

A BRIEF HISTORY OF MIDTERM ELECTIONS

1976

WATERGATE BABIES

Three months after Nixon resigned amidst the Watergate scandal, Congress saw one of the largest infusions of new faces into the House of Representatives in political history. These freshman congressmen were called Watergate Babies, the youngest of whom was just 25 years old.



SITTING PRESIDENT
Republican (Ford)



HOUSE
Democrats +49 seats



SENATE
Democrats +4 seats

1986

THE SIX-YEAR ITCH

During Reagan's second term, there were a large number of Republican freshman incumbents that got beat out by Democrats. This is an example of the "six-year itch" phenomenon that takes place in president's sixth year in office.



SITTING PRESIDENT
Republican (Reagan)



HOUSE
Democrats +5 seats



SENATE
Democrats +8 seats

1994

THE REPUBLICAN REVOLUTION

During Clinton's first midterms, he faced intense backlash against his liberal policies, and this loss pushed him to become more centrist in order to win his re-election campaign. Republicans took control of both houses for the first time in 42 years.



SITTING PRESIDENT
Democrat (Clinton)



HOUSE
Republicans +54 seats



SENATE
Republicans +8 seats

2002

REPUBLICANS HOLD STRONG

For the third time in American history (the first being in 1934, second being 1998) the party of the sitting president gained seats in both houses of Congress. These midterms were just 14 months after 9/11 and the election was overshadowed by fear surrounding the war on terror, an economic recession and an impending war with Iraq.



SITTING PRESIDENT
Republican (Bush)



HOUSE
Republicans +8 seats



SENATE
Republicans +2 seats

2010

THE RISE OF THE TEA PARTY

This was the largest swing since 1938, with Republicans gaining seats in Congress as well as a record number of state legislative seats (680 seats). The healthcare reform passed by the Democrats earlier that year was deeply unpopular with a newly prominent Tea Party wing of the Republican party.



SITTING PRESIDENT
Democrat (Obama)



HOUSE
Republicans +64 seats



SENATE
Republicans +6 seats