POWERS

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MEMORANDUM

To: ASTS

From: Peggy Tighe, J.D. Principal

Date: November 13, 2026

Re: **2026 Midterm Election: Implications for Health Care Policy and Advocacy**

Executive Summary

The midterm elections shifted congressional control, delivering Democratic majorities in both chambers and reshaping health care policy, oversight, and legislative priorities in the 120th Congress. With Democrats gaining control by significant margins in both chambers, expect heightened Congressional oversight of the Trump Administration's agenda, including health care policies that formed the basis of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act ("OBBBA"). Democrats are telegraphing that they will focus on the nearly $1 trillion in Medicaid cuts, dramatic reductions in ACA coverage, prescription drug pricing, and public health and research funding.

The election also reshapes congressional health care leadership, with new physicians and health care professionals entering and leaving Congress. At least nine health care and biomedical science professionals, including physicians, nurses, an epidemiologist, and a microbiologist, are entering the 120th Congress, bringing additional clinical, scientific, and public health expertise to federal policymaking. Several prominent physician-legislators lost re-election, including Senators Bill Cassidy (R-LA) and Roger Marshall (R-KS), as well as Drs. Mariannette Miller-Meeks (R-IA), Greg Murphy (R-NC), and Jefferson Van Drew (R-NJ). This new landscape creates new opportunities and challenges for health care stakeholders, particularly those focused on Medicare, Medicaid, rehabilitation, federal research, and access to medically necessary care and technologies.

Of the 36 gubernatorial races held in 2026, five resulted in a change in party control, with Georgia, Iowa, Nevada, Ohio, and Texas flipping from Republican to Democratic control. No governorships flipped from Democratic to Republican control. Twenty-nine states retained their incumbent party's leadership. Twenty-four state legislatures will be under full Democratic control starting in January as Democrats flipped 12 states' individual chambers. Republicans will control both chambers in 22 states, down from 28 states prior to the election.

This memorandum provides a detailed analysis of the 2026 election results to date and the implications for the 120th Congress, including the following:

- **Election 2026: Overview of Election Results**
- **Analysis of Election Dynamics**
- **Key Changes to Congressional Committees Overseeing Health Policy**
- **Health Care Impact and Analysis: "Lame Duck" Session & FY 2027 Appropriations**

Election 2026: Overview of Election Results

SENATE

The Democratic Party secured control of the U.S. Senate effective January 3, 2027, with 55 seats with one race still undecided in Alaska. Of the 35 Senate races held in 2026, seven resulted in a change in party control, with Iowa, Kansas, Maine, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, and Texas flipping from Republican to Democratic control. No seats flipped from Democratic to Republican control, while 24 seats remained with their incumbent party. The outcome of the Alaska contest may take weeks or possibly months to finalize as ballot counting continues and litigation ensues. Sen. Chuck Schumer (D-NY) is positioned to become Majority Leader, although some incoming Democrats have publicly opposed his leadership bid. Sen. John Thune (R-SD) was chosen as Minority Leader.

HOUSE

Democrats also secured control of the House, with a total of at least 254 seats. Republicans will have at least 162 seats, and 19 races are still too close to call. In a notable primary upset, Rep. Thomas Massie (R-KY) lost to Trump-backed Ed Gallrein after Massie's public criticism of the President, Rep. Diana DeGette (D-CO), the top Democrat on the House Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee, also lost her primary to in her primary by Melat Kiros.

Current House Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA) announced that he will not run for Republican Leader after the Republicans' losses. Rep. Jim Jordan (R-OH) was voted in as the new Minority leader. House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY) is poised to become Speaker in 2027 and the first Black Speaker in U.S. history. Several newly elected members also bring backgrounds in medicine, public health, disability advocacy, and other fields relevant to federal health policy.

