
Midterm Election Update

*Updated as of
October 24, 2022*



There are less than two weeks left until election day.

Early voting continues to surge past previous cycles.

- Over **7.5 million votes** have already been cast.
- Compared to **5 million in 2018** and **1.9 million in 2014** two weeks out.

The GOP has picked up momentum.

- Voters' attention has been more focused on the economy and inflation.

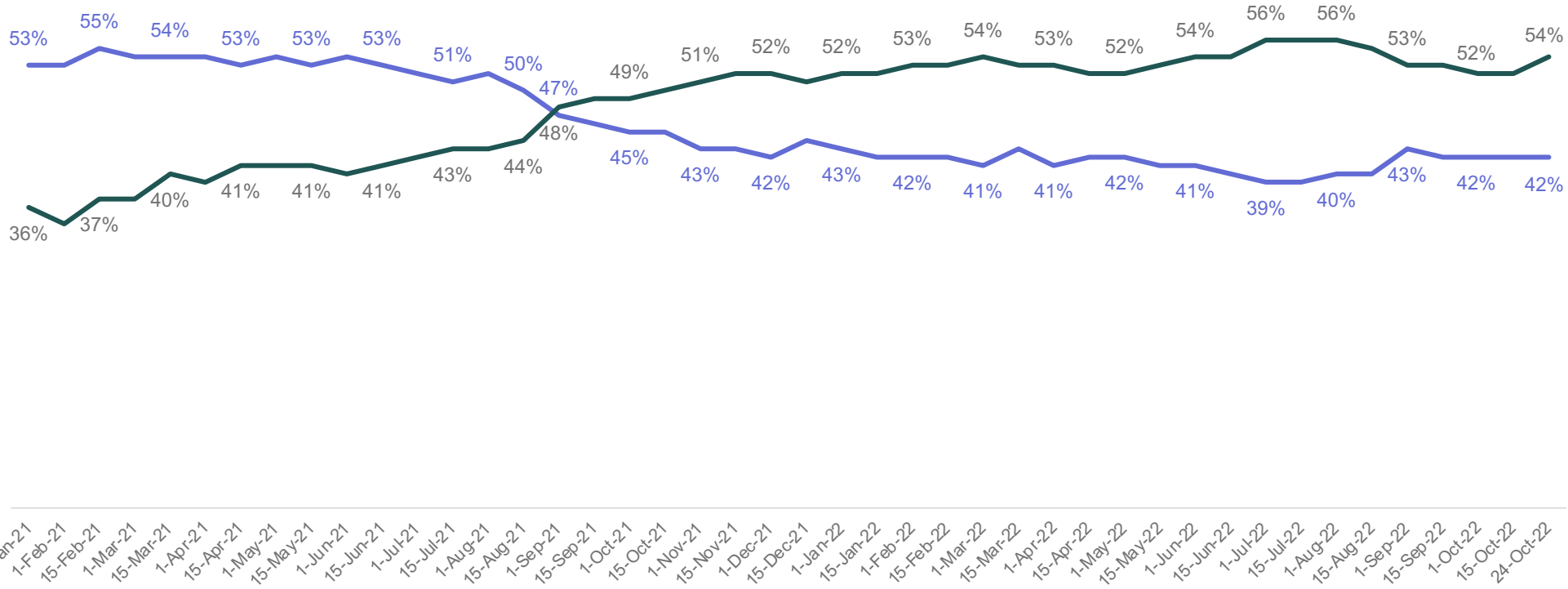
Both parties are making their closing arguments in the final weeks.

The President's approval numbers have remained flat since September.

Pres. Biden's Job Approval Over Time

January 2021
53% approve
36% disapprove

October 2022
42% approve
54% disapprove



Other Presidential approval ratings during midterms of their first term:

- Trump: **40%**
- Obama: **45%**
- G. W. Bush: **66%**
- Clinton: **46%**
- G. H. W. Bush: **58%**

Democrats have led in generic ballot polling in recent weeks, but the GOP has closed the gap.

