

Patterns to watch in the 2018 midterm elections

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Producer: Libbie Wilcox

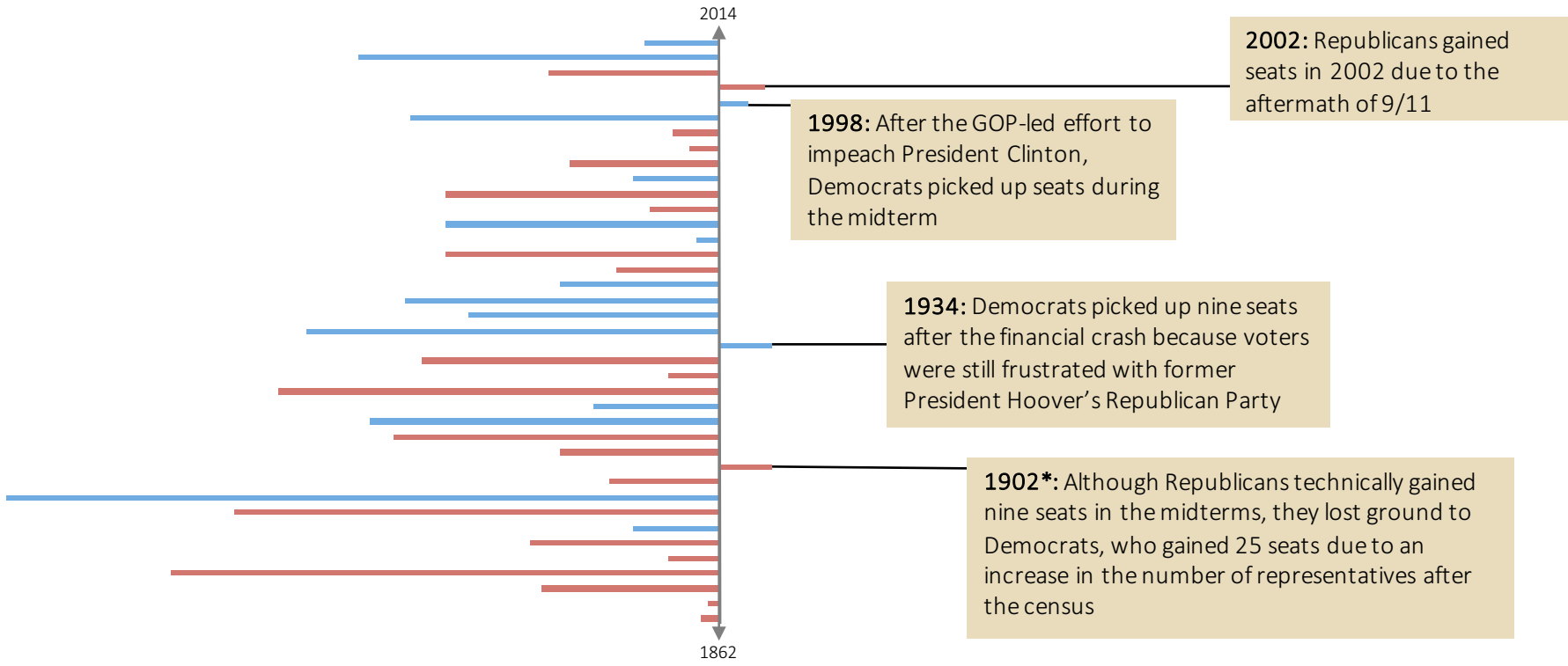
Director: Alistair Taylor

Since 1862, the president’s party has lost ground in the House in 92% of midterm elections

