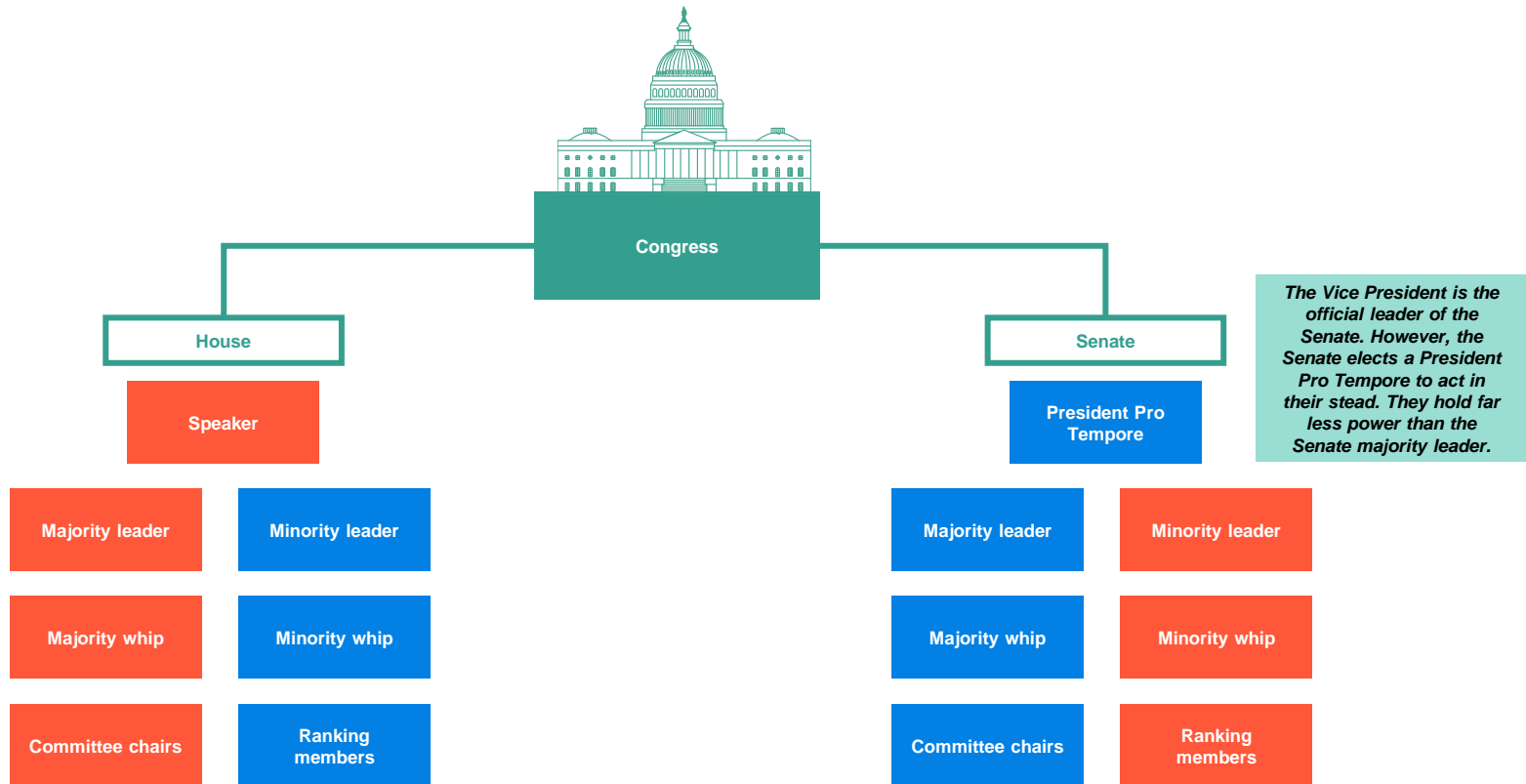


Party leadership in the 118th Congress

A look at party leadership in the new Congress, including an overview of McCarthy's concessions to the House Freedom Caucus in his bid to become Speaker

January 10, 2023

Congressional leadership hierarchy



Party leadership elections overview

Each party uses the same method to decide who presides over each chamber, majority/minority leaders in each chamber, and whips in each chamber.