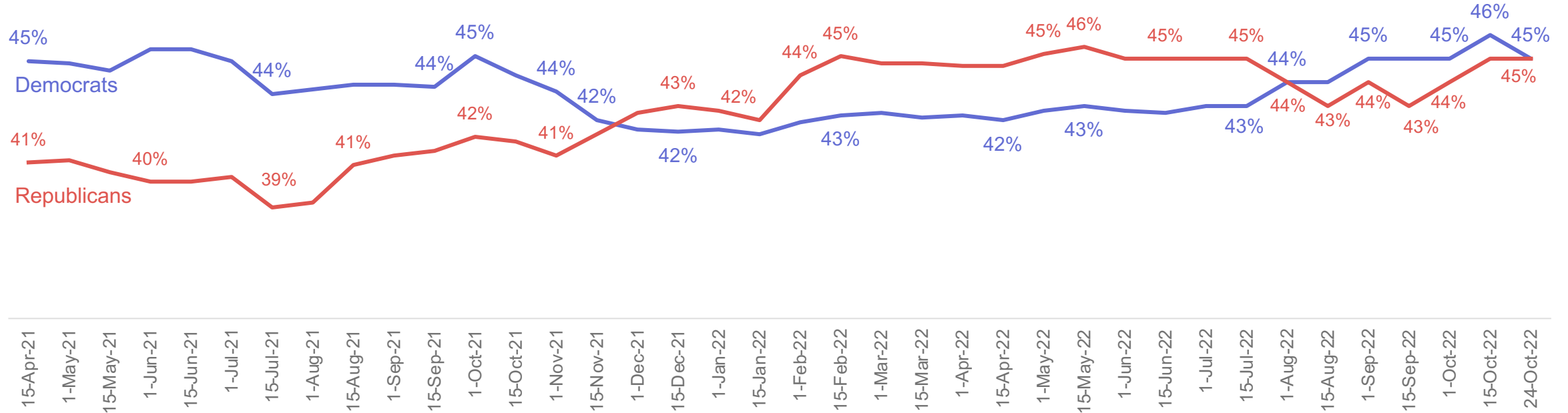
April 2021

D +4.4

Which party would you support in an election?

October 2022

R +0.5



At this point in 2018 midterms:

Democrats led generic ballot polling by 8.2 points.

On election day, they gained 40 House seats and lost 2 Senate seats.

Economy, crime, immigration, and abortion access dominate messaging.



Pocketbook Issues:

- > **More voters trust Republicans to handle economic issues (46%).**
- > Republicans are emphasizing inflation and the rising cost of food and gas. **The average price for a gallon of gas is up to \$3.79, a \$0.40 increase from a year ago.**
- > Republicans are highlighting that recent Democratic legislative wins will raise taxes and contribute to inflation.



Crime & Immigration:

- > **More voters trust the GOP to handle immigration (47%) and crime (45%).**
- > Republicans are doubling down on crime, saying Democrats are too soft and too focused on defunding police.
- > Republicans are also hitting Democrats on a perceived lack of border control in Texas and Arizona.



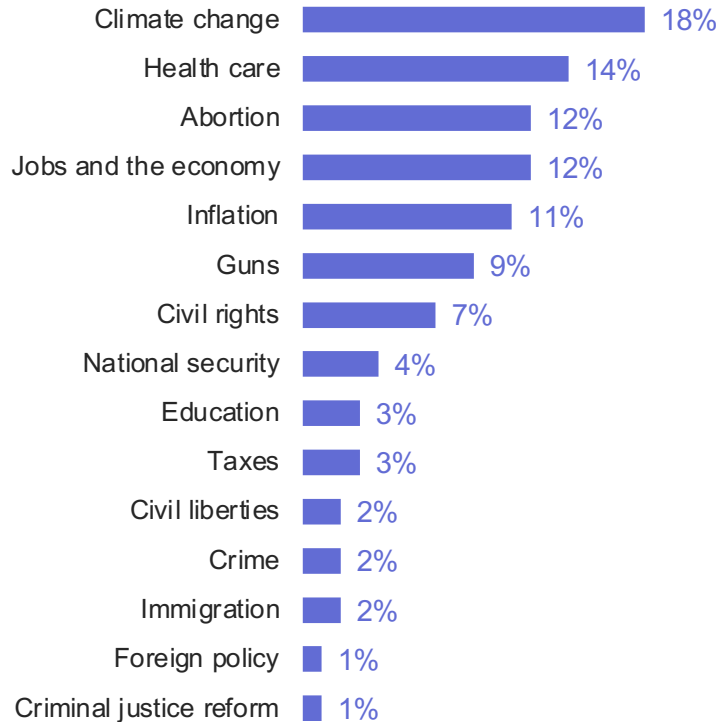
Abortion Access:

- > **More voters trust Democrats to handle access to abortion (53%).**
- > Democrats continue to make abortion rights a central theme.
- > Pres. Biden recently committed to codifying abortion rights nationwide if Democrats expand their Senate majority and keep the House.
- > While still a key motivating issue for Democrats, it remains to be seen if it increases their turnout.