REDISTRICTING

Once every ten years, following the U.S. Census, states redraw congressional and state legislative districts to reflect population changes. However, over the past two years, numerous states have pursued mid-decade redistricting efforts. Notably, none of the redrawn districts led by Republicans resulted in Republican winners, which is a stunning result and reveals the limits of redistricting.

LAME DUCK

During the lame-duck session, Republicans are seeking to confirm President Trump's outstanding nominees and advance a budget reconciliation package to increase defense funding before Democrats assume control in January. Given other high-stakes legislative priorities, including passage of a Continuing Resolution (CR) to fund the federal government after December 11, 2026, there may not be enough time or Congressional will to do so. There will be an end of year package to continue government funding. Additions to that CR are expected to be modest, either extending current programs or including bills that are noncontroversial, bipartisan, no-cost, and widely supported and endorsed.

Key Senate Races

- Senator-elect Adam Hamilton (D-KS) became the first Democrat elected to represent Kansas in the U.S. Senate in 94 years.
- Senator-elect Peggy Flanagan (D-MN), a member of the Ojibwe tribe, will become the first Native American woman to serve in the U.S. Senate.
- Senator-elect Josh Turek (D-IA) is a Paralympic basketball player born with spina bifida and an advocate for disability representation and improved access to rehabilitation equipment and services.
- Senator-elect Abdul El-Sayed, MD (D-MI) is a physician with a doctorate in public health and epidemiology who emphasizes prescription drug affordability and expanded coverage.
- Senator-elect Annie Andrews, MD (D-SC) is a pediatrician who emphasizes affordability and access to care.

Key House Races

- Representative-elect John Cowan, MD (R-GA) is a neurosurgeon elected to represent Georgia's 11th Congressional District.
- Representative-elect Stefany Shaheen (D-NH) is the daughter of retiring Sen. Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH).
- Representative-elect Mark Teixeira (R-TX) is a former New York Yankees first baseman who was elected to represent Texas's 21st Congressional District.
- Representative-elect Mitchell Berman (D-WI) is a registered nurse elected to represent Wisconsin's 1st Congressional District.

Analysis of Election Dynamics

Congressional and Gubernatorial Seat Count — 2026 (Preliminary)

	Senate	House	Governors
Democrats	55	255	30
Republicans	44	168	20
Independents	2	0	0
To Be Determined	2	12	0

Battleground (Most Competitive) Senate Races

State	Elected	Defeated
Alaska	*Mary Peltola (D)*	*Dan Sullivan (R)**
Mississippi	***Scott Colom (D)***	*Cindy Hyde-Smith (R)**
Texas	**James Talarico (D)**	Ken Paxton (R)
Kansas	**Adam Hamilton (D)**	Roger Marshall (R)*
Iowa	**Josh Turek (D)**	Ashley Hinson (R)
Michigan	Abdul El-Sayed (D)	Mike Rogers (R)
Minnesota	Peggy Flanagan (D)	Michele Tafoya (R)
Ohio	**Sherrod Brown (D)**	Jon Husted (R)*

Maine	**Troy Jackson (D*)***	Susan Collins (R)*
Nebraska	Pete Ricketts (R)*	Dan Osborn (I)
New Hampshire	Chris Pappas (D)	John Sununu (R)
North Carolina	**Roy Cooper (D)**	Michael Whatley (R)
South Carolina	**Annie Andrews (D)***	Darline Graham (R)
Florida	Ashley Moody (R)*	Angie Nixon (D)
Georgia	Jon Ossoff (D)*	Mike Collins (R)

*Indicates Incumbent
Italics indicate race still pending with the leading candidate in the "elected" column
Bold indicates a flipped seat

