Freshmen in the House of Representatives and Senate by Political Party: 1913-2008

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# Freshmen in the House of Representatives and Senate by Political Party: 1913-2008 

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## Summary

Sixty-five freshmen were elected in November 2006 to the $110^{\text {th }}$ Congress: 55 to the House and 10 to the Senate. Most of the freshmen were Democrats, thus enabling the party to regain control of both houses of Congress after 12 years. The $103{ }^{\text {rd }}$ Congress freshmen class (elected in November 1992), which was composed of 110 new Representatives and 12 new Senators, represented the largest freshman class in more than four decades. Two years later, in 1994, the Republicans gained control of both the House and the Senate for the first time in some 40 years when 97 new Members ( 86 in the House, 11 in the Senate) were elected to the $104^{\text {th }}$ Congress. This report will be updated after the November 2008 elections.

## Analysis of Data

Table 1 shows, by party, the number of freshmen elected to the House in each election beginning in 1912 and those elected to the Senate beginning in 1914. These starting points were used because the size of the House was fixed at 435 before the election of 1912 and direct election of Senators commenced after ratification of the Seventeenth Amendment in 1912. Italicized entries in the table denote the party which elected the majority of freshmen Members.

Table 1 demonstrates that there can be a rebound effect in which one party has a majority of freshmen at the beginning of a Congress and the other party recovers part or all of the loss within the next two elections. ${ }^{1}$ Another pattern is a party shift occurring and prevailing over time. For example, in the time frame of this report, the $72^{\text {nd }}$ through

[^1]$75^{\text {th }}$ Congresses (1931-1938) established a Democratic dominance in the House that has since been overcome by the Republicans three times, in 1947-1948 (80 Congress), 19531954 ( $83^{\text {rd }}$ Congress), and 1995-2006 ( $104^{\text {th }}-109^{\text {th }}$ Congresses).

The table shows instances in the House and Senate throughout the period of this study when one party has had a majority of freshmen, but that majority was insufficient to achieve control of a chamber. For example, see the Senate in the $107^{\text {th }}$ Congress and both houses for the $76^{\text {th }}, 78^{\text {th }}, 105^{\text {th }}$, and $106^{\text {th }}$ Congresses.

## Data Sources

The data for the House from 1913 to 1953 were drawn from the lists of freshmen in Congressional Directories. Congressional Quarterly Inc. publications (including the yearly Almanacs and Weekly Reports), various Congressional Directories, and other published accounts were the sources for data on Representatives in subsequent years. Included in the House numbers are freshmen who were elected in November to fill a vacancy and then sworn in prior to the convening of the next Congress, as well as Representatives elected between the November election and the opening day of the next Congress. Representatives elected to fill vacancies during the course of a Congress were not counted. Delegates and Resident Commissioners were also not counted.

The majority of data on Senators was obtained from The Senate, Historical Statistics, 1789-1992, by Senator Robert C. Byrd. Data for more recent years were obtained from Congressional Directories and various published accounts of congressional elections. Gubernatorial appointees, Senators elected in special elections not held in November, and Senators who were appointed in an election year and then subsequently elected were not counted.

Returning former Members with interrupted service were also counted as freshmen. Footnoted are Congresses that included large numbers of these former Members. Those in which the number of such returnees was small are not identified.

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Table 1. Freshmen Members in the House of Representatives and Senate by Political Party: 1913-2008

