# Cards---Kentucky RR---Round 2

## Midterms

### 1NC---OFF

#### Dems win now.

Emily Singer 9/19. Staff writer for the Daily Kos. “This poll should give Democrats hope for the 2026 midterms.” https://www.dailykos.com/stories/2025/9/19/2344419/-This-poll-should-give-Democrats-hope-for-the-2026-midterms.

If a new Washington Post/Ipsos poll released on Friday bears out, a blue wave may wash over next year’s midterm elections. The survey found that registered voters prefer that Democrats control the next Congress, by a 9-percentage-point margin. Such a large spread would likely be enough for Democrats to overcome the GOP’s corrupt redistricting efforts across the country. Fifty-three percent of voters want Democrats to be in control, to serve as a check on President Donald Trump, according to the poll. And 44% want Republicans to be in control, to support Trump's agenda. Those numbers are somewhat reminiscent of what The Washington Post/Ipsos found in October 2018, right before Democrats rode a blue wave to retaking the House. That year, 55% of voters wanted Democrats to control Congress to be a check on Trump, while 39% wanted Republicans to hold a majority to back Trump’s agenda. In 2018, Democrats went on to win the national House popular vote by over 8 points, taking 235 seats in the House. Democrats need to flip just a handful seats to win control of the House in 2026. For a while now, political handicappers have said Democrats are favorites to win that chamber. But their path to retaking the Senate next year is much steeper, though not impossible in a massive wave election.

#### Delivering on Pro-Labor policies locks in working-class support for Republicans

Eyal Press 25. Writer at The New Yorker. Author of *Dirty Work*, recipient of 2022 Hillman Prize for Book Journalism. PhD in Sociology @ NYU. Puffin Foundation Fellow at the Type Media Center, previously fellow at the Carnegie Corporation and the Dorothy and Lewis B. Cullman Center at the New York public Library. “Josh Hawley and the Republican Effort to Love Labor.” The New Yorker. 5-30-2025. https://www.newyorker.com/news/the-lede/josh-hawley-and-the-republican-effort-to-love-labor

But even those who question Hawley’s motives don’t doubt his ambition, particularly as jockeying for 2028 begins. One thing he appears to recognize is that siding with unions has become popular even on the right. In March, American Compass, a conservative think tank, and YouGov conducted a survey that illustrated this fact. Among Republican respondents, the poll found that labor unions had a net favorability of eight percentage points. Among young Republicans, defined as those born after 1980, the margin was thirty-eight points. Young Republicans also overwhelmingly backed several provisions of the PRO Act that the survey tested, such as expediting the collective-bargaining process, posting information about labor rights in workplaces, and penalizing companies that violate the law.

Daniel Kishi, a policy adviser at American Compass and a former aide to Hawley, told me that the generational divide captured by the survey is mirrored among Republican elected officials, with those who entered office after the 2008 financial crisis—such as Hawley and Vance—more likely to view unfettered markets skeptically and to see rank-and-file union members as potential supporters. These officials understand that, while voters in union households still tend to back Democrats, the gap has narrowed, a dynamic that has enabled Trump to win states like Michigan and Pennsylvania. Some Republicans are even beginning to see the labor movement’s leaders as allies, rather than as Democratic operatives who will turn out the vote for their opponents—in particular Sean O’Brien, the general president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, who spoke at the Republican National Convention this past summer. Kishi believes that enacting some of the pro-union reforms that drew support from young Republicans in the American Compass survey could solidify the political realignment that has occurred in recent years, leading more and more blue-collar workers to view the Republican Party as their home.

Thus far, of course, what the Trump Administration has prioritized is not passing such reforms but selling influence to wealthy patrons and granting unchecked power to billionaires including Elon Musk, whose Department of Government Efficiency fired thousands of federal employees who are union members. On March 27th, Trump issued an executive order that cancelled the union contracts of nearly a million federal workers. The order is “by far the largest single action of union-busting in American history,” the labor historian Joseph McCartin recently told the Center for American Progress, which has estimated that it ended collective-bargaining rights for one of every fifteen workers currently protected by a union contract. Trump’s tax-and-spending bill contains a few measures designed to appeal to low-income workers, such as eliminating taxes on tips and overtime pay. But assessments by the Congressional Budget Office and other nonpartisan sources show that the benefits will go mainly to the wealthiest households, while the poorest ten per cent of Americans will see their income decline.