House of Representatives – Notable Districts that Have Been Called

State and District	Elected	Defeated
AK-AL	*Nicholas Begich III (R)**	*Eric Hafner (D)*
AL-02	**Shomari Figures (D)***	Rhett Marques (R)
AZ-01	**Amish Shah (D)**	Jay Feely (R)
AZ-02	*Eli Crane (R)**	*Jonathon Nez (D)*
AZ-06	**JoAnna Mendozza (D)**	Juan Ciscomani (R)*
CA-22	**Randy Villegas (D)**	David Valadao (R)*
CA-48	**Marni von Wilpert (D)**	Jim Desmond (R)
CO-04	*Eileen Laubacher (D)*	*Lauren Boebert (R)**
CO-05	**Jessica Killin (D)**	Jeff Crank (R)*
CO-08	**Manny Rutinel (D)**	Gabe Evans (R)*
FL-07	*Ryan Elijah (R)*	*Bale Dalton (D)*
FL-09	*Darren Soto (D)**	*Dan Green (R)*
FL-13	Anna Luna (R)*	Leela Gray (D)
FL-14	Kathy Castor (D)*	Mike Beltran (R)
FL-22	Pia Dandiya (D)	Casey Askar (R)
FL-25	Jared Moskowitz (D)*	Scott Singer (R)
FL-27	*Maria Elvira Salazar (R)**	*Eliott Rodriguez (D)*
IA-01	**Christina Bohannan (D)**	Mariannette Miller-Meeks (R)*
IA-02	**Lindsay James (D)**	Joe Mitchell (R)
IA-03	**Sarah Trone Garriott (D)**	Zach Nunn (R)*
IN-05	**J.D. Ford (D)**	Victoria Spartz (R)*
KY-06	**Zach Dembo (D)**	Ralph Alvarado (R)
ME-02	*Paul LePage (R)*	*Matthew Dunlap (D)*
MI-04	**Sean McCann (D)**	Bill Huizenga (R)*
MI-07	**William Lawrence (D)**	Tom Barrett (R)*
MI-10	**Christina Hines (D)**	Michael Bouchard (R)
MN-01	*Jake Johnson (D)*	*Brad Finstad (R)**
MT-01	Sam Forstag (D)	Aaron Flint (R)
NC-01	Don Davis (D)*	Laurie Buckhout (R)
NC-03	**Raymond Smith (D)**	Greg Murphy (R)*
NC-11	Jamie Ager (D)	Jennifer Balkcom (R)
NJ-07	**Rebecca Bennett (D)**	Thomas Kean Jr. (R)*
NM-02	Gabriel Vasquez (D)	Gregory Cunningham (R)
NV-02	**Teresa Benitez-Thompson (D)**	**David Flippo (R)**

NY-17	**Cait Conley (D)**	*Mike Lawler (R)**
NY-21	*Anthony Constantino (R)*	*Blake Gendebien (D)*
OH-07	**Brian Poindexter (D)**	Max Miller (R)*
OH-09	Marcy Kaptur (D)*	Derek Merrin (R)
OH-10	**Kristina Knickerbocker (D)**	Mike Turner (R)*
OH-15	**Don Leonard (D)**	Mike Carey (R)*
PA-01	**Bob Harvie (D)**	Brian Fitzpatrick (R)*
PA-07	**Bob Brooks (D)**	Ryan Mackenzie (R)*
PA-08	**Paige Cognetti (D)**	Rob Bresnahan Jr. (D)*
PA-10	**Janelle Stelson (D)**	Scott Perry (R)*
SC-01	*Nancy Lacore (D)*	*Jenny Costa Honeycutt (R)*
TX-15	**Bobby Pulido (D)**	Monica De La Cruz (R)*
TX-23	**Katy Padilla Stout (D)**	Brandon Herrera (R)
TX-35	Johnny Garcia (D)	Carlos De La Cruz (R)
TX-34	Vicente Gonzalez (D)*	Eric Flores (R)
VA-01	**Shannon Taylor (D)**	Robert Wittman (R)*
VA-02	**Elaine Luria (D)**	Jen Kiggans (R)*
VA-05	John James McGuire III (R)*	Tom S.P. Perriello (D)
WA-03	Marie Gluesenkamp Perez (D)*	John Braun (R)
WI-01	**Mitchell Berman (D)**	Bryan Steil (R)*
WI-03	**Rebecca Cooke (D)**	Derrick Van Orden (R)*

