percent of the vote. Donalds had described himself as “Liberty-loving. Pro-Trump. Pro-2nd Amendment. Pro-Life. Husband & father to 3. Conservative.” He added that he was anti-socialist.

Donalds is an example of a definite increase in the number of black Americans who are trending to the Republican Party and more conservative principles. Not surprisingly, many Democrats are quite dismissive of such conservative black Republicans. One might recall that Biden said that any person even thinking about voting for Trump “ain’t black.” Representative Maxine Waters, the radical California Democrat, was even more adamant, saying she “will never, ever forgive” blacks who voted for Trump, calling them “shameful.”

Donalds, who was endorsed by Senator Rand Paul of Kentucky, had previously served in the Florida House of Representatives. “We need to secure our southern border and reform our entry/exit visa system, so we eliminate visa overstays,” Donalds said during the campaign. On the Second Amendment, Donalds said it was “just as important as the rest of the Bill of Rights.” He also promised to “fight to protect the life of every unborn child without exception.”

Republicans Pick Up Seats in the House

It is unclear exactly how many House seats were lost by the Democrats, but NBC said it could be as few as six or as many as 14. If the latter, that would give the Democrats 218 seats, the bare minimum for a majority. At any rate, the Republicans have defeated at least seven House Democratic incumbents, while losing no incumbents. The Republicans also gained the seat held by Representative Justin Amash in Michigan, who had been elected as a Republican, but switched to Independent. Republican Peter Meijer defeated Democrat Hillary Scholten to replace Amash.



Masked, not muzzled: Chuck Schumer of New York, shown here with the Democratic House Speaker Nancy Pelosi of California, is the Democratic Party leader in the Senate. Before the election, he was



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confidently predicting a “Blue Wave” of Democratic victories. He vowed to then pack the Supreme Court, add more states in order to create new Democratic senators, and terminate the Senate filibuster. *(Photo credit: AP Images)*

Other contests the Republicans won include the defeat of Representative Joe Cunningham in South Carolina by Republican Nancy Mace; Republican Yvette Herrell, who won her rematch over first-term Democratic Representative Xochitl Torres Small in New Mexico; Republican Ashley Hinson, who defeated first-term Democratic Representative Abby Finkenauer in Iowa; Republican Carlos Gimenez, who ousted Democratic incumbent Debbie Mucarsel-Powell in Florida; and Democrat Donna Shalala, closely tied with the Clintons, who lost her seat in Florida to Republican Maria Elvira Salazar.

In another interesting contest, Representative Jeff Van Drew of New Jersey, who switched from Democrat to Republican after disgust at the partisan impeachment of President Trump earlier in the year, defeated Amy Kennedy (who is married to a nephew of President Kennedy). Van Drew overcame a huge spending disadvantage in keeping his seat.

Also noteworthy, considering the narrative pushed by the Democrats in Congress and most of the national media, was that at least 13 conservative Republican women were added to the House in the election. At least six of them took seats that had been held by Democrats. The Republican effort was led by Representative Elise Stefanik of New York, who launched E-PAC (Elevate Political Action Committee). Stefanik said on election night, “The story of the night is the success of Republican women at the ballot box.” Prudence Robertson, speaking for the pro-life Susan B. Anthony List, was ecstatic. “Several of our endorsed candidates have won. There are 13 new pro-life women who have been elected to the House.... There are still eight races to be called, and a lot of them are looking really good.”

Robertson added, “It’s a stunning blow to Nancy Pelosi and her pro-abortion agenda.”

John Gizzi of Newsmax said that as many as 33 Republican women could win seats in the House, many of whom Gizzi says have a “take-no-prisoners” style much like President Trump. For example, Lauren Boebert, who ousted a Republican in the primary, is well known as the owner of a pub in which waitresses openly wear firearms.

With the stunning losses, the Democrats are fearful about the 2022 midterms. One Democratic House member was quoted as saying, “If we don’t get our act together, we’re going to get creamed in 2022.” That is certainly possible, if history is any guide. Political parties who control the White House typically lose seats in the midterm, as the supporters of the party that has the White House tend to be somewhat more lackadaisical, and the supporters of the party that do not have the presidency are more energized. The Republicans lost 26 House seats in 1982 during Reagan’s first term, and the Democrats lost the House in 1994 during Bill Clinton’s first term. Then, in 2006, after 12 years of control, the Republicans lost the House during George W. Bush’s second term. In 2010, the Democrats lost the House during the first term of Barack Obama, and in 2018, the Republicans lost the House during the first term of Donald Trump.

With the more high-profile contests for president and the Senate, the battles for seats in the House of Representatives are mere after-thoughts to even political junkies. But the House of Representatives is highly important, as the Republicans found out with the partisan impeachment by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and the House Democrats earlier this year. (This was after the Democrats led the voters to believe impeachment was essentially off the table during their successful campaigns in 2018.)



