



A Diversity Wave



**Demographic Projections and Policy Implications for the
116th Congress**



What if...

Democrats Win Control

All indicators suggest that Democrats are poised to make electoral gains on November 6. Whether they actually have enough momentum to win a majority in the U.S. House of Representatives, and even the Senate, is up to the voters.

We're forecasting what a Democratic majority might look like, in either or both chambers. We looked at every House race district-by-district and compiled three projections for the composition of the House in the 116th Congress. We also provide a projection for the Senate.

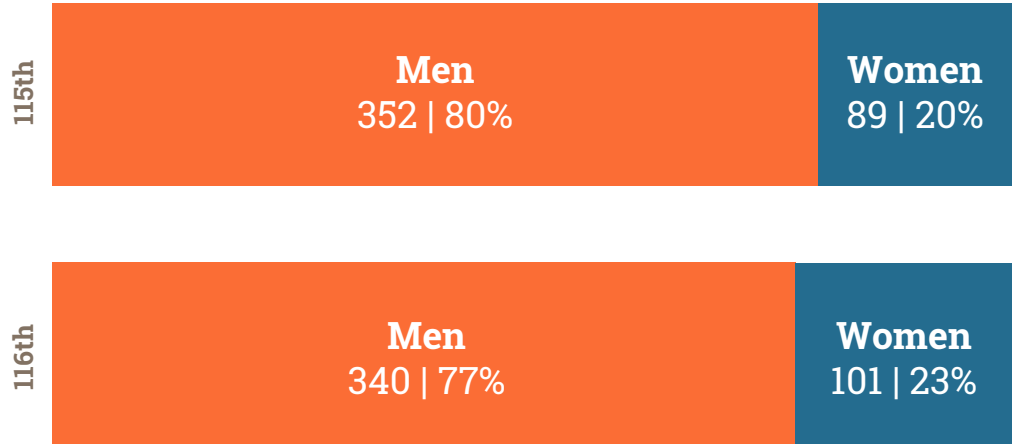


Record-Breaking Diversity: House

First Scenario

If Democrats hold onto all of their current seats and only **win the 13 seats rated as *likely or lean Democratic****, they won't win a majority, but women will make significant gains in the House.

* Cook Political Report, House Race Ratings 9/26/18



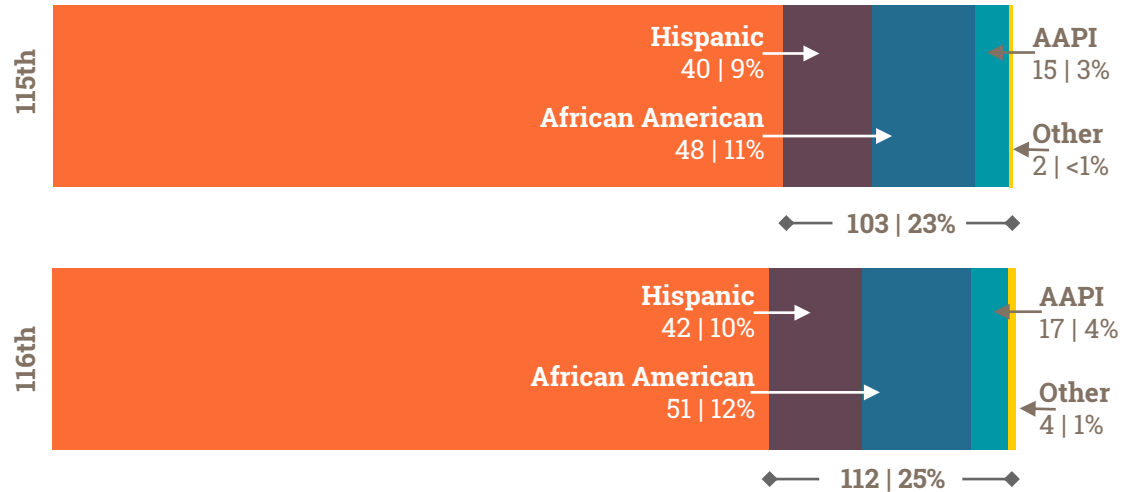


Record-Breaking Diversity: House

First Scenario

If Democrats hold onto all of their current seats and only **win the 13 seats** rated as *likely or lean Democratic**, they won't win a majority, yet Congress will still become modestly more diverse.

