



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

- VIP exclusive webinar: Capitalizing on In-District Engagements
- Hotline's 2022 House power rankings
- Notes on the state of the Senate
- A look ahead – Congressional calendar for May

Join us for a VIP exclusive webinar: Capitalizing on In-District Engagements

Holiday parades, picnics, ceremonies at local libraries and civic centers, legislator town-halls, constituent in-take sessions. Members of Congress host and attend countless in-district events throughout the year. These events offer constituents a unique opportunity to share concerns, provide direct feedback to lawmakers, or even have a chance run-in with an elected official.

To find out how to leverage these opportunities – join us on May 24 at 7pm ET for our exclusive webinar: “[Capitalizing on In-District Engagements](#)”

As summer approaches, what are the prospects for engaging lawmakers in-person? How can physician advocates capitalize on in-district interactions today and through the end of August district work period? And what can advocates expect now that DC and district offices are reopening to constituents?

This webinar will address these questions and provide you with the know-how to track in-district events and confidently create opportunities for planned and "unscheduled engagements" with Members of Congress. AMA staff will also provide an update on issues currently progressing at the federal level including prior authorization, Medicare, and telehealth.

[Register now](#) to get access to this exclusive training and stay tuned for information on upcoming training topics and times.

Hotline's 2022 House power rankings

By [National Journal's](#) Erin Covey, Josh Kraushaar and Kirk A. Bado

The House map is, for the most part, set in stone. While Republicans' advantage under new maps is not as severe as analysts once predicted, Democrats' prospects of keeping their

narrow House majority have only dimmed amid voters' growing frustration with the party in power.

Republicans are targeting dozens of Democratic incumbents, even in districts President Biden carried by double-digits. Retirements from Democratic members have made already competitive districts even more vulnerable.

Since New Hampshire, Florida, and Missouri had not completed their redistricting process at the time of reporting, Hotline is leaving those states off of the initial round of rankings. Hotline is not including seats that are almost certain to flip—like Georgia's 6th, Tennessee's 5th, and New York's 22nd. Operatives in both parties noted that if the environment continues to deteriorate for Democrats, Illinois's 13th and New York's 1st—GOP-held seats that were redrawn to significantly favor Democrats—could become more competitive.

Our findings are based on an analysis of candidate recruitment, demographics, fundraising, polling, and interviews with party strategists.

1. Wisconsin's 3rd: Open (D)

Rep. Ron Kind's announcement that he would not seek reelection last August opened the floodgates for a rush of Democratic retirements. Without the congressman on the ballot, the 2020 Republican nominee, Derrick Van Orden, is in a strong position to flip this rural district—which Trump carried by nearly 5 points in 2020. None of the Democratic candidates have come close to matching Van Orden in fundraising. While Democrats have focused on Van Orden's involvement in the Jan. 6 rally leading up to the insurrection, polls show that it's unlikely to be a significant issue for voters this November.

2. Michigan's 10th: Open (D)

If the favorable makeup of Kind's rural Wisconsin district puts it at the top of our list, the GOP's recruitment of former Senate candidate John James—one of the top candidates of the cycle—puts this race right behind it in the list of Republican pickup opportunities. While James, an African American businessman, lost Senate races in 2018 and 2020, he ran ahead of expectations in a Democratic-leaning state. With James as the nominee and a weak field of Democratic opponents, it's easy to see how he logs his first political win in a newly drawn Trump district.

3. Arizona's 2nd: Rep. Tom O'Halleran (D-01)

Operatives in both parties agree that O'Halleran is the most vulnerable Democrat this cycle. Among all the Democrats running for reelection, his northeast Arizona district is the most conservative. The one bright spot for O'Halleran is the Republican primary, which is still unsettled, and the congressman could end up facing a uniquely weak candidate in November. At least two Republican candidates—Walt Blackman and Ron Watkins—have ties to far-right groups. But ultimately, the makeup of this district, which became even more Republican after redistricting, will be very difficult for O'Halleran to overcome.