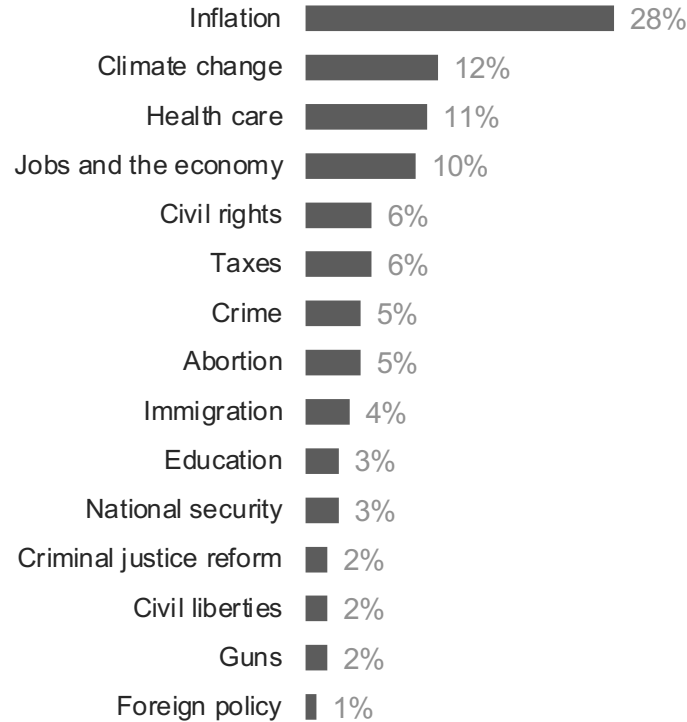
Inflation is the priority for Republicans and Independents; Democrats are split across other issues.

Most Important Issue

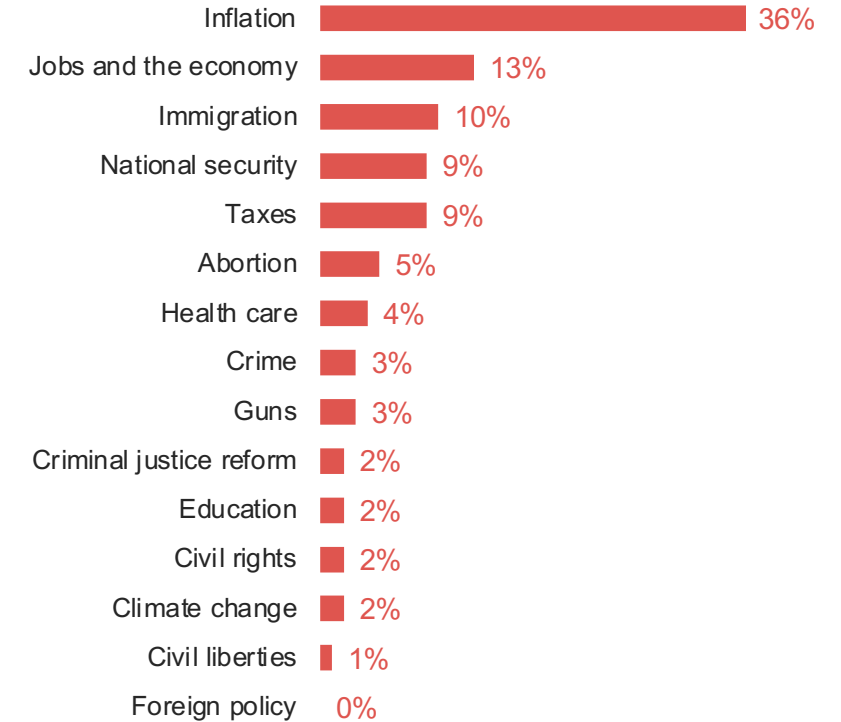
Democrats



Independents



Republicans



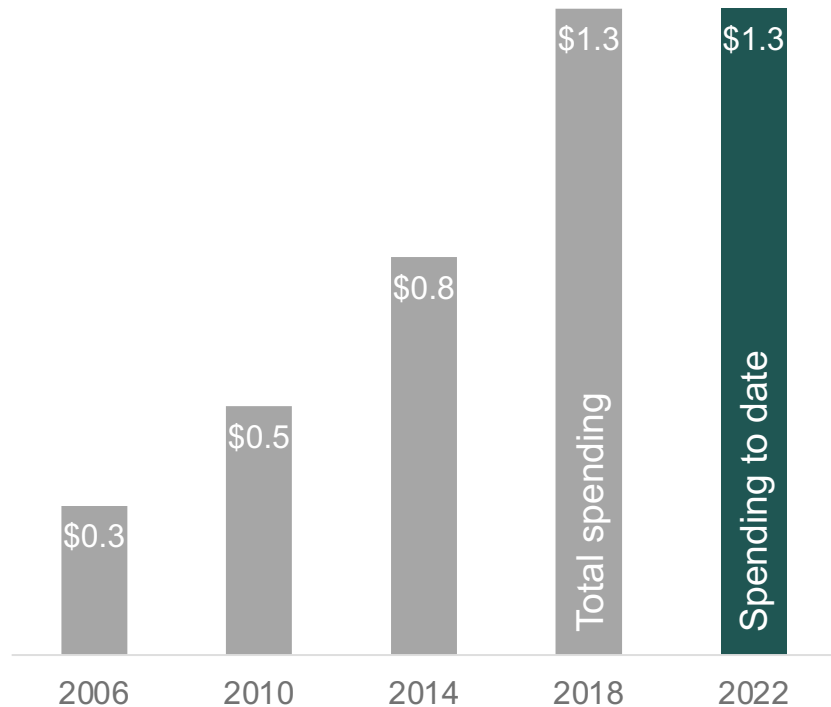
Inflation -6 and climate change +5 from early October