* Cook Political Report, House Race Ratings 9/26/18



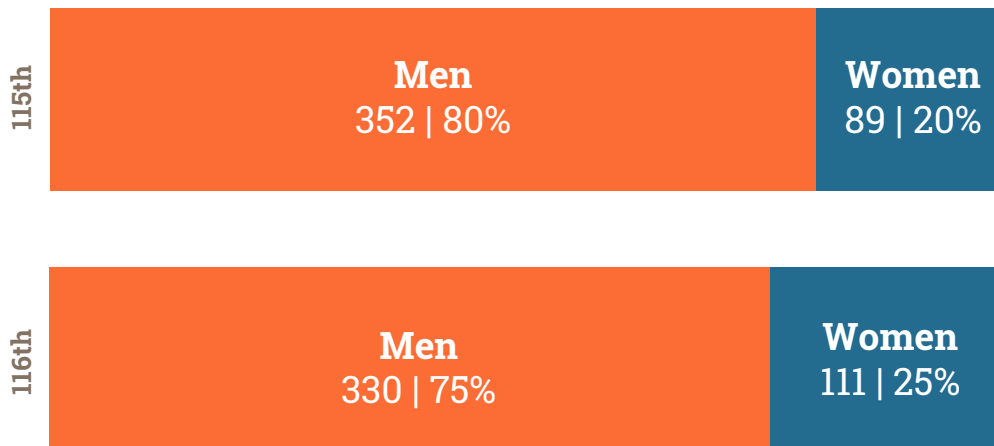


Record-Breaking Diversity: House

Second Scenario

If Democrats hold onto all of their current seats and **win the 42 seats rated as *likely or lean Democratic* and *toss-up****, they will win the majority. Women will hold one in four House seats.

* Cook Political Report, House Race Ratings 9/26/18



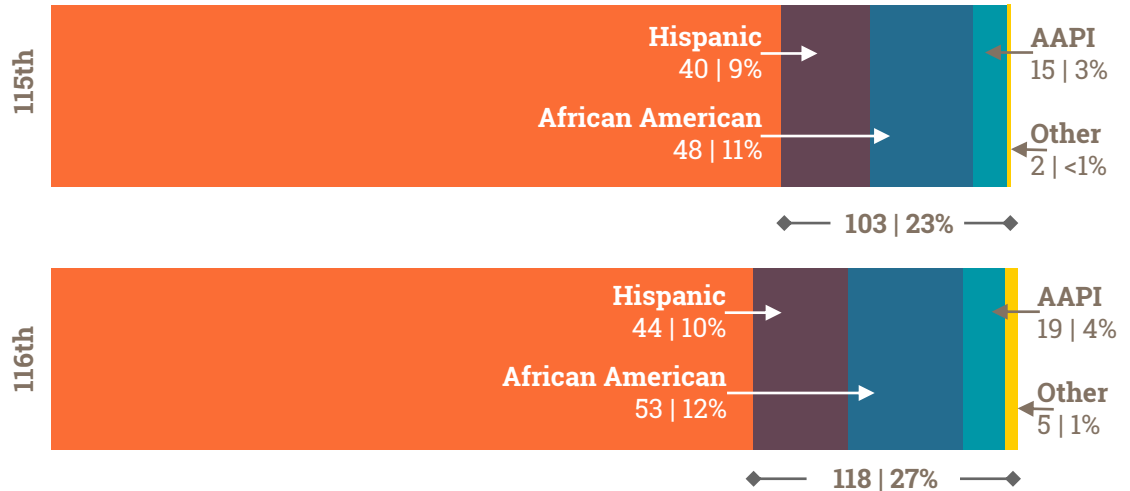


Record-Breaking Diversity: House

Second Scenario

If Democrats hold onto all of their current seats and **win the 42 seats rated as *likely or lean Democratic* and *toss-up****, they will win the majority. The number of people of color in congress will jump from 23 to 27 percent.

