

# A Conversation with Charlie Cook: Takeaways

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# Alabama is too close to call, Mueller's investigation shifts to focus on financial misconduct

Key takeaways from National Journal's December 6<sup>th</sup> event: *A Conversation with Charlie Cook*



## Alabama

*The election is too close to call.*

**Dynamics:** Voter turnout tends to be low in special elections, but considering the national attention on the race normal dynamics may shift

- Doug Jones is outspending Roy Moore 6:1
- On good days Jones is up two or three points and on bad days Jones is even with his opponent
- Roy Moore is a uniquely flawed candidate, but a pro-choice Democrat is a big hurdle for conservative voters in Alabama, especially evangelical voters



## Russia

*For Trump, this will get worse before it gets better.*

The investigation appears to be moving toward a focus on financial dealings rather than dealings with Russia.

Investigators are looking for evidence of money laundering and illegal activity at Trump's international properties.

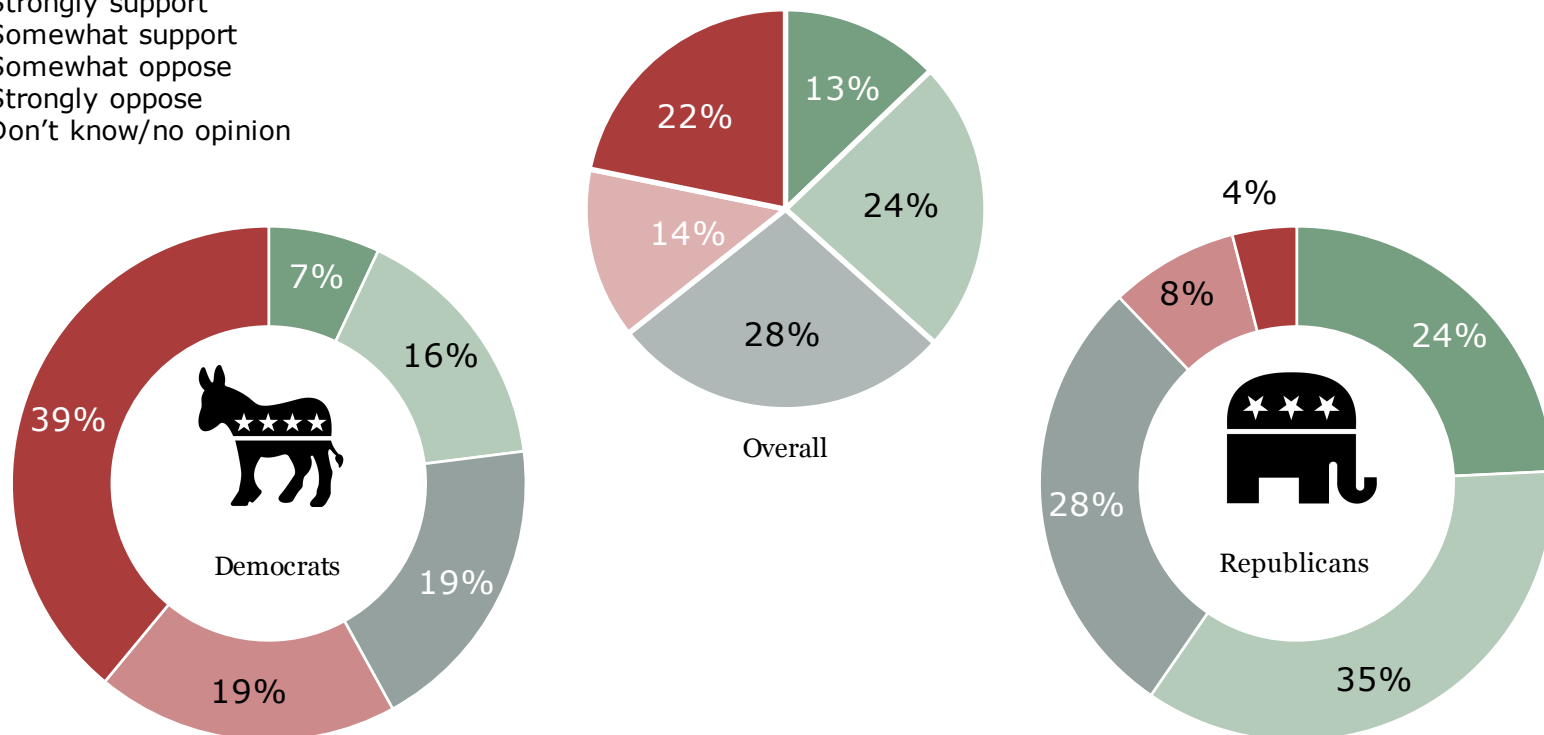
## Indictment?