#### Dem house restrains Trump, solving a slew of existential threats.

Mitch Jackson 25. J.D., Western State College of Law, California Lawyer Attorneys of the Year (CLAY) Award, Attorney at Maneuver Mediation law firm. “The 2026 Midterms Could Save America — If We Show Up.” Uncensored Objection. 5/29/2025. https://mitchthelawyer.substack.com/p/the-2026-midterms-could-save-america

This is an urgent and unflinching call to action that argues the 2026 midterms may be our last, best chance to stop Donald Trump’s dangerous grip on power, restore constitutional checks and balances, and protect the future of American democracy. With Congress currently enabling the White House, the piece lays out in plain, forceful terms how a Democratic majority in the House and Senate could block further damage, reverse harmful executive actions, hold corrupt officials accountable, and defend fundamental freedoms under siege.

It connects the dots across the economy, environment, global alliances, civil rights, and the rule of law, showing how much is at stake and how much power voters still hold. For anyone who thinks their vote won’t matter, this article makes one thing clear: it absolutely does.

How Do You Feel Right Now?

I’m going to be honest: like many of you, I’ve felt a knot of worry in my stomach when I think about our country lately. Over the past several months, I’ve heard friends and neighbors say they’re discouraged, that they feel our democracy is slipping away. I understand that fear deeply, because I feel it too. But I’m not writing today to dwell on despair. I’m here to share a path forward.

We are not powerless. We, the everyday Americans, have the ability to change the course of history in the 2026 midterms. By voting for Democrats to take back the majority in both the House and Senate, we can restore the checks and balances that safeguard our democracy and begin to repair the damage being done right now. This isn’t just a political preference; it’s a democratic necessity. It’s how we save our democracy from a real and present danger.

Democracy at the Brink

President Donald Trump’s return to the White House in 2025 has brought our nation to a crisis point. In just a short time, his actions and rhetoric have inflicted serious harm on the pillars of American democracy.

We’ve watched as he casts aside constitutional norms and treats the presidency like a personal fiefdom. He’s openly undermining the rule of law, pardoning those who committed violence in his name and urging his Justice Department to target political rivals. He’s using words like “vermin” to describe his opponents and calling the free press the “enemy of the people,” language that shocks me as an American. This is not normal disagreement or routine politics; it’s an assault on the values that hold us together.

Our economy, too, is caught in the crossfire of chaos. Instead of working to lower costs for working families, Trump and his allies in Congress have focused on tax breaks for billionaires and gutting programs that everyday people rely on. They tried to slash health care for millions by cutting Medicaid, and they even moved to shrink food assistance for struggling families. While costs of groceries and gas went up for us, the only “plan” from this leadership has been more breaks for the wealthy and leaving the rest of us to fend for ourselves. It feels like the powerful are playing a different game entirely, one that leaves regular folks behind.

Socially, the fabric of our nation is being pulled apart. Rather than seek common ground, this administration doubles down on dividing us, by race, by religion, by who we love or where we come from. Hate crimes and violent extremism have been emboldened by wink-and-nod encouragement from our nation’s highest office.

Instead of firmly denouncing white supremacists and conspiracy theorists, Trump often echoes their slogans or welcomes their support. It’s no wonder so many Americans feel a sense of dread and disunity. We are all tired of the constant outrage cycle and the feeling that we’re at each other’s throats. This is not the America we know and love, where despite our differences we used to believe we were on the same team.

Internationally, the United States’ standing has plummeted. Longtime allies are questioning whether they can rely on us, as President Trump cozies up to dictators and strongmen around the world. He has hinted at abandoning NATO and other alliances that have kept us safe for generations.

