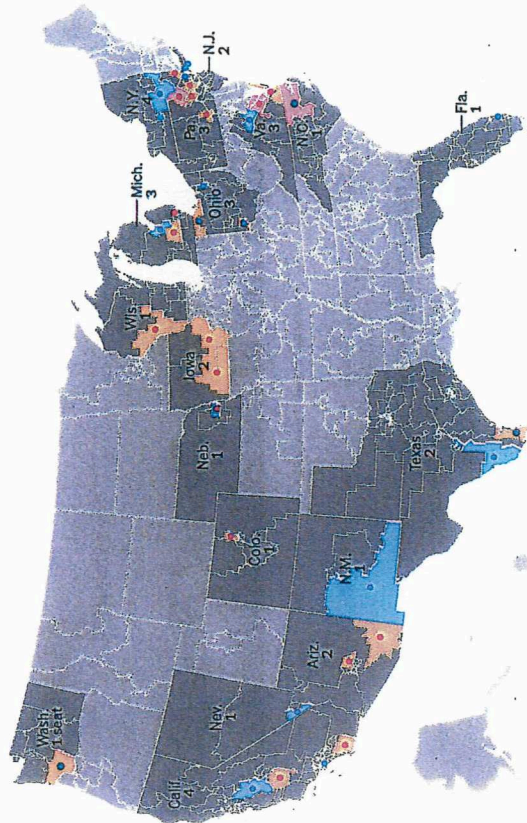
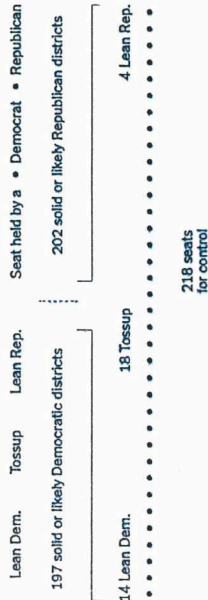
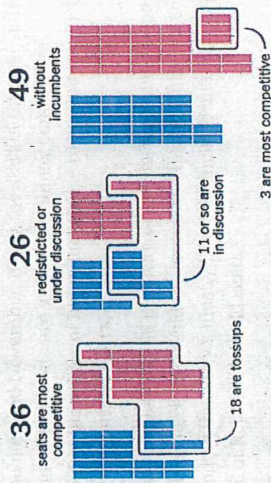


These 36 districts are the most competitive in the battle for House control.



Source: Cook Political Report, The New York Times

Today, The Cook Political Report rates just 18 seats as tossup races — four held by Democrats and 14 by Republicans. But the map is evolving and Cook recently shifted 18 House races in Democrats' direction, a sign of the party's momentum and Mr. Trump's struggles.



Who Will Win the House? Three Maps Tell a Tale of the 2026 Midterms.

By Ashley Cai and Shane Goldmacher Jan. 19, 2026

The battle for control of the House of Representatives this fall will be decided by a small fraction of the chamber's seats. Republicans are clinging to a five-seat edge, the narrowest margin in modern times.

The nation's political climate is volatile, and much can change between now and November. But at the start of the year, only a small number of seats are seen as genuinely competitive, magnifying the stakes of individual House races that routinely cost tens of millions of dollars.

The clearest Democratic pathway to a majority — and the power to serve as a check on President Trump and his legislative agenda — is defending the party's most vulnerable incumbents and flipping a handful of Republican-held seats.

THE NEW YORK TIMES

Of the House's 435 seats, the vast majority, 375, are rated as "solid" for one party or the other — meaning they are essentially noncompetitive. Another two dozen races are seen as likely to favor one party, while 18 are in the more competitive "lean" category.

The magic number for a House majority is 218 seats.

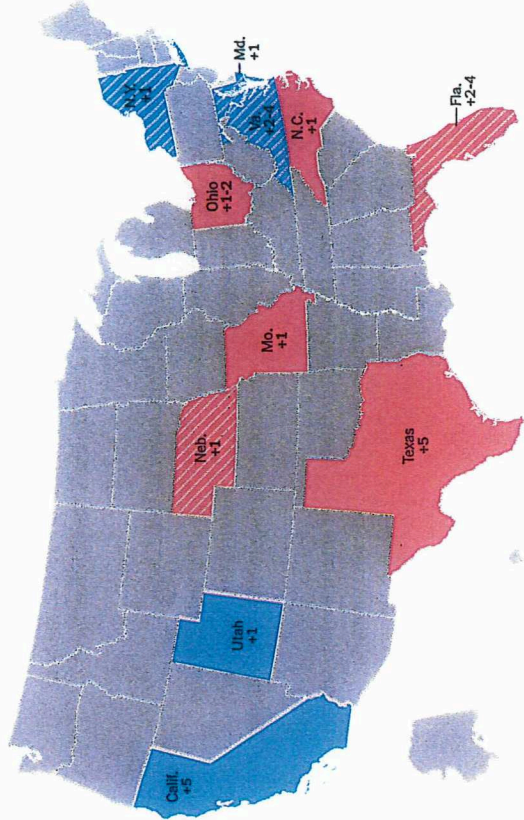
To get there, Democrats would need to hold all of their solid and likely seats, sweep the 13 seats that lean toward their party and win at least seven of the 18 tossups, according to The Cook Political Report.