Some results are still pending due to recounts, runoffs, and absentee/mail-in ballots still to be counted. Information presented in the table is subject to change.
*Indicates Incumbent
Italics indicate race still pending with the leading candidate in the "elected" column
Bold indicates a flipped seat

Notable Gubernatorial Races

State	Elected	Defeated
Alaska	*Jonathon Kreiss-Thompkins (D)*	*Bernadette Wilson (R)*
Kansas	***Cindy Holscher (D)***	*Ty Masterson (R)*
Georgia	**Keisha Lance Bottoms (D)**	Rick Jackson (R)
Iowa	**Rob Sand (D)**	Zach Lahn (R)
Michigan	Jocelyn Benson (D)	John James (R)
Nevada	Aaron Ford (D)	Joe Lombardo (R)*
Ohio	**Amy Acton (D)**	Vivek Ramaswamy (R)
Wisconsin	David Crowley (D)	Tom Tiffany (R)
Arizona	Katie Hobbs (D)*	Andy Biggs (R)
Texas	**Gina Hinojosa (D)**	Greg Abbott (R)*

*Indicates Incumbent
Italics indicate race still pending with the leading candidate in the "elected" column
Bold indicates a flipped seat

State Legislatures

Democratic gains in the 2026 midterm elections extended beyond Congress and gubernatorial races, with the party making significant inroads in state legislatures across the country. Democrats flipped numerous state legislative chambers, including both chambers in Arizona, New Hampshire, and Wisconsin, as well as legislative chambers in Georgia, Michigan,

Minnesota, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Texas. These changes will have important implications for state health care policymaking, particularly Medicaid coverage, prescription drug access, disability and rehabilitation services, and commercial insurance requirements. The results also create new opportunities for health care stakeholders to engage with incoming legislative leadership and advance policy priorities at the state level.

Key Changes to Congressional Committees Overseeing Health Policy

The four primary authorizing committees with jurisdiction over health care issues, programs, and policies face significant changes in membership due to election results and retirements, outlined below. In addition, the appropriations panels control funding for federal health agencies, public health programs, and research. Committee leadership assignments and committee appointments to fill vacancies have not yet been announced. Many assignments most likely that committee assignments will be finalized in early 2027.

SENATE TBD

Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-MN) was elected Governor of Minnesota, creating a potential vacancy in the Senate seat she currently holds through 2031. If she resigns before her gubernatorial inauguration in January 2027, outgoing Gov. Tim Walz (D-MN) would appoint a temporary replacement. However, if she resigns after taking office, Klobuchar would have the authority to appoint her own successor, who will serve until a special election, potentially in November 2027. Rep. Angie Craig (D-MN-02) has been mentioned as a possible appointee.

Additionally, Sen. Marsha Blackburn (R-TN) was elected Governor of Tennessee, becoming the first woman to hold that office and creating a potential vacancy in the Senate seat she currently holds through 2031. Upon Blackburn's resignation from the Senate, Gov. Bill Lee (R-TN) would have the authority to appoint a temporary replacement, who would serve until a special election, expected in November 2028.

Senate Finance Committee

Sen. Ron Wyden (D-OR) is expected to chair the Senate Finance Committee, which has jurisdiction over Medicare, Medicaid, and major tax issues. His priorities include prescription drug affordability, insurance reform, long-term care reform while overseeing any effort to address policy changes to Medicare and Medicaid. Wyden has also worked with current Chair Mike Crapo (R-ID) on bipartisan PBM and drug-pricing reforms, offering a potential path for continued collaboration.