4. Arizona's 6th: Open (D)

Democratic Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick was the first Democrat to announce retirement plans, making the open seat a priority for Republicans early on in the cycle. National Republican support has consolidated around Juan Ciscomani, a first-generation immigrant who served as a senior adviser to Gov. Doug Ducey. Meanwhile, on the Democratic side, the primary is far

from settled, with national Democrats divided between Kirsten Engel and Daniel Hernandez. Ciscomani will have the upper hand in the Tucson-based district.

5. Texas's 15th: Open (D)

Picking up this South Texas district is central to Republicans' efforts to build upon the party's gains with Hispanics in 2020. Rep. Vicente Gonzalez's decision to run for reelection in a neighboring, safer seat left Democrats without an incumbent to take on Monica De La Cruz, the 2020 nominee who came within 3 points of defeating Gonzalez. The new district has moved further to the right, and whoever wins the Democratic primary runoff on May 24 will face an uphill battle against De La Cruz, who consolidated national support early on in her campaign. Though De La Cruz faces domestic-abuse allegations from her ex-husband, the allegations have failed to generate local media coverage so far, and it remains to be seen whether they will have a significant impact on the race.

6. New Jersey's 7th: Rep. Tom Malinowski (D)

New Jersey's redistricting commission shored up all of the state's most vulnerable Democrats but one—Malinowski. Last cycle, Malinowski narrowly defeated top GOP recruit Tom Kean Jr. With Kean running against Malinowski again, Republicans appear to have a much better shot at flipping this competitive district, particularly after GOP nominee Jack Ciattarelli significantly outperformed expectations in the governor's race last year. With the national environment not looking any better for Democrats six months later, Malinowski will have to differentiate himself enough from the national party and fend off Republican attacks over his stock trading.

7. Iowa's 3rd: Rep. Cindy Axne (D)

As Democrats' power in Iowa has eroded over the past several years, Axne is the only Democratic member of the state's congressional delegation left. She defeated former Rep. David Young last cycle by 1 point after unseating him in 2018. But in a state where President Biden's approval rating remains stuck in the 30s, Axne has continued to embrace the president. While the GOP primary field is still in flux, state Sen. Zach Nunn is national Republicans' preferred candidate to face Axne in November.

8. New York's 11th: Rep. Nicole Malliotakis (R)

It's the battle between conservative Staten Island and progressive Park Slope in this gerrymandered New York City district drawn to oust Malliotakis. Democrats drew the Trump district into one that Biden carried comfortably, but given the favorable political environment for Republicans, it's not looking like an easy pickup. The race will come down to whether progressives in Brooklyn are as enthusiastic to vote in a midterm, compared to a fired-up Staten Island electorate frustrated about the declining livability in the city. The Democrats' biggest asset: former Rep. Max Rose, who is a top-tier recruit capable of picking off some blue-collar voters.

9. Pennsylvania's 7th: Rep. Susan Wild (D)

In 2020, Wild ran even with Biden and eked out a 3-point win over Lisa Scheller, who many GOP insiders considered a weaker recruit. Now armed with a friendlier district and the ability to self-fund her rematch, Scheller is back again to finish the job. In his adoptive home state of Pennsylvania, Biden's approval rating continues to bottom out, threatening to drag Wild down with him.

10. Michigan's 7th: Rep. Elissa Slotkin (D-08)

Slotkin is no stranger to competitive races, and she has bested GOP challengers in a district

Trump carried for the past two elections. But this cycle, Republicans are excited about state Sen. Tom Barrett, who they believe is a much stronger candidate than 2020 Republican nominee Paul Junge. While Slotkin, a prolific fundraiser, has significantly outpaced Barrett in fundraising, she'll have to differentiate herself enough from the national party to survive.

Notes on the State of the Senate

By [Kyle Kondik](#) and [J. Miles Coleman](#)

There is a push and pull in the race for control of the U.S. Senate between the big picture electoral environment, which clearly benefits Republicans, and the day-to-day developments on the campaign trail, which do not always clearly benefit Republicans.

