Bruce Mehlman
October 27, 2026
bruce@mc-dc.com

ACEC 2026 FALL CONFERENCE

Three Key Trends for 2027













The Midterms & What Comes Next

MEHLMAN CONSULTING

THERE'S A MANDATE FOR CHANGE

Change in Control of House, Senate and/or White House

1960's	1970's	1980's	1990's	2000's	2010's	2020's
1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
1962	1972	1982	1992	2002	2012	2022
1964	1974	1984	1994	2004	2014	2024
1966	1976	1986	1996	2006	2016	2026
1968	1978	1988	1998	2008	2018	2028

MEHLMAN CONSULTING

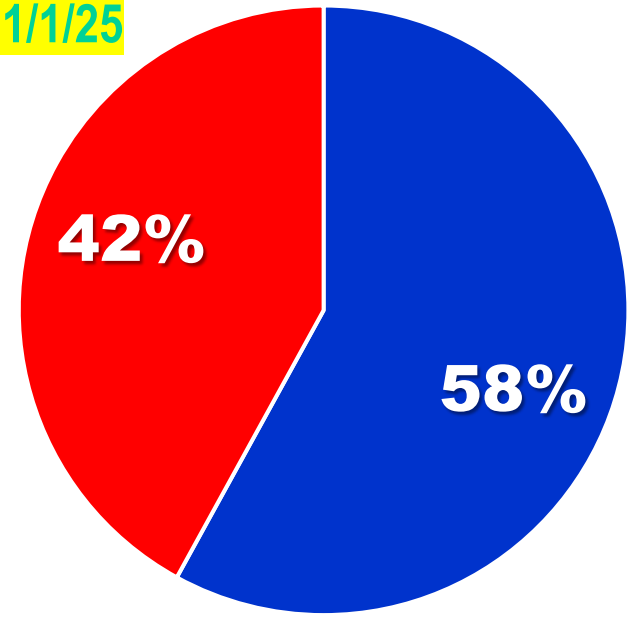
#1. The Midterm Elections

Money, Maps, Mood & Matchups