The initial 2026 House battlegrounds do not span the whole nation. The South and the Mountain West are mostly afterthoughts, though Democrats hope some strong candidates in those places could make more seats viable.

Other factors are at play for House control, too:

Redrawn maps scramble the midterm forecast

Net yet signed into law	Possible change	Change
New maps passed		
Texas	+8R	
Missouri	+1R	
North Carolina	+1R	+2R to 3R
Ohio	+1-2R	
California	+5D	
Utah	+1D	
Actions taken to redistrict		
Florida	+2-4R	
Virginia	+2-4D	
New York	+1D	+1R to 3D
Discussed but less likely		
Nebraska	+1R	+0
Maryland	+1D	
Total possible seats		+1D to +4R



The New York Times

Many states have redrawn their maps after Mr. Trump set off a nationwide gerrymandering fight. Typically, House districts are drawn once a decade, after the census. But Mr. Trump, wanting to defend his party's slim House majority, sought an edge by pressing for so-called mid-decade redistricting in red states.

He has already pushed Texas, Missouri and North Carolina to draw new maps, carving out as many as seven more Republican districts. Ohio had to redraw its map by law, and its new lines favor Republicans more, but to a lesser degree than some Democrats had feared. In Indiana, Republicans stunningly rejected Mr. Trump's effort.

In response to Texas' move, Gov. Gavin Newsom of California persuaded his state's voters to approve a plan to carve out five Democratic seats and shore up vulnerable House Democrats.

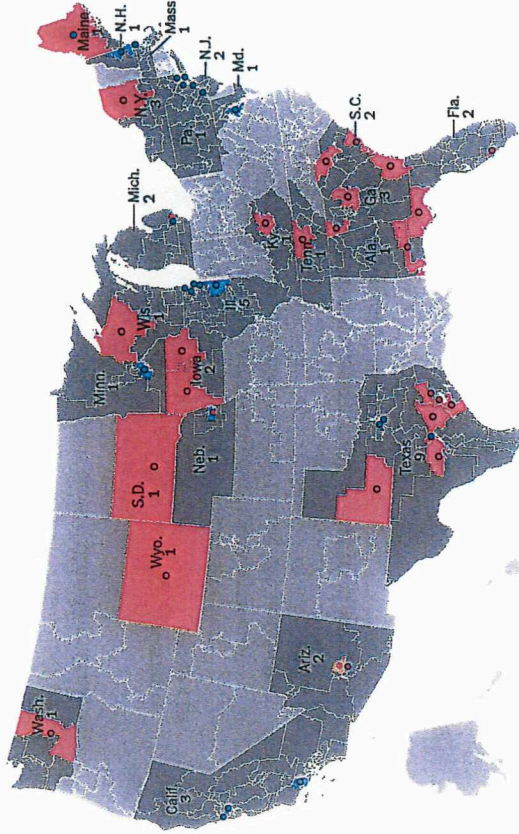
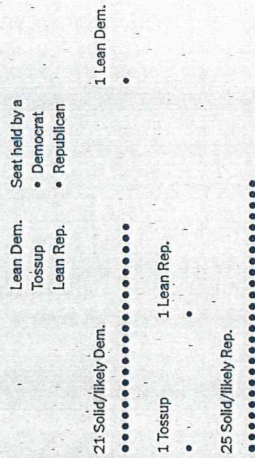
More new maps could be coming: Democrats are pushing to redraw lines in Virginia and possibly New York, and Republicans are considering new lines in Florida. Other states like Maryland and Nebraska have had discussions about redistricting but have made limited progress.

There is another X-factor: The Supreme Court is considering a case that could sharply weaken Voting Rights Act protections for districts drawn to purposefully help voters of color elect candidates. Such a decision could set off another round of redistricting and eliminate a range of Democratic seats in the South.

And as all of this is happening, many lawmakers in both parties are heading for the exits.

A wave of retirements concentrated in solid districts

At least 49 districts will not have an incumbent running in the midterms.



The New York Times

The Congress that will be sworn in next year will look very different, regardless of which party controls each chamber. More than 10 percent of lawmakers in the House have already announced they won't be running for re-election.

But those retirements — including those who are forgoing re-election to seek higher office — are heavily concentrated in safe seats.

The two clearest exceptions are Representative Don Bacon of Nebraska, a Republican in a seat that Mr. Trump lost, and Representative Jared Golden of Maine, who had held the most pro-Trump seat of any Democrat. Both seats are now seen as more likely to flip.

Two other Republicans who decided to run for governor of their states, Representative John James in Michigan and Representative David Schweikert in Arizona, have opened up competitive seats, as well.

