

# POLITICO

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## Poll: Kavanaugh confirmation energizes Dems more than GOP

In the survey, 46 percent of voters said the Senate 'made the wrong decision' in approving the controversial judge.

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## Trump's midterm pitch

'I'm on the ballot. So, please go out and vote.'

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## Dems incensed over misleading GOP ads on Medicare for All

The GOP is hammering foes over a plan putting the government in control of health care. Few of the targeted Dems actually support such a plan.

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## Matt Wuerker

The cartoonist's daily take on the world of politics.

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ALEX BRANDON/AP

Sen. Heidi Heitkamp is trailing her GOP challenger, Rep. Kevin Cramer, by double digits in polls in her reelection bid, but she vows to keep campaigning, harking back to her come-from-behind win in 2012.

## Dems' hopes of majority rest on reeling Heitkamp

The North Dakota Democrat is down in polls. And if she loses, it would all but eliminate the chances of a Democratic Senate.

BY BURGESS EVERETT

Republicans say they're on the cusp of delivering a knockout blow to North Dakota Democratic Sen. Heidi Heitkamp — and virtually ending Democrats' hopes of winning the Senate.

Heitkamp is down in public polls by a significant margin, and most political handicappers

think Rep. Kevin Cramer (R-N.D.) is the favorite to beat her. If she goes down, Democrats would basically have to run the table in every other battleground race to take the chamber.

Republicans have had Heitkamp losing by double digits in their private polling for weeks, according to a GOP strategist

working on Senate races. Democrats argue the race is closer but acknowledge she is down even in their polling, after her vote against Brett Kavanaugh's confirmation to the Supreme Court.

"At this point, it's really ours to lose," said Sen. John Thune (R-S.D.). "The race, probably to

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## McCarthy woos Trump's immigration populists

BY RACHAEL BADE

House Majority Leader Kevin McCarthy has never been the darling of the right — far from it.

But as he seeks to replace Speaker Paul Ryan, the No. 2 House Republican is branding himself as an immigration hard-liner in the mold of President Donald Trump, wooing conservatives who might otherwise oppose his ascension to lead

the conference next year.

And conservatives are taking note.

Several who've previously agitated against GOP leaders are praising the California Republican's new bill fully funding President Donald Trump's \$25 billion border wall with Mexico,

a key White House priority. That comes just a couple of weeks after

McCarthy pushed for a House vote on his resolution rejecting the idea of allowing undocumented immigrants — or "illegals," as he repeatedly called them that week — the right to vote.

Particularly noteworthy: Both announcements were given as exclusives to Breitbart. The Trump-supporting website has long

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## Trump judges put Democrats in election bind

Senators up for reelection must choose between campaigning or fighting judicial nominees

BY ELANA SCHOR AND BURGESS EVERETT

Senate Democrats are wrestling over how hard to fight another batch of GOP judicial picks — a decision that could rob their vulnerable incumbents of valuable campaigning time.

The latest judicial conundrum for Democrats comes days after the brutal Brett Kavanaugh battle ended and weeks before midterm elections as five of their members run for their political lives in states President Donald Trump carried by double digits. As Majority Leader Mitch McConnell tees up another package of judicial nominees, the minority must decide how long it wants to drag out the next clash.

By calling up the judicial nominations now, McConnell will force Democrats to swallow more confirmations before their imperiled incumbents can leave Washington to campaign.

The challenge is clear: Democrats can't consent to too speedy a consideration of more judges because liberals, inside their caucus and outside the Beltway, are still livid about how Kavanaugh's confirmation process went. But they can't slow things too much without keeping their red-state members off the campaign trail, a choice some may make unilaterally by skipping future votes.

So they're settling for a middle ground, with few committing to a full-on fight.

"After the whole Kavanaugh experience, I am focused like a laser beam — and I hope all of the women and others who came forward to share their accounts with us, that they're focused like a laser beam — on the elections," Sen. Mazie Hirono (D-Hawaii), among Kavanaugh's most pugnacious critics on the Judiciary Committee, said

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## Hoyer eyes majority leader position in 2019

BY NOLAN D. McCASKILL AND JOHN BRESNAHAN

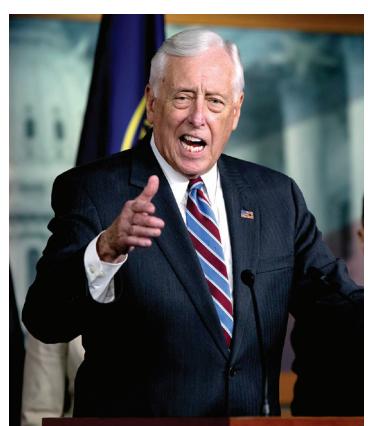
Steny Hoyer wants to be House majority leader next year. Very badly.

Hoyer — who came to Congress when Ronald Reagan was a brand new president — is hoping that Democrats win on election night and return him to the No. 2 House job, a post he last held eight years ago.

Hoyer is also confident Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi of California can assemble the votes necessary to become speaker, despite calls from some Democrats to replace her.

But if for some reason Pelosi

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J. SCOTT APPLEWHITE/AP

Maryland Rep. Steny Hoyer has served 19 terms and is a former majority leader and party whip.



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