

Welcome to the holiday edition of the AMA's Very Influential Physician (VIP) Insider. Read on for details about these topics:

- Congress enters peak retirement season
- Redistricting spotlight: Maryland
- NRCC and DCCC release their list of 2022 Congressional target districts

Congress enters peak retirement season

By Casey Wooten of the National Journal

With redistricting and a tight House margin, many House Democrats are opting to retire. The uptick has echoes of past wipeouts.

House Democrats are set to have a tough midterm season, staring down unfavorable redistricting, stunted messaging on their legislative agenda, and the historical trend that the sitting president's party typically loses seats.

For some lawmakers, that's their cue to do what they've been thinking about already: head home.

Already, 19 House Democrats have announced this year that they won't seek reelection for their House seats, compared to 13 Republicans—including GOP Rep. Devin Nunes's resignation announcement Monday. Some are leaving politics, while others are seeking a Senate seat or elected office in their home state. That surpasses the 17 retirements by House Democrats in 2010, when the party suffered a 63-seat blowout.

Just last week, House leadership was dealt one its most high-profile retirements with Transportation and Infrastructure Committee Chair Peter DeFazio [announcing](#) he'll step down after 36 years in office. That's the second committee chair after John Yarmuth, the top Democrat on the budget panel, announced his retirement in October.

And there are likely more to come.

"It's during the holiday period that you slow down a little bit, and that's when you start talking to your family about 'Should I do this or not do that,' so I think that's probably going on," said former Rep. Bart Gordon, who served 26 years in Congress before announcing his retirement in late 2009.

Of the 17 House Democrats who retired in the 2010 midterm cycle, eight announced between December 2009 and February 2010.

The next marker is lawmakers' year-end fundraising report due to the Federal Election Commission on Jan. 31, Gordon said.

"If you've sort of slowed down in your fundraising, people are going to see it at that time and then the buzzards come out," said Gordon, who sits on the board of the Association of Former Members of Congress. "So as that gets closer, you'll see other people making their announcements."

Retirement is a tough decision for some members, more difficult than the announcement to run, said former Rep. Bart Stupak, who retired in the run-up to the 2010 midterms as well.

"It's a career coming to an end that you love, that you enjoyed, but there comes a point in time that you have to say, 'OK, is it time to move on?'" Stupak said.

Stupak said he had never wanted to be a lifer in Congress like some of his colleagues in the Michigan delegation, such as Reps. John Dingell and Sander Levin. Stupak was expecting grandkids as well, and the demands of serving his 600-mile-long district were wearing.

And there was the Affordable Care Act vote, which some argue cost many moderate Democrats their seats that year. Stupak was one of the few remaining antiabortion Democrats in Congress. As lawmakers drew close to passing the landmark health care bill in the House, he and a handful of moderates held out until leadership included his amendment to ensure the bill didn't fund most abortions.

Like moderates today in the middle of negotiations over the Build Back Better Act, some moderates then were taking criticism from both sides.

Sometimes the vitriol became extreme. Stupak received a death threat, he [told](#) The Atlantic in 2011, and was facing outside ad spending in his district.

"It's not just you; it's your family that really sacrifices," Stupak told National Journal. "Every campaign, you don't see the commercials that are on ad nauseam because you're too busy. You don't see it. It's the family that sees it and gets angry."

There's seldom just one reason to retire from Congress, Gordon said. Newly redrawn district lines in Tennessee were a tipping point for him in 2010, along with family considerations and a sense that, as the former chair of the Science and Technology Committee, he had accomplished what he had set out to do in Congress.

Retiring Rep. G.K. Butterfield recently found himself with a tougher district after North Carolina Republicans unveiled that state's new district map this year. Butterfield lashed out at his state's legislature, calling the map "partisan" and "racially gerrymandered" in a video announcing his retirement.