* Cook Political Report, House Race Ratings 9/26/18





Record-Breaking Diversity: House

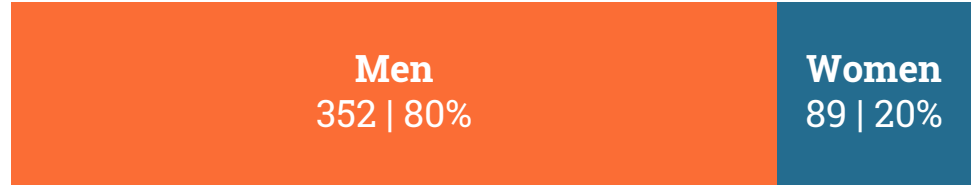
Third Scenario

If Democrats sweep the board -- lose no seats and **win all 68**

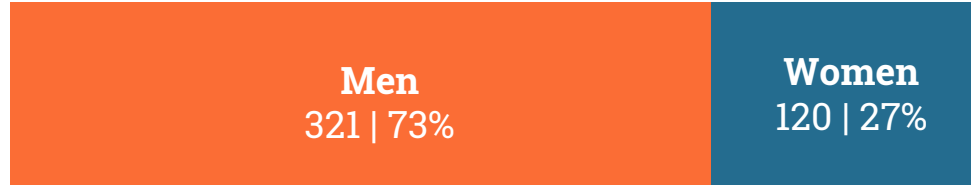
Republican-held seats rated as *likely or lean Democratic, toss-up, and lean Republican**, they will have a large majority. Women will hold over 40 percent of Democrats' seats.

* Cook Political Report, House Race Ratings 9/26/18

115th



116th





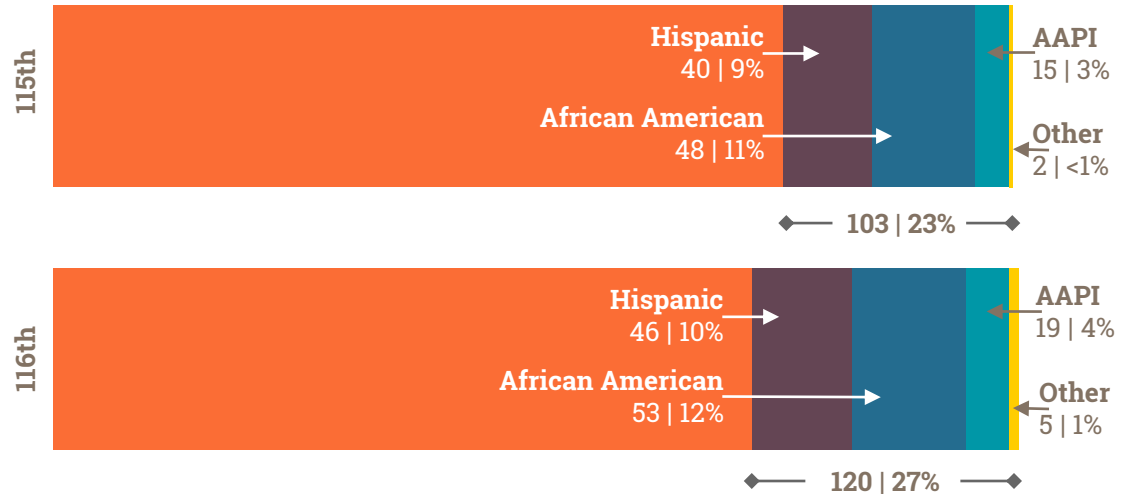
Record-Breaking Diversity: House

Third Scenario

If Democrats sweep the board -- lose no seats and win all 68 GOP-held seats rated as *likely or lean Democratic, toss-up, and lean*