SENATE Toss-Up

2026	2028	2030	SENATE Toss-Up			SENATE Toss-Up
State	Incumbent	Party	Since	Term	Consensus	SENATE Toss-Up
AK	Dan Sullivan	●	2015	2nd	■	SENATE Toss-Up
GA	Jon Ossoff	●	2021	1st	■	SENATE Toss-Up
IA	Joni Ernst <i>Incumbent not running for re-election in 2026.</i>	●	2015	2nd	■	SENATE Toss-Up
ME	Susan Collins	●	1997	5th	■	SENATE Toss-Up
MI	Gary Peters <i>Incumbent not running for re-election in 2026.</i>	●	2015	2nd	■	SENATE Toss-Up
MN	Tina Smith <i>Incumbent not running for re-election in 2026.</i>	●	2018	2nd	■	SENATE Toss-Up
NC	Thom Tillis <i>Incumbent not running for re-election in 2026.</i>	●	2015	2nd	■	SENATE Toss-Up
NE	Pete Ricketts	●	2023	1st	■	SENATE Toss-Up
NH	Jeanne Shaheen <i>Incumbent not running for re-election in 2026.</i>	●	2009	3rd	■	SENATE Toss-Up
OH	Jon Husted <i>2026 special election for final two years of JD Vance's term</i>	●	2025	1st	■	SENATE Toss-Up
TX	John Cornyn	●	2003	4th	■	SENATE Toss-Up

DEMOCRATS | 13 HELD SEATS

SOLID D	LIKELY D	LEAN D	TOSS UP	LEAN R	LIKELY R	SOLID R
CO-Hickenlooper DE-Coons IL-OPEN MA-Markley NJ-Booker NM-Lujan OR-Merkley RI-Reed VA-Warner	MN-OPEN	NH-OPEN	GA-Ossoff NH-OPEN			

All races link to the at-a-glance race pages.

REPUBLICANS | 22 HELD SEATS

SOLID D	LIKELY D	LEAN D	TOSS UP	LEAN R	LIKELY R	SOLID R
			ME-Collins NC-OPEN	AK-Sullivan OH-Husted	IA-OPEN TX-Cornyn	AL-OPEN AR-Cotton FL-Moody ID-Ritch KS-Marchall KY-OPEN LA-Cassidy MS-Hyde-Smith MT-Daines NE-Ricketts OK-Mullin SC-Graham SD-Rounds TN-Hagerty WV-Capito WY-OPEN

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2026 Senate Forecast: Democrats' Narrow Path to the Majority

By Mark Messinger | January 11, 2024

Balance of power is up for grabs in the U.S. Senate come November and Republicans are the odds-favorite to retain control. The question hasn't been whether they'll lose control, but rather what that majority will be.

Republicans have been bullish on a few targets, but the environment might preclude them from picking up any seats. On the other hand, Democrats have more targets to choose from, but the layout of the map poses a geography problem. The Democratic Party can only gain so much ground in one cycle, unless the midterms end up being a 2018-like blue wave. The chamber is divided 53R-47D, which means Democrats must make a net gain of four seats in order to take control. Anything less than that means the GOP keeps control, as Vice President J.D. Vance (R-OH) can cast tie-breaking votes.

Of the thirty-five seats on the table this cycle, **The Messenger** identifies eighteen as competitive. Two of the total seats are special elections to fill remainders of Vice President Vance in Ohio and Secretary of State Marco Rubio (R-FL) in Florida.

Georgia – Tilts Democrat

Democrats managed to win both Georgia Senate seats in a double-barrel special election in 2021. Herschel Walker (R) failed to oust Senator Raphael Warnock (D-GA) in 2022, but now Senator Jon Ossoff (D-GA) – at 38, the Senate's youngest incumbent – is up for re-election. Georgia's tectonic leftward shift was seen as something of a fluke, until later election results have corroborated its newfound swing state status – courtesy primarily of the Atlanta metro area and its suburbs.

In fact, Atlanta is consistently ranked as one of the fastest growing metro areas in the U.S. The city is an economic engine of the South, as well as a hub for broader commerce. The economy is robust, and the suburbs continue to balloon in population. Moreover, Atlanta is home to the busiest airport in the world – Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport (ATL).

The counties that contain Atlanta proper have always been deep-blue: Fulton, DeKalb, and Clayton. While they have gotten slightly bluer between 2012 and 2024, the suburban counties of Atlanta reveal why Georgia is the swing state it is today.

In 2012, Mitt Romney (R-MA) won Cobb County 55%-43%. In 2024, Kamala Harris (D-CA) won Cobb County 56%-41% – almost a thirty-point shift in just four cycles. The results across the other suburban counties more or less follow this pattern. Gwinnett, and Henry counties have flipped from red to blue, while Rockdale and Douglas counties started as blue-leaning counties in 2012 and are now solidly-blue today. Only Fayette, Cherokee, and Forsyth counties remain red, albeit markedly less so than they were before the Trump Era.

The massive leftward shifts are only emblematic of the national urban-rural divide, as well as the suburbs of major metro areas becoming increasingly Democratic.

Ossoff remains a competitive candidate and as a younger, more progressive voice in the Senate, Atlanta's younger, liberal voters will be hard swayed to back a Republican. Popular Governor Brian Kemp (R-GA) is term-limited but has said he will not run for the Senate seat. Conventional wisdom has stated that Kemp would be the best Republican candidate to take on Ossoff.

