

# United States Congress

## 2017-2020

### DEMOCRATIC POSITIONS

### THE ISSUES

### REPUBLICAN POSITIONS

Republicans controlled the House of Representatives 2017-2018, and Democrats 2019-2020. Key legislation that each party passed shows the differences in their priorities and stands. We've listed representative bills passed on party-line votes — or near-party-line votes — with just a few crossovers from the other party. See [guides.vote](#) for more nonpartisan guides, including for [presidential](#) and [Senate](#) races and the [Supreme Court](#).

#### DEMOCRATS

#### AFFORDABLE CARE ACT/HEALTH CARE

#### REPUBLICANS

**Keep Obamacare.** Democrats opposed attempts to repeal the Affordable Care Act (ACA), also known as Obamacare. Instead have supported building on and expanding it. Some support further expansions of health coverage like a public option or Medicare for All.

**Repeal and replace Obamacare.** Republicans passed [2017 bill](#) to repeal or cut [key parts of Obamacare](#), cut [Medicaid](#), and [cut \\$900 billion in taxes](#) on higher-income taxpayers and insurers. Senate version narrowly failed. Trump 2017 [tax bill](#) ended Obamacare's individual mandate that [required all Americans to get basic health insurance](#) for themselves and their dependents.

#### CAMPAIGN FINANCE/VOTING RULES

**Tighten campaign finance rules, ease voting rules.** [Passed 2019 bill expanding automatic and same-day voter registration along with campaign finance and voting rules reforms](#). Senate hasn't considered. (See [CEEP guide to the bill](#).)

**Oppose campaign finance regulation and support tighter voting rules.** Republicans largely oppose tightening campaign finance rules as intrusions on free speech. Say stricter voter registration and voting rules are needed for election security.

#### COVID-19

**Increase supplemental COVID relief.** Bipartisan \$2 trillion [CARES Act](#) gave [relief to individuals and businesses](#). Passed after negotiations between House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin. House then passed [\\$3 trillion bill](#) that [assisted state and local governments, gave hazard pay to frontline health care workers, offered student-debt forgiveness and bolstered Medicaid and Medicare](#). More recently, proposed [smaller \\$2.2 trillion version](#).

**Limit additional COVID relief.** Republicans and Democrats joined in passing House and Senate [CARES Act](#). Republicans have rejected follow-up House bills and backed a [smaller \\$500 billion bill with \\$300 instead of \\$600 weekly enhanced unemployment benefits, and no funding for state and local governments](#).

#### ECONOMY

**Tighten financial regulation.** Sought [to restore](#) Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB) provisions and rules cut or scaled back by Trump administration. Senate hasn't considered.

**Pass major Trump tax cuts.** [Passed](#) \$1.5 trillion Trump administration tax cut, [cutting corporate and top bracket tax rates and increasing standard deduction](#). Passed by Senate, signed into law.

**Loosen financial regulation.** [Rolled back parts of Dodd-Frank Act](#), a 2010 law that tightened regulations for banks and other financial institutions. Said the law harmed smaller banks. Passed by Senate, signed into law.

**Loosen rules on interest rates from auto lenders.** [Ended](#) Obama-era rule making auto lenders [ensure that minorities were not charged higher rates](#). Passed by Senate, signed into law.

#### ENVIRONMENT/CLIMATE CHANGE

**Support Paris Climate Agreement.** House voted to [require](#) U.S. [to stay in the Paris Agreement](#) beyond 2020 and fulfill its obligations. Senate hasn't considered.

**Oppose offshore drilling.** 2019 bills [banned offshore drilling](#) on [Atlantic and Pacific coasts](#) and coastline of [Arctic National Wildlife Refuge](#) (ANWR). Senate hasn't considered.

**Support Alaska oil and gas drilling.** [Established an oil and gas leasing program](#) in ANWR, opening the refuge to oil and gas drilling. Passed by Senate in 2017 and signed into law.

**Repeal stream pollution limits on coal mining companies.** [Repealed rule that made mines monitor water quality in nearby streams and restore them once mining is complete](#), calling it [overly costly regulation](#). Passed by Senate and signed into law.