TOP LINES

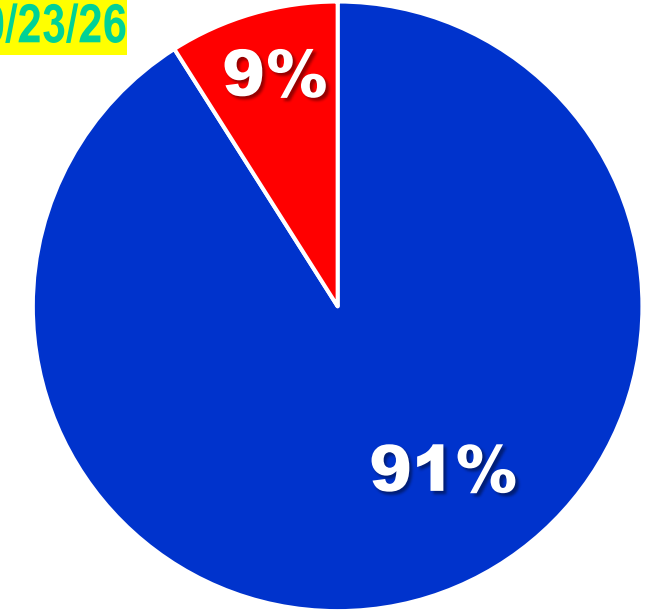
Kalshi

11/1/25

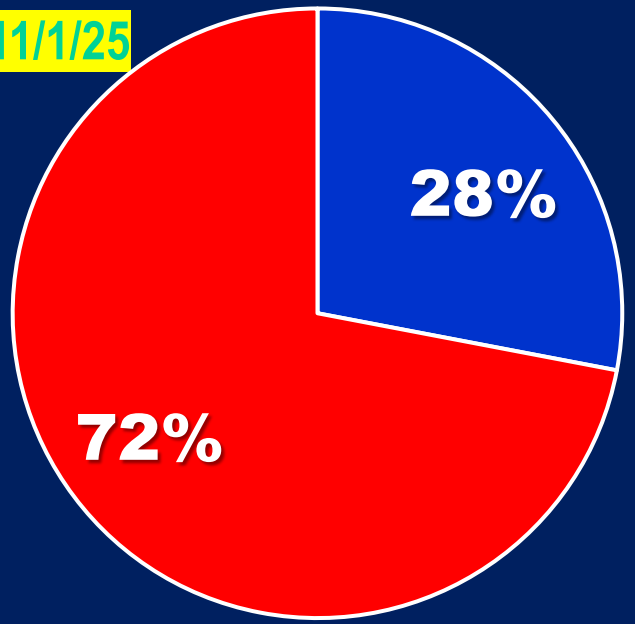


HOUSE

10/23/26

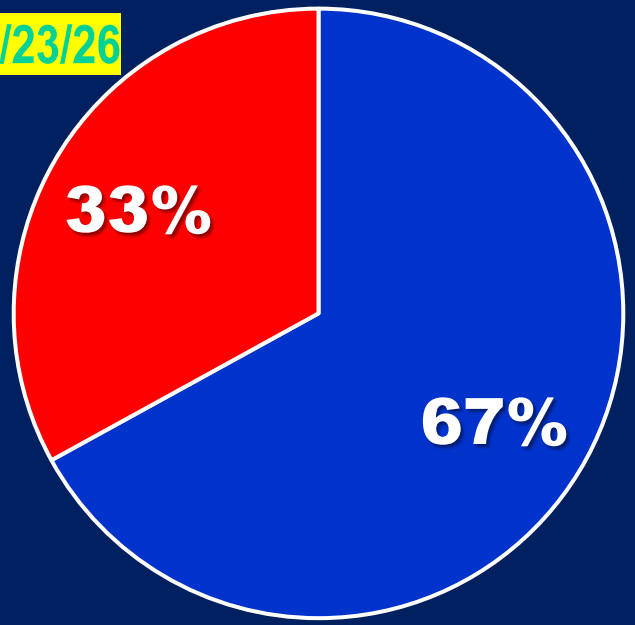


11/1/25



SENATE

10/23/26

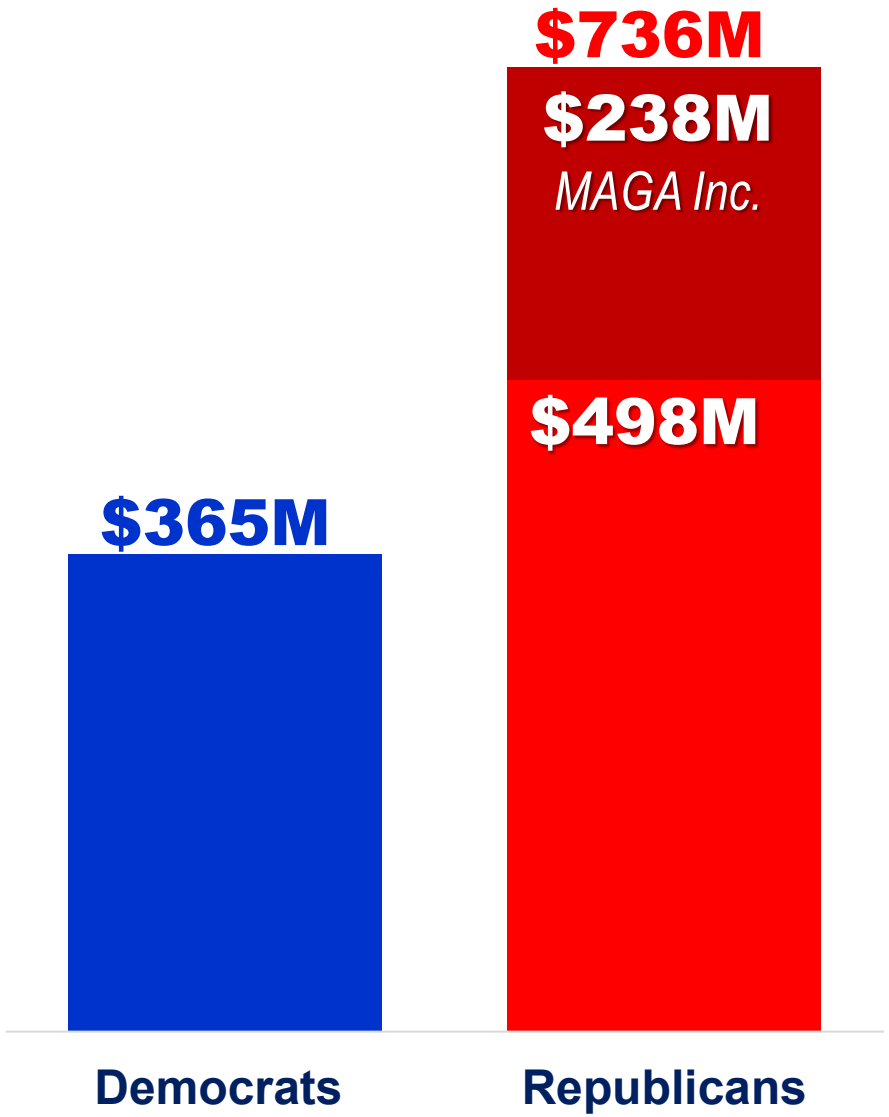


MEHLMAN CONSULTING

PARTY MONEY FAVORS GOP… DEM *CANDIDATES* RAISED MORE