Republicans should be able to flip a seat like Georgia, even in a moderately blue environment. But this isn't the Georgia of the last decade and even just a slightly blue national mood might make Ossoff's advantage insurmountable. The massive leftward shifts of the Atlanta metro area only make the GOP's climb steeper here, as Georgia might be transitioning to a blue-leaning battleground.

Michigan – Toss Up

The Wolverine State is gearing up for another competitive Senate race. The GOP hasn't won a Senate race here since 1994, and the 2024 election was the closest in Michigan's history: Elissa Slotkin (D) defeated Mike Rogers (R) by a margin of just 0.34% – 19,000 votes out of over 5 million cast.

Another open seat is up in Michigan this year, leaving Democrats vulnerable in a state they shouldn't have problems in during a blue midterm. Mike Rogers is running a second time, while the Democratic field is growing between incumbent federal, state, and local officials.

While a Republican winning in Michigan is more common than it has been since the 1990s, it still takes a certain set of circumstances to pull it off. Environment is tantamount to this scenario, as well as a depressed Democratic voter turnout. With the conventional wisdom applied, Democrats shouldn't have a problem retaining this seat, but polling indicates another nail-biter.

New Hampshire – Toss Up

The GOP once ruled the Granite State with an iron fist. While they have fallen from graces on the federal level, they've still managed to win gubernatorial races and have controlled the state legislature for several years.

New Hampshire was such a red beacon of New England that Democrats were shut out of Senate races from 1855 to 1919, and again from 1980 to 2008. In 2016, as Democrats flipped the Senate seat they did not have; they also took control of both U.S. House seats, marking the first time since 1854 that New Hampshire's congressional delegation was entirely Democratic. It's remained that way since then.

The GOP has also become their own worst enemy in this state, typically by picking the lesser-equipped Republican in the primaries who then can't stack up to the incumbent. Also key is an environment good enough for the GOP to scale New Hampshire's Democratic lean at the federal level as of late.

But candidate quality and name recognition go a long way in a small, compact state like New Hampshire, as does retail politics. The GOP scored a top recruit in former Senator John Sununu (R) – a scion of the Sununu political dynasty and brother of the wildly popular governor who ran the state from 2016 to 2024. That recency will be invariable to the intrinsically libertarian New Hampshire electorate. Sununu also has experience winning statewide under his belt, albeit in a different era entirely. He had served only one term, winning in 2002, but being defeated for re-election in 2008.

The only hurdle Sununu has is winning the primary, where former Senator Scott Brown (R) – who won the 2010 special election in Massachusetts in a massive upset – is eyeing a comeback. Brown had run for this seat in 2014 and narrowly lost to Shaheen in what was otherwise a red wave year.

Senator Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) has chosen to retire instead of seeking a fourth term. Congressman Chris Pappas (D, NH-01) is the strongest candidate of the three Democrats presently declared. Pappas was elected in 2018 to NH-01, the redder of the state's two congressional districts, and has been able to win in tough environments. Pappas, 45, is also on the younger side of things.

Both parties have good recruits, but if Sununu wins the primary – as we think he will – this seat could go down to the wire. Otherwise, Democrats should have no problem retaining this seat even in a mildly-blue year.

North Carolina – Tilts Democrat

Since Democrats need to net four seats to flip the Senate, we'll look at their most conceivable path to that number. It all starts in North Carolina.

On paper, Democrats should have more federal statewide wins under their belt in the Tar Heel State. A premier battleground for over a decade, a diverse population, educated urban centers, and a penchant for ticket-splitting, one would think Democrats have had better luck in North Carolina Senate races.

In fact, Democrats have only won two such races here since the 1980s: John Edwards (D), who was John Kerry's (D-MA) presidential running mate in 2004, won his first and only term in 1998, and Kay Hagan (D-NC), who won one term in 2008. Hagan's victory is the last for a Democrat in a Senate race in this state, and is the last time North Carolina gave its electoral votes to a Democratic presidential nominee.

This year's seat is being vacated by Thom Tillis (R), a twice-elected Senator who was the considerable underdog in both 2014 and 2020. Tillis was last seen sparring with GOP leadership over Medicaid cuts earlier this year and decided not to run for a third term. The seasoned overperformer would have been a crucial asset for the GOP's defense of this seat this fall.

Former Governor Roy Cooper (D-NC) is the presumptive Democratic nominee for this seat. Elected in 2016 and re-elected in 2020, Cooper is seen as a generally more moderate Democrat, although not prohibitively so. Republican National Committee (RNC) Chairman Michael Whatley is aiming to earn the nod to run against him, but polling has Cooper ahead.

To put it succinctly, Democrats have no path to a Senate majority without North Carolina, and as of right now, they seem poised for a generational win in the Tar Heel State.

Maine – Tilts Republican

Like North Carolina, Maine is a state where Democrats, on paper, should have a lock on statewide races. However, Maine's ancestral Republican lean has permeated into the Trump Era, and Senator Susan Collins (R-ME) is perhaps the Senate's staunchest maverick.

