TODAYS TRENDS ON CAPITOL HILL

NOVEMBER 4, 2026

THE GDELT PROJECT



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THE 2026 MIDTERM "BLUE TSUNAMI" MARKS A DECISIVE PIVOT IN AMERICAN GOVERNANCE AND A TOTAL REPUDIATION OF THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION'S FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC POLICIES

DAY-AT-A-GLANCE

The 2026 Midterm Elections have resulted in a **comprehensive realignment** of the American political landscape, characterized by analysts as a Blue Tsunami that has handed Democrats decisive control of both the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate. This electoral shift was driven by a convergence of intense voter dissatisfaction with the **ongoing war in Iran**, the domestic **affordability crisis** exacerbated by trade tariffs, and the **systemic cuts to social services** enacted by the Trump administration. Major Republican strongholds, including Texas, Kansas, and South Carolina, saw historic flips in both Senate and Gubernatorial races, signaling a collapse of the GOP's "southern wall" and a total rejection of **identity-based campaign strategies** in favor of economic populism.

Legislative leaders are already preparing to leverage this new mandate, with Senate Majority Leader-elect Chuck Schumer and future House Speaker Hakeem Jeffries announcing an immediate focus on **restoring Medicaid and ACA tax credits**, ending the war in Iran, and launching aggressive oversight investigations into executive corruption and the "Epstein Files." Meanwhile, the Republican party faces an **internal crisis** as House Speaker Mike Johnson announced he will not seek a leadership role in the new Congress, and Vice President JD Vance publicly admitted that the administration's **military engagement in the Middle East** was the primary cause of the party's catastrophic losses. Even as the administration attempts to project strength through **hardened infrastructure projects** at the White House, the legislative branch is poised to enter a period of intense confrontation with the executive.

MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

Democratic Control of the 120th Congress

- Democrats are projected to hold between 54 and 56 seats in the Senate, achieving a healthy majority that complicates Republican legislative efforts for the foreseeable future.
- In the House, Democrats have secured at least 255 seats, representing a pickup of 25+ seats and the largest majority for the party in over 30 years.
- The election is viewed as a **referendum on President Trump**, whose approval ratings hit a historic low of -26% among registered voters leading up to the vote.

Systemic Collapse of GOP Strongholds

- In Texas, James Talarico defeated Ken Paxton for the U.S. Senate, and Gina Hinojosa defeated Greg Abbott for the governorship, the first Democratic win in a statewide race in nearly 40 years.
- Kansas elected a Democrat, Adam Hamilton, to the U.S. Senate for the first time in 94 years.
- South Carolina flipped a Senate seat with Annie Andrews defeating incumbent Darline Graham, sister of the late Lindsey Graham.

GOP Leadership Reshuffle

- Speaker Mike Johnson will not run for reelection as leader of the House Republicans following the catastrophic losses.
- A leadership vacuum has emerged, with **Jim Jordan and Steve Scalise** expected to vie for the Minority Leader position next Tuesday.
- Vice President JD Vance has begun **distancing himself** from the President regarding the war in Iran to salvage a potential 2028 presidential bid.

Post-Election Policy Agenda

- Governor JB Pritzker released a 200-recommendation policy book for the new Congress, focusing on reversing Medicaid cuts and SNAP restrictions.
- Democrats have committed to **ending the war in Iran** and repealing "illegal" Trump tariffs directly impacting grocery and fuel prices.
- New priorities include **national AI guardrails** and a moratorium on new data center constructions which have become deeply unpopular with voters.

KEY GOVERNANCE TOPICS

Armed Conflict & Militarization

- The war in Iran is cited as a **primary driver** of Republican defeats; the conflict has reportedly resulted in at least 23 service member fatalities.
- President Trump claims the military has "totally broken" the Iranian navy and air force, but voters remain **furious over gas prices** rising to $6-$7 per gallon due to the conflict.
- Incoming legislative leaders plan to use the **power of the purse** to force an immediate de-escalation and end to funding for the war.

Macroeconomics & Trade

- The "affordability crisis" is the top voter concern, with 71% of voters dissatisfied with their financial situation.
- Trump's trade wars and tariffs are blamed for raising grocery prices and the cost of automobiles "through the roof."
- Voters soundly rejected the administration's claim of a "Golden Age," noting that inflation remains at 3.7%, higher than when Trump entered office.

Critical Infrastructure Security

- There is a growing **grassroots revolt** against data centers; voters in Georgia and Texas express anger over these facilities draining power and water resources.