- An indictment would be unprecedented and constitutional experts are split as to whether it's possible to indict a sitting president
- An indictment of a sitting president would result in a constitutional crisis that would likely be handled in the Supreme Court
- Impeachment is nearly impossible because it requires a two-thirds majority in the Senate, in addition to a majority in the House

# Charlie Cook: the tax bill antagonizes independents and fuels already active dissent from Democrats

## Morning Consult/POLITICO opinion poll on the House tax bill

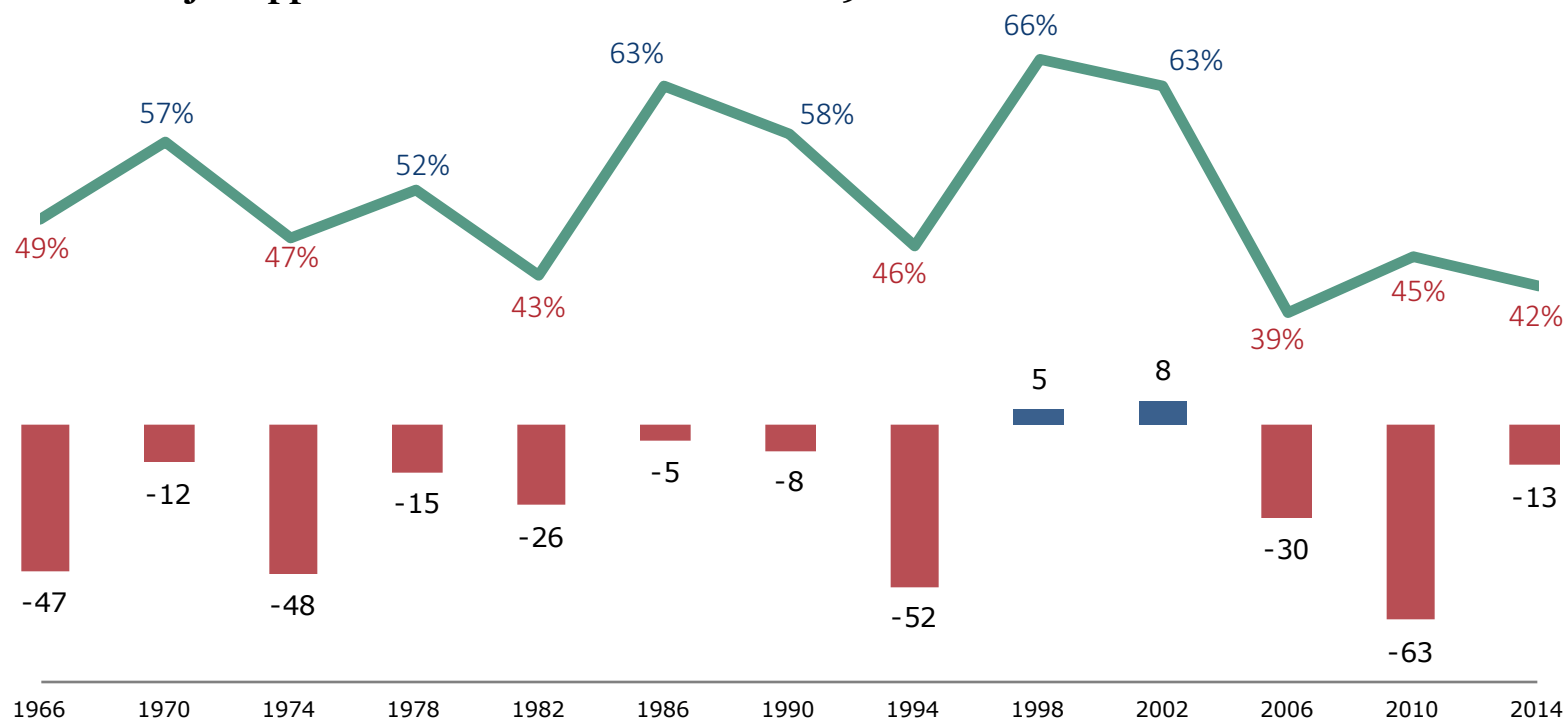
- Strongly support
- Somewhat support
- Somewhat oppose
- Strongly oppose
- Don't know/no opinion