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The Importance of Focusing on the House of Representatives

All bills affecting revenue must, by the Constitution, originate in the House of Representatives, although the Senate and the president must agree, as on all other bills. Biden's vow to dramatically raise taxes would likely get nowhere if the Republicans had a House majority. Any efforts to impose the totalitarian Green New Deal would be stillborn if its advocates did not have a majority in the House.

This is not to downplay the power of a president to advance (or block) a political agenda. Certainly, a cursory look at the presidencies of Obama and Trump illustrate that quite vividly. But without the acquiescence of the House of Representatives to provide the money for a president's grandiose plans, we basically have gridlock — which despite its bad reputation is usually quite good for Americans.

It should also be considered that it is much easier for a constitutional conservative to “fly under the radar,” so to speak, in a House race than a more high-profile Senate race. This past election demonstrates that powerfully.



Great black hope: Representative Byron Donalds, a black Republican from Naples, Florida, won election to the U.S. House of Representatives. He ran as a staunch conservative, and Republicans hope that his victory signals a rise in support for their party among black Americans. (*Photo credit: AP Images*)

On the other hand, if one party holds the House and the other party controls the Senate, we can also see a president's agenda frustrated. Perhaps the most important domestic constitutional role of the Senate is the confirmation of federal judges, particularly on the Supreme Court. While the Founders did not envision the elevated role of the Supreme Court in our political system, the reality is that the control of the Senate plays a central role in the makeup of the federal judiciary. Without a majority of the Senate, President Trump could not have placed three lifetime nominees on the Supreme Court.

It is probable that the infamous 1973 Supreme Court decision *Roe v. Wade*, in which a 7-2 decision asserted that state laws against abortion were generally unconstitutional, is the major point of contention in Supreme Court nominee confirmation hearings. And since the Senate — and only the Senate — has a role in that confirmation process, Senate races often develop into contests that highlight a candidate's position on what should be the proper role of judges in our system.

Senators are elected for terms of six years, with about one-third facing the voters every two years. As



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such, the party that holds the most seats that appear on the ballot generally has a more difficult task of holding on to its present membership. Going into the 2020 election, the Republicans held 53 seats, compared to 47 for the Democrats. Because of a special election in Georgia, in addition to the regularly scheduled election, two of those seats were in that state, for a total of 35 Senate seats on the ballot. About a dozen Republican seats were considered competitive, with only a couple of Democratic seats thought to be possibly in play.

Democrats Hoped to Win the U.S. Senate

Democrats were quite optimistic that they could win the White House and at least three more Senate seats, which would have given them control. (If that happened, the Democrats would be able to count on their party's vice president to give them a 51-50 edge as a tiebreaker). Actually, the Democrats expected to do even better than that, but it was not to be.

First of all, Senator Doug Jones, the Alabama Democrat, won his seat in a special election, after Republican Senator Jeff Sessions resigned to take the post as attorney general in the Trump administration. When Judge Roy Moore won the Republican nomination, the national media launched a smear campaign against Moore, allowing Jones to win an election largely considered a fluke in heavily Republican Alabama. It was widely believed that Jones would lose the seat in 2020, when his special two-year term ran out, which is what happened. Former Auburn football coach Tommy Tuberville easily ousted Jones, which brought the Republicans up to 54 Senate seats.

But two Republican incumbents — Martha McSally in Arizona, and Cory Gardner in Colorado — lost their bids for reelection. Those two were considered the most vulnerable of all Republican Senate incumbents, but there were others whom the Democrats hoped, and even expected, to retire: Thom Tillis of North Carolina; Susan Collins of Maine; Dan Sullivan of Alaska; Joni Ernst in Iowa; and Steve Daines in Montana. All were reelected, despite most polls showing them losing. Democrats also spent nearly \$100 million against Senator Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, fueled by anger that as chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee he pushed through Trump's three Supreme Court nominees. Despite such spending against him, Graham won by a strong margin.

Polls almost uniformly supported the Democrats' hopes, which has led many Republicans to question the honesty of the polling industry. For example, in Maine, Collins trailed in every establishment poll for months, yet she won by better than seven points! Tillis was seen as a goner in the North Carolina Senate race, with polls indicating a Democratic pickup, yet Tillis won there.

At the end, Democrats had a net gain of *one* Senate seat, with the two Georgia seats that will see run-off races in January expected to determine control of that chamber. When Republican incumbent Johnny Isakson was forced to retire early due to failing health, Kelly Loeffler was appointed by Georgia Governor Brian Kemp to replace him until a special election could be held in conjunction with the regular election in November 2020.

There was no primary to determine the nominees of the Democratic and Republican parties, as all candidates, regardless of party, were placed on the ballot. Under Georgia law, if a candidate won a majority of the vote, that candidate would be declared the winner. However, with nearly 20 candidates, including six Republicans, eight Democrats, a Libertarian candidate, a Green Party hopeful, and four Independents, it was highly unlikely that any one candidate was going to achieve a majority of the vote.