- President Trump is focusing on **fortifying the White House**, signing the final beam of a new missile-proof and drone-proof ballroom and heliport.
- The administration claims the new structures are necessary to ensure the **safety of the President** during meetings with foreign leaders like those from China and Russia.

Leadership Dynamics & Governance

- A historic number of **women of color** and black governors were elected, including Keisha Lance Bottoms in Georgia and David Crowley in Wisconsin.
- Democratic governors-elect like Amy Klobuchar (MN) and Rob Sand (IA) are prioritizing "total audits" of state governments to root out waste and fraud.
- The GOP base is fracturing, with populist right figures like **Tucker Carlson** reportedly advising voters against supporting establishment GOP candidates.

DEEP DIVE: TRENDS AND THEMES

The Failure of Identity-Based Distraction

- Republican attempts to focus the campaign on **LGBTQ+ issues** and "transgender surgery" ads backfired significantly, with voters prioritizing their "pocketbook concerns" over cultural warfare.
- The "normalization of weird" narrative, used against candidates like Troy Jackson and James Talarico, failed to resonate as these candidates successfully **pivoted to affordability** and labor issues.
- Even in the South, attempts to use **Islamophobic rhetoric** against candidates like Abdul El-Sayed were unsuccessful, as he gained over 60% of the Jewish vote in Michigan, defying media narratives of a communal rift.

Populist Resurgence on the Left

- The new Democratic majority is heavily influenced by a **populist left wing** that emphasizes "Money out of politics" and "Medicare for All."
- Candidates like Abdul El-Sayed and Josh Turek ran on explicitly populist platforms, defeating well-funded establishment rivals and signaling a shift in the party's ideological center of gravity.
- There is a strong push to move beyond "damage control" and toward **structural changes** like taxing billionaires and passing federal living wage laws.

INTERNAL DYNAMICS & DOMESTIC INSTABILITY

The United States is currently experiencing a period of **extreme political polarization** and institutional stress. The 2026 midterms revealed that even high-profile gerrymandering could not protect the Republican party from a unified public backlash. The **Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE)** has caused significant domestic friction, with reports that its cuts disproportionately displaced over 300,000 black women and multiple high-ranking military personnel from federal service. This has fueled a sense of **betrayal** among segments of the voter base that previously supported the administration. Furthermore, the **EPSTEIN Files** continue to act as a destabilizing force, with voters demanding the

full release of information and expressing disgust at the administration's perceived cover-ups.

EXTERNAL DYNAMICS & GLOBAL POSTURE

The international perception of the United States is one of a nation **adrift and internally conflicted**. While the Trump administration focuses on **power projection** through the war in Iran and "illegal" tariffs, allies and adversaries alike are reacting to the shift in internal power. The UK's Prime Minister's Questions reflected a global sense that Trump took "one hell of a beating," with British leaders calling for **immediate de-escalation** in the Middle East and raising concerns about scanned Epstein files. The global framework is seen as a **threat matrix** by the administration, leading to the construction of high-security bunkers and defensive infrastructure at the White House, while the incoming Congress signals a **retreat from interventionism** and a pivot toward "America First" in its truest economic sense.

THE ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT

The economic sentiment is overwhelmingly negative despite the administration's claims of manufacturing success. Financial markets are pricing in a **potential "bloodbath"** on the stock exchange following the Democratic sweep, with the Dow already dropping in response to the news. The war in Iran has disrupted oil flows and skyrocketed fuel prices, while trade tariffs have added roughly $250 a month to the cost of living for average families in rural states like Kansas.

Key Economic Vectors:

- **Gas Prices:** Averaging $6 per gallon; Diesel at $7 per gallon due to the war.
- **Inflation:** Reported at **3.7%**, causing voters to "put groceries back at the register" due to rising costs.
- **Medicaid Cuts:** Estimated to have stripped coverage from millions, placing hundreds of hospitals at risk of closure.
- **Housing:** Democrats plan to drive **private equity** out of the residential housing market to lower costs.
- **Tariff Impact:** Blamed for the closure of meat processing plants in the Quad Cities and driving up fertilizer costs for farmers.

LEADERSHIP CHANGES

The post-election landscape is defined by the **fall of the Trump-aligned GOP leadership** and the rise of a younger, more diverse Democratic cohort.

