

# Charlie Cook on the problems facing Republicans in Congress

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**Producer:** Presentation Center team

**Director:** Alistair Taylor

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# Republicans control the House, Senate and White House, but enacting their legislation may prove difficult

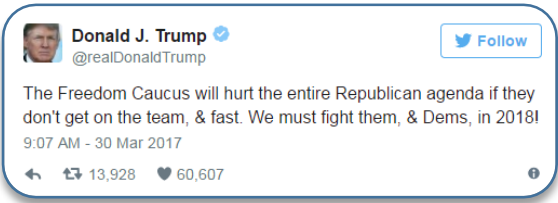
**1** Forming a majority with fewer than 60 senators and fractious House

	Republicans have:	A majority requires:	Number of votes Republicans can lose:
House:	239	217 (3 vacancies)	22
Senate:	52	51	2 (VP breaks tie)

**2** An inexperienced Republican Party

	First term with a Republican president
House:	172/239
Senate:	31/52

**3** Wariness of Trump's agenda and potential midterm backlash



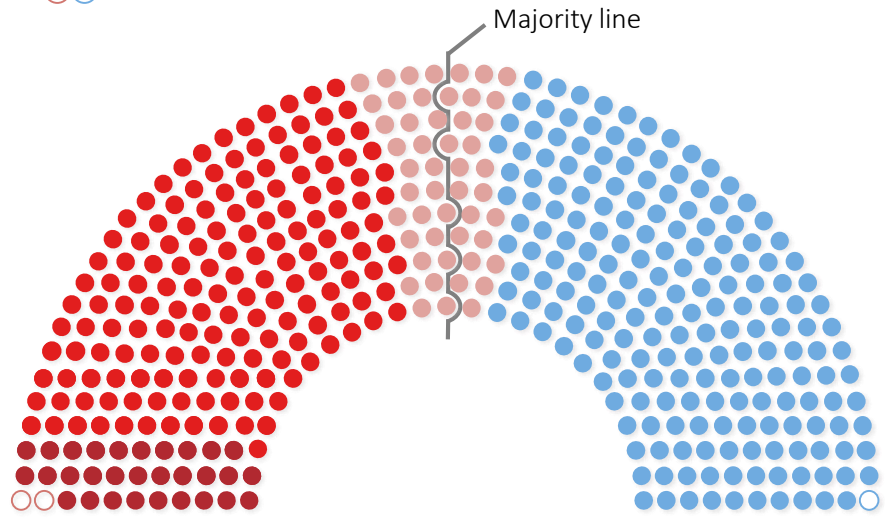
Sources: National Journal Research, 2017.

# Opposing factions in the Republican Party threaten to impede its ability to form a majority in the House

## If Dems maintain unity, GOP can only lose 22 votes

● Freedom Caucus ● Moderate Republicans ● Tuesday Group

○ Vacancies



Republicans	239
Tuesday Group	~52
Freedom Caucus	~30
Democrats	193
Vacancies	3

### More conservative caucuses

#### Freedom Caucus (~30 members)

- Farthest-right group of Republicans
- Chair, Mark Meadows (R-NC11)

#### House Liberty Caucus (~35 members)

- Libertarian wing of the Republican party
- Chair, Justin Amash (R-MI03)

#### Republican Study Committee (~170 members)

- Strong conservatives, limited spending and traditional values
- Chair, Mark Walker (R-NC06)

### Moderate caucuses

#### Tuesday Group (~50 members)

- Moderate fiscal conservatism and more socially liberal
- Co-chairs, Charlie Dent (R-PA15), Elise Stefanik (R-NY21)

#### Republican Main Street Partnership (65 representatives, 4 senators)

- More centrist, attempts to form bipartisan initiatives
- Chair, Amory "Amo" Houghton (R-NY29, retired)

### Whip stats (four vacancies)

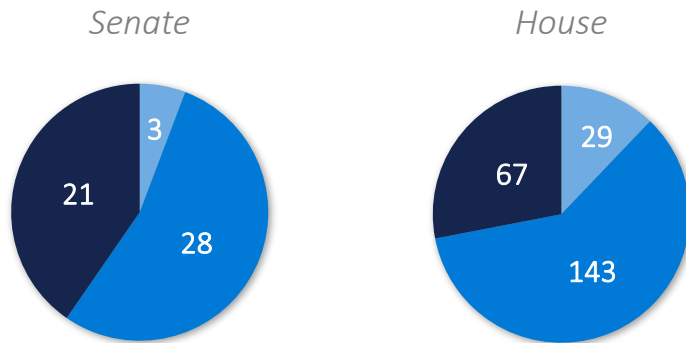
- Republicans hold a 46-seat lead
- A majority requires 217 votes (if all members cast a ballot)

Sources: National Journal Research, 2017.

# Most Republicans in Congress have never served under a Republican president

## Republicans by number of years served

■ Freshman ■ 1-8 years in Congress ■ > 8 years in Congress



### Consequences

- Republicans now “own” the federal government
- They must take the **leading role** in raising the debt ceiling, passing the annual budget, **everything**
- The **minority party** has the luxury of “throwing rocks” and voting against anything
- Their policies may now become law, and they will face the **political consequences** of them

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Moving from an **opposition party** to a **governing party** comes with some growing pains.”  
 —**Speaker Ryan**, after pulling the first iteration of the AHCA from consideration

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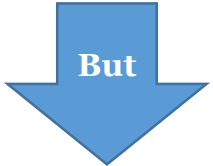
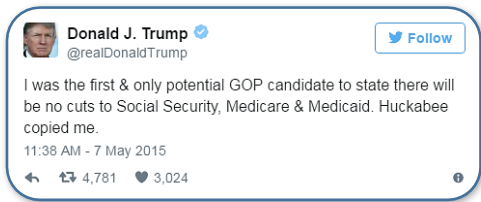
The number of times Republicans voted under Obama to **repeal the ACA in its entirety**

Sources: National Journal Research, 2017.

# Congressional Republicans are still unsure if Trump's agenda will actually be "conservative"

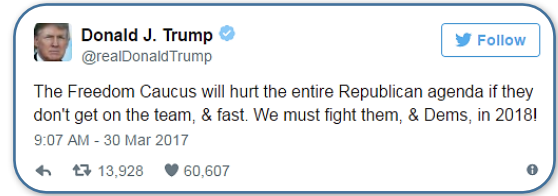
Trump's campaign rhetoric contained many historically Democratic policies:

- Taxes on companies that leave the US
- No cuts to entitlements
- Paid family leave
- Deficit spending for the military and border security



- In supporting the AHCA and submitting his budget request, Trump showed he was willing to cut social programs, such as Medicaid, to offset his spending

- Congressional Republicans are also wary of frustrating Trump, who might use his power of the megaphone via his Twitter account



Sources: National Journal Research, 2017.