Retiring Reps. Filemon Vela and Ann Kirkpatrick were both at risk of facing more competitive districts as their Republican-controlled states redraw electoral maps in the decennial process. But breaking the news of your retirement to leadership is never easy, Gordon said. "It was very difficult for me to go see the speaker who had been my friend since before we even got to Congress, and Steny Hoyer, another great friend, because I knew that Democrats would lose that seat," he said.

But once a lawmaker makes up their mind that it's time to go, they shouldn't let leadership talk them out of it, Stupak said.

"They'll try to convince you to stay, but once you make up your mind, you've got to follow through," he said. "Because if leadership talks you out of it, then you are going to second-guess yourself, and that's the worst thing you can do. And you won't be sincere in the next election."

There are more than 70 House Democrats who have only served in the majority, those elected as part of the "blue wave" of 2018 that netted Democrats 40 seats and as part of the 2020 elections, when Democrats narrowly held onto the majority.

Should Democrats lose the majority next year, the transition to the minority party in the House can be a culture shock for lawmakers accustomed to the limelight.

GOP Rep. Tom Cole has seen both sides of that coin, coming to Congress in 2003 and seeing Republicans lose the majority in 2006, regain it in 2010, and then lose it again eight years later.

When asked if lurching from the majority to the minority can be difficult for new members, Cole paraphrased former Democratic lawmaker and Obama chief of staff Rahm Emanuel.

"Being in the minority is like being on television with the mute on, they can see you but they can't hear you," Cole said. "There's a lot of truth to that."

Lawmakers in the minority, especially the House minority, notice that reporters don't pepper them with questions quite as much as members walk to the chamber to vote, he said.

And the public's attention drifts elsewhere as well, he added.

"You go from getting your calls returned to, like, 'Who are you again?'" Cole said.

Redistricting spotlight: Maryland

By [J. Miles Coleman](#) of [Sabato's Crystal Ball](#)

Though Maryland has, on paper, divided government, Democrats hold supermajorities in both chambers of the legislature, which gave them the upper hand in the redistricting process.

After 2010, the Democrats, who then had unified control of the state, sought to increase their advantage in the state's 8-seat delegation from 6-2 to 7-1. At the time, MD-6, a conservative seat in western Maryland, was redrawn to take in a healthy chunk of suburban Montgomery County, which gives Democrats large majorities. The gerrymander worked as intended for 2012, delivering an additional seat to the Democrats. Although MD-6 nearly reverted to the GOP in 2014, there has otherwise been little general election action since then in Maryland congressional races.

With their hold on the House majority appearing potentially tenuous, state Democrats felt some pressure from their national counterparts to aim even higher: a plan that would shut Republicans entirely out of their delegation was feasible. During the last round of redistricting, then-first-term Rep. Andy Harris (R, MD-1), who holds an Eastern Shore-based district, was strengthened -- though he has been reelected comfortably, some adjacent and overwhelmingly Democratic districts could have been unpacked to his detriment.