Examples of the latter include, but are not limited to, the following over the past few months:

- National Republican Senatorial Committee Chairman Rick Scott's (R-FL) rollout of his own political agenda, which includes some items (like suggesting that poorer Americans who don't currently pay income tax pay it) that other national party leaders don't want to deal with in the midterm.
- Fundraising dominance displayed by the 3 most vulnerable Senate Democratic incumbents: Sens. Mark Kelly (D-AZ), Raphael Warnock (D-GA), and Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV).
- Donald Trump wading into primaries and endorsing candidates who may not be the party's best choice for the general election, such as television doctor Mehmet Oz (R) in Pennsylvania.

It's easy to get caught up in these various developments — after all, these are some of the most newsworthy things that have happened in the race for the Senate recently. And there certainly is a world in which Republicans are foiled in their bid to flip the Senate by some confluence of these developments. Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) acknowledged the possibility of being undermined by campaign developments and poor GOP candidates recently: "From an atmospheric point of view, it's a perfect storm of problems for the Democrats," he said recently. "How could you screw this up? It's actually possible. And we've had some experience with that in the past."

McConnell went on to note that bad nominees cost the Republicans seats a decade ago. Indeed, weak nominees likely cost the Republicans 5 seats in 2010 and 2012 in Colorado, Delaware, Indiana, Missouri, and Nevada, although it's fair to note that Republicans fixed their mistakes and flipped those seats in Indiana and Missouri in 2018. More recently, Roy Moore (R) blew what should have been an unlosable race in Alabama in a 2017 special election, although Republicans reclaimed that lost seat in 2020. With the exception of Moore, though, a lot of the handwringing about Republican fortunes in Senate races has been overblown in recent years, particularly in red or reddish states where high-profile, well-funded Democratic candidates failed to break through.

This is all a long way of saying that Republicans absolutely should sweat the small things but having one big thing on their side — the political environment — can help cover up for the small things that don't go their way.

As we assess the Senate map right now, we do currently see the Republicans as favorites to take the majority. This is because, of the most competitive seats — the ones we call Toss-ups — Republicans are defending just 1 (Pennsylvania) and Democrats are defending 3 (Arizona, Georgia, and Nevada). And while we're holding at a Toss-up rating in all of these races, there are some indications that the Republicans are better-positioned in several if not all of them.

In Georgia, former NFL star Herschel Walker (R) — who may or may not ultimately turn out to be a weak candidate given his baggage — often leads the incumbent, Warnock, in polls.

Recent polls have differed on Cortez Masto's standing against her likeliest challenger, former state Attorney General Adam Laxalt (R), but whether she's ahead or not, her polling is often in just the low-to-mid 40s, short of 50%, and Nevada's diverse, working-class population could be poised to demonstrate problems in the Democratic coalition. Cortez Masto polling in the 40s may, in and of itself, not be too troubling — the state usually has a high third-party vote, as she won with 47% in 2016 — but as recent polling from OHPI showed, her 43% share against Laxalt matched Biden's approval share, which suggests the challenger may have more room to grow.

Arizona and Pennsylvania are murkier, although Kelly, like Cortez Masto, also is not hitting 50% in polls — and as discussed below, perhaps next month's primary in Pennsylvania will bring some clarity to that race.

While Democrats aren't defending incumbents in deep red states, as they were when they lost the Senate in 2014, Biden still did worse in all 3 of Arizona, Georgia, and Nevada than he did nationally in 2020 (despite carrying all of them). He also ran a few points behind his national margin in Pennsylvania, the top Democratic offensive target. In other words, if Biden's standing is already weak nationally (which seems apparent), it is likely at least as weak or perhaps a little weaker in these states.

[Continue reading](#)

A look ahead – Congressional calendar for May

As a valued member of the Very Influential Physicians (VIP) program we want to make sure that you're up-to-date on when Congress is in session in Washington, DC and when members are back home for district work periods. That's why we've created an exclusive VIP branded calendar allowing you the ability to better plan your advocacy efforts – whether in DC or back in the district. Each Newsletter we will highlight the calendar for that month. You can always access the [full calendar](#) along with other advocacy tools on our [VIP website](#).

MAY

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30 Memorial Day	31				

Senate in Session

House in Session

Both Chambers in Session

State Work Periods

District Work Periods

Both Work Periods



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