| Congress and Years | House Majority Party | House Freshmen |  |  |  | Senate Majority Party | Senate Freshmen |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  | Democrats | Republicans | Other | Total |  | Democrats | Republicans | Other | Total |
| 63 ${ }^{\text {rd }}, 1913-1914$ | Democratic | 102 | 44 | 7 | 153 | - | - | - | - | - |
| $64^{\text {th }}, 1915-1916$ | Democratic | 38 | 93 | 4 | $135^{\text {a }}$ | Democratic | 7 | 3 | - | 10 |
| $65^{\text {th }}, 1917-1918$ | Demockatic | 39 | 43 | 2 | 84 | Democratic | 8 | 10 | - | 18 |
| $66^{\text {th }}, 1919-1920$ | Republican | 38 | 70 | 1 | 109 | Republican | 6 | 10 | - | 16 |
| $67^{\text {th }}, 1921-1922$ | Republican | 28 | 97 | 1 | $126^{\text {b }}$ | Republican | 4 | 13 | - | 17 |
| $68^{\text {th }}, 1923-1924$ | Republican | 89 | 41 | 3 | $133^{\text {c }}$ | Republican | 12 | 5 | 1 | 18 |
| $69^{\text {th }}, 1925-1926$ | Republean | 21 | 58 | 1 | 80 | Republican | 3 | 9 | - | 12 |
| $70^{\text {th }}, 1927-1928$ | Republean | 28 | 29 | - | 57 | Republican | 8 | 5 | - | 13 |
| $71^{\text {st }}, 1929-1930$ | Republien | 24 | 59 | - | 83 | Republican | 1 | 9 | - | 10 |
| $72^{\text {nd }}, 1931-1932$ | Democratic | 62 | 19 | - | 81 | Republican | 14 | 4 | - | 18 |
| $73^{\text {rd }}, 1933-1934$ | Democratic | 134 | 27 | 4 | 165 | Democratic | 16 | 0 | - | 16 |
| $74^{\text {th }}, 1935-1936$ | Democratic | 75 | 28 | 6 | 109 | Democratic | 13 | 0 | - | 13 |
| $75^{\text {th }}, 1937-1938$ | Democratic | 75 | 15 | 4 | 94 | Democratic | 12 | 2 | 1 | 15 |
| $76^{\text {th }}, 1939-1940$ | Democratic | 33 | 82 | 1 | 116 | Democratic | 5 | 8 | - | 13 |
| $77^{\text {th }}, 1941-1942$ | Democratic | 46 | 26 | 1 | 73 | Democratic | 5 | 7 | - | 12 |
| $78^{\text {th }}, 1943-1944$ | Democratic | 41 | 64 | 1 | 106 | Democratic | 3 | 10 | - | 13 |
| $79^{\text {th }}, 1945-1946$ | Democratic | 62 | 21 | - | $83^{\text {d }}$ | Democratic | 8 | 6 | - | 14 |
| $80^{\text {th }}, 1947-1948$ | Republican | 35 | 73 | - | 108 | Republican | 4 | 15 | - | 19 |
| 81 ${ }^{\text {st }}, 1949-1950$ | Democratic | 104 | 14 | - | $118^{\text {e }}$ | Democratic | 14 | 4 | - | 18 |
| $82^{\text {nd }}, 1951-1952$ | Democratic | 21 | 51 | 1 | 73 | Democratic | 6 | 7 | - | 13 |
| $83^{\text {rd }}, 1953-1954$ | Republican | 31 | 50 | - | 81 | Republican | 6 | 9 | - | 15 |

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| Congress and Years | House <br> Majority Party | House Freshmen |  |  |  | Senate Majority Party | Senate Freshmen |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  | Democrats | Republicans | Other | Total |  | Democrats | Republicans | Other | Total |
| $84^{\text {th }}, 1955-1956$ | Democratic | 39 | 17 | - | 56 | Democratic | 7 | 7 | - | 14 |
| $85^{\text {th }}, 1957-1958$ | Democratic | 24 | 22 | - | 46 | Democratic | 6 | 4 | - | 10 |
| $86^{\text {th }}, 1959-1960$ | Democratic | 63 | 19 | - | 82 | Democratic | 15 | 3 | - | 18 |
| 87 ${ }^{\text {th }}, 1961-1962$ | Democratic | 19 | 44 | - | 63 | Democratic | 3 | 2 | - | 5 |
| 88 ${ }^{\text {th }}, 1963-1964$ | Democratic | 36 | 31 | - | 67 | Democratic | 8 | 2 | - | 10 |
| $89^{\text {th }}, 1965-1966$ | Democrofatic | 71 | 20 | - | 91 | Democratic | 5 | 1 | - | 6 |
| $90^{\text {th }}, 1967-1968$ | Democ ${ }^{\text {a }}$ atic | 14 | 59 | - | 73 | Democratic | 2 | 5 | - | 7 |
| 91 ${ }^{\text {st }}, 1969-1970$ | Democtatic | 20 | 19 | - | 39 | Democratic | 5 | 9 | - | 14 |
| $92^{\text {nd }}, 1971-1972$ | Democ㦹tic | 33 | 23 | - | 56 | Democratic | 5 | 5 | 1 | 11 |
| $93^{\text {rd }}, 1973-1974$ | Democtabtic | 27 | 41 | 1 | 69 | Democratic | 8 | 5 | - | 13 |
| $94^{\text {th }}, 1975-1976$ |  | 75 | 17 | - | 92 | Democratic | 8 | 2 | - | 10 |
| 95 ${ }^{\text {th }}, 1977-1978$ | Democ適tic | 47 | 20 | - | 67 | Democratic | 9 | 8 | - | 17 |
| $96^{\text {th }}, 1979-1980$ | Democanatic | 41 | 36 | - | 77 | Democratic | 9 | 11 | - | 20 |
| $97^{\text {th }}, 1981-1982$ | Democratic | 22 | 52 | - | 74 | Republican | 2 | 16 | - | 18 |
| $98^{\text {th }}, 1983-1984$ | Democratic | 57 | $24^{\text {f }}$ | - | 81 | Republican | 2 | 3 | - | 5 |
| $99^{\text {th }}, 1985-1986$ | Democratic | 12 | 31 | - | 43 | Republican | 5 | 2 | - | 7 |
| $100^{\text {th }}, 1987-1988$ | Democratic | 27 | 23 | - | 50 | Democratic | 11 | 2 | - | 13 |
| $101^{\text {st }}, 1989-1990$ | Democratic | 17 | 16 | - | 33 | Democratic | 5 | 5 | - | 10 |
| 102 ${ }^{\text {nd }}, 1991-1992$ | Democratic | 25 | 18 | 1 | 44 | Democratic | 1 | 3 | - | 4 |
| $103{ }^{\text {rd }}, 1993-1994$ | Democratic | 63 | 47 | - | 110 | Democratic | 7 | 5 | - | 12 |
| $104{ }^{\text {th }}, 1995-1996$ | Republican | 13 | 73 | - | 86 | Republican | - | 11 | - | 11 |
| $105^{\text {th }}, 1997-1998$ | Republican | 42 | 32 | - | 74 | Republican | 6 | 9 | - | 15 |
| $106{ }^{\text {th }}, 1999-2000$ | Republican | 23 | 17 | - | 40 | Republican | 4 | 4 | - | 8 |
| $107^{\text {th }}, 2001-2002$ | Republican | 13 | 28 | - | 41 | Repub/Dem ${ }^{\text {h }}$ | $8^{i}$ | 2 | - | 10 |

