



## Week in Review

### Friday, December 7

- Former FBI Director James Comey [refused to answer](#) several questions related to the Russia investigation during his testimony before members of Congress. Comey told reporters after the session that he would return to testify again in two weeks.
- In a new court filing, federal prosecutors [recommended](#) that the former Trump lawyer Michael Cohen receive a “substantial” prison sentence despite his cooperation with the special counsel.
- White House Chief of Staff John Kelly, who was recently interviewed by Special Counsel Robert Mueller’s team, is [reportedly expected to](#) resign in the next few days.
- President Donald Trump [blasted](#) former Secretary of State Rex Tillerson on Twitter, calling him “dumb as a rock” and “lazy as hell.” In an interview with CBS, Tillerson called Trump “[pretty undisciplined](#)” and said that the president regularly attempted to do things that violated the law.
- Trump said [he will nominate](#) former Attorney General William Barr to replace Jeff Sessions as the next attorney general. The president also chose the State Department spokeswoman Heather Nauert as the next U.S. ambassador to the United Nations.

### Monday, December 10

- The [search continues](#) for a replacement for White House Chief of Staff John Kelly after several leading candidates reportedly have already declined the role.
- The U.S. Supreme Court has [declined to hear a case](#) brought by two states—Kansas and Louisiana—that were seeking to end Medicaid funding for Planned Parenthood.

- Maria Butina, the accused Russian spy who was close with officials at the National Rifle Association, seems [to have reached a plea deal](#) with the Justice Department, according to a new court filing.
- Hundreds of activists [protested in the offices](#) of three House Democratic leaders, including likely incoming Speaker Nancy Pelosi. The protesters are encouraging Democrats to create a special committee focused on climate change.
- Over the weekend, House Democrats [discussed the prospect of impeachment](#), and one senator suggested that Trump's troubles have entered a "new phase."

## Tuesday, December 11

- Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said that [he would let the Senate vote on a bipartisan criminal-justice reform bill](#), the First Step Act, backing down from his earlier reluctance to bring the measure to the floor.
- President Donald Trump, House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, and Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer [openly argued](#) in front of reporters about funding for Trump's proposed border wall. The president threatened to shut down the government if Democrats do not agree to increase their funding offer for the wall.
- The House Judiciary Committee [questioned Google CEO Sundar Pichai](#) for the first time about the company's data-collection practices, potential censorship on its platforms, and other issues.
- James A. Fields Jr., the self-proclaimed neo-Nazi who killed the demonstrator Heather Heyer after driving his car into counter-protesters in Charlottesville, Virginia, in August 2017, was [sentenced to life in prison](#) for first-degree murder and nine other crimes.
- The Trump administration is [planning a multi-agency effort](#) to target and sanction China for alleged economic espionage and hacking.

## Wednesday, December 12

- Michael Cohen, President Donald Trump's longtime former lawyer, [was sentenced](#) to three years in prison after being convicted of tax evasion, campaign-finance violations, and lying to Congress. In a prepared statement, Cohen said that his "blind loyalty" to Trump led him "to take a path of darkness instead of light."
- The Senate [passed a resolution](#) demanding an end to the U.S. military's support for Saudi Arabia's war in Yemen. But when passing a consequential [\\$867 billion farm deal](#),

House Republicans tacked in an [unrelated provision](#) to prevent a floor vote on the war in Yemen, blocking its path to passing in the House.

- Dozens of former state and federal judges [called on](#) Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents to stop making immigration arrests at courthouses.
- About [20 percent fewer new people](#) have signed up for insurance plans under the Affordable Care Act ahead of a Saturday deadline, compared with this time last year, according to a status report from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.
- Republicans and Democrats appear to be headed toward a [do-over election](#) in North Carolina's Ninth Congressional District, where the November election was rocked by claims of fraud.

### Thursday, December 13

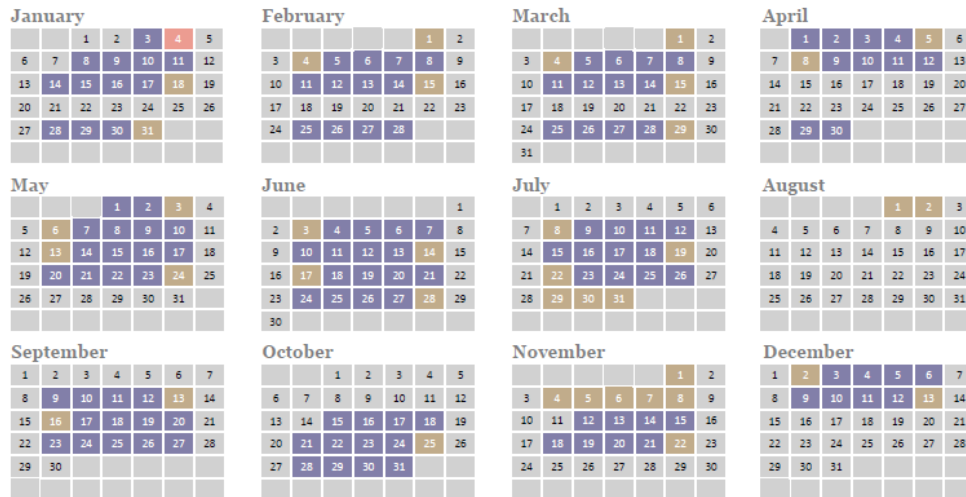
- Congress voted for a [\\$867 billion farm bill](#) with a 386-47 vote, which legalizes hemp and provides billions of dollars in subsidies to farmers, among other provisions. The bill does not include stricter limits on food stamps, like more stringent work requirements, that were in a previous version of the bill approved by President Trump.
  - House Minority Leader and 2019 House Speaker prospect Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) [agreed to a four year term-limit deal](#), in return for the votes required to secure her post in January.
  - Senate Democratic Leader Charles Schumer (D-NY) [announced](#) that Democrats will not provide any more funding for a border wall and are willing to wait until January to deal with the issue.
  - Alleged Russian spy Maria Butina has been [cooperating with investigators](#) leading up to her official guilty plea today, sharing information on American co-conspirators who helped her infiltrate US political circles and her Russian associates
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## Top Stories: Visualized

1. [2019 congressional calendar](#) — The legislative schedule for the first year of the 116th Congress

### 2019 congressional calendar

■ Both chambers in session ■ Senate only in session ■ House only in session



2. [Potential committee chairs for the 116th Congress](#) — Who is next in line, based on seniority, to take over as committee chairs if their party wins the 2018 midterms?