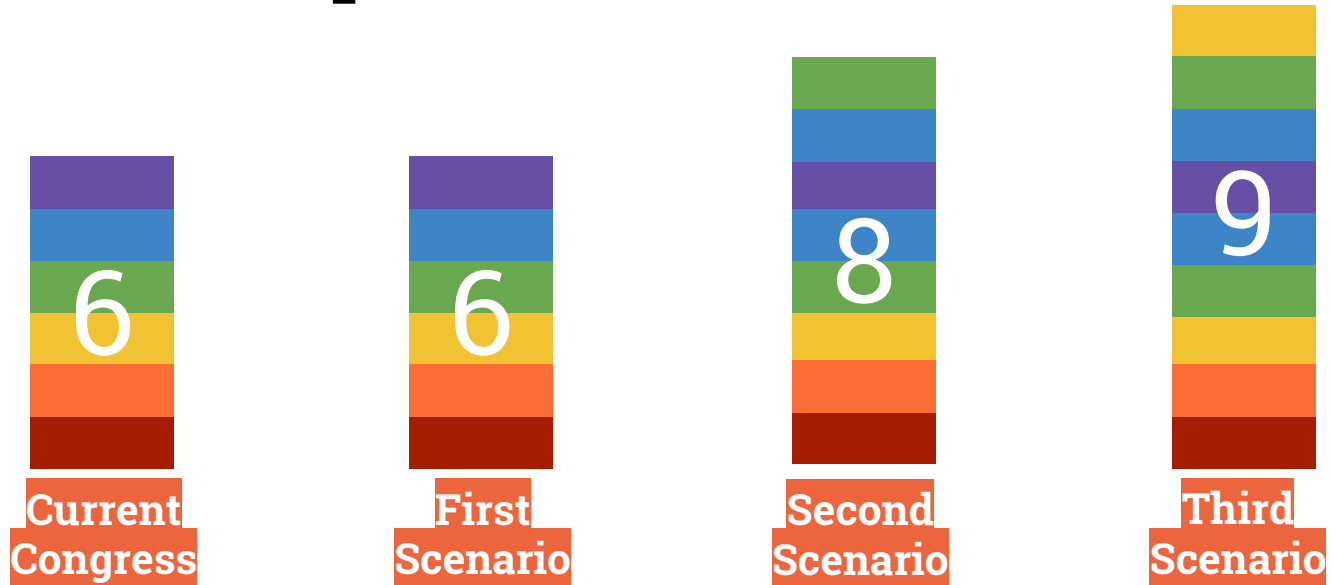
*Republican**, they will have a large majority. 44 percent of House Democrats will be people of color.

* Cook Political Report, House Race Ratings 9/26/18





LGBTQ Representation in the House





Record-Breaking Diversity: Senate

We looked at each Senate race state-by-state. We're basing our projection, and the composition of subcommittee leadership, on Democrats holding all of their current seats and picking up those Republican-held seats rated as *toss-up** races (Arizona, Nevada, Tennessee, and Texas).

Under this scenario, women would hold a record one in four Senate seats, and openly LGBTQ senators would stand at a record two.

* Cook Political Report, Senate Race Ratings 9/21/18





Projections for the 116th Congress | House

Likely House Committee Leadership

Out of **21 full committees**, we project that **four** would be chaired by women, **eight** by people of color, and **one** by an openly LGBTQ member of Congress.

Agriculture	Collin C. Peterson	MN-07
Appropriations	Nita M. Lowey	NY-17
Armed Services	Adam Smith	WA-09
Budget	John Yarmuth	KY-03
Education & Workforce	Robert C. "Bobby" Scott	VA-3
Energy & Commerce	Frank Pallone, Jr.	D-NJ-06
Ethics	Ted Deutch	FL-22
Financial Services	Maxine Waters	CA-43