He pulled back on global agreements, like those on climate and human rights, leaving America isolated on the world stage. I can’t tell you how heartbreaking it is to see the country that once championed democracy and freedom now shaking the confidence of our friends and giving comfort to our adversaries. When America doesn’t lead with its values, the world becomes a more dangerous and unstable place.

All of this sounds dire, and it is. We have to face that truth head on: our democracy is at the brink. The Constitution, the economy, our unity as a people, and our global reputation are all under assault by a president who will stop at nothing to aggrandize his own power. It’s easy to feel hopeless hearing that.

But here’s the thing I want you to remember: this story isn’t over. We are not helpless spectators. America’s strength has always been the ability of its people to course-correct, to come together and insist on change when it’s needed most. And right now, what’s needed is a restoration of checks and balances. We need a Congress that will stand up and say no to this march toward authoritarianism and division. We need a Congress that works for us, the people, not for the president’s whims.

Checks and Balances: Why Congress Matters So Much

When the founders of our nation wrote the Constitution, they were deeply worried about any one person having too much power. That’s why they built a system of checks and balances, so no president could act like a king.

The legislative branch, Congress, was given the duty to be the people’s voice and a check on the executive branch. In plain terms, it’s Congress’s job to rein in a president who goes off the rails. For most of our history, this system has (more or less) worked. No matter which party a president came from, Congress was there to question, to oversee, and sometimes to say “hold on, that’s not right.” Checks and balances are the brakes on the car when the driver is speeding toward a cliff.

Right now, those brakes aren’t working. With Trump in the Oval Office and his party holding slim majorities in the House and Senate, the usual safeguards are failing. Instead of putting country over party, too many current congressional leaders have chosen to be rubber stamps. They’re either too afraid or too complicit to stand up to the President’s worst instincts.

We’ve seen congressional committees that should be investigating genuine problems instead wasting time targeting the President’s perceived enemies or spreading his preferred narratives. We’ve seen silence or shrugs in response to blatant abuses of power. This lack of pushback is exactly what enables the dangerous trajectory we’re on. When one party controls all levers of government and refuses to police its own leader, the checks and balances are effectively gone.

But here’s the hopeful part: we can fix this by changing who’s in Congress. In our democracy, the people are the ultimate check. If our representatives won’t do their job, we can fire them at the ballot box.

By electing a Democratic majority to the House and Senate, we will restore the balance that our system needs. I’m not talking about giving one party power just for the sake of it. I’m talking about ensuring that someone in power is finally willing to stand up to the president and say, “Enough.” We need lawmakers who will actually perform oversight, who will act as a co-equal branch of government instead of a subordinate.

Throughout history, there have been moments when Americans chose a new Congress to correct the course of a runaway presidency, and it worked. I think of 1974 after Watergate, or the 2018 midterms after Trump’s first two years, when voters elected a House that could hold the administration accountable. Those were turning points that pulled our country back from the brink. We have that same kind of moment before us in 2026. By voting for Democrats, we aren’t handing power to a party so much as we are reclaiming power for the people, via a Congress that will actually do its job.

The Powers Congress Can Use to Stop the Damage

How exactly can Congress constrain a president gone rogue? It’s important to understand that the legislative branch has real, tangible powers, tools that, in the right hands, can halt abuse and even begin to undo it.

If we flip the House and Senate, a Democratic-controlled Congress can deploy these powers on our behalf. Here are the major ways Congress can act as a safeguard:

Oversight and Investigations: Congress has the authority to oversee the executive branch. This means they can hold hearings and launch investigations into misconduct, corruption, or unconstitutional actions by the President or his administration. With a Democratic majority, those committees investigating would no longer turn a blind eye.

They can shine a bright light on what’s been happening behind closed doors. Think about the power of truth, when wrongdoing is exposed in the public eye, it becomes a lot harder for it to continue. Hearings can reveal, for example, if officials are abusing power, if taxpayer money is being misused, or if rights are being violated.

We saw this work in the past: it was congressional investigations that uncovered the Watergate scandal long ago, and more recently, a Democratic-led House in 2019 was able to investigate and impeach Trump over abuse of power. Oversight is a way of saying, “We’re watching, and you will be held accountable.”