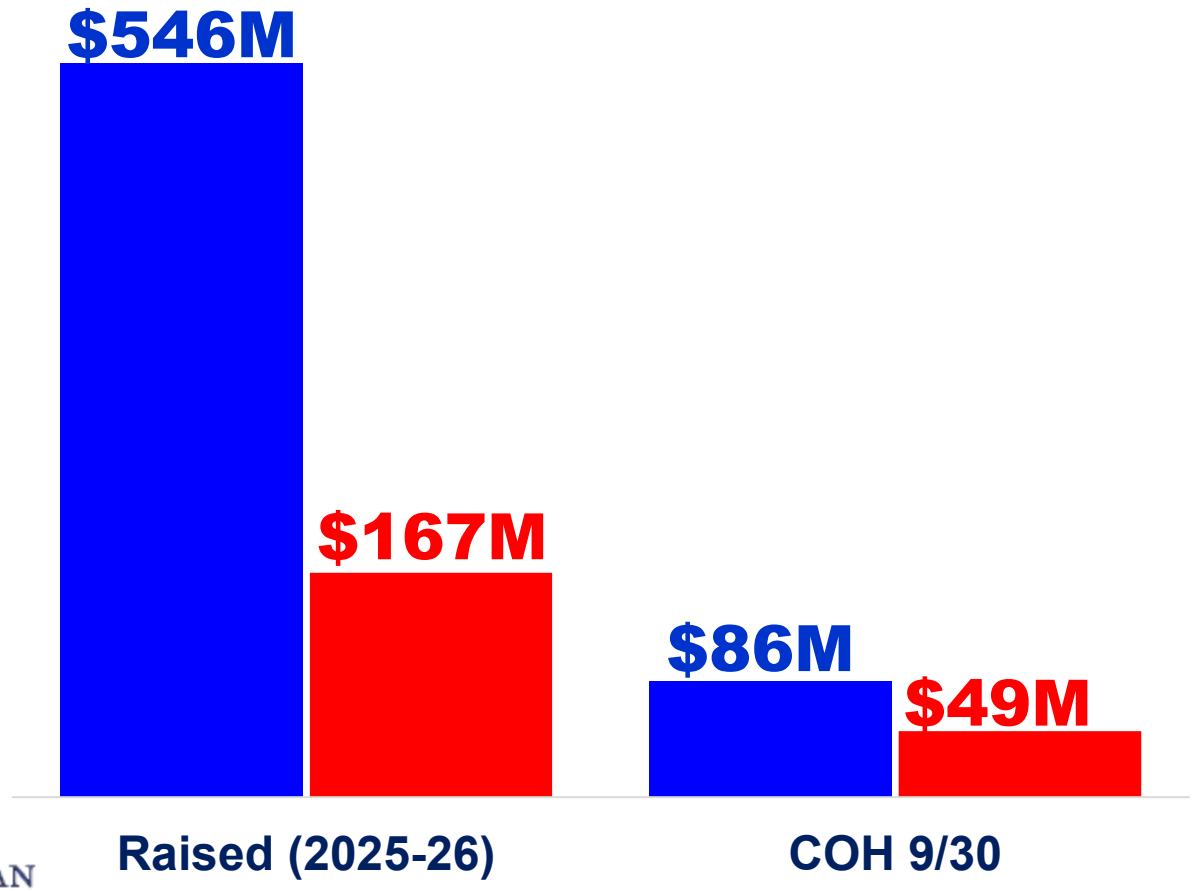
Party PACs & Committees

COH 9/30



Top 14 Senate Races

Candidates 9/30



Source: FEC

MEHLMAN CONSULTING

MAPS: THE HOUSE

220 DEM | **17 TOSS-UPS** | **198 GOP**

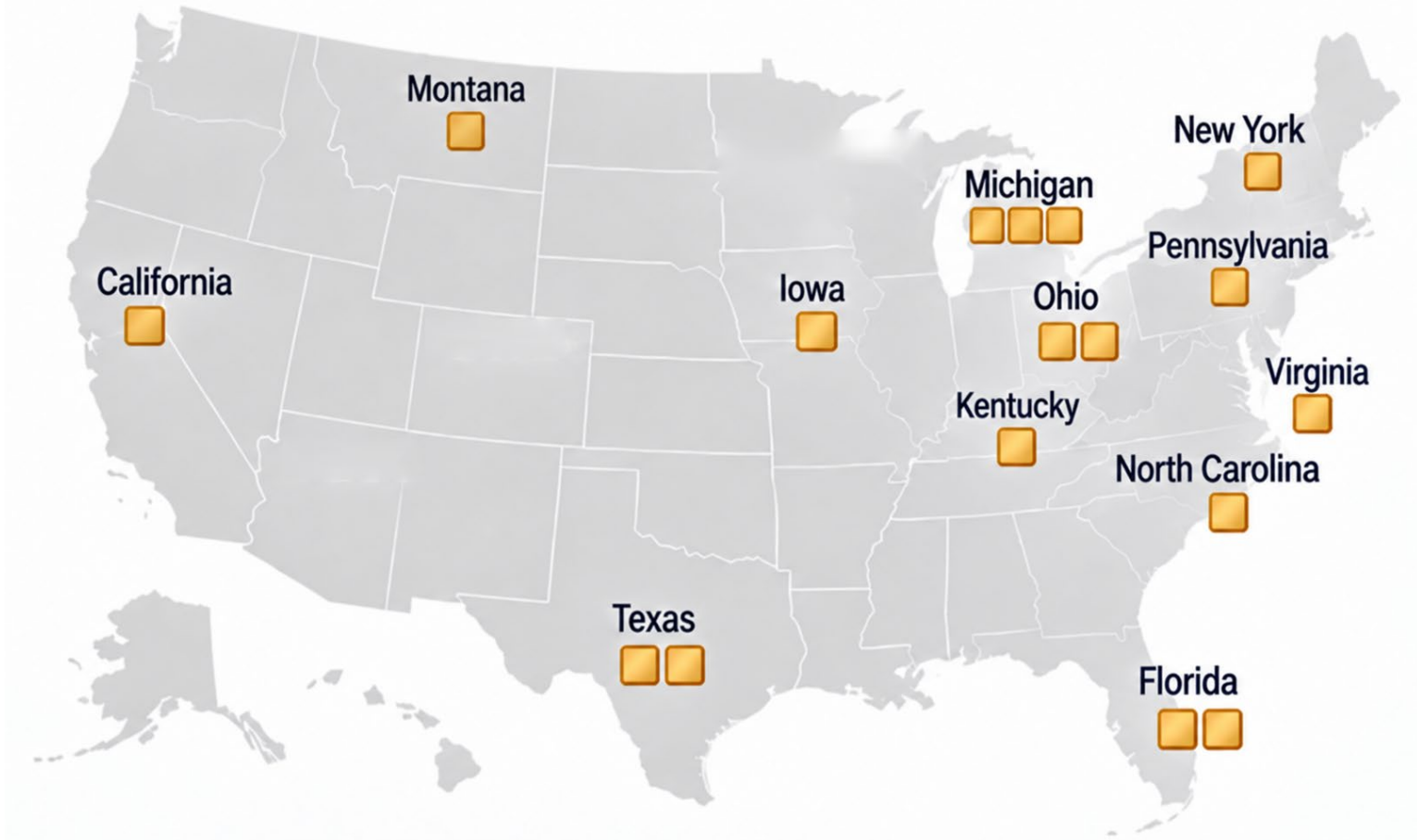
D D D D D R R R R R R R R R R R R R R R R R



