

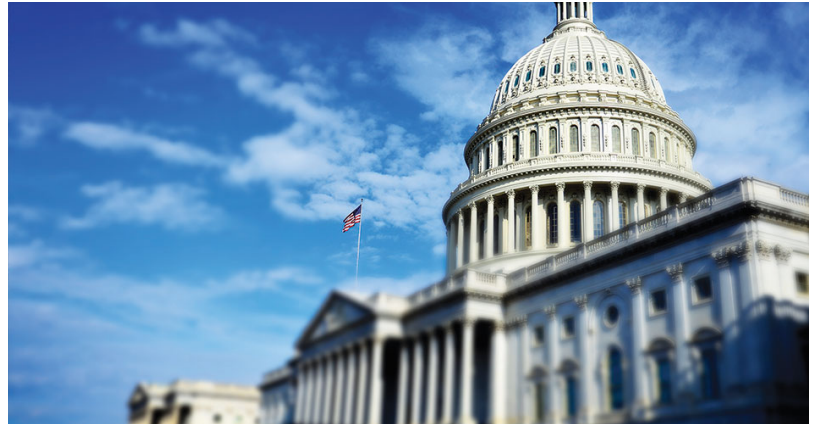


Written by [Steve Bonta](#) on January 24, 2023

Published in the February 13, 2023 issue of [the New American](#) magazine. Vol. 39, No. 03

The New House of Representatives

With the 118th Congress officially sworn in, the new House GOP majority's ambitious agenda has been unfolding at a rapid pace. The first action item was to vote in a sweeping set of rules changes by which the House will limit its own powers and carry out its agenda while remaining responsive to the people. Included in the rules changes are many overdue reforms, including requiring a 72-hour period for reading bills, replacing the practice of gargantuan omnibus spending bills with 12 discrete pieces of legislation for covering the required spending, and a restoration of the old rule — jettisoned by Democrats in 2019 — permitting any member of the majority party of the House to propose a “motion to vacate” the speaker's chair, which would trigger a full House vote on whether or not to retain the speaker. (The threat of this motion was used by the GOP in 2015 to force the ouster of unpopular RINO Speaker John Boehner.)



[eric1513/iStock/ Getty Images Plus](#)

Additional alterations entailed by the rules changes include House Speaker Kevin McCarthy's pledge to give three out of the total nine GOP seats on the Rules Committee to Freedom Caucus members, as well as the scheduling of a vote to establish a special new subcommittee of the Judiciary Committee with the mandate to investigate misuse of power by the executive branch, including abuses perpetrated by the FBI and the DOJ against political opponents. This committee, long overdue, would be a necessary corrective to the executive abuse of investigative and prosecutory power for political motives that has become routine since 9/11. Before that infamous date, it was generally understood that the FBI and CIA were not to surveil and harass American citizens, thanks in no small measure to the work of the Senate's “Church Committee” of the 1970s. Even then, the Church Committee failed to prove the extensive connections between the CIA and the American media, and in general fell far short of truly exposing the Deep State as then constituted.

The new House committee appears to have a much broader writ of authority, although we can certainly expect Deep Staters in the DOJ, the FBI, and the Biden administration to continue the long tradition of stonewalling, intimidation, and coverup. As for the Judiciary Committee itself, its new chair is Ohio Representative Jim Jordan, one of the staunchest constitutionalists and most outspoken members of the House Freedom Caucus.

Other early positive signs include the creation (with rare bipartisan support) of a committee to



Written by [Steve Bonta](#) on January 24, 2023

Published in the February 13, 2023 issue of [the New American](#) magazine. Vol. 39, No. 03

investigate the influence of the Chinese Communist Party in the United States, and a promised vote to defund the IRS. All of these, and more besides, must be reckoned as positive developments.

However, given the pragmatic realities right now — the inevitable influence of RINOs within the House Republican caucus coupled with continued Democratic control of both the Senate and the White House — we should not have unrealistic expectations. If the GOP can maintain unity in the face of ridicule, threats, and slander — and that’s a big “if” — the House does have the power to simply defund, by refusing to fund, a wide range of obnoxious federal agencies, certainly including the IRS. Also critical will be the House’s power to investigate Hunter Biden, the Russia collusion hoax, the raid on Mar-a-Lago, the January 6 Committee, and numerous other episodes of Democratic corruption that have been ignored and covered up.