President’s party gain/loss of seats in House

Data from Vital Statistics on Congress

■ Democratic president ■ Republican president



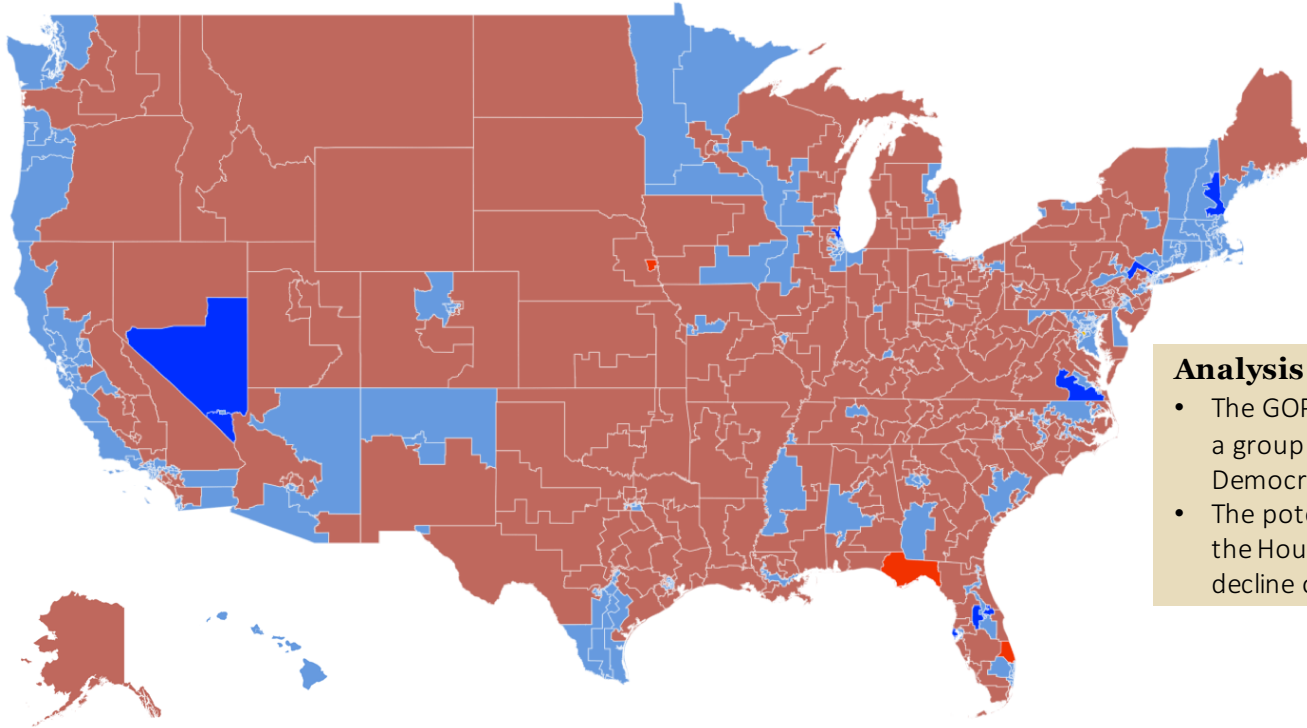
*gain affected by House expansion

Sources: Charlie Cook, "Will History Hold in 2018 Midterms?" The Cook Political Report, January 9, 2017.

While history suggests the GOP will lose seats the midterms, their losses are likely to be limited

House seats gained and held, 2016 House elections

■ Democratic gain ■ Democratic hold ■ Republican hold ■ Republican gain



Analysis

- The GOP lost six seats in 2016, so there is not a group of freshmen members in formerly Democratic districts vulnerable to challengers
- The potential for large Republican losses in the House is further limited by the continuing decline of swing districts

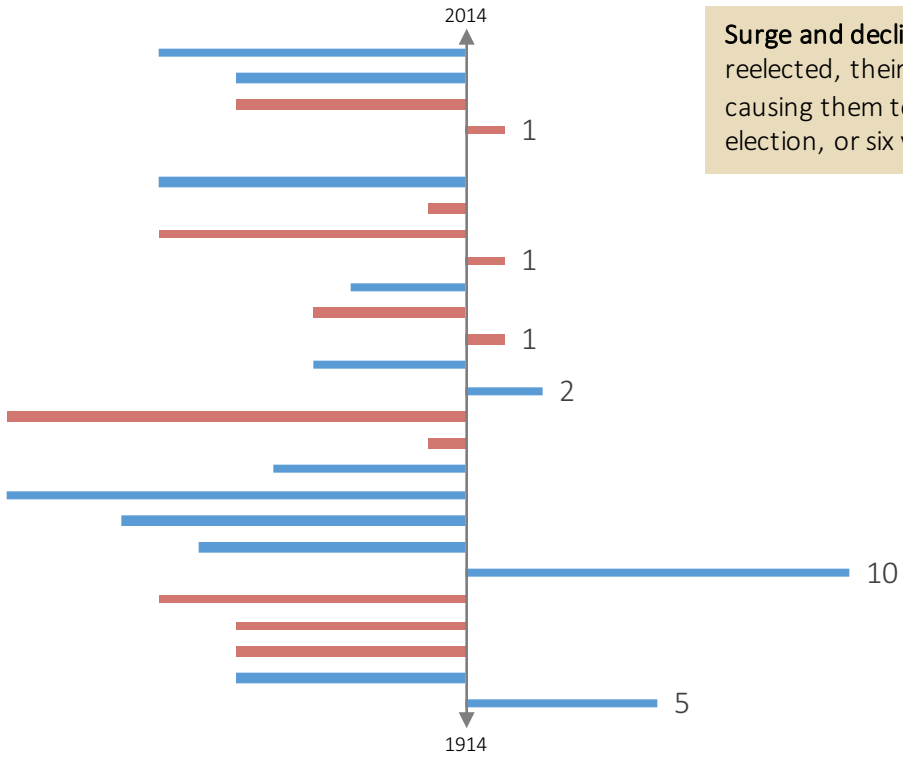
Source: Charlie Cook, "Will History Hold in 2018 Midterms?" The Cook Political Report, January 9, 2017, National Journal research, 2016; AP, 2016.