Inflation +5 from early October

Inflation +3 from early October

Outside spending has reached a new high.

Outside spending in midterms in billions:



- The GOP-aligned **Senate Leadership Fund** has been the top outside contributor this cycle (\$149.1 million spent so far).
- The GOP-aligned **Congressional Leadership Fund** is the second-largest contributor so far (\$110 million).
- The Democrat-aligned **Senate Majority PAC** is the third largest spender this cycle (\$75.4 million spent so far).
- The Pennsylvania Senate race has seen the most outside spending, followed by the Georgia and Nevada Senate races.
- Democratic nominees in seven of the ten most competitive Senate races had more cash on hand than their Republican opponents as of one week ago.

There is potential for record turnout as interest is at an all-time high.

**70% of
Voters**

are very interested in the
midterm elections this year.

Republican voters are
+9 pts. more interested than
Democratic voters.



**5% higher
than 2018**

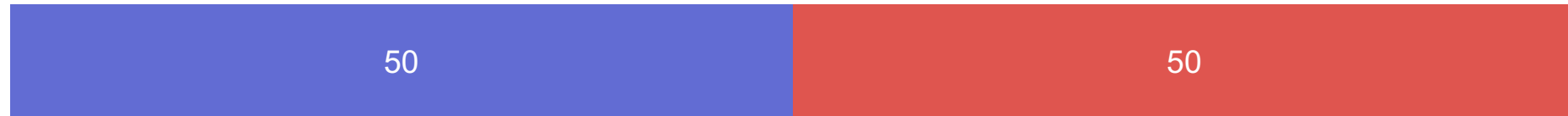
At this time in 2018, 65% of
voters were very interested,
leading to a record high turnout
rate for a midterm (53%).

The Battleground

Republicans need 1 seat to take the Senate and 6 seats to take the House.

Current Senate:

Republicans need 1 seat to take the Senate in 2022

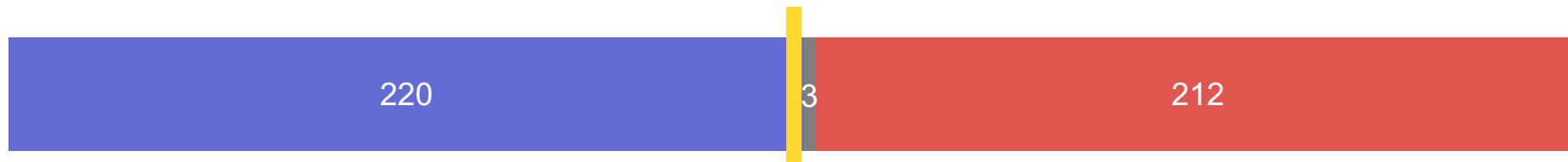


Democrats
(Includes 2 Independents)
+1 Democratic Vice
President to break ties

Republicans

Current House:

Republicans need 6 seats to take the House in 2022



Democrats

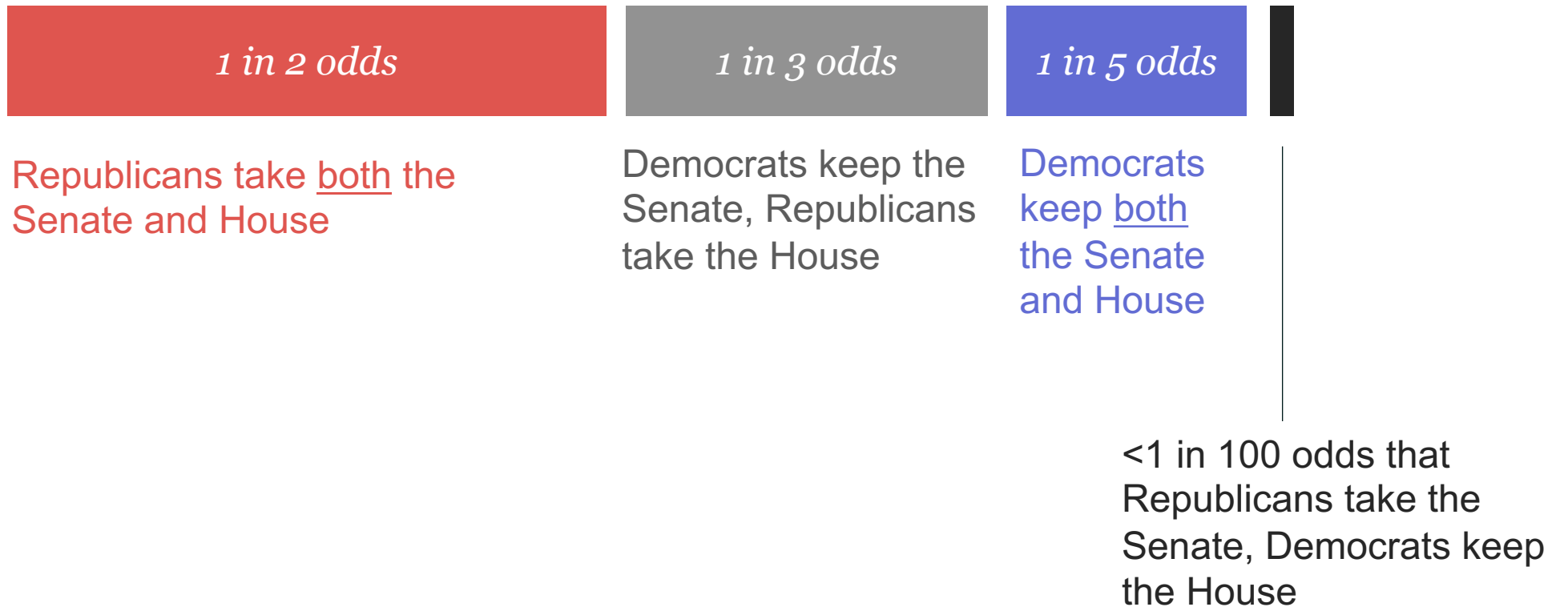
Vacancies
(Previously held by 1
Republican and 2 Democrats)

Republicans

Odds makers increasingly favor Republican control.

Earlier this month, odds were split between whether Democrats retain control of both houses, Republicans take control of both houses, or if control would be split.

Today, FiveThirtyEight gives it a roughly even chance that the GOP takes both houses.