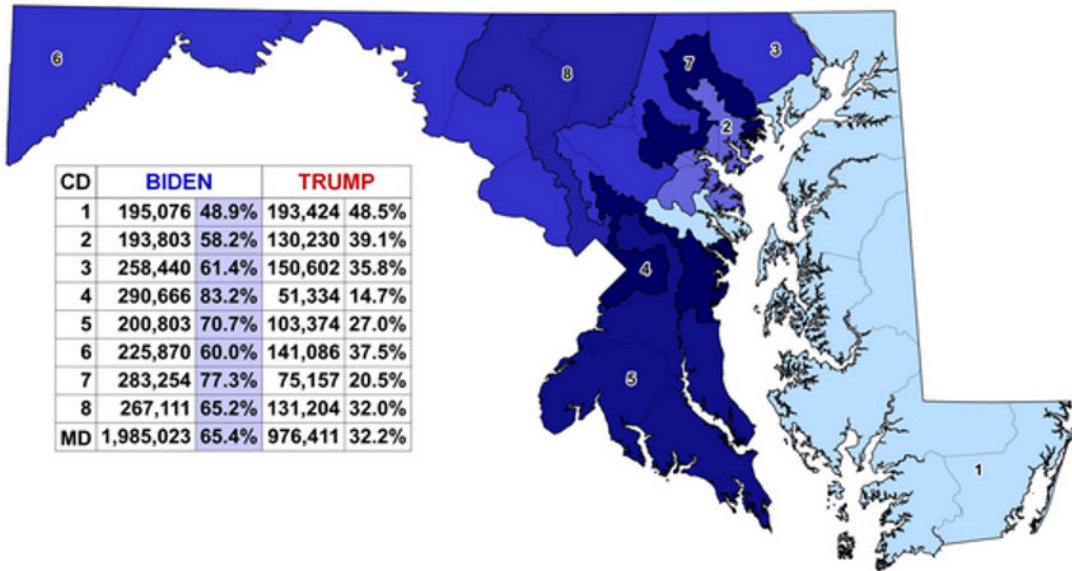
Meanwhile, Gov. Larry Hogan (R-MD), who has a national reputation as one of his party's more moderate members, has taken adamant stances against partisan gerrymandering -- one look at the tangled lines on his state's [current map](#) helps explain why.

Earlier this year, Hogan established an independent redistricting commission -- which did produce some [clean maps](#) -- but its recommendations were not binding. With that, it wasn't surprising when Hogan vetoed the legislature's more partisan plan last week. Almost immediately, legislative Democrats voted to [override](#) his veto and enact their plan anyway.

The map that legislators passed is more compact than the current plan -- though that is not a very high bar -- and it makes reelection harder, but far from impossible, for Harris. Map 1, from state political analyst [James Newton](#), gives the 2020 presidential breakdown by the new lines.

Map 1: 2020 presidential election in Maryland by 2022 districts

MARYLAND: 2021 CONGRESSIONAL MAP



MARGIN	>0%	>5%	>10%	>15%	>20%	>30%	>40%	>50%
BIDEN								

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Compared to the outgoing map, MD-1 drops most of its suburban Baltimore precincts and crosses the Chesapeake Bay Bridge to take in parts of the Annapolis area -- as a result, Trump's share drops from 58.5% to 48.5%, while Biden claims a slim plurality in the new district.

While we'll follow the Democratic primary in MD-1, we're starting the district off as Leans Republican. Though Harris, a House Freedom Caucus member, has cast some [controversial votes](#) during his tenure, the eventual Democratic nominee may not be able to match Biden in what very well could be a less-than-ideal environment next year. In 2016, both Hillary Clinton and now-Sen. Chris Van Hollen (D-MD) would have lost the district by 8 points, which may be a better indicator of MD-1's partisanship.

Aside from MD-1, there are few drastic changes, at least from a purely partisan perspective. Trump took below 40% of the vote in the 7 Democratic-held seats, though he fared best in Rep. Dutch Ruppersberger's MD-2, which is now a tidier eastern Baltimore seat. Rep. John Sarbanes (D, MD-3), who has the most [grotesquely shaped](#) seat on the outgoing map and has long been mentioned as an eventual statewide candidate, retains voters in both the state's main metros, Baltimore and Washington D.C.


Districts 4 and 7, the two darkest blue seats, are both majority Black by composition, although MD-5 may elect a Black member later this decade. House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer, who has held the seat since the early Reagan era, will be 83 on Election Day next year -- the Black percentage in the district is nudged up to 45%.

Rounding out the map, Reps. David Trone (D, MD-6) and Jamie Raskin (D, MD-8) both have sizable portions of Montgomery County, which should, electorally, overwhelm the further-out counties in their districts. Trone may be somewhat vulnerable if 2022 ends up being a truly smashing cycle for House Republicans, but he has the luxury of being able to self-finance.