The president’s party has lost Senate seats in 19 of 26 midterms; their only gains occurred during the president’s first term

President’s party gain/loss of seats in Senate

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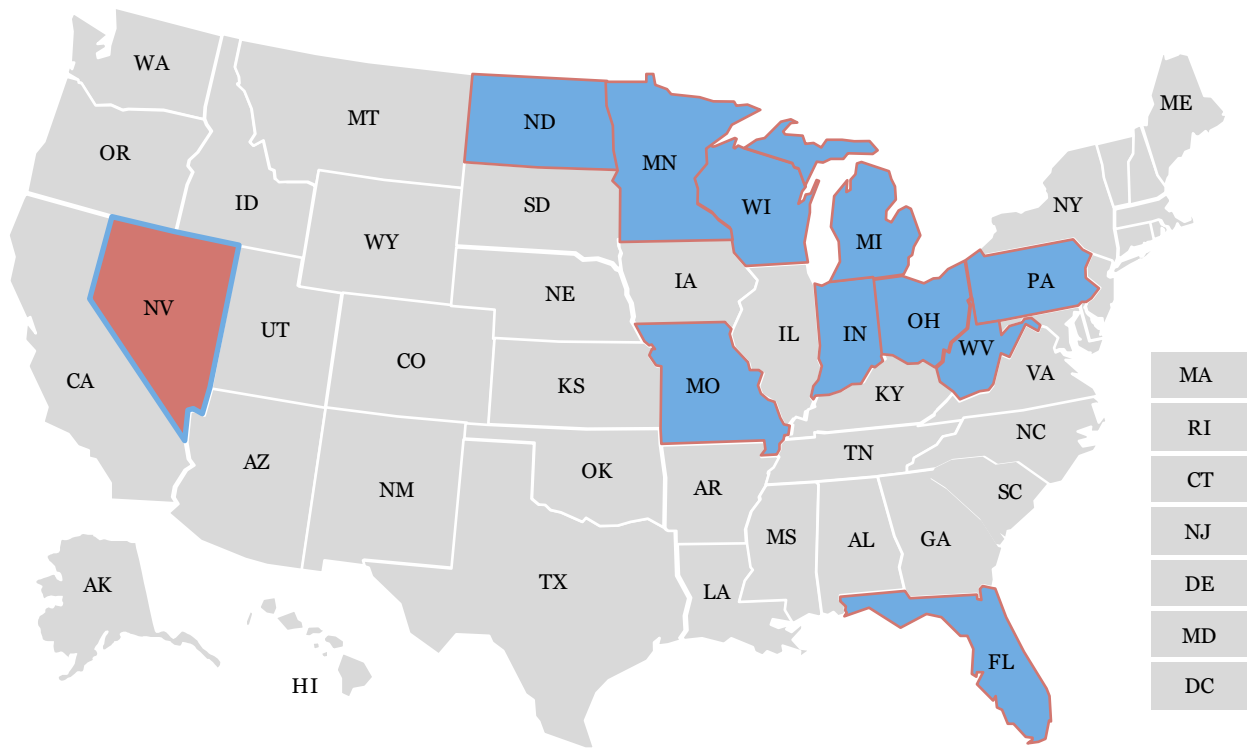
Surge and decline theory : When presidents are elected or reelected, their party picks up House and Senate seats, causing them to be overexposed in the following midterm election, or six years later in the Senate

Sources: Charlie Cook, "Will History Hold in 2018 Midterms?" The Cook Political Report, January 9, 2017.

Democrats have 25 Senate seats up for reelection in 2018, 10 of which are in states Trump carried in the general

Senators up for reelection in states won by the opposing party's presidential candidate

□ Clinton victory □ Trump victory ■ Democratic Senator up for reelection ■ Republican Senator up for reelection



Analysis

- Republicans historically benefit from low turnout in midterm elections; however, there are exceptions to this pattern
- Trump carried five of the 10 states he won with Democratic Senators up for reelection in 2018 by double digits
- Potential anti-Trump backlash and unpredictable turnout are unknowns
- Any significant turbulence in the 2018 races is likely to occur in gubernatorial and state legislative contests, which could have long term implications for 2021 redistricting

Sources: Charlie Cook, "Will History Hold in 2018 Midterms?" The Cook Political Report, January 9, 2017.