- **Mike Johnson:** Outgoing Speaker of the House; declined to run for Minority Leader.
- **Hakeem Jeffries:** Expected to be the first Black Speaker of the House; running on a platform of "Relief is on the Way."
- **James Talarico & Abdul El-Sayed:** Newly elected Senators and **rising stars** of the populist left ideological movement.
- **Gina Hinojosa & Keisha Lance Bottoms:** Historic gubernatorial wins in TX and GA, establishing a new bench for the 2028 presidential race.
- **Ken Paxton & Greg Abbott:** Major **political casualties** in Texas; their defeat signals a total collapse of the MAGA mandate in the state according to exit polls.

EDITORIAL POSTURE & STORY HIERARCHY

The network coverage was dominated by the **Blue Tsunami** narrative, with C-SPAN focusing on direct victory/concession speeches and analyst panels emphasizing the **death of the MAGA mandate**. The "Lead Stories" were the historic flips in **Texas and Kansas** and the internal chaos in the GOP leadership. "Buried Stories" included the **ongoing details of the Iran blockade** and the specific humanitarian impacts of the government shutdown earlier in the year. The tone varied from **celebratory and defiant** on TYT and Democratic podiums to **morose and analytical** on the Salem Radio Network and PBD Podcast. **Conspicuous Omissions** include a detailed accounting of the current military situation in Iran beyond Trump's brief claims, and the potential for **lame-duck executive actions** that could further destabilize the transition of power.

GEOPOLITICAL FRAMING

The day's framing depicts an America in a **state of "reformation,"** pivoting away from a perceived "corrupt and incompetent" presidency toward a new, multiracial populist majority. The international system is viewed through the lens of **Trump's failure** to project sustainable power abroad, while the home front is characterized by "brokenness" needing immediate healing through **aggressive domestic legislation**.

Countries

- **United States:** Portrayed as a nation that has "roared" and "soundly rejected" corruption and fear in favor of integrity.
- **Iran:** Characterized as a military target that has been "shattered" but remains an open-ended conflict causing domestic economic ruin.
- **Israel:** Framed increasingly as a liability by the populist left, with calls to "zero out aid" and hold the nation accountable to international law.
- **United Kingdom:** Portrayed as a concerned ally, **relieved by Trump's defeat** and eager for de-escalation in the Middle East.

Leaders

- **Donald Trump:** Portrayed as a "failed, lame-duck president" whose **erratic judgment** caused a political bloodbath; he remains defiant, focusing on bunkers and ballroom construction.
- **Hakeem Jeffries:** Framed as a historic figure and the "Builder in Chief" of the new Democratic majority.
- **James Talarico:** Portrayed as a **prophetic figure** who used "the politics of love" to defeat the "Goliath" of Texas billionaire donors.

INFORMATION WARFARE ENVIRONMENT

A significant portion of the day's transcripts were dedicated to **deconstructing media narratives**. Progressive outlets like TYT accused CNN and other "mainstream media" of conducting a **propaganda campaign** on behalf of Mike Rogers and AIPAC to smear Abdul El-Sayed. Conversely, conservative voices like Jennings and the PBD Podcast highlighted **information warfare** within their own party, noting that Trump's refusal to acknowledge the polling led to a state of **total shock** among the GOP rank-and-file. The use

of **AI deepfakes** and "foreign bots" was cited by Talarico as a primary tool used by his opponents, marking 2026 as a **high-water mark** for tech-driven election interference that ultimately failed.

HYPOTHESES AND FUTURE OUTLOOK

- **Legislative Gridlock:** Even with a massive majority, Democrats will face **constant vetoes** from President Trump, leading to a period of "legislative razor wire" and a focus on **symbolic votes** to damage the GOP brand for 2028 as outlined by Schumer.
- **GOP Civil War:** The defeat in Texas and the defectors in the Midwest (Taverner/ Carlson wing) suggests a **permanent fracture** in the MAGA coalition, potentially leading to the emergence of a **new third party** or a total "reset" candidate like Marco Rubio.
- **Oversight Blitz:** The new Congress will likely **prioritize the Epstein Files** and the "Trump Parden" schemes, potentially leading to **articles of impeachment** for cabinet members like Pete Hegseth within the first 100 days according to analyst predictions.

STRATEGIC FORESIGHT

Short Term (1-4 Weeks):

- Expect a **leadership battle** in the GOP between Jim Jordan and Steve Scalise. Democrats will likely announce their "Day One" bills focused on **Medicaid restoration** and ending the Iran blockade.

Medium Term (1-6 Months):

- A **government shutdown** looms in December as the lame-duck Congress struggles with funding. Once the 120th Congress is seated, a series of **subpoenas** will be issued to White House counsel and Trump family members regarding self-dealing.