Collins is eyeing a sixth term; she was first elected when Republicans still had significant political power in the Pine Tree State. Democrats were optimistic that they'd finally beaten her in 2020, but Collins ended up springing a shocker. She won by eight points, a staggering overperformance when polling aggregates showed her opponent leading by four to seven points. Collins won by that large margin on the same night that Joe Biden (D-DE) won the presidential race in Maine by nine points, generating a seventeen-point crossover gap – a once dime-a-dozen scenario that is now extremely rare in the modern era.

The real political calculus in this race comes down to who Democrats chose in a primary: two-term incumbent Governor Janet Mills (D) or harbormaster Graham Platner (D). Mills is the more mainstream choice, but Platner represents a younger, more “fed up” tone that could strike a chord. Polling suggests that Collins will have an easier time beating Mills than she would Platner. As incumbents and those with institutional political experience become less popular in the economic-populist era, Mainers might go with Platner.

If there's one mistake to never make, it's underestimating a moderate Republican in Maine. While Collins' approval ratings are underwater, it's entirely conceivable that she bridges the gap and earns a sixth term in November, so long as she retains her moderate record and if the wrong Democrat wins the primary.

Iowa – Leans Republican

The last decade has made Iowa a fantastic political case study. A swing state that the GOP had just gotten used to losing – between 1988 and 2012, they had won it just once in 2004 – is now a much redder beacon in the heart of the Great Plains. In 2022, Republicans solidified control of Iowa's entire congressional delegation for the first time since the 1940s. While the state itself is much redder than it once was, the GOP shouldn't revel as if it's a ruby-red state like its neighbors.

Democrats still retain a relatively high floor in Iowa, meaning a ten-to-fifteen-point gap is closeable. The seat is also being vacated by two-term Senator Joni Ernst (R), who might have been more of a liability than an asset to her party this fall.

It's a stretch, but in the right environment, especially one where Iowa farmers might not be enthused with Trump's trade wars, Democrats could contest this seat. But their path to the majority runs squarely through Iowa.

But closing that gap might be easier said than done. On top of farmers, the blue-collar backbone of the classic Democratic coalition has all but evaporated in the Hawkeye State – a transition truly emblematic of the GOP's strength in the Rust Belt in the Trump Era. Evangelical voters remain lock-step with the GOP, while Iowa has few college towns and dense urban areas to counterweight the rest of the state. Democrats thought they had flipped this seat in 2020, but the now-outgoing

Ernst managed to win by a firm six-point margin. The eastern counties along the Mississippi River were once blue-leaning, but are now red-leaning battlegrounds at best.

Ohio – Likely Republican

Ohio is another excellent case study in American geopolitics. Ohio was once the quintessential swing state, but is now an obdurately Republican one. Bernie Moreno (R) ousted three-term moderate Senator Sherrod Brown (D) in 2024, giving Republicans control of both seats simultaneously since 2007. Brown is eyeing a comeback to this seat this year and poses Democrats' best shot at flipping this seat back.

But appointed Senator Jon Husted (R) has more credentials on the Ohio ballot than Moreno did before defeating Brown. Husted is a twice-elected lieutenant governor, a twice-elected Ohio Secretary of State, and a former Speaker of the Ohio State House.

Ohio was once a state where both parties were able to win in reasonable environments, but Democrats had significantly more credibility among the working-class coalition. The northeastern counties of the state, particularly the Youngstown-Akron area, were the decades-long cornerstone of Democrats' working-class coalition not just in Ohio, but nationally – arguably. Now, that area is at least red-leaning, as Donald Trump won Youngstown's Mahoning County in 2020 – the first time a Republican had done so since 1972. The margins here have only grown for the GOP in the Trump Era and don't seem keen on fading any time soon.

Even if the environment is on Democrats' side, Ohio will be perhaps their largest hurdle in their quest for a majority.

Here's the Count

While Democrats do have a conceivable path to fifty-one seats, it's not a likely one. They would need to run the table in the Toss Ups, play solid defense elsewhere, and pick off all four of the key states: North Carolina, Maine, Iowa, and Ohio. If they lose just one, they remain in the minority for at least another two years. Strategists opine that the Democratic Party is using 2026 as a springboard to take back the majority in 2028, provided they can reduce the GOP's caucus.



Turning Point or Tipping Point?

 By [weeklysift](#) on January 26, 2026

This week has also seen a number of hopeful signs. In saying that, I know how naive I sound. People of good will have been looking for hopeful signs for 11 years now. [2] Again and again, we have heard events described as turning points, as moments when Trump had finally gone too far and would be swept away by public revulsion. Again and again, the moment passed. Maybe it will pass again.

If there is a difference this time, it's that the consequences of rolling over and doing nothing are more obvious than they've ever been. If Trump's goon squads can murder people in the streets, tell lies obviously contradicted by the video evidence, and then paint their victims as "domestic terrorists" or "assassins" who deserve what they got — then quite likely we have passed a tipping point. There may be no going back without violent revolution and civil war.

{...}

We're not the only ones watching to see what happens in this moment. Trump is watching too.

Here are the signs I'm paying attention to. You could respond to any single one of them by saying: "We've seen this before and it came to nothing." But this time they are all happening at once. [3]

The lockstep support Trump's worst outrages have been receiving from Republicans in Congress is starting to crack.