Finally, though we are assuming the enacted map will be in place for the midterms, the new lines have prompted litigation [spearheaded](#) by the group Fair Maps Maryland. Though a majority of the judges on the state Court of Appeals (Maryland’s state Supreme Court equivalent) were appointed by Hogan, there is no guarantee the high court will intervene. But it is possible that after state courts in North Carolina and Pennsylvania intervened against Republican gerrymanders over the last few cycles, a state court in Maryland could do the same against a Democratic gerrymander now.

NRCC and DCCC release their list of 2022 Congressional target districts

Recently the National Republican Congressional Committee and the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee released their lists of 2022 Congressional targets. Our friends at the [National Journal](#) created some new slides detailing the target lists and highlighting the path that each party believes is their road to victory in 2022.



PRESENTATION CENTER

REDISTRICTING RISK IN-DEPTH

For more insight on which incumbents are most at risk due to redistricting, read David Wasserman's analysis at [The Cook Political Report with Amy Walter](#).

37 of the NRCC's 70 targeted Democrats in 2022 are at some risk due to redistricting

Targeted Democrats at **moderate to high** risk due to redistricting

Democratic incumbent	District	2020 margin of victory
Tom Malinowski	NJ-07	1.2
Abigail Spanberger	VA-07	1.8
Conor Lamb	PA-17	2.2
Haley Stevens	MI-11	2.4
Carolyn Bourdeaux	GA-07	2.8
Vicente Gonzalez	TX-15	2.9
Tom O'Halleran	AZ-01	3.2
Elissa Slotkin	MI-08	3.6
Matt Cartwright	PA-08	3.6
Chris Pappas	NH-01	5.1
Charlie Crist	FL-13	6
Sean Casten	IL-06	7.4
Tim Ryan	OH-13	7.6
Lucy McBath	GA-06	9.2
Stephanie Murphy	FL-07	12.1
Dan Kildee	MI-05	12.7
Marie Newman	IL-03	12.8
Jim Cooper	TN-05	Unc.

Targeted Democrats at **slight** risk due to redistricting

Democratic incumbent	District	2020 margin of victory
Cindy Axne	IA-03	1.4
Angie Craig	MN-02	2.2
Ron Kind	WI-03	2.6
Kim Schrier	WA-08	3.6
Susan Wild	PA-07	3.8
Elaine Luria	VA-02	5.7
Mikie Sherrill	NJ-11	6.6
Kurt Schrader	OR-05	6.8
Katie Porter	CA-45	7
Josh Gottheimer	NJ-05	7.6
Andy Kim	NJ-03	7.7
G.K. Butterfield	NC-01	8.4
Sharice Davids	KS-03	10
Ann Kirkpatrick	AZ-02	10.2
Josh Harder	CA-10	10.4
Chrissy Houlahan	PA-06	12.2
Sanford Bishop	GA-02	18.2
Jim Costa	CA-16	18.8
Deborah Ross	NC-02	28.2

SOURCE NRCC, Roll Call, New York Times, The Cook Political Report with Amy Walter

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33 of the NRCC's 70 targeted Democrats in 2022 have no or minimal risk due to districting