Long Term (1-5 Years):

- Structural reforms to the **Supreme Court** (ethics codes, term limits) and the **abolition of the filibuster** are now viable political targets, potentially altering the balance of power for a generation if Democratic unity holds.

RISK ASSESSMENT

- **Iran War Escalation:** President Trump may launch a "third round" of attacks to **distract from election losses**. **Triggers:** Perceived Iranian naval maneuvers or Congressional attempts to cut funding. **Likelihood:** High. **Impact:** Catastrophic global fuel prices and increased service member casualties. **Mitigations:** Immediate Congressional War Powers Resolution.
- **Stock Market "Bloodbath":** A potential panic sell-off following the shift in control. **Triggers:** Announcements of **wealth taxes** or corporate regulations. **Likelihood:** Moderate. **Impact:** Erasure of middle-class retirement savings. **Mitigations:** Clear, moderate signaling from future leadership like Jeffries.

- **GOP Base Radicalization:** Far-right segments may perceive the sweep as **fraudulent** despite the "squeaky clean" results. **Triggers:** Incendiary social media posts from the President. **Likelihood:** High. **Impact:** Civil unrest and threats against newly elected minority officials. **Mitigations:** Bipartisan certification and local law enforcement vigilance.
- **Infrastructure Collapse:** Domestic energy and water systems stressed by **unregulated data centers**. **Triggers:** High-summer peak usage. **Likelihood:** Moderate. **Impact:** Regional blackouts in TX and GA. **Mitigations:** Moratoriums on new data center utility connections.
- **Executive/Legislative Deadlock:** Total paralysis of government for two years. **Triggers:** Vetoing of every Democratic bill. **Likelihood:** Certain. **Impact:** Failure to address the affordability crisis. **Mitigations:** Negotiating "pocketbook" deals with moderate Republicans.

GAPS & BLIND SPOTS

- The transcripts do not provide a **concrete casualty count** or current operational status of the Iran war beyond the "23 service members" figure.
- There is a lack of detail on **President Trump's legal strategy** regarding the upcoming Congressional subpoenas.
- The broadcasts fail to address how the **Federal Reserve** will react to the projected market instability following the election.
- Detailed demographic turnout data for **Latino and Black voters** is purely anecdotal and lacks finalized percentages in key states like Texas and Florida.
- The role of **international actors** (China/Russia) during the transition period is largely ignored despite the President's references to them.

CONTRARIAN NARRATIVE SCENARIOS

- **The "Veto King" Strategy:** President Trump's "Veto" branding is not a defensive retreat but a **precursor to a 2028 offensive**. By blocking every Democratic bill, he may intentionally worsen the economy to blame the "Do-Nothing Congress" in two years.
- **The "Fake Blue" Surge:** The Democratic win in TX and KS may be **temporary anti-incumbent fever** rather than a realignment. If the new majority fails to lower gas prices in 100 days, these states could flip back Republican before the 2028 presidential race.
- **Black Swan - Presidential Resignation:** President Trump, citing the construction of his ballroom and heliport as his "final gift," and facing aggressive subpoenas, **resigns unexpectedly** to allow JD Vance to govern and potentially "pardon" the administration. This would create a **total power vacuum** in a highly polarized environment.

RECOMMENDATIONS & IMPLICATIONS

For Statecraft/Public Sector:

- **Security:** Immediately implement the **War Powers Act** to force a withdrawal from Iran to stabilize global supply chains and energy costs.

- **Economic:** Priority must be placed on the **repeal of tariffs** that directly impact agricultural inputs to prevent a total collapse of the Midwest farming economy as highlighted in Iowa.
- **Diplomatic:** Re-engage with **European allies** who have distanced themselves during the "illegal war" period to restore American credibility in international forums.

For Private Sector/Investors:

- **Supply Chain:** Diversify away from **tariff-sensitive commodities**; anticipate a period of regulatory overhaul in the pharmaceutical and energy sectors under Pritzker's agenda.
- **Regulatory Compliance:** Tech firms should prepare for **national AI guardrails** and heightened oversight into **data center utility usage**.
- **Capital Allocation:** Expect increased volatility in the **defense sector** as Congressional probes into "self-dealing" and war profits begin in early January.

LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP

The attached transcripts outline a massive pivot in policy proposals, moving away from "deregulation and government efficiency" toward a **comprehensive anti-corruption and social protection** framework.