Finance Democrats are expected to emphasize affordability, including health care costs and rural needs. Bipartisan cooperation remains possible given Wyden and Crapo's work over the years on health and tax policy. Additionally, the retirement of Sen. Steve Daines (R-MT) – the current Republican sponsor of the Medicare O&P Patient-Centered Care Act, and other Republican departures from the Committee will create opportunities for new membership in the 120th Congress, potentially influencing future negotiations on healthcare and tax policy.

Key Finance Committee departures include Sens. Steve Daines (R-MT), Thom Tillis (R-NC), Tina Smith (D-MN), John Cornyn (R-TX), and Marsha Blackburn (R-TN).

Sens. Ben Ray Luján (D-NM) and Mark Warner (D-VA) won reelection. Sen. Warner is the primary Democratic sponsor of the Medicare O&P Patient-Centered Care Act. Sen. Roger Marshall (R-KS) was defeated by Democratic nominee Adam Hamilton, flipping the Senate seat to Democratic control for the first time in 94 years. Marshall, a physician by training, was a strong advocate for market-based health care reforms. His departure also changes the Finance Committee's health policy expertise and representation of physicians and health care experts in the Senate.

Senate Finance Committee Vacancies

State	Senator	Status on Committee
Montana	Steve Daines (R)	Retiring
North Carolina	Thom Tillis (R)	Retiring
Minnesota	Tina Smith (D)	Retiring
Texas	John Cornyn (R)	Lost Primary Election
Louisiana	Bill Cassidy (R)	Lost Primary Election
Tennessee	Marsha Blackburn (R)	Elected TN Governor
Kansas	Roger Marshall (R)	Lost General Election

Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee

Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT), the current Ranking Member of the HELP Committee, is likely to resume his previous role as Committee Chair following Democrats' return to the Senate majority. As Chairman, Sanders would likely pursue efforts to reverse Medicaid cuts and work requirements enacted under H.R. 1, strengthen Affordable Care Act (ACA) coverage protections, and conduct aggressive oversight of the Administration's health policies. These efforts could include hearings examining Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr.'s vaccine policies, agency leadership and nominees, and other public health initiatives.

Additionally, with Democrats regaining control of the Senate, Sen. Sanders (I-VT) has pledged to secure Dr. Abdul El-Sayed, (D-MI) a seat on the HELP Committee under his anticipated chairmanship. El-Sayed, who holds a medical degree from Columbia University and a Ph.D. in public health from Oxford University, has made Medicare for All a central pillar of his campaign, alongside reducing health care costs, strengthening protections for health care workers, and addressing the influence of insurance companies and large hospital corporations. Sanders has expressed enthusiasm for working alongside El-Sayed to advance Medicare for All and broader health care reform.

Sen. Bill Cassidy (R-LA), the current HELP Chair, lost his Republican primary to Rep. Julia Letlow, who won the Senate seat. Republican minority leadership of HELP remains uncertain following the departures of Sens. Bill Cassidy (R-LA), Susan Collins (R-ME), and Roger Marshall (R-KS). Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) is next in seniority but recently announced that she is seeking the top Republican position on the Senate Appropriations Committee following Collins' defeat. Sen. Rand Paul (R-KY) and Josh Hawley (R-MO) are both angling to be the Ranking member, with Dr. Paul having more seniority. If Dr. Paul takes the helm, he is expected to stymie Sen. Sanders efforts to advance legislation including Medicare for All.

Two Republican members of the Senate HELP Committee, Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME) and Sen. Roger Marshall (R-KS), were defeated by Democratic challengers Troy Jackson and Adam Hamilton, respectively. Marshall's defeat also opens the leadership of the Primary Health and Retirement Security Subcommittee; Sen. Ed Markey (D-MA), its current Ranking Member, is positioned to assume the role under Democratic control of the Senate.

Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Vacancies

State	Senator	Status on Committee
Louisiana	Bill Cassidy (R)	Lost Primary Election (Current Committee Chair)
Alabama	Tommy Tuberville (R)	Elected AL Governor
Utah	Alan Armstrong (R)	Appointed Term Concluding
Maine	Susan Collins (R)	Lost General Election
Kansas	Roger Marshall (R)	Lost General Election
Ohio	Jon Husted (R)	Lost General Election

Senate Appropriations Committee

Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA) is positioned to chair the Senate Appropriations Committee. Her priorities include federal funding for biomedical research, public health, mental health, and substance use treatment, maternal health, as well as oversight of how agencies spend congressionally appropriated funds.

Major Senate Appropriations departures include Sens. Mitch McConnell (R-KY), Dick Durbin (D-IL), Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), and Gary Peters (D-MI). The loss of Durbin and Shaheen will also affect the Labor-HHS Subcommittee. Sen. Chris Coons (D-DE) may seek the Foreign Relations chairmanship, potentially triggering additional subcommittee shifts. Returning members include Sens. Chris Coons (D-DE), Bill Hagerty (R-TN), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Shelley Moore Capito (R-WV), Jon Ossoff (D-GA), Jack Reed (D-RI), and Mike Rounds (R-SD).

After Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME) lost reelection, the Senate Appropriations Committee's top Republican post became vacant. Sen. Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), who will be the most senior Republican appropriator, is seeking the lead Republican spot on the committee. Sen. Darline Graham (R-SC), who won the special election to fill the seat previously held by her late brother, lost her re-election bid to Democratic challenger Dr. Annie Andrews (D-SC).

Senate Appropriations Committee Changes

State	Senator	Status on Committee
Kentucky	Mitch McConnell (R)	Retiring
Illinois	Dick Durbin (D)	Retiring
New Hampshire	Jeanne Shaheen (D)	Retiring
Michigan	Gary Peters (D)	Retiring
Maine	Susan Collins (R)	Lost General Election
South Carolina	Darline Graham (R)	Lost General Election
Mississippi	*Cindy Hyde-Smith (R)*	*Pending*

Italics indicate race still pending

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

House committee turnover will be substantial. Incoming members with health care experience include neurosurgeon John Cowan (R-GA), nurse Mitchell Berman (D-WI), and nurse practitioner Kristina Knickerbocker (D-OH). Physician Rep. Mariannette Miller-Meeks (R-IA) lost her reelection bid. These changes could affect both committee expertise and stakeholder relationships.

House Ways and Means Committee

With Democrats reclaiming control of the House, current Ranking Member Rep. Richard Neal (D-MA) is expected to assume the chairmanship. Jason Smith (R-MO) will likely lead the GOP as Ranking Member of the House Ways and Means Committee.

During the 119th Congress, Neal prioritized healthcare affordability, protecting Medicare beneficiaries, increasing healthcare price transparency, and improving access to care, including reforms to Medicare Advantage prior authorization requirements and initiatives supporting rural healthcare access. Smith has emphasized preventive services, early cancer detection, and the Hospital at Home program.

Numerous Ways and Means members will depart following the 2026 elections. Six members are retiring, including Reps. Vern Buchanan (R-FL), Jodey Arrington (R-TX), Lloyd Doggett (D-TX), Danny Davis (D-IL), and Dwight Evans (D-PA). Notably, Buchanan and Doggett serve as Chair and Ranking Member, respectively, of the Ways and Means Health Subcommittee.

Four members pursued election to other offices, including Reps. David Schweikert (R-AZ), Kevin Hern (R-OK), Randy Feenstra (R-IA), and Stacey Plaskett (D-VI). Schweikert and Feenstra were unsuccessful in their respective gubernatorial primary bids. Plaskett won the U.S. Virgin Islands gubernatorial election and Hern secured a U.S. Senate seat. Additionally, four Committee members lost their reelection bids: Reps. Greg Murphy (R-NC), Jimmy Gomez (D-CA), Max Miller (R-OH), Mike Carey (R-OH), and John Larson (D-CT), who was unseated in the primary. Mike Thompson (D-CA), the Democratic sponsor of the House Medicare O&P Patient-Centered Care Act, is locked in a close race that is currently undecided.