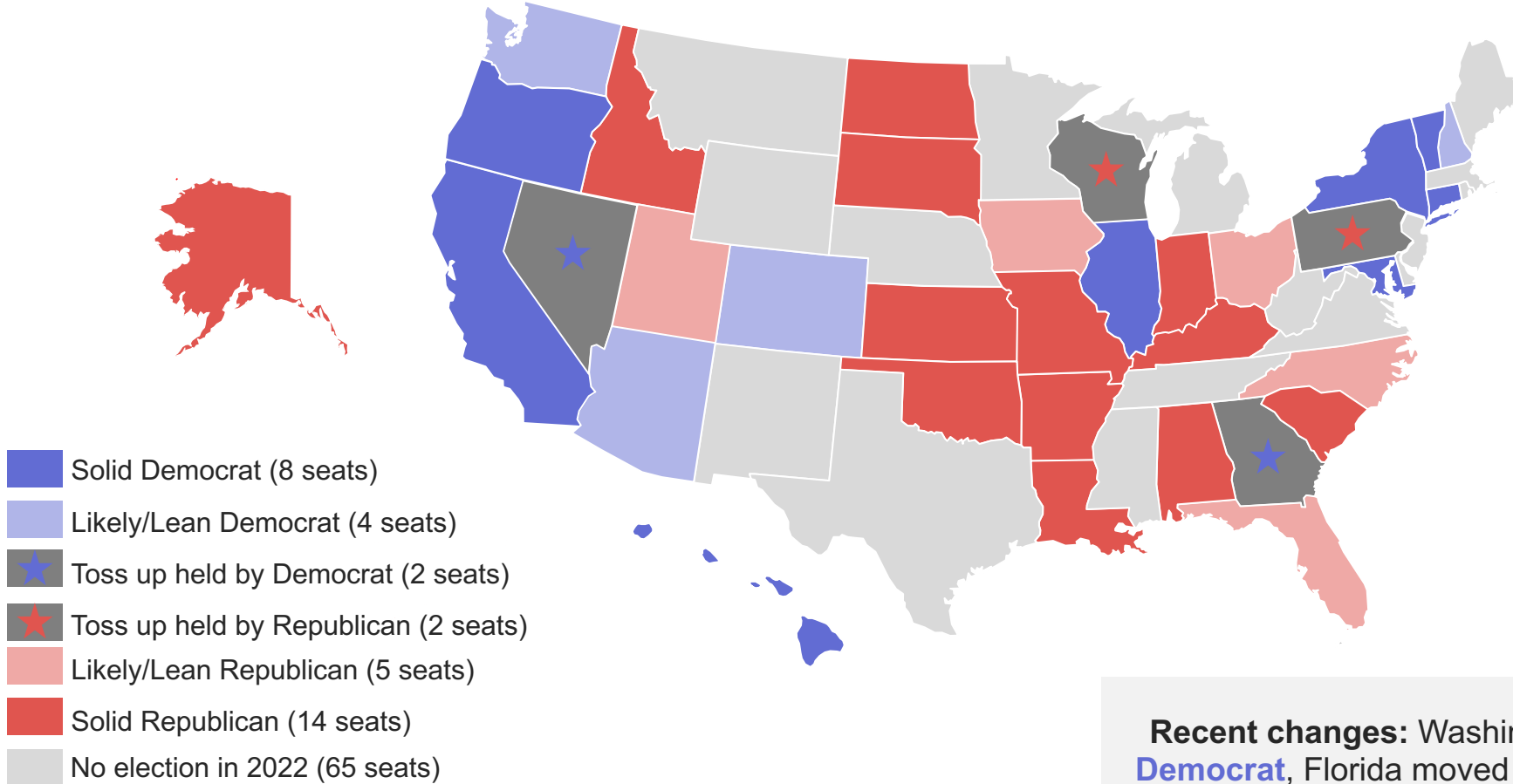


Democrats are defending more toss up seats in the House.

Lean Dem		Toss Up		Lean Rep	
CA-47 Porter	OH-09 Kaptur	AK-AL Peltola	NY-19 Open	AZ-01 Schweikert	AZ-02 O'Halleran
CA-49 Levin	OR-04 Open	CA-13 Open	OH-13 Open	CA-22 Valadao	AZ-06 Open
CT-05 Hayes	TX-28 Cuellar	IL-17 Open	OR-05 Open	CA-27 Garcia	CA-41 Calvert
IL-13 Open	VA-07 Spanberger	IN-01 Mrvan	OR-06 New Seat	CO-08 New Seat	CA-45 Steel
MI-03 Open		KS-03 Davids	PA-07 Wild	NC-13 Open	FL-27 Salazar
MI-08 Kildee		ME-02 Golden	PA-08 Cartwright	NE-02 Bacon	IA-01 Miller-Meeks
NC-01 Open		MI-07 Slotkin	PA-17 Open	NM-02 Herrell	IA-03 Axne
NH-02 Kuster		MN-02 Craig	RI-02 Open	NY-22 Open	MT-01 New Seat
NV-04 Horsford		NH-01 Pappas	VA-02 Luria	OH-01 Chabot	NJ-07 Malinowski
NY-03 Open		NV-01 Titus	WA-08 Schrier	TX-34 Merged Seat	NY-01 Open
NY-04 Open		NV-03 Lee			WA-03 Open
NY-18 Ryan		NY-17 Maloney			WI-03 Open

Bold denotes ratings that have shifted in recent weeks. NY-04, NY-17, and OR-06 moved in favor of Republicans. MT-01 moved in favor of Democrats.

The Senate map remains more competitive.



Latest Forecast:

- Projections give Democrats about a 50/50 chance of keeping the Senate.
- Only 4 seats remain true toss ups:
 - > **Two are held by a Republican:**
 - Sen. Ron Johnson (WI)
 - Retiring Sen. Pat Toomey (PA)
 - > **Two are held by Democrats:**
 - Sen. Raphael Warnock (GA)
 - Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto (NV)

Recent changes: Washington moved from **Safe** to **Likely Democrat**, Florida moved from **Lean** to **Likely Republican**, and Iowa moved from **Solid** to **Likely Republican**.

Polls show several tight Senate contests.