Targeted Democrats at no or minimal risk due to redistricting

Democratic incumbent	District	2020 margin of victory	Democratic incumbent	District	2020 margin of victory
Lauren Underwood	IL-14	1.4	Kathleen Rice	NY-04	13.1
Susie Lee	NV-03	3	Ami Bera	CA-07	13.2
Lizzie Fletcher	TX-07	3.3	Jennifer Wexton	VA-10	13.2
Cheri Bustos	IL-17	4	Filemon Vela	TX-34	13.6
Steven Horsford	NV-04	4.9	Frank Mrvan	IN-01	16.2
Peter DeFazio	OR-04	5.3	Teresa Leger Fernandez	NM-03	17.4
Colin Allred	TX-32	6	Madeleine Dean	PA-04	19
Jared Golden	ME-02	6.1	Henry Cuellar	TX-28	19.3
Mike Levin	CA-49	6.2	David Trone	MD-06	19.7
John Garamendi	CA-03	9.4	Joe Morelle	NY-25	20.2
Ann Kuster	NH-02	10.2	Raul Ruiz	CA-36	20.6
Dean Phillips	MN-03	11.2	Joe Courtney	CT-02	21.2
Jahana Hayes	CT-05	11.6	Ed Perlmutter	CO-07	21.5
Antonio Delgado	NY-19	11.6	Paul Tonko	NY-20	22.3
Darren Soto	FL-09	12	Greg Stanton	AZ-09	23.2
Tom Suozzi	NY-03	12.5	Brian Higgins	NY-26	41.1
Sean Patrick Maloney	NY-18	12.6			

SOURCE: NRCC, Roll Call, New York Times, The Cook Political Report with Amy Walter
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The DCCC announced 22 initial "Districts in Play" for the 2022 midterms

Redistricting risk: Moderate to high Slight None or minimal

Republican incumbent (unless otherwise specified)	District	2020 margin of victory
Claudia Tenney	NY-22	0.04
Mike Garcia	CA-25	0.1
David Schweikert	AZ-06	4.4
John Katko	NY-24	10.1
Mariannette Miller-Meeks	IA-02	0
David Valadao	CA-21	0.9
Young Kim	CA-39	1.2
Michelle Steel	CA-48	2.2
Ashley Hinson	IA-01	2.6
Andrew Garbarino	NY-02	6.9
Steve Chabot	OH-01	7.2
Ann Kirkpatrick	AZ-02	10.2
Burgess Owens	UT-04	1
Beth Van Duyne	TX-24	1.3
Maria Elvira Salazar	FL-27	2.8
Carlos Gimenez	FL-26	3.4
Tony Gonzales	TX-23	4
Victoria Spartz	IN-05	4.1
Don Bacon	NE-02	4.6
Ann Wagner	MO-02	6.4
Scott Perry	PA-10	6.6
Brian Fitzpatrick	PA-01	13.2

SOURCE: DCCC, New York Times, The Cook Political Report with Amy Walter
SLIDE LAST UPDATED ON 9/22/21

The DCCC named 26 vulnerable Democratic incumbents to the 2021-2022 Frontline Program

Redistricting risk: ■ Moderate to high ■ Slight ■ None or minimal

Democratic incumbent	District	2020 margin of victory	Democratic incumbent	District	2020 margin of victory
Tom Malinowski	NJ-07	1.2	Mike Levin	CA-49	6.2
Abigail Spanberger	VA-07	1.8	Mike Sherrill	NJ-11	6.6
Haley Stevens	MI-11	2.4	Kurt Schrader	OR-05	6.8
Tom O'Halleran	AZ-01	3.2	Andy Kim	NJ-03	7.7
Elissa Slotkin	MI-08	3.6	Sharice Davids	KS-03	10
Matt Cartwright	PA-08	3.6	Josh Harder	CA-10	10.4
Chris Pappas	NH-01	5.1	Lauren Underwood	IL-14	1.4
Katie Porter	CA-45	7	Susie Lee	NV-03	3
Cindy Axne	IA-03	1.4	Steven Horsford	NV-04	4.9
Angie Craig	MN-02	2.2	Jared Golden	ME-02	6.1
Kim Schrier	WA-08	3.6	Jahana Hayes	CT-05	11.6
Susan Wild	PA-07	3.8	Antonio Delgado	NY-19	11.6
Elaine Luria	VA-02	5.7	Dina Titus	NV-01	28.4

*Frontline provides Democratic Members of Congress from competitive seats the resources to run successful reelection campaigns.

SOURCE DCCC, New York Times, The Cook Political Report with Amy Walter.
SLIDE LAST UPDATED ON 12/15/21