House Ways and Means Committee Changes

State and District	Representative	Status on Committee
Florida (FL-13)	Vern Buchanan (R)	Retiring (Current Health Subcommittee Chair)
Texas (TX-37)	Lloyd Doggett (D)	Retiring (Current Health Subcommittee Ranking Member)
Texas (TX-19)	Jodey Arrington (R)	Retiring
Illinois (IL-07)	Danny Davis (D)	Retiring
Connecticut (CT-01)	John Larson (D)	Lost Primary
Pennsylvania (PA-03)	Dwight Evans (D)	Retiring
Arizona (AZ-01)	David Schweikert (R)	Lost AZ Gubernatorial Primary Election

Iowa (IA-04)	Randy Feenstra (R)	Lost IA Gubernatorial Primary Election
Oklahoma (OK-01)	Kevin Hern (R)	Elected U.S. Senate (OK)
U.S. Virgin Islands (At Large)	Stacey Plaskett (D)	Elected VIA Governor
California (CA-34)	Jimmy Gomez (D)	Lost General Election
Ohio (OH-07)	Max Miller (R)	Lost General Election
Ohio (OH-15)	Mike Carey (R)	Lost General Election
North Carolina (NC-03)	Greg Murphy (R)	Lost General Election

Italics indicate race still pending

House Energy and Commerce Committee

With Democrats reclaiming control of the House, Frank Pallone (D-NJ), the Committee's current Ranking Member, is expected to assume the chairmanship. Brett Guthrie (R-KY) will likely transition from Chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee to Ranking Member.

Pallone's healthcare priorities in the 119th Congress focused on protecting and strengthening the Affordable Care Act (ACA), preserving Medicare's prescription drug price negotiation authority, opposing cuts to Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and strengthening public health infrastructure and consumer protections. Guthrie has emphasized pharmacy benefit manager (PBM) reform, rural and telehealth access, program integrity, and medical innovation.

There are eleven members of the House Energy and Commerce Committee who are retiring, seeking higher office, or departing from the Committee following the 2026 elections. Four members are retiring, including Reps. Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), Mark Veasey (D-TX), Robin Kelly (D-IL), and Neal Dunn (R-FL). Reps. Buddy Carter (R-GA) and John James (R-MI) were unsuccessful in their respective bids for higher office, while Reps. Dan Crenshaw (R-TX) and Diana DeGette (D-CO) lost their reelection bids. Three additional Committee members, Reps. Gabe Evans (R-CO), Richard Hudson (R-NC), and physician Marianne Miller-Meeks (R-IA) lost their reelection bids.

House Energy and Commerce Committee Vacancies

State and District	Representative	Status on Committee
Illinois (IL-09)	Jan Schakowsky (D)	Retiring
Texas (TX-33)	Mark Veasey (D)	Retiring
Florida (FL-02)	Neal Dunn (R)	Retiring
Illinois (IL-02)	Robin Kelly (D)	Retiring
Colorado (CO-1)	Diana DeGette (D)	Lost Primary Election (Current Vice Chair)
Georgia (GA-01)	Buddy Carter (R)	Lost GA Senate Primary Election
Texas (TX-02)	Dan Crenshaw (R)	Lost Primary Election
Michigan (MI-10)	John James (R)	Lost MI Gubernatorial General Election
Colorado (CO-08)	Gabe Evans (R)	Lost General Election
North Carolina (NC-09)	Richard Hudson (R)	Lost General Election
Iowa (IA-01)	Mariannette Miller-Meeks (R)	Lost General Election

Italics indicate race still pending

House Appropriations Committee

With Democrats reclaiming control of the House, Rosa DeLauro (D-CT), the Committee's current Ranking Member, is expected to assume the chairmanship, though there are rumblings she may be challenged for the role. Tom Cole (R-OK) will likely transition from Chairman of the House Appropriations Committee to Ranking Member.