Sources: Morning Consult/POLITICO poll. Surveyed 1994 registered voters from Nov 21 to Nov 25, 2017. Margin of error is +/- 2%.

# Midterm elections: a referendum on the president

## Presidential job approval vs. midterm results since 1966



Trump job approval  
**Approve 38.9%**  
 RCP Average: December 7, 2017

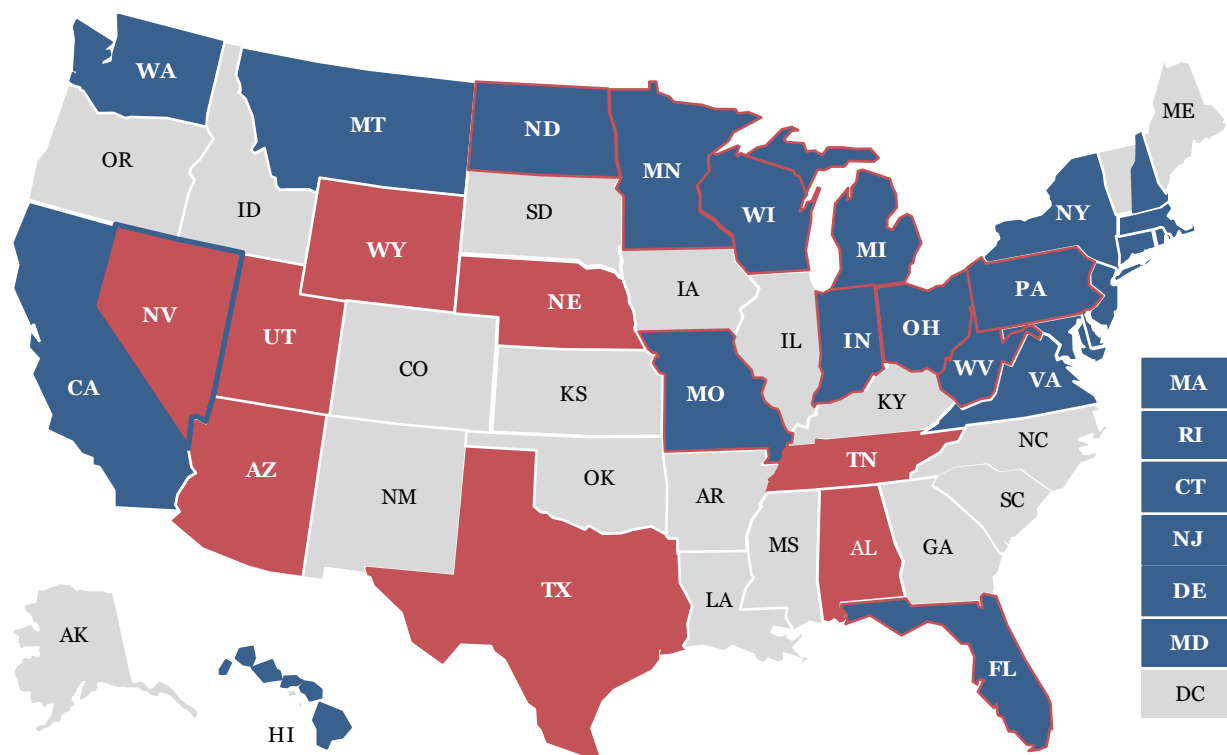
Job approval	Average change
Over 60%	+3 seats
50%-60%	-12 seats
Under 50%	-40 seats

Sources: Gallup, The Cook Political Report, National Journal

# 25 Senate seats up for election in 2018 are Democrat-held out of a total of 33

## States with U.S. Senate seats up for election

  Clinton victory    
   Trump victory    
   Democrat-held seat    
   Republican-held seat