Foreign Affairs	Eliot L. Engel	NY-16
Homeland Security	Bennie G. Thompson	MS-2
House Administration	Jamie Raskin	MD-8
Judiciary	Jerry Nadler	NY-10
Natural Resources	Raúl M. Grijalva	AZ-03
Oversight & Government Reform	Elijah E. Cummings	MD-7
Rules	Jim McGovern	MA-2
Science, Space, and Technology	Eddie Bernice Johnson	TX-30
Small Business	Nydia M. Velázquez	NY-7
Transportation & Infrastructure	Peter DeFazio	OR-04
Veterans' Affairs	Mark Takano	CA-41
Ways and Means	Richard Neal	MA-1
Intelligence	Adam Schiff	CA-28

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Projections for the 116th Congress | House



House Subcommittees: Anticipated Diversity

Looking at subcommittees, we anticipate that the likely leadership will be significantly diverse. While it is impossible at this stage to account for all of the unknown variables driving subcommittee composition – such as changes in committee assignments, member preferences, the potential creation of new subcommittees, etc. – those who end up in these leadership positions will be a very diverse lot.

**31 African American, 11 Hispanic, 4 AAPI; some members of Congress have mixed heritage and identify with more than one racial/ethnic group.*

101	Subcommittees
36	Women
45	People of Color*
2	LGBTQ



Projections for the 116th Congress | Senate

Likely Senate Committee Leadership

While too early to account for Committee changes, based on current ranking member assignments **eight** women will chair committees - equal to the 113th Congress when Democrats were the Senate majority. **One** committee will be led by a person of color.

Agriculture	Debbie Stabenow	MI
Appropriations	Patrick Leahy	VT
Armed Services	Jack Reed	RI
Banking	Sherrod Brown	OH
Budget	Bernie Sanders	VT
Commerce, Science, Transportation	Bill Nelson	FL
Energy & Natural Resources	Maria Cantwell	WA

Environment & Public Works	Tom Carper	DE
Finance	Ron Wyden	OR
Foreign Relations	Robert Menendez	NJ
HELP	Patty Murray	WA
Homeland Security	Claire McCaskill	MO
Indian Affairs	Tina Smith	MN
Judiciary	Dianne Feinstein	CA
Rules & Administration	Amy Klobuchar	MN
Small Business	Jeanne Shaheen	NH
Veterans Affairs	Jon Tester	MT
Aging	Robert Casey	PA
Ethics	Christopher Coons	DE
Intelligence	Mark Warner	VA



Projections for the 116th Congress | Senate

Senate Subcommittees: Anticipated Diversity

Similar to our projections for House subcommittees, an exact forecast is complicated by several variables, but thanks to the rising seniority of women in the Democratic Caucus, we are confident in predicting that, if Democrats win the majority, the **number of women leading subcommittees will reach a record level**, and for the first time ever, **openly LGBTQ senators will lead subcommittees**.

**3 African American, 2 Hispanic, 4 AAPI; note that some members of Congress have mixed heritage and identify with more than one racial/ethnic group*

69	Subcommittees
21	Women
8	People of Color*
2	LGBTQ



What if...

Democrats Win Control

More Diverse Leadership. Different Points of Policy Emphasis



Points of Policy: Projections

The make-up of caucus leadership is crucial. It shapes and colors the legislative agenda.

We already know the policy priorities* of the Democratic Caucus: healthcare, infrastructure, ethics, and lobbying reform ... and then there's immigration, economic security and labor rights, the environment, and, critically, oversight ...

But under a more diverse caucus, the points of emphasis are certain to shift.

* <https://abetterdeal.democraticleader.gov/learn-more/>





Points of Policy: Projections



Infrastructure won't simply be about building roads and bridges, but directing these investments through an equity lens so that they strengthen communities and meet the practical needs of low-income workers, commuters, and communities, such as access to transit, broadband, and clean water.



The broad agenda around **healthcare policy** may shift from a defensive posture of protecting the Affordable Care Act (ACA) to affirmative efforts to institutionalize access to reproductive care, strengthen pre-existing condition protections, lower drug prices, stabilize the ACA's marketplaces, and eradicate counterproductive work requirements in Medicaid.



Points of Policy: Projections



And, we suspect that legislation to normalize the status of certain **immigrants**, such as those currently covered by Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (**DACA**) and Temporary Protected Status (**TPS**), may move through the House.