DeLauro's healthcare priorities in the 119th Congress focused on protecting Medicaid and ACA coverage, reproductive healthcare access, and federal public health funding. She also served as Ranking Member of the Labor-HHS Appropriations Subcommittee. Cole has emphasized telehealth, drug affordability, and funding for NIH and CDC funding.

Several members of the House Appropriations Committee will leave Congress following the 2026 elections, including six retiring members, two seeking higher office, one who lost the primary election, and two who lost the general election. Of these, the following also serve on the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (Labor-HHS) Subcommittee: Reps. Julia Letlow (R-LA), Chuck Edwards (R-NC), Steny Hoyer (D-MD), Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-NJ), and Rep. Juan Ciscomani (R-AZ), who lost his reelection bid. Rep. David Valadao (R-CA) also lost his re-election bid, bringing the total number of departing Appropriations committee members to 11.

House Appropriations Committee Changes

State and District	Representative	Status on Committee
Louisiana (LA-05)	Julia Letlow (R)	Elected to U.S. Senate (LA)
Iowa (IA-02)	Ashley Hinson (R)	Lost IA Senate General Election
Nevada (NV-02)	Mark Amodei (R)	Retiring
Washington (WA-04)	Dan Newhouse (R)	Retiring
Montana (MT-11)	Ryan Zinke (R)	Retiring
North Carolina (NC-11)	Chuck Edwards (R)	Retiring
Maryland (MD-05)	Steny Hoyer (D)	Retiring
New Jersey (NJ-12)	Bonnie Watson Coleman (D)	Retiring
New York (NY-13)	Andriano Espaillat (D)	Lost Primary Election
Arizona (AZ-06)	Juan Ciscomani (R)	Lost General Election
California (CA-22)	David Valadao (R)	Lost General Election

Italics indicate race still pending

End of Session Preview ("Lame Duck")

Post-election, Congress is actively engaged in leadership elections and setting the next Congress's agenda. The post-election session is the "Lame Duck" Congress.

Republicans will confront pressure to advance priorities before losing congressional control in January, including approving judicial and executive nominations, finalizing government funding ahead of the December 11 deadline, and passing the FY27 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). Congress may also consider a year-end health care package or individual health packages, addressing programs and payment provisions expiring December 11, including community health center funding, Medicare physician reimbursement, rural hospital payments,

and the Special Diabetes Programs. Democrats may defer broader negotiations until they control Congress in January, narrowing the scope of any year-end agreement.

Research funding and grantmaking protections may also be on the lame-duck agenda. A September stopgap funding measure blocked proposed Office of Management and Budget (OMB) rule changes that would have shifted federal research grant approval authority from scientific experts to political appointees. With those protections set to expire in December, Congress may revisit the issue before the new Democratic majority takes office. Despite Republican control during the 119th Congress, lawmakers demonstrated bipartisan opposition to OMB's proposed changes.

FY 2027 Appropriations

Federal funding expires December 11, 2026, Congress must pass an FY 2027 appropriations package or a temporary continuing resolution for a defined period, or risk a government shutdown. Congress could opt to pass an omnibus spending bill that would package individual appropriations bills into one large bill, or adopt individual appropriations packages, clustering department bills together, where agreement can be more easily reached – often referred to as passing individual "mini-busses." There is rumor that the House is discussing the passage of three "mini-bus" bills that includes four bills each, to fulfill all 12 appropriations bills that need to pass into law.

House Democrats must decide whether to extend government funding into next year or to aim for an omnibus bill or mini-bus bills in December. Some Democrats prefer a year-end agreement and to start the 120th Congress with a clean slate, while others argue delaying until January would give Democrats more leverage, as they will have full control of Congress.