### To capture a majority Dems need to:

- 1<sup>st</sup>, hold onto all 25 of their own seats including the 10 in Trump states
- 2<sup>nd</sup>, beat Dean Heller in Nevada and pick up the open seat in Arizona
- And then either win the special Senate election in Alabama on December 12<sup>th</sup>
- Or hope former Gov. Phil Bredesen wins in Tennessee

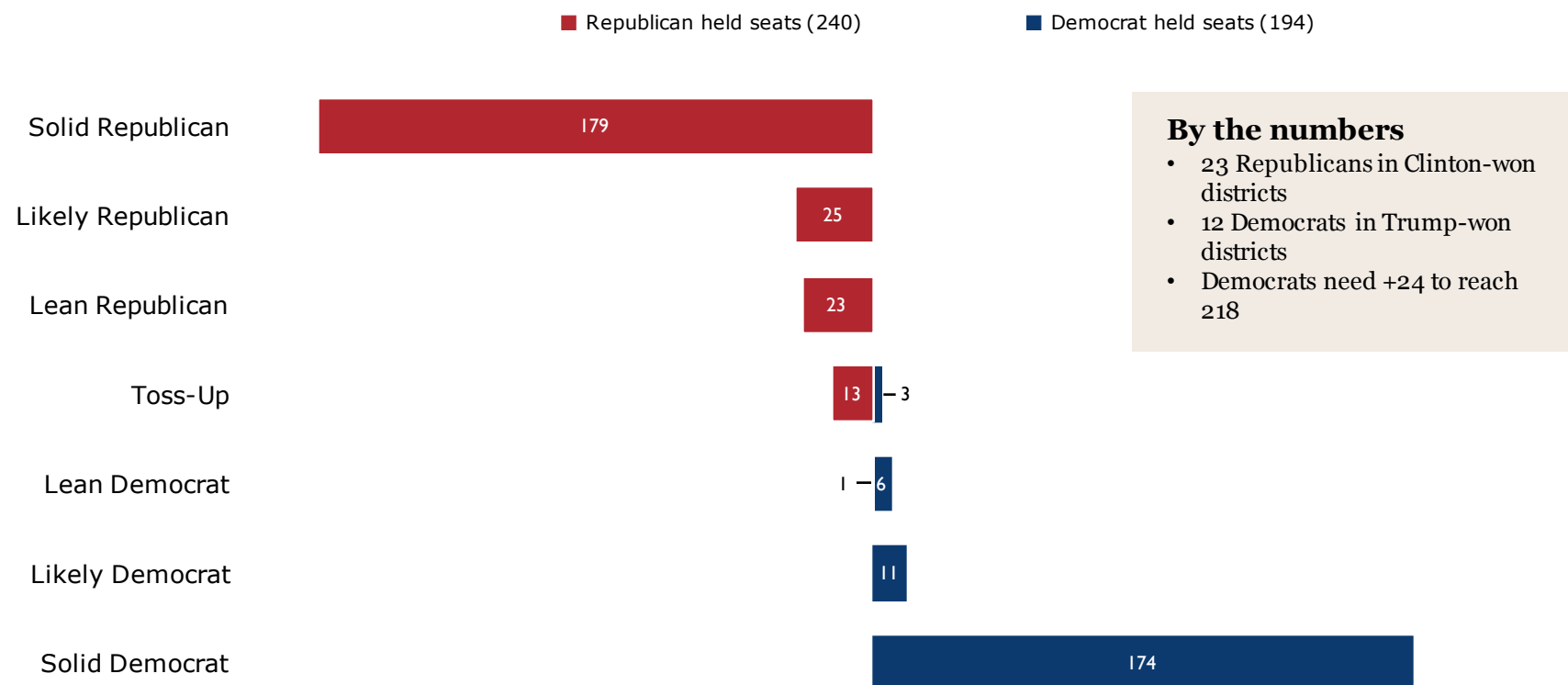
**It's not impossible, but unlikely.**

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

# Democrats need to pick up over 20 seats to take back the House in 2018

## Cook Political Report ratings

2017-2018 House races



Source: Cook Political Report.