220

Solid *(186)*
Likely *(18)*
Lean *(16)*

Democrat





198

Solid *(168)*
Likely *(13)*
Lean *(17)*

Republican

Source: Cook Political Report 10/20

MEHLMAN CONSULTING

MOOD: ANXIOUS & ANGRY

UNIV. OF MICHIGAN
CONSUMER SENTIMENT
CONSUMER CONFIDENCE SURVEY

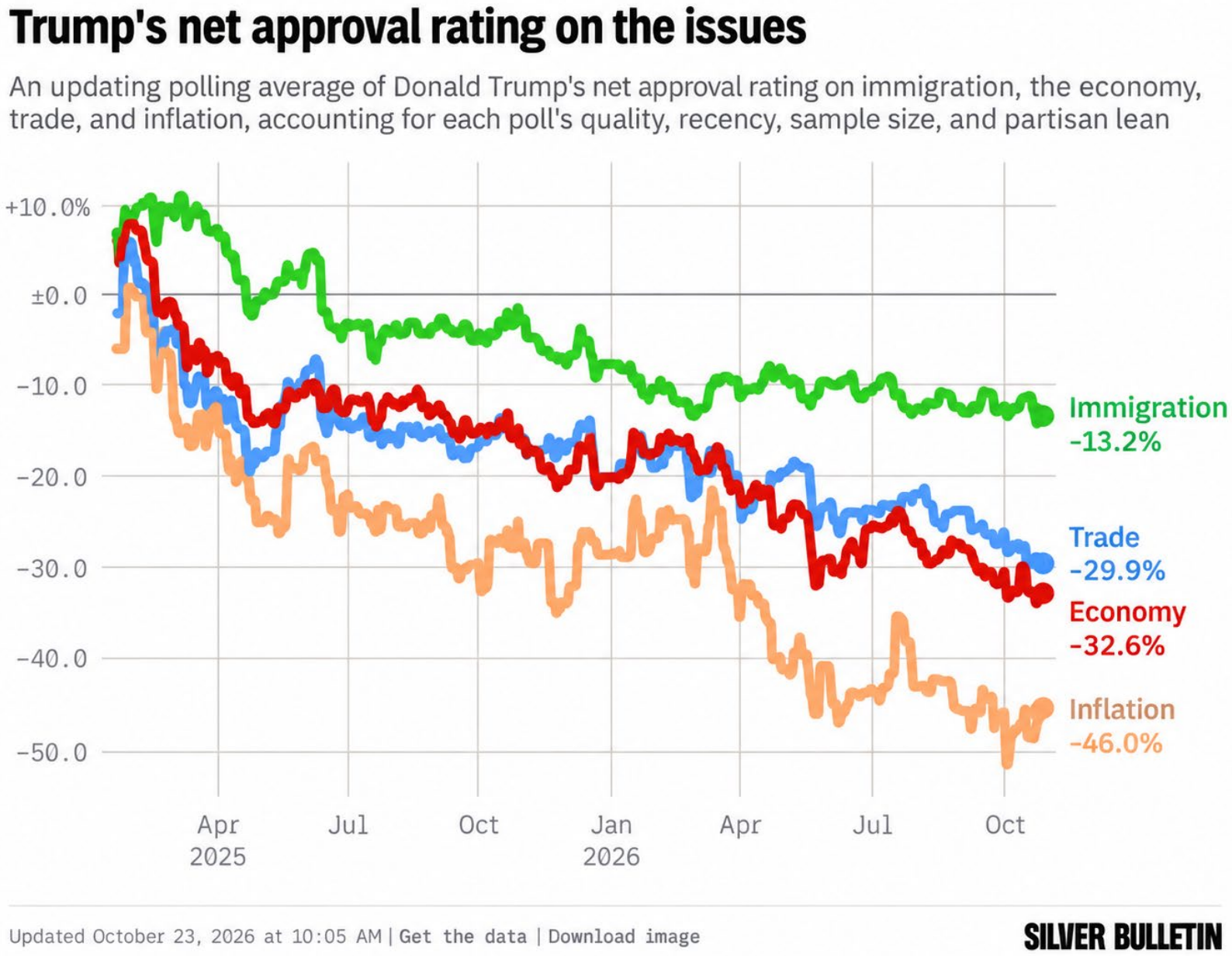
- 2018 *(98.6)*
- 1998 *(97.4)*
- 2006 *(93.6)*
- 1994 *(92.7)*
- 2014 *(86.9)*
- 2002 *(80.6)*
- 2010 *(67.7)*
- 2022 *(59.9)*
- **2026** *(46.3)*



- 1998 *(60%)*
- 2002 *(47%)*
- 2018 *(38%)*
- 1994 *(31%)*
- 2006 *(30%)*
- 2010 *(21%)*
- 2014 *(21%)*
- **2026** *(21%)*
- 2022 *(17%)*