Subpoena Power: As part of oversight, Congress can issue subpoenas to compel witnesses to testify and produce documents. This might sound technical, but it’s basically the power to force the truth out into the open.

Right now, a lot of truth is being hidden from the American people, whether it’s details about backroom deals, communication with foreign powers, or internal decisions that affect all of us. A Congress willing to use subpoena power can drag those facts into the sunlight.

For instance, if there are allegations that the administration is using government agencies to persecute political opponents or that officials are violating ethics laws, subpoenas can bring those officials before Congress to answer under oath. It puts a real check on abuse because lying under oath is a crime, and refusing a lawful subpoena can lead to contempt charges. In short, subpoenas are how Congress says, “You must tell the truth, whether the president likes it or not.”

The Power of the Purse: This is one of Congress’s most critical powers. Only Congress can appropriate money for government operations. In practice, this means if the President wants to fund a controversial project or enforce a harmful policy, a determined Congress can say, “Not with taxpayer dollars, you won’t.” A Democratic majority could block funding for any number of Trump’s harmful initiatives.

For example, if Trump issues an executive order that hurts the environment or sets up some kind of overreaching task force to target his critics, Congress can pass a budget that explicitly prohibits spending money on that. On the positive side, Congress can direct funding toward the things that help people, education, healthcare, disaster relief, infrastructure, and away from things that do harm. It’s an immense leverage point. Even the most powerful president cannot spend money that Congress refuses to provide. By controlling the purse strings, a Democratic House and Senate can effectively stop many of the damaging policies in their tracks.

Legislative Authority (Passing and Blocking Laws): Congress is the only branch that can make federal laws. With a majority, Democrats could block any new laws Trump’s allies try to push that would hurt our democracy or rights.

Think about proposals that may be on the table: a national abortion ban, cuts to Social Security or Medicare, laws undermining voting rights, or extremist cultural laws that attack LGBTQ citizens or other groups. Right now, those kinds of bills might have a chance. With a Democratic majority, they would never see the light of day.

Blocking bad legislation is vital, it prevents further damage. But it’s not just about defense. A new majority can go on offense by passing bills that protect our democracy and our people. Now, it’s true that Trump as president could veto bills he doesn’t like, but passing them still matters. It forces a public conversation and pressures even members of his party to take stands. In some cases, if enough Republicans feel the heat, Congress could even override a veto.

For instance, a law to safeguard elections or to help veterans shouldn’t be something a president vetoes without paying a political price. A Democratic Congress can put good legislation on his desk and dare him to reject it. And in any must-pass bills (like funding the government), they can include provisions that rein in abuses, knowing the President has to sign or face a shutdown that he’d be blamed for. In these ways, writing and shaping laws gives Congress immense power to direct the country’s course.

Advice and Consent (Senate’s Confirmation Power): The Senate has a unique role in confirming or rejecting the President’s appointments for key positions, from Cabinet secretaries to federal judges, including Supreme Court justices. If Democrats have the majority in the Senate, they can ensure that unqualified or extreme nominees don’t get rubber-stamped into lifetime judgeships or critical agency roles.

### Midterms Key---2NC

#### Midterms are our last shot. Otherwise, he’ll cement generational wins.

Stan Jones 8/4. Independent policy analyst and an award-winning journalist. “Opinion: The 2026 midterm elections may be our last chance to protect democracy.” Anchorage Daily News. 08/04/2025. https://www.adn.com/opinions/2025/08/04/opinion-the-2026-midterm-elections-may-be-our-last-chance-to-protect-democracy/

Many Americans still believe our democratic institutions will protect us from Donald Trump’s march toward authoritarian rule. But that belief is dangerously naïve. If Trump supporters retain control of Congress in 2026, he will be positioned to subvert future elections and entrench minority rule for a generation.

Trump has already shown how far he’s willing to go. He tried to overturn the 2020 election, pressured state officials to “find votes,” incited a violent mob to storm the Capitol, and continues to spread lies about election fraud. His allies in Congress and state legislatures have echoed those lies, laying the groundwork for future interference.