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Loeffler finished second, with 26 percent of the vote, behind Democrat Raphael Warnock, who had about 33 percent. Warnock ran far ahead of the rest of the Democrats, while Loeffler had a strong Republican opponent, who took 20 percent of the total. That Republican, Doug Collins, has given Loeffler a ringing endorsement for the January 5 run-off.

The total Republican vote was 2,416,635, as opposed to the total Democratic vote of 2,360,576. In January, the contest will be limited to Warnock and Loeffler, and it is expected that millions of dollars will pour into Georgia from outside of the state to influence the outcome of what is expected to be a close contest.

Incumbent Republican David Perdue was almost able to win without the January run-off, as he bagged 49.8 percent of the vote, to 47.9 for Democrat Jon Ossoff. In Perdue's race, since it was a regular general election, there were no additional Republicans or Democrats on the ballot, but there was a Libertarian, Shane Hazel, who took in 2.3 percent. This is something that our readers should be aware of — Libertarian candidates may have cost Trump valuable votes in the close swing states, enough to swing the state to Democrat Joe Biden. Based on studies of how people who vote Libertarian vote when there is no Libertarian on the ballot, a certain number will not even bother to vote. However, when Libertarians *do* vote absent a Libertarian candidate, it is well established they are more likely to vote Republican than Democrat. In other words, had Hazel not been on the ballot, it is almost certain that Perdue would have already been reelected. Now, he has to win a run-off on January 5.

We can expect that in both Georgia races, the national media will slant their coverage against the two Republicans, and polling will probably have the Democrats leading, in an effort to demoralize the Republicans and hurt their fundraising. Polling in this past election, in both the presidential contest and these competitive Senate races, had the Democrats performing better than they actually did — in every case. It is difficult to believe that was just coincidental. Also, with widespread evidence of election rigging by Democrats in this election, the election might rest almost exclusively on whether or not efforts are made to ferret out and punish fraudsters. If no one is held accountable for fraud, we can count on a repeat in the senatorial election.

Political Realignment Taking Place in America

Pollsters underestimated the percentages of minority voters voting Republican in both the presidential and congressional races, missing the political realignment that is taking place. Working and middle-class voters have been trending more Republican for the past several election cycles, a process that was probably retarded by some weak presidential Republican candidates such as Mitt Romney and John McCain, but was accelerated by Donald Trump. While Republicans such as Romney, McCain, and George W. Bush tended to soften their differences (if they have any) with the Democrats, Trump opted to highlight the differences. Scott Jennings, a Republican strategist, said in the aftermath of the election that Trump had "reorganized the political parties," and the Republicans, not the Democrats, are now the home of "working-class America."

Erick Erickson, a conservative with *The Resurgent*, expressed similar sentiments. "For the last decade I have been saying ... that we were headed towards realignment as black and Hispanic voters leave the Democratic Party and secular white people move to the Democrats.... In Florida, Hispanic voters and young black men handed Donald Trump the state [while] in Texas ... working-class white voters and Hispanic voters saved the GOP."



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Erickson contends that the socially liberal policies of the progressives who are now driving the agenda of the Democratic Party are “anathema to these voters.” Insulting the traditional standards of morality of millions of voters, while focusing on such things as the LGBTQ agenda, is pushing many working-class Americans — of whatever ethnicity — into the Republican Party. As well, many voters understand that destroying the oil and gas industry would destroy not only the oil and gas industry, but the entire economy.



Missed their target: Despite about \$100 million being spent to defeat Senator Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.), he won easily. Graham was one of many Republican senators targeted for defeat who were ultimately reelected. Progressives were particularly angry at Graham because he shepherded Trump’s judicial nominees through the Judiciary Committee, which he chairs. *(Photo credit: AP Images)*

Interestingly, before Donald Trump, there was much discussion within the Republican Party hierarchy as to how to reach the very voters that Trump has been reaching. Far too often, these very same people have not given Trump any credit for this, and even more importantly, have not even considered why more Hispanics and blacks voted for Trump — and other Republicans — this time than voted for either Romney or McCain in the past presidential elections.

In preparing for the next election cycle, it is important that those who understand the issues (such as the socialist agenda behind the alarmism of “climate change”) and the principles behind the issues (limited, constitutional government and the power of the free market) educate those who do not. We cannot expect candidates to conduct educational campaigns in order to win. Instead, a good candidate running in a congressional district in which the electorate understands the proper role of government has a much better chance of winning than one running in a district dominated by sources of information emanating from the Left.

It is a difficult task. Those forces that favor the collectivization of society largely control academia, from kindergarten through graduate school, as well as the media and the entertainment industry. Even professional sports are now used to advance a secular progressive agenda.

But it is a task worth taking on if we want to see the survival of a free society in America.



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