House

Speaker of the House

- The Speaker of the House is determined by a chamber-wide secret ballot vote
- The Speaker serves as the de facto leader of the House and is second in line to succeed the President after the Vice President

Majority/minority leader

- The majority/minority leaders are elected by each party's caucus in a secret ballot
- The House majority leader is distinct from the Speaker; the former is not in the presidential line of succession and deals with more quotidian operations management than does the latter

Majority/minority whip

- Party whips are elected by each party's caucus in a secret ballot
- Whips are responsible for ensuring that congresspeople vote along party lines

Senate

President Pro Tempore

- In lieu of the VP, the Senate elects a President Pro Tempore (usually the most senior member) to preside over the chamber
- The President Pro Tempore is third in the line of presidential succession after the Speaker of the House

Majority/minority leader

- The Senate majority leader holds a role analogous to the Speaker of the House, while the minority leader holds a role similar to the House minority leader
- Leaders are elected by a majority vote of all members in their party

Majority/minority whip

- As in the House, the Senate whips are responsible for ensuring party members toe the party line
- Whips are elected by a majority vote of all members in their party

Kevin McCarthy (R-CA-20) became Speaker of the House, offering rules concessions to far-right colleagues

McCarthy prevailed after 14 failed votes, allowing the 118th Congress to commence.

Why the process was lengthy



20 members of the House Freedom Caucus, the GOP's furthest-right caucus, had refused to vote for McCarthy unless he conceded to their demands. McCarthy failed 14 consecutive ballots before winning the support necessary to assume the Speaker role.

What roadblocks this caused

- 1 The House could not be sworn in on time
- 2 Delays in New House rules debate
- 3 Committee assignments could not officially begin
- 4 Other party leaders including majority/minority leaders, whips, conference chairs, etc. could not officially begin their roles

House Freedom Caucus demands



Reinstitute the "Motion to vacate" rule, allowing any member to bring forward an immediate motion to remove the Speaker



Simplify bills and enforce a deadline by which to have final text ready to read before a vote



Eliminate party leadership involvement in GOP primaries



Increase conservative representation on committees, especially the Rules Committee



Institute an actionable plan to cut government spending



Use must-pass legislation like the NDAA to battle Biden's legislative agenda



Form a "Church Commission"-style committee to target "weaponized" government

Overview of McCarthy's concessions in the House rules package

The House adopted a final set of rules the evening of January 9.

Concessions status

House Freedom Caucus demand

Adopted?

Motion to vacate

✓ YES

Simplify bills and enforce text-ready deadline

✓ YES

Eliminate party leadership involvement in GOP primaries*^o

✗ PARTIAL

Increase conservative representation on committees*

✓ YES

Cut government spending:

✓ YES

- Reinstitute "Holman rule"
- Cut spending before raising debt ceiling
- Eliminate omnibus spending

Target Biden's legislative agenda

✓ YES

Investigate "weaponized" federal government

✓ YES

*Not specifically in rules package; agreed to on other terms.

^oOne McCarthy-aligned super PAC agreed to stay out of open Republican seats in safe districts.

Key concessions overview

1 Reinstating the motion to vacate

- New rules allow any one member to bring forward a motion to remove the Speaker from their role at any time
- McCarthy had previously floated an amended version of the rule allowing any five members to bring forward such a motion to no avail

2 Investigating "weaponized" government

- New rules establish a "Select Subcommittee on Weaponization of the Federal Government" under the Judiciary Committee
- Committee objectives will be investigating the work of the Jan. 6 Committee, the withdrawal from Afghanistan, and the work of the FBI

3 Cutting government spending

- New rules reinstate the "Holman rule," which can be used to reduce the salary of federal officials
- Spending cuts must accompany efforts to raise the debt ceiling

House Republican leadership



Kevin McCarthy (CA-20)

Speaker of the House

- Represents the Republican Party on the House floor
- Elected after 15 ballots; conceded to certain demands of the House Freedom Caucus to win support



Steve Scalise (LA-01)

Majority Leader

- Elected as House majority leader
- Assists Republican leadership in managing the party's legislative program



Elise Stefanik (NY-21)

Republican Conference Chair

- Reelected as Republican Conference Chair
- Leads organization efforts of all Republican Party members in the House



Tom Emmer (MN-06)

House Majority Whip

- Elected as House majority whip (last Republican whip was Steve Scalise LA-01)
- Leads Republican Conference on policy development



Mike Johnson (LA-04)

