



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on December 28, 2022

No Shoo-in for Kevin McCarthy as House Speaker

Tuesday, January 3, 2023, could be a very long day for Rep. Kevin McCarthy (R-Calif.). On the surface, all he needs is 218 Republican representatives to vote for him. There will be 222 Republicans in the new, 118th Congress.

End of story, right?

Not quite. Back in November, House Republicans nominated McCarthy for that position by a vote of 188 to 31. On December 9, seven Republicans issued a lengthy list of demands to McCarthy, including installing a “vote of confidence” rule — a “motion to vacate the chair” — that would allow any member of Congress to call for a vote to oust the speaker.



AP Images
Kevin McCarthy

And on Wednesday, five anti-McCarthy Republicans — “Never Kevins” — [announced a pact](#) that they would vote as a bloc against McCarthy, depriving him of the position at least on the first vote.

Those five, according to the *New York Times*, “don’t seem to have a price.” In other words, they can’t be bought. They, among unnumbered others taking the oath of office next Tuesday, are determined to shrink the size of government, regardless.

It’s the number of those “others” that could upset McCarthy’s apple cart. He is the darling of “moderates” — those with voting records, according to *The New American’s* Freedom Index (FI), in the 60s (out of 100) — and McCarthy, with an FI rating of 60, fits right in.

He is, in the words of the *Times’* White House correspondent Annie Karni, “not an ideologue” but instead “a go-along-to-get-along guy.”

In still other words, McCarthy is exactly the kind of speaker the country doesn’t need to begin to rectify the enormous damage being deliberately inflicted on the nation by Democrats and their enablers and sycophants.

McCarthy has the endorsement of Donald Trump, who, claims Karni, “doesn’t see a viable alternative and believes McCarthy [would be] better for him” in 2024 than an even weaker speaker “who [could] draw some Democratic votes.”

McCarthy, scrambling to secure his election before Tuesday, has several factors working in his favor, including history. In January 1997, Rep. Newt Gingrich secured the position with just 216 votes because four Republicans voted for another Republican, five voted “present,” and three were absent that day.

In January 2015, Rep. John Boehner won the speakership with 216 votes when 25 members didn’t vote. And in 2021, Rep. Nancy Pelosi regained the position with 216 votes due to vacancies and absences.

And history also records that no speaker vote has gone to a second ballot in a century.

McCarthy himself told *Fox News* last week that he would have the votes on the first round.



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On the other hand, though, Rep. Scott Peters (D-Calif.) said:

I'm obviously observing it from the other side [of the aisle], but all the intel I get from my Republican friends is ... to expect it to go late ... I plan to wear my comfortable suit.



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