Now that he’s back in the White House, Trump is moving quickly. He’s surrounded himself with loyalists who won’t resist his agenda. Project 2025, a blueprint from the conservative Heritage Foundation, outlines plans to purge the federal bureaucracy, eliminate checks on executive power, and weaponize the Justice Department against political enemies. Trump has endorsed it — and begun implementing it.

But the real danger lies in what comes next. If Trump and his allies succeed in 2026 — by retaining control of Congress and installing loyalists in key state offices — they will be in position to subvert or overturn Democratic victories in 2028. They’ll rewrite election laws, suppress votes, and challenge results they don’t like. With Congress and the Supreme Court in Republican hands, Trump might be able to block or delay a Democratic win in the presidential election. With state legislatures under GOP control, he could pressure officials to send alternate slates of electors. The playbook is already written.

This isn’t speculation. It’s a continuation of what we’ve already seen. The difference is that next time, the system may not hold.

That’s why the 2026 midterms may be our last real chance to stop America’s slide into authoritarianism. If Democrats win back the House or Senate or both, they can block Trump’s most dangerous plans. If pro-democracy candidates win state races, they can protect the integrity of future elections. But if Republicans retain control, Trump will have a clear path to consolidate power and rig the system in his favor.

We can’t afford to sit this one out. The stakes are too high. This isn’t just about policy differences or partisan rivalry — whether you’re conservative or liberal, it’s about whether America remains a democracy.

If you love this country and you love democracy, then support pro-democracy candidates in the midterm elections with your money, your time, and your ballot. Donate. Volunteer. And, above all, vote.

The survival of the greatest democracy the world has ever known may depend on what happens in November of next year.

#### 3. Wrong. 2026 is the only chance to stave off authoritarianism before 2028.

Hanna Rosin 25. Interview with Garry Kasparov, Chess world champion who runs the Renew Democracy Initiative; and Anne Applebaum; Senior Fellow at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies and the SNF Agora Institute. "‘2026 Is the Battlefield’." Atlantic. 9-21-2025. https://www.theatlantic.com/podcasts/archive/2025/09/radio-atlantic-live-from-the-atlantic-festival-2026-is-the-battlefield/684291/

Rosin: Okay. I’m gonna ask you a question that I don’t wanna ask you, and then I’m gonna close my eyes as you answer: 2026?

Kasparov: Most fateful election in American history.

Rosin: Most what?

Kasparov: Most fateful election in American history. If Democrats do not retake the House, 2028 will be a formality. That’s it. You know, then I’m afraid the show, Autocracy in America, the show will be shut down.

Applebaum: Hanna and I will run it in the underground.

Rosin: Yes. We’ll run it in the underground.

Applebaum: In this room.

[Audience laughter]

Rosin: What? Okay, 2028 then?

Applebaum: 2028 is too far.

Kasparov: 2026. This is the battlefield. You have to make sure that the Congress, that Article I of the Constitution, will take a stand against Donald Trump.

And by the way, I believe the Democrats should actually start work on it now. There are five Republicans—there are five members of the House that separate, you know, Donald Trump from pushing his agenda. Three of the GOP members, they are retiring. So make them an offer they cannot reject. All you need, you need five votes. And it’s, again: Be active. Try. Offer them speakership.

### No Uniqueness---2NC

#### Full throttle now.

Ed Kilgore 25 – “Trump Bets He Can Have His Extremism — and the Midterms, Too,” 9/14, https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/opinion/trump-bets-he-can-have-his-extremism-and-the-midterms-too/ar-AA1McsIe

This was a particularly fraught decision for Trump because his idea of “policy accomplishments” involved a vast expansion of presidential power, an inevitably controversial mass-deportation program, a return to protectionist economic strategies, and relentless threats of Mafia-style retribution against his enemies and critics. Given his incredibly high regard for his own uniqueness and his history of disdain for the Republican Party, it would have been the most natural thing in the world for Trump to write off the midterms and plan to leave the White House in 2029 after infuriating and betraying as many allies and voters as possible.