No elected Republican I'm aware of is openly denouncing what the regime is doing in Minnesota, calling ICE's murders by their proper name, or pointing out that the violence in Minneapolis is almost entirely instigated by ICE rather than the protesters. But a number are [publicly saying that there is something to explain here](#). They are calling for a real investigation rather than a cover-up, and seem open to the possibility that the answers will not be pleasant.

Some are challenging the wisdom of the regime's immigration strategy. Oklahoma Governor Kevin Stitt observed that "Nobody likes the feds coming to their states." Kentucky

Rep. James Comer suggested that it's unwise to launch an immigration crack-down without the state and local governments' support. He believes that cities will be so much better after undocumented immigrants have been expelled that the voters in places like Minneapolis will be envious. (Try it and see, I say. I think it's Comer who will be surprised.)

None of this is rebellion. But it's also not reflexive repetition of regime propaganda. That's a change.

The mainstream media has begun reporting the truth with much less hedging.

[The Washington Post editorial board](#) begins its call for congressional action to rein Trump in with "The unjust killing of Alex Pretti ...". The injustice of the killing is treated as a fact we can all see, not a contention made by "Democrats" or "critics" or "activists". [The New York Times](#) analyzed the regime's response like this:

Even as videos emerged that contradicted the government's account, the Trump administration was in a race to control the narrative around the killing of Mr. Pretti, a registered nurse with no criminal record who was pinned down when immigration agents opened fire and killed him. The rush to blame Mr. Pretti and exonerate the immigration agents — even while officials were still gathering the facts — deviates entirely from the way law enforcement investigations are normally carried out.

Videos taken by eye-witnesses don't "appear" to contradict the government's account, they *do* contradict it. The contradiction is not something Democrats "contend" or critics "charge". The NYT is testifying in its own voice rather than striking a listen-to-both-sides pose. This is a change. They seem to be taking seriously the point made on social media by [Katie Mack](#):

A reminder to the news media: "conflicting accounts" is what you say BEFORE the incontrovertible video evidence appears. After that, your job is to ask why one side is lying, not to repeat the lie and pretend no one knows the truth.

On the other side, [Fox News](#) is doubling down, headlining "The far-left network that helped put Alex Pretti in harm's way, then made him a martyr". Fox's crack investigative reporters have discovered that the resistance in Minneapolis is organized, uses messaging apps to communicate, and keeps a database of ICE sightings — all things that resistance organizers will proudly tell you themselves. But Fox sees something sinister in this. Meanwhile, [The Atlantic](#) covers the same set of facts with an air of admiration rather than fear. No one is trying to hide how organized the resistance is. ...

No doubt you will hear similar rhetoric from your MAGA contacts, and maybe you will be frustrated that nothing seems to break through their silo of Trump-think. **But this kind of**

propaganda plays differently when the mainstream media is telling a clear opposing story rather than hemming and hawing, as it so often has before.

Democrats in the Senate look ready to take a stand.

Counting on Chuck Schumer has been a risky strategy in the past, but he's [saying the right things now](#). In particular, he's balking at passing funding for DHS without additional riders that control ICE's abuses.

Senate Democrats will not allow the current DHS funding bill to move forward. ... People should be safe from abuse by their own government. Senate Republicans must work with Democrats to advance the other five funding bills while we work to rewrite the DHS bill. This is the best course of action, and the American people are on our side.

It remains to be seen how principled and effective Senate Democrats can be, and whether the restrictions they put on ICE will be meaningful. At a minimum they can make Republicans defend ICE masking its agents, asking US citizens for their papers, breaking into homes without judicial warrants, and avoiding investigations when they kill someone.

If a partial government shutdown results, I think Schumer is right that the American people will stand with Democrats as they try to bring a rogue agency under lawful control.

I think the House passing DHS funding last week was an incredibly negative moment for the Democratic Party. If all Democrats had voted with the handful of Republicans in opposition, [the bill would not have passed](#). Results like these are demoralizing: What's the point of voting for Democrats if they won't take a stand when they have the chance?

Those Democrats who support DHS funding to avoid seeming like they are against "law enforcement" are boosting the regime's propaganda. The whole point of blocking DHS funding is that ICE is not *enforcing* laws, it's *breaking* laws.



Clergy of many faiths came to Minneapolis Friday to participate in the resistance.

The religious left has grabbed the momentum away from the religious right.

I have a somewhat biased point of view here: The senior minister of my church (First Parish Unitarian Universalist in Bedford, Massachusetts) answered an interfaith call for clergy to come to Minneapolis for Friday's protests and general strike. By Sunday, he was back to report on his experiences.

The [Religion News Service](#) reports that hundreds of ministers answered the call. Many of them participated in the organized activities that Fox News found so suspicious: ride-alongs with ICE observers, blowing whistles to tell the community about an ICE presence, packing food to deliver to non-White families that are afraid to leave their homes (independent of their legal status, since [ICE doesn't seem to care](#)). Here's one experience:

ICE agents surrounded one of the women from the minivan and instructed the pastors to get back. [Rev. Dan] Brockway [an American Baptist minister from upstate New York] standing behind the other faith leaders, [began livestreaming the encounter](#) to his church's Facebook page.