DEMOCRATS	REPUBLICANS
<b>GUNS</b>	
<b>Expand background checks for guns.</b> Voted to <a href="#">establish new background check requirements for firearm transfers between private parties</a> , and <a href="#">extended</a> the background check period <a href="#">on firearm sales from licensed gun dealers</a> . Senate hasn't considered.	<b>Ease rules on interstate concealed gun carry.</b> <a href="#">Let</a> people who have permits for concealed gun carry in one state carry concealed guns <a href="#">in other states where it's legal</a> . Did not advance in Senate.
<b>IMMIGRATION/BORDER WALL</b>	
<b>Give DACA participants path to citizenship.</b> Voted to <a href="#">establish path to permanent legal U.S. residency and potential citizenship</a> for "DREAMers," whom Obama's <a href="#">DACA program</a> protected after they were brought to U.S. as children by parents who weren't legal immigrants. Senate hasn't considered.	<b>Tighten immigration laws in exchange for legalizing DACA status.</b> <a href="#">Sharply reduced legal immigration, penalized sanctuary cities, mandated worker verification and allotted \$23.4 billion to border wall</a> . In exchange, gave DACA recipients renewable legal status, <a href="#">and eliminated separation of families at the border</a> . Supported by Republican leadership but failed to pass when 41 Republicans joined all Democrats in opposition.
<b>IRAN AND SAUDI ARABIA</b>	
<b>Require congressional approval for military action against Iran.</b> <a href="#">2020 war powers bill required congressional approval for military attacks on Iran except in emergency situations</a> . <b>Earlier 2019 bill ended U.S. military support for Saudi Arabia war in Yemen.</b> Both passed House and Senate, President Trump vetoed and senators failed to override.	<b>Mostly oppose requiring congressional approval for military action against Iran.</b> <a href="#">All but six House Republicans opposed</a> war powers bill, and <a href="#">eight Senate Republicans voted for it</a> . <b>Mostly oppose ending military support for Saudi Arabia.</b> <a href="#">All but 16 House Republicans and seven Senate Republicans</a> opposed resolution. <a href="#">Failed to override presidential veto</a> .
<b>LGBTQ RIGHTS</b>	
<b>Ban discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation and gender identity.</b> Passed <a href="#">"Equality Act."</a> Senate hasn't considered.	<b>Oppose "Equality Act" as incursion on religious rights.</b> <a href="#">All but eight</a> House Republicans opposed it.
<b>LEGAL ABORTION</b>	
<b>Oppose abortion bans.</b> <a href="#">All but three</a> voted against Republican bills imposing strong additional restrictions on abortion.	<b>Outlaw abortion.</b> <a href="#">Outlaw abortion</a> at 20 weeks of pregnancy. <a href="#">Failed to reach</a> 60-vote threshold in Senate. <b>Ban abortion coverage in private insurance plans that participate in Obamacare</b> — and permanently ban any federal funding of abortion. <a href="#">Bill passed House</a> but <a href="#">didn't get Senate majority</a> .
<b>MINIMUM WAGE/LABOR</b>	
<b>Raise minimum wage.</b> <a href="#">Raise federal minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$15 per hour by 2025</a> . Senate hasn't considered. <b>Prohibit wage discrimination on basis of sex.</b> <a href="#">Bill made it easier to sue for wage discrimination and required Department of Labor to conduct studies to eliminate pay disparities</a> . Senate hasn't considered.	<b>Oppose minimum wage increase.</b> <a href="#">All but three House Republicans</a> voted against minimum wage increase as bad for the economy. <b>Oppose wage discrimination bill</b> as regulatory overreach, with <a href="#">all but seven House Republicans voting against it</a> .
<b>PLANNED PARENTHOOD</b>	
<b>Oppose defunding of Planned Parenthood.</b> <a href="#">Only two Democrats supported bill to let states withhold federal funding for non-abortion health services</a> .	<b>Defund Planned Parenthood.</b> <a href="#">Let states withhold federal family planning funds from organizations that perform abortions</a> , overturning Obama-era rule and defunding Planned Parenthood. Passed Senate, signed into law.
<b>POLICING</b>	
<b>Restrict police use of force and increase public oversight.</b> <a href="#">Bill held officers liable in lawsuits, banned no-knock warrants and stopped military surplus acquisitions</a> . Senate hasn't considered. <b>Add protections for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.</b> <a href="#">New protections</a> added to Violence Against Women Act promoted housing stability and economic security for victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking. Senate hasn't considered.	<b>Oppose Democratic police oversight bill.</b> <a href="#">All but three House Republicans</a> opposed Democratic police oversight bill. <b>Split on Violence Against Women Act.</b> Republicans sponsored a bipartisan bill <b>to fund suicide prevention and mental health support services for law enforcement officers.</b> <a href="#">Passed both House and Senate without recorded roll call</a> .

[Campus Election Engagement Project](#) is a nonpartisan effort to help colleges engage students in elections. Sources include [Votesmart.org](#), [FactCheck.org](#), [PolitiFact.com](#) and candidate statements. [Vote411.org](#) and [Ballotready.org](#) offer guides to local races.