Within moments of his second inauguration, Trump pursued a course of unprecedented extremism that suggested he would be fine with vast midterm losses, deliberately alienating voting blocs (Latinos, younger voters, inflation-sensitive voters) that had moved in the GOP’s direction in 2024 and exhibiting indifference to public opinion generally (a bit disguised by his habit of asserting vast popularity absent, or even against, any evidence).

But then something surprising began happening: Trump started showing considerable personal interest in his party’s midterm prospects, interfering in Republican primaries to promote the most electable options (notably by shoving Marjorie Taylor Greene out of a Senate race) and making sure the White House is as focused on 2026 as he is.

The standard take on Trump’s motivation for this sudden decision to care about his party’s fate is that it’s actually all about himself: He’s worried about being investigated or even impeached by a Democratic House. But given the absence of any evidence that past Democratic House investigations or impeachments inhibited him even a bit, there’s a more lurid possibility: He’s convinced a rabid pursuit of a maximalist agenda is compatible with a successful midterm win and long-term Republican success.

This is consistent with Trump’s longtime belief in a base-first political strategy. If the GOP base wasn’t already completely under Trump’s thrall coming out of the 2024 elections, he’s probably heat-seared his bond with them by the audacity and thrilling hatefulness of his conduct since returning to the White House. You can debate all day long whether the second Trump administration bears the characteristic marks of an authoritarian regime. But without any question, the 47th president’s relationship with his supporters is ducelike. His biggest power grabs please them most, as is evidenced by the rapturous GOP rank-and-file reaction to the idea of sending troops into major U.S. cities to combat a nonexistent crime wave.

But even Trump seems to understand that this might not be enough to reverse the historic pattern of the White House party losing House seats in midterms. And that is why a big part of his own “pivot to the midterms” has been an effort to skew the results with a national gerrymandering effort that effectively increases the GOP House majority from a few seats to perhaps a dozen. To be very clear, this is something that would not have happened without Trump’s personal intervention; in some cases, he’s had to drag state-level Republicans kicking and screaming into this effort, and there will be collateral damage among Republican U.S. House members (especially in California, where Gavin Newsom’s retaliatory gerrymander could extinguish five GOP incumbents) who are sacrificing their own careers to the Leader’s cause.

If changing the geographical landscape isn’t enough to maintain the Republican trifecta, Trump is clearly planning to shift the issue landscape as well by doing everything possible to keep the public focus on topics he believes favor him and his party, including immigration, crime, and national security (or rather “war-fighting”). This last topic remains quite literally an unfired bullet in his chamber. A Wag the Dog scenario of preelection wars or rumors of wars is an ever-present possibility.

Trump has resolved the second-term president’s dilemma by refusing to choose at all between chewing up political capital to get things done and trying to win the midterms. He’s riding two horses past a fork in the road he refuses to acknowledge. After violating almost every existing political (and legal) norm since his reelection, he’s now seeking to extend the wild MAGA party for at least two more years by revving up his base to a state of great excitement, cheating as much as he can, and lying about conditions in the country in order to give himself additional opportunities to keep the opposition (and the courts) off balance.

The scarier question is what Trump will do if (as still appears likely) his efforts fall short. Will he simply reject the midterms results as fraudulent, as he did in 2020? Will he seek to overturn a Democratic House victory via the courts, state-election certifiers, or mass disturbances? Or will he turn to his faithful subaltern Mike Johnson and instruct the outgoing Speaker to refuse to seat every Democrat who’s won a close race? And will the U.S. Supreme Court again look the other way? The 2026 midterms could be Trump’s wildest ride yet.

### Dems Solve---2NC

#### It ends partisan legislation and imposes oversight.

Elaine Kamarck 25. "What history tells us about the 2026 midterm elections." Brookings. 8-28-2025. https://www.brookings.edu/articles/what-history-tells-us-about-the-2026-midterm-elections/

Since reentering the White House in January, President Trump has enjoyed the support of narrow but unified Republican majorities in both the House and the Senate. This has enabled him to win significant legislative victories while minimizing potentially troubling congressional oversight.