All of this is happening despite the failure of the widely anticipated “red wave” that was supposed to reduce the Democrats to rump party status in reaction to the pathetic maladministration of the Biden administration. Instead, the GOP literally flipped the House, securing precisely the narrow majority that the Democrats enjoyed in the 117th Congress. However, the complexion of the new Congress, alongside that of its immediate predecessor, reveals a very large number of principled, reliable constitutionalists and partisans of individual liberty — far more than was the case a decade or two ago. According to *The New American’s* biannual [Freedom Index](#), the 117th Congress included a total of 25 representatives with a cumulative score of 90 percent or better, with four achieving a perfect 100 percent over the last two years. Many of these were part of the anti-McCarthy 20 representatives who repeatedly blocked his confirmation. And a number of the 20 were freshmen with no voting record, who bid fair to swell the ranks of the Freedom Caucus and pad the percentages of the Freedom Index.



Changing his tune: New Speaker of the House Kevin McCarthy has an uneven voting history as a representative, and tried to replace many Freedom Caucus members with RINOs during last year’s primaries. So far, the new speaker has kept a number of promises made to those who opposed his



Written by [Steve Bonta](#) on January 24, 2023

Published in the February 13, 2023 issue of [the New American](#) magazine. Vol. 39, No. 03

candidacy. But time will tell if McCarthy has really made a course correction. (AP Images)

Where did so many exceptional congressmen come from? They were all voted into office by a well-informed electorate, whose voters in some cases were bucking the GOP RINO establishment by supporting candidates that the establishment had tried to sabotage. This is a genuinely new development, at least within living memory. It is the fruit of many years of patient educational efforts at the grassroots level, bringing back a more general understanding of our Constitution and the type of government it undergirds. The couple dozen stalwarts already in Congress were sufficient to wring enormous concessions from McCarthy — something they would not have had the leverage to do in the wake of a genuine red wave that might have left a much-larger Republican majority able to nullify the impact of a handful of Freedom Caucus stalwarts.

We are still a long way from genuine, lasting reform in the direction of constitutionally limited government and greater individual freedom. But it must be borne in mind that, just as we did not get into this mess overnight, so too it will take time to undo the damage of generations of maladministration. However, such a spectacle as we have seen in this new year — of a significant number of genuine constitutionalists holding the entire House to account — would have been unthinkable 20 years ago. After years of grassroots education, a better-informed electorate is now electing better-informed representatives, at least in some parts of the country. And if 20 such representatives can achieve the previously unthinkable, imagine what 100 or 200 will be able to achieve in the not-too-distant future.

This state of affairs is vindication for the long-term strategy of The John Birch Society, for which “education is our only strategy, and truth is our only weapon,” to educate the electorate and watch them elect more principled leadership. This strategy is slow and requires great patience, but will yield far better, more lasting results than any quick-fix gambit such as a constitutional convention could ever hope to achieve. A modern-day con-con, in point of fact, would present a terrible threat to our liberties and would almost certainly leave us with an irretrievably maimed Constitution. But an educated electorate can be relied upon to elect educated leaders grounded in constitutionalist principles — and, failing that, to hold the feet of those who do get elected to the fire. A government composed of a majority of such leaders would be an unparalleled blessing. And while we are not there yet, we certainly appear to be headed in the right direction.



Written by [Steve Bonta](#) on January 24, 2023

Published in the February 13, 2023 issue of [the New American](#) magazine. Vol. 39, No. 03

Subscribe to the New American

Get exclusive digital access to the most informative, non-partisan truthful news source for patriotic Americans!

Discover a refreshing blend of time-honored values, principles and insightful perspectives within the pages of "The New American" magazine. Delve into a world where tradition is the foundation, and exploration knows no bounds.

From politics and finance to foreign affairs, environment, culture, and technology, we bring you an unparalleled array of topics that matter most.



[Subscribe](#)

What's Included?

- 24 Issues Per Year
- Optional Print Edition
- Digital Edition Access
- Exclusive Subscriber Content
- Audio provided for all articles
- Unlimited access to past issues
- Coming Soon! Ad FREE
- 60-Day money back guarantee!
- Cancel anytime.