When those ministers go home, their congregations will be radicalizing also. The religious left is also turning up the heat in other ways, most notably by repeating the teachings of Jesus, which [MAGA Christianity has completely turned its back on](#).

The resistance in Minneapolis is inspiring.

This may in fact be the most encouraging development of all. It's one thing to turn out large crowds of people for one-day demonstrations like [No Kings](#). That's happened before, all the way back to the [Women's March in 2017](#).

But what's happening in Minneapolis is on another level entirely: Ordinary people are getting together with their neighbors to plan activities and carry them out. They're watching the streets for ICE raids, taking videos of arrests, watching schools so that non-White children don't vanish without a trace, delivering food and medicine to families afraid to leave their homes, and in general looking after their at-risk neighbors.

[The Atlantic](#) reports:

But behind the violence in Minneapolis—captured in so many chilling photographs in recent weeks—is a different reality: a meticulous urban choreography of civic protest. You could see traces of it in the identical whistles the protesters used, in their chants, in their tactics, in the way they followed ICE agents but never actually blocked them from detaining people. Thousands of Minnesotans have been trained over the past year as legal observers and have taken part in lengthy role-playing exercises where they rehearse scenes exactly like the one I witnessed. They patrol

neighborhoods day and night on foot and stay connected on encrypted apps such as Signal, in networks that were first formed after the 2020 killing of George Floyd.

[Fox News reporters](#) see a vast and threatening “Antifa” conspiracy here, while the [Murdoch-owned New York Post](#) looks for funding networks they can trace back to George Soros or some other Elder of Zion.

But the tactics and practices of ICE resistance have been developing all year, from Los Angeles to Portland to Chicago. Protesters are getting trained in the same way that Martin Luther King’s and Mahatma Gandhi’s movements trained people in non-violence. The discipline and forbearance they have shown in the face of outrageous provocation is remarkable.

What’s happening here is that ordinary American people are defending their neighborhoods and defending their neighbors. They are coming together in cells of folks who are learning to trust one another and work together.

The regime wants Americans to feel isolated and fearful, to sit in their social media silos and beg for Big Brother’s protection from Antifa or Venezuelan gangsters or whatever other bogeyman they are projecting this week. But the resistance movement is teaching people to trust one another and rely on one another. It is teaching people to love their neighbors and defend “the least of these” against bullying from those in power.

That’s been a radicalizing message for thousands of years, and it’s getting out again.



Finding the Light of America

From Robert Reich <robertreich@substack.com>
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Finding the Light of America

The tragic events of Minnesota are pushing the nation toward two tipping points.

ROBERT REICH
JAN 27

Friends,

One of the few advantages of being as conspicuous as I am is that many people come up to me whom I don't know, to give me their views about what's happening in America — as if I'm a free-floating focus group.

This morning, I was at a restaurant counter finishing my breakfast when a middle-aged man sat down next to me, turned to me, and said, "I don't want to intrude."

He just had just done so, so I put down my knife and fork, wiped my mouth with my napkin, turned toward him, and asked, "May I help you?"

"I've been a life-long Republican," he said, "but the events of the past weeks have caused me to leave the Republican Party."

"I'm happy to hear that," I said with a smile and turned to finish my

breakfast.

"I'm from New Hampshire, and many of my Republican friends are leaving the party, too," he said. "Minneapolis was the last straw."

I put down my fork and turned toward him again. "I assume you're talking about the behavior of ICE and Border Patrol agents there, and the killings?"

"All terrible, of course," he said, shaking his head. "But what really finished me were the lies — Noem. Miller, Bovino, Vance, Trump." He frowned. "They all lied through their teeth. I saw the video! They're a pack of liars."

I agreed and then turned back to my breakfast, explaining that I had to finish to get to an appointment.

But his words stuck with me.

There are two ways to look at what's happened in Minneapolis. Two different tipping points for America.

The first is to see the nation tipping more deeply toward Trump's fascist police state. ICE and the Border Patrol have now become vehicles of state terror. They're engaged in extrajudicial executions with apparent impunity.

This tipping began with Trump's purging of federal prosecutors who tried to hold him accountable for his attempted coup. It continued with his pardons of the January 6 rioters, his pardons of his allies and wealthy friends, his criminal prosecutions of James Comey and Letitia James, and the criminal investigation of Jerome Powell.

Now, we're at full tilt. Trump's inadequately trained, trigger-happy goons — outfitted with guns, pepper spray, and riot gear — have been bullying, beating, and murdering the residents of Minneapolis.

The regime refuses to allow Minnesota to investigate the killings, won't

criminally investigate the shooters, makes wildly false accusations about the victims, and claims that federal agents responsible for the killings have total immunity from prosecution.

But there's a second way to see what's happening in Minnesota — a tipping point of a different kind. The fellow from New Hampshire who sat next to me at breakfast this morning typifies it.

It's America tipping toward mass revulsion of Trump and the people around him.

His latest lies and those of his surrounding sycophants are so blatant and disgusting that some Republicans, like my breakfast companion, are abandoning the GOP altogether.

