The Washington Report

The Newsletter of the National Association of Police Organizations
Representing America's Finest

November 5, 2026

Special Election Update: What a Democratic Congress Means for NAPO

Democrats' November 3 victories are reshaping the outlook for NAPO's legislative priorities. With control of both chambers changing hands, the next Congress will bring new leaders, renewed police reform proposals, and opportunities to advance bipartisan support for public safety officers.

Election Snapshot

As votes continue to be counted, Democrats could reach 260 House seats, giving the party room to navigate differences between progressives and moderates. In the Senate, Democrats currently hold a 54–44 advantage, with Alaska and Mississippi still undecided. They remain short of the 60 votes needed to overcome a filibuster, making Republican support essential for legislation facing that hurdle.

Leadership Watch

Speaker Mike Johnson (R-LA) has announced plans to step down at year's end. Majority Leader Steve Scalise (R-LA) and Congressman Jim Jordan (R-OH) are seeking to lead House Republicans in the minority. Whip Tom Emmer (R-MN) faces a challenge from Congressman August Pfluger (R-TX) for the party's second-ranking position. Frustration over the election results could strengthen calls for a change in leadership.

Democratic leadership contests are expected to be less contentious. Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer (D-NY) is expected to become Majority Leader, while House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries is expected to become Speaker. Both parties' leadership elections are scheduled for next week; the House will elect its Speaker in the first week of January after the new Congress is sworn in.

Key Committees to Watch

House Judiciary Committee. Congressman Jamie Raskin (D-MD) is set to become chairman, with an agenda focused on congressional oversight, investigations, and legislation responding to the administration. Current Chairman Jim Jordan is pursuing the Republican leadership post, and several Republicans are competing to become the committee's Ranking Member.

House Ways and Means Committee. Ranking Member Richard Neal (D-MA) is expected to become chairman. His support for Social Security and public-sector pensions makes him an important ally as Congress considers the Social Security Trust Fund shortfall.

Copyright © NAPO 2026. All rights reserved.

Senate Judiciary Committee. Senator Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI) is expected to become chairman, with Senator Mike Lee (R-UT) in line to serve as Ranking Member. A former federal prosecutor and consistent ally of NAPO, Whitehouse brings a law enforcement perspective to the role. Lee favors a limited federal role in grant programs and supports restrictions on law enforcement's access to data.

The Opening Legislative Agenda

Democratic leaders have identified four priorities for their first "100 hours":

- Restore Affordable Care Act subsidies.
- Repeal Medicaid cuts scheduled to take effect early next year under the One Big Beautiful Bill.
- End the Iran war.
- Curtail President Trump's authority to impose tariffs.

Oversight and accountability of the administration and corporations are also expected to feature prominently in the Democratic agenda.

What This Means for Law Enforcement

NAPO anticipates renewed police reform efforts, particularly proposals restricting law enforcement's access to automated license plate reader (ALPR) technology and third-party data. Measures to end qualified immunity, weaken officers' due process protections, and increase scrutiny of law enforcement are also expected to be introduced and debated. Advancing these proposals will still require navigating Republican opposition, especially in the Senate, and the prospect of a presidential veto.

NAPO's Priorities for the 120th Congress

Our focus remains on protecting officers' safety, rights, and ability to serve their communities. NAPO will evaluate any police reform proposal against those principles while advancing bipartisan priorities:

- Officer safety and wellness.
- Affordable healthcare, housing, and childcare for public safety officers.
- Full funding for key law enforcement grant programs.

Looking Ahead: A Strong Voice for Officers

The transition to a new Congress presents both challenges and opportunities. As we work to move our current priorities across the finish line, NAPO is beginning meetings with Democratic staff to lay the groundwork for the next legislative agenda and ensure officers have a voice in public safety and criminal justice policy.

Our approach will remain focused on substance: protecting officers' rights and safety, opposing measures that impede effective policing, and building bipartisan support for the resources officers and their families need. Changes in congressional leadership do not change those priorities.

As leadership contests conclude and committee agendas take shape, the key question for NAPO will be how each proposal affects the men and women serving on the front lines. We will keep members informed as these debates develop. Stay engaged through the channels below as we work to turn shared public safety priorities into meaningful progress.

Please monitor NAPO's website, www.napo.org, and Facebook page: National Association of Police Organizations, and follow us on X at NAPOpolice for breaking news and updates.

Copyright © NAPO 2026. All rights reserved.

Copyright © NAPO 2026. All rights reserved.