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| Congress and Years | House Majority Party | House Freshmen |  |  |  | Senate <br> Majority <br> Party | Senate Freshmen |  |  |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  | Democrats | Republicans | Other | Total |  | Democrats | Republicans | Other | Total |
| $108{ }^{\text {th }}, 2003-2004$ | Republican | 21 | 33 | - | 54 | Republican | 2 | $8^{j}$ | - | 10 |
| $109^{\text {th }}, 2005-2006$ | Republican | 16 | 24 | - | 40 | Republican | 2 | 7 |  | 9 |
| $110^{\text {th }}, 2007-2008$ | Democratic | 42 | 13 | - | 55 | Democratic | 8 | 1 | 1 | 10 |
| Grand Total |  | 2028 | 1803 | 39 | $3870^{\text {g }}$ |  | 308 | 278 | 4 | 590 |
| Percent of Total |  | 52.4\% | 46.6\% | 1.0\% | 100\% |  | 52.2\% | 47.1\% | 0.7\% | 100\% |

Sources: For House freshmen, vario For the House, the numbers are basefi on November election results and any special elections held between November and the convening of the next Congress. The numbers include former Members as well as Representantives simultaneously elected to fill a vacancy in an existing Congress and to their own seat in a new Congress. The numbers do not include special elections or appointments during the Fourse of a Congress. For Senate freshmen, the source was Byrd, Senator Robert C. The Senate, Historical Statistics, 1789-1992 (Washington: GPO, 1993), pp. 414-415. From 1993 forward, the sources were various Congressional Directories and published accounts of congressional elections. The Senate numbers do not include gubernatorial appointments, epecial elections not held in November, or Senators appointed earlier in an election year and then elected in November. Italicized entries in the table denote the party which elected the majority of freshmen Members.
a. Includes 19 former Members.
b. Includes 18 former Members.
c. Includes 26 former Members.
d. Includes 16 former Members.
e. Includes 22 former Members.
f. Includes Member-elect who died before taking the oath of office.
g. The numbers do not include Delegates or Resident Commissioners.
h. As a result of the November 2000, election, the Senate had 50 Democrats and 50 Republicans at the beginning of the $107^{\text {th }}$ Congress. However, a party switch by a Republican Senator in June 2000 shifted control of the Senate to the Democrats.
i. Does not include Democratic Senator Jean Carnahan (D-MO), who was appointed in December 2000 to fill the vacancy caused by the posthumous election of her husband, Governor Mel Carnahan.
j. Does not include Republican Senator Lisa Murkowski, who was appointed in December 2002 by her father, Frank Murkowski, to fill the vacancy caused by his election as governor of Alaska.


[^0]:    Abstract. This report contains a table that shows, by party, the number of freshmen elected to the House in each election since 1912.

[^1]:    ${ }^{1}$ For example, in the House in the $63{ }^{\text {rd }}$ Congress, Democratic freshmen numbered 102, Republican 44. In the House in the $64^{\text {th }}$ Congress, Republican freshmen numbered 93, Democrats 38. Thus, the total for the two Congresses was 140 new Democrats and 137 new Republicans. This pattern appears repeatedly in both the House and the Senate. After the Republicans gained control of the House in the $104^{\text {th }}$ Congress with 73 freshmen, the Democratic freshmen totaled 65 in the following two Congresses, while the number of Republican freshmen totaled 49.