Americans are coming together to defeat Trump's fascism, just as they've come together in Minneapolis. Not just demonstrating — but also participating in neighborhood watches, standing guard outside a local mosque during Friday prayers, sending out encrypted messages about where agents are lurking, and taking videos of ICE's atrocities and sharing them widely.

I hear from friends and former students in Minneapolis about an extraordinary outpouring of cooperation and mutual aid. They're organizing deliveries of food and other necessities to families afraid to leave their homes, picking up groceries for immigrant families, driving vulnerable families to doctor's appointments, and taking immigrant kids to school.

One friend tells me he's lived in Minneapolis for 40 years and has never felt the city as closely bound together. "I think we've discovered the real meaning of community," he writes.

A former student says that despite the subzero weather, he and everyone he knows have been involved in organizing — both against ICE and for one

another. "This goes far deeper than a protest," he says. "It's a new way to live here."

This upwelling isn't limited to Minneapolis. I'm hearing from friends and former students across America who are seeing something similar where they live.

"You wouldn't believe how this community has come together," writes an old friend from Portland, Maine. "I've lived here for more than 20 years and don't recall a time when we felt as united."

Both tipping points may be true: We're tipping toward Trump's fascist police state at the same time we're tipping toward a new era of community and solidarity. The latter is the consequence of the former.

I don't buy the predictions of a second civil war. I think Americans are better than that. If polls are to be believed, most oppose the way Trump has been implementing his immigration policies. Most don't accept his fascist police state.

As the nation shudders on the edge of his police state, we're gaining stronger unity against it and taking more responsibility for the well-being of each other. In the darkness of Trump, we're finding the light of America.

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Wednesday, January 21, 2026

Mark Carney Sounds Like a Great American

by William Kristol

As Andrew writes above, the most important speech at Davos yesterday was by Canada's Prime Minister, Mark Carney. It was not just an excellent speech. It was a very American one.

We citizens of the United States know that everything good doesn't come from within our own borders. The Capitol contains not only a statue of Abraham Lincoln, but also a bust of Winston Churchill. Our students study *The Federalist Papers*—and also John Locke and Montesquieu. Our orchestras perform Leonard Bernstein and George Gershwin—and also Mozart and Rossini. We read Herman Melville and Mark Twain—and also Jane Austen and Tolstoy. Our art museums maintain and display the works of Norman Rockwell and Edward Hopper—and also Rembrandt and Cezanne. We watch *Casablanca* and *High Noon*—and also British crime dramas on Britbox (or, if your tastes are a little darker, Scandinavian ones on MHz Choice).

We in the United States have understood the foolishness of xenophobia. We have understood that a crabbed or defensive nationalism doesn't lead to decency or greatness. We know, as they say, that you don't have a nation if you don't have borders, but we also know that you can't have a great nation if you have only borders, and if you're not open to the contributions from the rest of mankind.

And so at a time when honesty and wisdom are in short supply here at home, we should be especially grateful for candor and enlightenment from abroad. Which brings us to our neighbor to the north.

What did Prime Minister Carney say yesterday, in Davos? You can (and should!) set aside less than twenty minutes to [watch his speech](#). Or you can [read the whole thing here](#). But here's one of the more important passages:

Today, I'll talk about the rupture in the world order, the end of a nice story and the beginning of a brutal reality where geopolitics among the great powers is not subject to any constraints. . . .

But let's be clear-eyed about where this leads. A world of fortresses will be poorer, more fragile and less sustainable. . . .

American hegemony helped provide public goods: open sea lanes, a stable financial system, collective security and support for frameworks for resolving disputes. . . .

And there's another truth: if great powers abandon even the pretense of rules and values for the unhindered pursuit of their power and interests, the gains from "transactionalism" will become harder to replicate. Hegemons cannot continually monetize their relationships.

Now, Carney is speaking as prime minister of Canada, not (unfortunately!) as president of the United States. So he focuses on what Canada and other middle powers can do in this new world.

But I also submit to you that other countries, particularly middle powers like Canada, are not powerless. They have the capacity to build a new order that embodies our values, like respect for human rights, sustainable development, solidarity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of states. . . .

We believe that from the fracture, we can build something better, stronger, more just.

This is the task of the middle powers. . . .

The powerful have their power. But we have something too—the capacity to stop pretending, to name reality, to build our strength at home and to act together.

That is Canada's path. We choose it openly and confidently.

And it is a path wide open to any country willing to take it with us. Carney is laying out a path for Canada and other nations similarly situated. He's doing what he can do as that nation's prime minister. But the truth is that Canada and other middle powers can only do so much to save civilization in a world of unconstrained hegemony.

And Carney knows that. Surely he wants us in the United States to listen to what he's saying. Surely he hopes that his words may spur us to rethink, to decide that it is not too late to reverse course, not too late to build anew after the fracture, that a path of strength and responsibility is still open to us as well.

The obvious question raised by Carney's speech for the United States is this: Is such a path of strength and responsibility now irreparably closed to *us*? Yes, the rupture is real and damaging. But is the United States irreversibly lost? Can we not recover from our self-inflicted wound? Is it beyond the capacity of the United States to once again be an admirable nation and a responsible great power?