BILLS DISCUSSED/DEBATED:

- **Pritzker Policy Book (200 Recommendations):** Aimed at **reversing Trump administration actions**, including SNAP and Medicaid restrictions at the federal level.
- **Anti-Corruption Act:** Proposed legislation to **ban stock trading** by members of Congress and increase transparency in lobbying.
- **Lincoln Riley Act:** Mentioned as a Republican success **targeting crime**, but now subject to Democratic review regarding its enforcement.
- **National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA):** Subject to a new debate regarding the **merging of US/Israeli military resources** and the Stutzman amendment in Indiana.

HEARINGS & PRESS EVENTS:

- **Hakeem Jeffries Victory Briefing:** Defined the mandate as **affordability and accountability**; announced the formation of five working groups on healthcare and housing for the 120th Congress.
- **JB Pritzker Post-Election Presser:** Emphasized the "scale and scope" of damage to Illinois and the nation; called for the adoption of a "practical roadmap" for governing.
- **Trump White House Construction Event:** A **defiant display** where the President signed the final piece of steel for a fortified ballroom while dismissing the **loss of Congress** as marginally war-related.

KEY STORIES

- **The Blue Tsunami Landslide:** Democrats decisively win control of the House and Senate, flipping key states and districts once thought impermeable to the party.

- **Texas Political Realignment:** James Talarico (Senate) and Gina Hinojosa (Governor) flip Texas blue for the first time in decades.
- **The Kansas Upset:** Adam Hamilton wins a Senate seat in **deep-red Kansas** for the first time in nearly a century defying a 13-point Trump margin.
- **The Michigan Mandate:** Abdul El-Sayed becomes the **first Muslim American Senator** after defeating Mike Rogers in a heavily contested race fueled by anti-war sentiment.
- **GOP Leadership Resignation:** Mike Johnson **abdicates** his leadership role in the House following the electoral defeat citing mid-term history.
- **White House Bunkering:** President Trump signs the final beam for a **missile-proof ballroom**, focusing on "beautification" and security as his party collapses around him.
- **Florida GOP Bright Spot:** Byron Donalds and Ashley Moody **defy the national trend** to keep Florida red, establishing Donalds as a top 2028 GOP candidate.
- **The War in Iran Post-Mortem:** Vice President JD Vance blames the "hot wars and trade wars" for the billions of dollars in costs that alienated voters.
- **Oversight of the Epstein Files:** The incoming House majority signals **aggressive investigations** into Epstein's connections to the Trump administration and cabinet members.
- **Georgia Sweep:** Jon Ossoff is re-elected and Keisha Lance Bottoms becomes **Governor of Georgia**, marking a "sweeping and decisive" victory for Democrats in the South.
- **Iowa Labor Win:** Josh Turek, a logger-turned-Senator, flips Iowa by **prioritizing labor and healthcare** over cultural issues against Ashley Hinson.
- **UK International Reaction:** Prime Minister's Questions in London characterize Trump's defeat as an opportunity for **global de-escalation** and economic relief.
- **Data Center Hostility:** Voter backlash against data centers is cited as a major factor in flipping rural and exurban counties in GA and TX.
- **AI Regulation Push:** Governor Pritzker and other leaders call for **national guardrails** on AI to prevent job displacement and infrastructure strain.
- **The $5,000 Check Failure:** Trump's promise of **$5,000 checks** for all Americans failed to motivate voters, who instead focused on daily gas and grocery costs.

ABOUT THIS REPORT

Today's Trends On Capitol Hill is a public interest experiment in applying deep trend analysis to the daily business of the United States Congress to explore how responsibly applied advanced AI can help journalists, scholars and Congressional staff better understand the overarching legislative trends, themes and patterns of Congress.

No data is used to train or tune any AI model.

Each morning, we apply Google's Gemini 3 to deeply examine yesterday's Congressional activity to tease out its overarching themes and trends into a richly annotated thematic analysis. Each high-level insight is connected back to the original source material, allowing

journalists and scholars to understand the legislative themes and trends and instantly click out to the underlying sources for details.

This inaugural report is based on deep analysis of CSPAN, CSPAN2 and CSPAN3 coverage in collaboration with the Internet Archive's TV News Archive. It is currently limited to the Congressional business covered on those three CSPAN channels and thus may not include all major Congressional business, may include activity from previous days that aired on a later date, and/or may include other major federal, state and local governmental business. We will continue to refine this report to incorporate a growing array of Congressional information sources. This report is entirely machine generated using Gemini 3 and may include errors and omissions. Please verify all findings. No data is used to train or tune any AI model.

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