Republican Conference Vice-Chair

- Re-elected as Vice Chairman
- Serves alongside the Chair of the Republican Conference



Richard Hudson (NC-09)

National Republican Congressional Committee Chair

- Previously held by Tom Emmer (MN-06)
- Organizes and manages Republican House campaign efforts

Senate Republican leadership



Mitch McConnell (KY)

Republican Leader

- Re-elected as Senate Minority Leader
- Head representative of the Republican Party on the Senate floor



John Thune (SD)

Republican Whip

- Previously served as Senate Majority Whip
- Assistant leader, responsible for counting and securing party votes



John Barrasso (WY)

Republican Conference Chair

- Reelected as Republican Conference Chair
- Responsible for intraparty committee assignments and leadership elections



Joni Ernst (IA)

Republican Policy Committee Chair

- Previously Vice Conference Chair
- Responsible for Senate Republican policy development



Shelley Moore Capito (WV)

Vice Chair of the Senate Republican Conference

- Previously held by Joni Ernst (IA)
- Responsible for taking minutes of the party conferences



Steve Daines (MT)

National Republican Senatorial Committee Chair

- Previously held by Rick Scott (FL)
- Responsible for strengthening the Republican conference through recruiting and fundraising

House Democratic leadership



Hakeem Jeffries (NY-08)

Minority Leader

- Won bid to become the House's top Democrat
- Position in party previously held by Nancy Pelosi



Katherine Clark (MA-05)

Minority Whip

- Newly elected as House minority whip
- Position previously held by James Clyburn



Pete Aguilar (CA-31)

Democratic Caucus Chair

- Newly elected as Democratic caucus chair
- Position previously held by Steny Hoyer



James Clyburn (SC-06)

Assistant Caucus Leader

- Elected as assistant caucus leader after challenger David Cicilline withdrew
- Opted to stay in House Democratic leadership, previously House majority whip



Ted Lieu (CA-33)

Democratic Conference Vice-Chair

- Elected as vice-chairman
- Previously served as a co-chair on the Democratic Policy and Communications Committee



Joe Neguse (CO-02)

Chair of the Democratic Policy and Communications Committee

- Elected as sole chair of the DPCC
- Previously served as co-chair along with Ted Lieu, Debbie Dingell, and Matt Cartwright

Senate Democratic leadership (1/2)



Patty Murray (WA)

President Pro Tempore

- Previously held by Sen. Leahy (VT)
- Nominally the President of the Senate, but holds far less power over the Democratic caucus than the majority leader



Chuck Schumer (NY)

Senate Majority Leader

- Current Senate Majority Leader
- Head representative of the Democratic party on the Senate floor



Dick Durbin (IL)

Democratic Majority Whip

- Current Senate Majority Whip
- Assistant leader, responsible for counting and securing party votes



Debbie Stabenow (MI)

Chair of Democratic Policy and Communications Committee

- Current Vice-Chair of the House Democratic Caucus
- Responsible for leading policy development for Senate Democrats



Elizabeth Warren (MA)

Vice Chair of Conference (Co-vice Chair)

- Current Vice Chair of Conference
- Assists Democratic leader in setting the Democratic agenda, messaging, and strategy



Mark Warner (VA)

Vice Chair of Conference (Co-vice Chair)

- Current Vice Chair of Conference
- Assists Democratic leader in setting the Democratic agenda, messaging, and strategy

Senate Democratic leadership (2/2)



Amy Klobuchar (MN)

Chair of Steering Committee

- Current Chair of the Steering Committee
- Responsible for coordinating efforts between Democrats, advocacy groups and government agencies



Bernie Sanders (VT)

Chair of Outreach

- Current Chair of Outreach
- Leads efforts to engage Americans who feel disconnected from the political process



Joe Manchin (WV)

Vice Chair, Policy & Communications Committee (Co-vice Chair)

- Current Vice Chair of Policy and Communications Committee
- Assists Chair in leading policy development for Senate Democrats



Cory Booker (NJ)

Vice Chair, Policy & Communications Committee (Co-vice Chair)

- Reelected as Vice Chair along with Joe Manchin



Tammy Baldwin (WI)

Secretary of Conference

- Current Secretary of Conference
- Responsible for intraparty committee assignments and leadership elections



Gary Peters (MI)

Chairman of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee

- Reelected as sole Chair
- Responsible for coordinating Senate strategy to elect more Democrats