MEHLMAN CONSULTING

MOOD: NET NEGATIVE ACROSS MOST ISSUES



MEHLMAN CONSULTING

POTUS APPROVAL IS THE BEST PREDICTOR OF HOUSE RESULTS



Presidential Approval Rating

33	38	39	40	41	42	44	44	45	46	49	54	57	58	58	61	61	63	63	66
1946	2006	1950	2022	2018	1982	1966	2014	2010	1994	1978	1974	1958	1970	1990	1954	1962	1986	2002	1998
-45	-30	-29	-9	-40	-26	-47	-13	-63	-52	-15	-48	-48	-12	-8	-18	-4	-5	8	5

Seats Lost

Seats Won / Lost

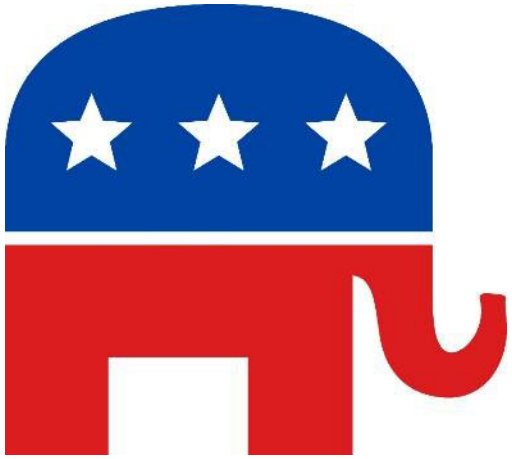
MEHLMAN CONSULTING

BUT POLITICS ARE RELATIVE – ELECTIONS ARE A CHOICE

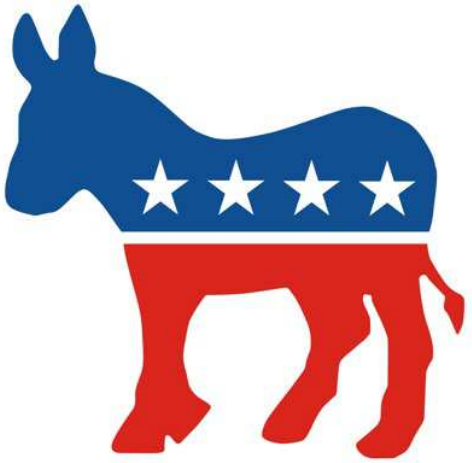
Net Positive Image



-18%



-13%



-21%

Source: NBC NEWS POLITICS 9/11-15

MEHLMAN CONSULTING

SENATE: THE FOURTEEN BATTLEGROUNDS

Democrats Need to Net +4 to Win Control

Trump '24 Margins	State (Incumbent)	Cook Political Rating (10/20)
+2.2	GA (Ossoff)	Likely Dem
+3.2	NC (OPEN)	Likely Dem
-4.2	MN (OPEN)	Lean Dem
-2.8	NH (OPEN)	Lean Dem
-6.9	ME (Collins)	TOSS UP
+1.4	MI (OPEN)	TOSS UP
+11.2	OH (Husted)	TOSS UP
+13.2	IA (OPEN)	TOSS UP
+13.6	TX (OPEN)	TOSS UP
+13.1	AK (Sullivan)	TOSS UP
+16.2	KS (Marshall)	TOSS UP
+17.8	SC (Graham)	Lean GOP
+20.4	NE (Ricketts)	Likely GOP
+22.9	MS (Hyde-Smith)	Likely GOP

REMAINING UNKNOWNS

Election Interference?



Polling Accuracy?



"A typical miss — 3.7% points on average — in either direction takes Democrats anywhere from 47 to 56 seats."

–G. Elliott Morris
10/16/2026

Contested Outcomes?



MEHLMAN CONSULTING

#2. Trump II: Act 2, Scene 2
What to Expect in 2027-28

More Ambitious, More Aggressive, Fewer Guardrails





TRUMP'S FINAL TWO YEARS' AGENDA



IMPORT TARIFFS











MAKE AMERICA HEALTHY AGAIN.
STRONGER PEOPLE BRIGHTER TOMORROWS





LA28

MEHLMAN CONSULTING



WILDCARDS: WHAT MIGHT ALTER TRUMP'S PLANS?