### Potential House committee chairs and ranking members in the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress based on seniority, retirements and term limits

*NAMES IN ITALICS DENOTE INCUMBENT CHAIRS/RANKING MEMBERS*

■ Republican ■ Democrat

<p><i>Rodney Davis (IL)</i></p> <p><b>Administration</b></p> <p><i>Zoe Lofgren (CA)</i></p>	<p><i>Mike Conaway (TX)</i></p> <p><b>Agriculture</b></p> <p><i>Collin Peterson (MN)</i></p>	<p><i>Kay Granger (TX)</i></p> <p><b>Appropriations</b></p> <p><i>Nita Lowey (NY)</i></p>
<p><i>Mac Thornberry (TX)</i></p> <p><b>Armed Services</b></p> <p><i>Adam Smith (WA)</i></p>	<p><i>Steve Womack (AR)</i></p> <p><b>Budget</b></p> <p><i>John Yarmuth (KY)</i></p>	<p><i>Virginia Foxx (NC)</i></p> <p><b>Education and the Workforce</b></p> <p><i>Bobby Scott (VA)</i></p>
<p><i>Greg Walden (OR)</i></p> <p><b>Energy and Commerce</b></p> <p><i>Frank Pallone (NJ)</i></p>	<p><i>Susan Brooks (IN)</i></p> <p><b>Ethics</b></p> <p><i>Ted Deutch (FL)</i></p>	<p><i>Patrick McHenry (NC)</i></p> <p><b>Financial Services</b></p> <p><i>Maxine Waters (CA)</i></p>

3. [Government Affairs 101](#) — An introduction to government affairs and the relevant branches of government

**The Congressional Progressive Caucus aims to take on a larger role in a Democratic House**



**Mark Pocan**  
Co-Chair of the Progressive Caucus  
Democratic representative from Wisconsin



**Pramila Jayapal**  
Co-Chair of the Progressive Caucus  
Democratic representative from Washington

**Major issues for the Progressive Caucus**



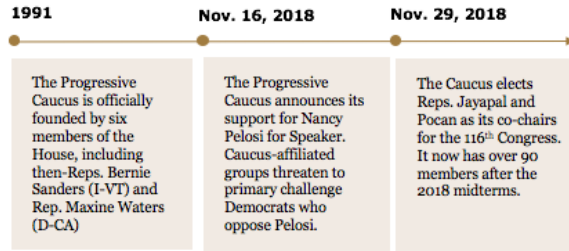
**Health Care**  
Members of the Caucus support Medicare for All proposals, though, the Caucus itself has not endorsed the proposal



**Immigration**  
Some members have called for abolishing the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency



**Climate Change**  
The Caucus supports proposals that would transition the country to 100 percent renewable energy



**Hotline: Overlooked**

**Overlooked:** Three states' congressional delegations got more Republican (Indiana, Missouri, and North Dakota, which all voted out a Democratic senator) while 22 states' delegations got more Democratic, according to [Ballotpedia](#).

**The Minorities' Majority:** House Democrats will represent 79 percent of Asian Americans, 72 percent of Latinos, and 66 percent of African Americans in the 116th Congress, according to the [Cook Political Report's](#) Dave Wasserman.

**Blue State Warriors:** Gavin Newsom's victory last month marked the first time in California history that Democrats won three straight governor elections, the University of Minnesota's [Smart Politics](#) reported.

## Hotline: Quotes of the Week

"Bring it on." — Sen. Joni Ernst (R-IA), on her potential challengers, [Des Moines Register](#), 12/7.

"That's not true. It isn't there." — NRCC Chairman Tom Emmer, on a suburban realignment toward Democrats, [Hotline reporting](#), 12/10.

"To some of my colleagues across the aisle, if you're getting bad press articles and bad search results, don't blame Google or Facebook or Twitter, consider blaming yourself." — Rep. Ted Lieu (D-CA 33), responding to House Judiciary Republicans' complaints, [Washington Post](#), 12/11.

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## Look Ahead

### Tuesday, December 18

**Federal spending:** The House Financial Services Committee holds a hearing titled, "The National Debt: Washington, We Have a Spending Problem."

**VA MISSION Act:** The House Veterans' Affairs Committee and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee holds a hearing titled "Tracking Transformation: VA MISSION (Maintaining Systems and Strengthening Integrated Outside Networks) Act Implementation."

### Wednesday, December 19

**VA MISSION Act:** The House Veterans' Affairs Committee and Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee holds a hearing titled, "Tracking Transformation: VA MISSION (Maintaining Systems and Strengthening Integrated Outside Networks) Act Implementation."

**Global economy:** The Senate Judiciary Committee holds a hearing titled, "A Comparative Look at Competition Law Approaches to Monopoly and Abuse of Dominance in the US and EU."

### Thursday, December 20

**Veterans' affairs:** The House Veterans' Affairs Committee holds a hearing titled, "The Veterans First Program after Kingdomware."

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