If Republicans lost control of either chamber in 2026, the legislative phase of Trump’s presidency would end (unless he and the Democratic opposition pivoted toward an unlikely bipartisanship), and a stream of oversight hearings would put his administration on the defensive. For a president whose approval rests in part on his ability to move swiftly and decisively, this would be a major setback.

What are the odds that this will happen? Here’s what we know about midterms.

House elections differ structurally from Senate elections. The most obvious and consequential difference is that while every House member faces the voters every two years, only one-third of the senators do, and there is no guarantee that these senators in the aggregate will represent the actual balance between the parties.

#### That’s uniquely powerful in constraining Trump’s foreign policy.

Albin Aronsson & Björn Ottosson 25. \*Deputy Programme Manager for NOTS and a Researcher in FOI’s Department for International Security Policy; Master’s degree in War Studies from King’s College London. \*\*Programme Manager for NOTS and a Senior Researcher in FOI’s Department for International Security Policy; PhD in Political Science from Stockholm University. “Drift or Abandonment? Exploring How US Domestic Politics and External Realities may affect US Security Engagement in Europe 2025–2029.” Swedish Ministry of Defense. August 2025. https://www.foi.se/rest-api/report/FOI-R--5777--SE

Democratic opposition forms an additional line of resistance. While Republicans may control the executive branch, Democrats in Congress, particularly in the Senate and House committees on Foreign Affairs, Armed Services, and Intelligence, can leverage procedural tools, public hearings, and legislative oversight to scrutinise or stall controversial initiatives. During Trump’s first term, for example, bipartisan coalitions, often led or backed by Democrats, moved to block or constrain certain foreign policy moves. In 2023, Congress passed legislation prohibiting the president from unilaterally withdrawing the United States from NATO without Senate approval, reflecting concerns over Trump’s repeated criticisms of the alliance and signalling institutional commitment to transatlantic security.25

Furthermore, Democratic governors, attorneys general, and state-level actors have historically mobilised legal and political opposition to federal directives, especially on immigration, climate, and human rights, extending resistance beyond Washington and into the broader federal system. This multi-tiered resistance can constrain, delay, or reshape presidential foreign and security policy, even when the executive branch seeks to centralise control. Needless to say, if the Democrats win in the 2026 midterms, especially if they gain a majority in the House of Representatives, this resistance will likely become considerably more effective, with enhanced capacity to investigate, block, or amend executive actions across a range of foreign and security policy areas.

### Dems Win Now---2NC

#### That’s confirmed by the most recent polling.

G. Elliott Morris 25. 9-23-25. American data journalist formerly at FiveThirtyeight. “New poll: Percent saying America on the "wrong track" hits new high”. https://www.gelliottmorris.com/p/new-poll-voters-to-blame-republicans-for-shutdown

The generic ballot: a modest Democratic edge, slightly narrower than August

If the 2026 U.S. House elections were today, 47% of adults say they’d vote for the Democratic candidate in their congressional district, whereas 42% say they’d vote for Republicans (11% undecided) — a D+5 advantage. The margin is the same (5 points) among registered voters. That’s a touch smaller than last month’s D+8 (49–41) among adults, but within a zone of normal month-to-month variation.

This month, we added a question about how likely voters are to cast their ballot in next year’s elections. Among the most engaged voters (those saying they are definitely or very likely to vote), the margin is still D+5 (50–45). We also asked voters to rate their interest in the election on a scale from 1 to 10: Among the 10-out-of-10 voters, Democrats lead 55–41 (just 4% undecided) in the generic ballot. That mirrors the Democratic edge in recent special elections for Congress and state legislatures.

Among those rating their interest 6–9, Republicans inch ahead 48–46 (within the margin of error), while low-interest respondents have many undecided (roughly four in ten).

The national mood grows more pessimistic

The public remains deeply dissatisfied with the direction of the country. In our September survey, 28% of adults say the U.S. is “on the right track” compared to 60% who say it’s “off on the wrong track” (12% don’t know). That’s significantly more negative than August’s reading (33/57).

Persistent pessimism typically harms the party that holds national power — which, in a Trump-era environment, helps explain why the president’s issue ratings remain net negative and why Democrats keep a modest lead on the generic ballot.