Meanwhile, funding for a **border wall** will likely go nowhere. Expect oversight hearings to hold officials accountable for the Administration's **family separation** policy and to challenge **executive orders** and regulations such as those on family detention and public charge.



Points of Policy: Projections



We expect **protections for the right to vote**, along with ethics and campaign finance reforms, to comprise a major part of a robust agenda of protecting our democracy. There will be efforts to restore the protections of the Voting Rights Act against barriers to voting, modernize the election system to make it easier to vote, fight partisan gerrymandering, and combat cyber-attacks.



The nation's affordable **housing** crisis – especially among renters – will continue to demand a response. We expect to see a range of proposals that **address affordability, empower residents** and hold the administration accountable to **affirmatively furthering fair housing**.



Points of Policy: Projections



We anticipate a robust focus on **education** policy in the new Congress.

At the early childhood level, look for attention to expanded access to high-quality, affordable **child care** and to **universal preschool** for children in all communities.

For K-12, expect greater scrutiny on the implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act (**ESSA**), as well as concurrent efforts to reinstate protections for **transgender** students, enforce protections for students with **disabilities**, and improve **student safety and school climate**.

Postsecondary priorities will include **college access and completion**, stronger protection against predatory **for-profit colleges**, efforts to address **student debt**, and restoring the rights of **campus sexual assault** survivors to seek justice.



Points of Policy: Projections



In the economic security and financial opportunity space, we'll see proposals for **paid family leave** and increasing the **minimum wage**. There'll be efforts to shore up the **Consumer Financial Protection Bureau** and the rest of **Dodd-Frank**, as well as stronger protections against **predatory lending** and modernization of the **Community Reinvestment Act**.



Environmental protections are likely to take on a different slant, one focused on **environmental justice** for low-income communities like Flint, with a spotlight on the burden borne by communities of color impacted by climate change.



About The Raben Group

Raben is a national **public policy, communications, and organizational consulting** firm committed to solving problems and inspiring change across the corporate, nonprofit, and government sectors.

The country's **largest and most inclusive progressive** public affairs agency, with deep roots in communities of color, the women's equality movement, and the LGBTQ community, we bring a unique, often untold perspective to policy and systems change.

Learn more about us online at rabengroup.com

Questions about our data in this report? Email Michael Torra at mtorra@rabengroup.com

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Appendix A: Data Sources

Subcommittee Leaders

Our projection for who will lead subcommittees rests on many variables (see next page). You can find our assumptions, by each subcommittee, [in these tracking sheets](#). If Democrats do take back the House and/or Senate, we'll update this regularly as new information becomes available.

Diversity Data

Want to check our math? [This table](#) lists each House seat, who is running in open and competitive seats, and what the impacts on diversity would be under our three hypothetical election outcome scenarios for the House. In building these tables, we consulted House.gov, Senate.gov, [Politico](#), [The New York Times](#), [Ballotpedia](#), the [LGBTQ Victory Fund](#), and [Women of Color For America](#).

Cook Political Report

For our hypothetical scenarios, we used Charlie Cook's 2018 [House Race Ratings](#) of September 26, 2018 and [Senate Race Ratings](#) of September 21, 2018.



Appendix B: Assumptions

Vacant House seats: For purposes of counting shifts in party control and diversity, we counted the six vacant House seats as if the most recent member to have occupied them were still in office.

Delegates and the Resident Commissioner are included in all of our calculations for the House of Representatives.

Subcommittee projections are complicated by a few variables that make it difficult to provide an exact forecast of who would wield subcommittee gavels in a new Congress. These variables include:

- If control of the House changes hands, Democrats will gain seats on all committees, providing opportunities for current members of Congress to switch to different committees altogether.
- In our projections, we assume that current ranking members of subcommittees will want to chair the same subcommittees. However, some members will opt to chair a different subcommittee.
- New majorities often reorganize the House, adjusting the jurisdiction of subcommittees, creating new subcommittees, or merging or eliminating existing ones. In the Senate, our projection includes the creation of a new Judiciary subcommittee.