Georgia

Incumbent: **Raphael Warnock (D)**
Challenger: **Herschel Walker (R)**
Recent average polling: **Warnock +3.0**



Nevada

Incumbent: **Catherine Cortez-Masto (D)**
Challenger: **Adam Laxalt (R)**
Recent average polling: **TIED**



Wisconsin

Incumbent: **Ron Johnson (R)**
Challenger: **Mandela Barnes (D)**
Recent average polling: **TIED**



Pennsylvania (Open)

Democrat: **John Fetterman (D)**
Republican: **Mehmet Oz (R)**
Recent average polling: **TIED**



Arizona

Incumbent: **Mark Kelly (D)**
Challenger: **Blake Masters (R)**
Recent average polling: **Kelly +4.5**



Colorado

Incumbent: **Michael Bennet (D)**
Challenger: **Joe O'Dea (R)**
Recent average polling: **Bennet +8.8**



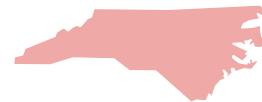
New Hampshire

Incumbent: **Maggie Hassan (D)**
Challenger: **Don Bolduc (R)**
Recent average polling: **Hassan +5.5**



Ohio (Open)

Democrat: **Tim Ryan (D)**
Republican: **JD Vance (R)**
Recent average polling: **TIED**



North Carolina

Democrat: **Cheri Beasley (D)**
Republican: **Ted Budd (R)**
Recent average polling: **TIED**

Insiders are watching key races in Georgia, Pennsylvania, and Washington.



- > **Georgia:** Polling after recent scandals involving Herschel Walker (R) shows some slight gains for Sen. Raphael Warnock (D) but it hasn't fundamentally shifted the race. It is likely to require a runoff due to a third-party candidate, Libertarian Chase Oliver.

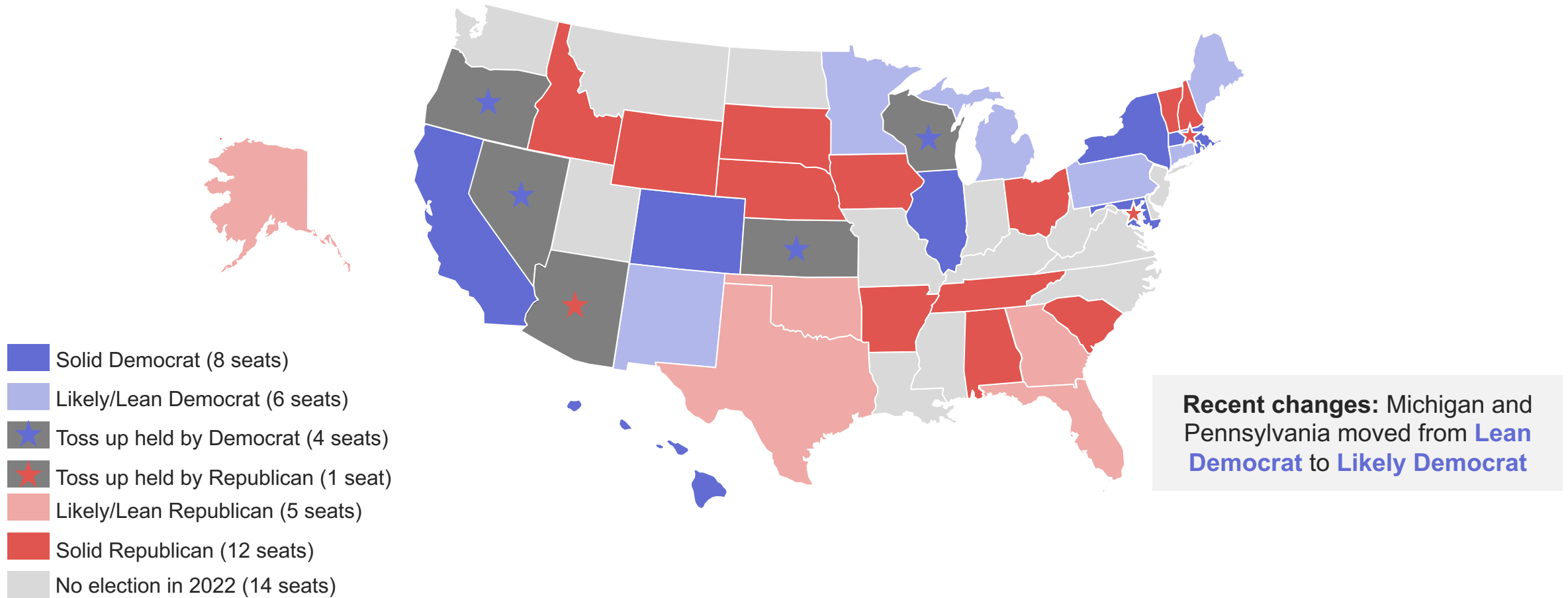


- > **Pennsylvania:** The Senate race between John Fetterman (D) and Mehmet Oz (R) has tightened in recent days, with Oz and allies making the case that Fetterman is soft on crime.