- ~~IEEPA (national security emergency powers)~~
- Sec. 232 (national security)
- Sec. 301 (unfair trade practices)
- Sec. 122 (balance of payments authority)
- Sec. 338 (response to foreign discrimination)
- Sec. 201 (imports threaten domestic industry)
- Sec. 891 (retaliatory tax)

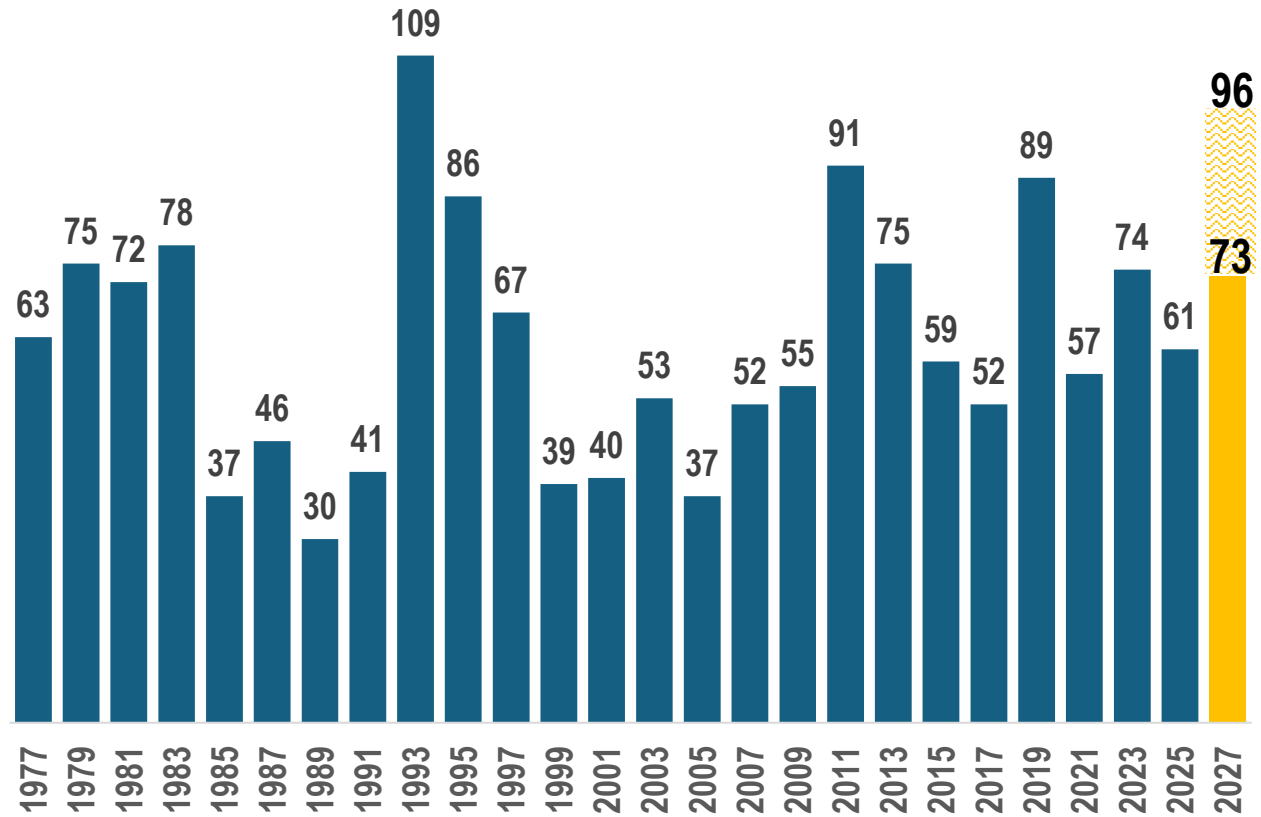
MEHLMAN CONSULTING

#3. Enter the 120th Congress

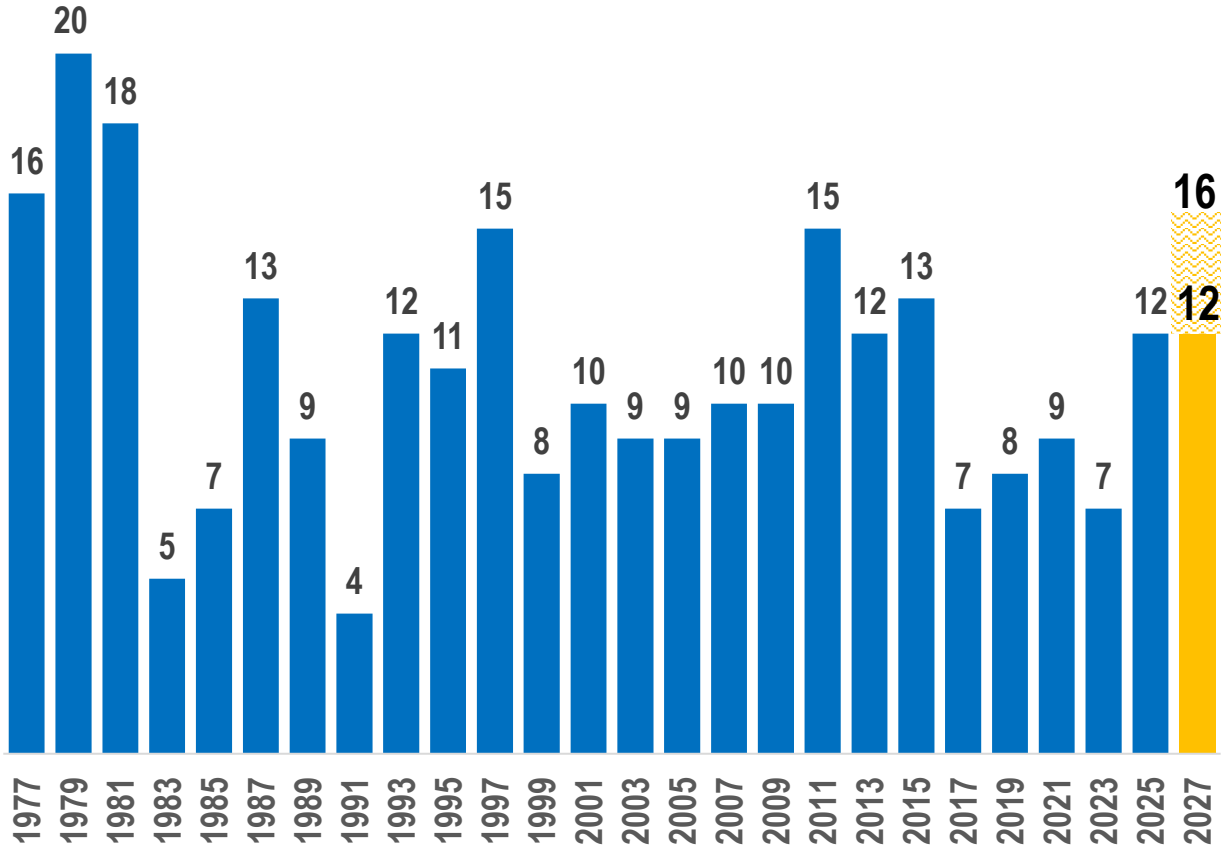
Deals or No Deals?

LARGE INCOMING FRESHMAN CLASSES; PARTY SUBDIVISIONS

House Freshman Classes



Senate Freshman Classes



Source: Congressional Research Service

MEHLMAN CONSULTING

DEALS NEEDED, TRUST LACKING

“Easier”



Harder



DEMOCRATS' TOP PRIORITIES IN 2027





Groceries & Household Essentials



Health Care



Housing



Gas & Utilities



Family Care



Trump Administration "Corruption"



Competition & Consumer Protection



Systemic Risks



MEHLMAN CONSULTING

Two Parting Recommendations

Navigating the Disruption

PLAY THE LONG GAME

The Pendulum Always Swings Back











2006 & 2008

2014 & 2016

2018 & 2020

2022 & 2024

MoveOn.ORG
DEMOCRACY IN ACTION

TEA PARTY

#METOO

BLACK LIVES MATTER



NO KINGS

OCCUPY



MARCH FOR OUR LIVES

MEDICARE FOR ALL!

CEASEFIRE NOW!

STOP THE BILLIONAIRE TAKEOVER

MEHLMAN CONSULTING

SHOW UP: ALL TRUST IS LOCAL

They Won't Help You If They Don't Know You

Perceived from afar via media

Not Trusted		Trusted
Congress	Politics	My Representative
Big Business	Business	My Employer
Mass Media	News	My Favorite Media
Healthcare System	Healthcare	My Doctor
Other Party	People	My Friends

Experienced first-hand, offline / (IRL)

For these slides: bruce@mc-dc.com

My Substack (free): https://brucemehlman.substack.com/subscribe

MEHLMAN
CONSULTING