- > **Washington:** While typically a Democratic stronghold, crime and inflation may make the race between Sen. Patty Murray (D) and Tiffany Smiley (R) tighter than expected. Pollsters have Murray leading by 9 pts. on average.

Potential for significant policy changes as 36 states are electing governors.



Toss-up gubernatorial races are all tied.



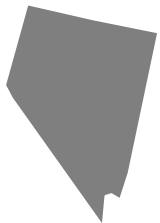
Arizona (Open)

Democrat: **Katie Hobbs (D)**
Republican: **Kari Lake (R)**
Recent average polling: **TIED**



Kansas

Incumbent: **Laura Kelly (D)**
Challenger: **Derek Schmidt (R)**
Recent polling: **TIED**



Nevada

Incumbent: **Steve Sisolak (D)**
Challenger: **Joe Lombardo (R)**
Recent polling: **TIED**



Oregon (Open)

Democrat: **Tina Kotek (D)**
Republican: **Christine Drazan (R)**
Notable third party candidate: **Betsy Johnson (I)**
Recent average polling: **TIED**



Wisconsin

Incumbent: **Tony Evers (D)**
Challenger: **Tim Michels (R)**
Recent average polling: **TIED**

Insiders are watching the potential for split ballots in key races.



Georgia

- > **Senate polling: D +3.0**
- > **Gov. polling: R +6.2**
- > Republican Senate candidate Herschel Walker has been mired in controversy in recent weeks, but a strong showing for incumbent Gov. Brian Kemp (R) may help.



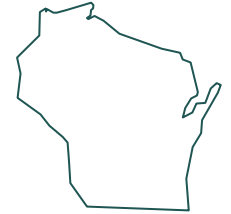
Kansas

- > **Senate polling: R +12**
- > **Gov. polling: TIED**
- > Gov. Laura Kelly (D) took office in 2018 in the reliably red state. She faces state Attorney General Derek Schmidt (R) who won his race by 15 points in 2020.



Oregon

- > **Senate polling: D +11**
- > **Gov. polling: TIED**
- > Oregon is a reliably blue state, but former Democrat Betsy Johnson is splitting support with Democratic nominee Tina Kotek. This creates an opening for Republican candidate Christine Drazan.



Wisconsin

- > **Senate polling: TIED**
- > **Gov. polling: TIED**
- > Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes (D) led incumbent Sen. Ron Johnson (R) in Senate polling through the summer, but Johnson has now pulled ahead.

FGS Global perspectives

*“As a former White House reporter, I see the midterms as the first day of the 2024 presidential race. What themes and personalities will win the hearts and minds of voters? **Many politicians we’ve seen campaigning this midterm – for themselves or on behalf of others – clearly have higher ambitions and are laying the groundwork for a presidential run.** And there’s no bigger shadow campaign than the one being run by the current president amid more Democrats calling for him not to run for re-election.”*

- Nedra Pickler, FGS Global Partner

*“Republicans enjoy the traditional first term midterm historical advantage, low presidential approval ratings, and high inflation being the top issue. However, Republicans will be challenged by poor candidate recruitment and primary choices, along with the prominence of other issues that may cut into their vote. **The all-important issue of candidate and campaign performance stands to limit potential gains, even if they win the House.**”*

- Bruce Haynes, FGS Global Partner

*“I’m watching whether the political media capture the true drivers behind the voting. Can media go beyond stubborn horse-race obsession, simplistic issue reporting, and addiction to polling that is probably very wrong to explain, for instance, the myriad types of anger and fear across demographics, like women, rural communities, left-behind geographies, young people, urban dwellers, voters of color and more? **Companies need to know whose anger and fear will win this time, and where and why, because those are their customers, employees, investors, and regulators.**”*

- Jennifer Loven, FGS Global Partner

What to expect after election day

- **We likely won't know the outcome of all races on election night:**
 - > With an increased number of early and by-mail voters, final counts and results may not be determined for many days after the election. It may be clear, however, which party controls the House even without all races reported.
 - > In this current political climate, there will likely be more contested races and recounts.

- **Expect government gridlock:**
 - > With a Democrat in the White House and a likely GOP-controlled House, a divided government will likely lead to more gridlock.

- **Cultural divides will remain:**
 - > Polling still shows a divided nation on the issues of the day.
 - > Brands and organizations will continue to be in the crossfire between government, citizens, and their employees.

Thank You

FGS Global has a full-service insights team offering an innovative suite of qualitative, quantitative, digital and analytics services.

We go beyond the standard Q&A and use research to make strategic recommendations on complex issues and political topics that helps shape our clients' messaging and strategy.

For more information about this update or to find out more about FGS Global's insights capabilities, contact:

publicopinion@fgsglobal.com

*Updated as of
October 24, 2022*

