



## [Analysis into Critical United States House of Representatives Races to Watch in the Lead-Up to U.S. Midterm Elections on November 8th and Their Potential Foreign Policy-Related Implications](#)

With U.S. midterm elections set to take place on November 8th, races are tightening as both parties scramble for control of the House, which is currently held by Democrats but vulnerable this year to Republican takeover. In fact, despite persistent optimism on the part of Democrats, it is likely that the GOP will be taking the reins for the next two years. Midterm elections are not kind to the president's party, and rising inflation has not done Democrats any favors. According to expert analysis from Inside Elections, Republicans must have a net gain of only five seats to take control, but are expected to have a net gain of anywhere between eight and twenty seats. A focus on protecting the right to an abortion after the overturning of *Roe vs Wade* has helped Democrats make up some ground, but as it often does, the state of the economy remains the most salient issue. In a recent Pew Research poll, almost 80% of voters classified the economy as a "very important" issue. Republicans are especially concerned, with 47% of voters expressing their concern as compared to only 34% of Democrats. Still, keeping in mind that at least 24 U.S. House races are predicted to be decided by five or less percentage points, it is still anyone's game, although it is Republicans that historically tend to upset the polling applecart.

While there are many exciting U.S. House races this cycle, a few in particular are worthy of additional note. One such race is California's 27th district, where Republican incumbent Mike Garcia is hoping to hold onto a district where President Biden earned 55% of the vote back in 2020. Depending on the source, the district located north of Los Angeles is classified as either a toss-up or as giving a slight advantage to Garcia. On the flip side, Texas's Democrat-controlled 15th district in the Rio Grande Valley has a good chance of flipping Republican in the wake of Trump's victory there in 2020. Other closely-contested races include Ohio's 1st district, Iowa's 3rd, and Minnesota's, Nebraska's, and Maine's 2nd districts. In Maine, incumbent Jared Golden (D), known for frequently going against his party's grain, faces former Rep. Bruce Poliquin (R) in a district that Trump also won in 2020. In terms of states, Michigan is one that will be interesting to keep an eye on. The 3rd, 7th, and 8th districts are all battlegrounds in which the Democrat has a slight lead, but if one goes Republican, perhaps there will be a domino effect that may also indicate state voting patterns in 2024.

The economy, crime, immigration, abortion, and other domestic issues are taking center stage in midterm campaigns, but that is not to say that other issues are not also on voters' minds. Foreign policy is one such backseat issue. A Pew Research poll suggests that 54% of voters characterized foreign policy as a "very important" issue. Of those, more were Republican than Democrat. However, some experts do not think that foreign policy is likely to change much in the immediate aftermath of the elections, even if Republicans secure both the House and Senate. Democrats and Republicans alike are mostly aligned on probably the two biggest U.S. foreign policy concerns at the moment, those being the war in Ukraine and wariness of China. Stopping arms sales to Saudi Arabia has bipartisan backing as well. Support for the war in Ukraine, however, does have the possibility of shifting in one direction or another with new GOP leadership. Some Republicans have called for more advanced weaponry to be sent to Ukraine, whereas others have wanted to pull some of the funding. As the economy worsens, Republican support for Ukraine is likely to weaken. Nevertheless, no dramatic change to policy is expected while President Biden remains in office.

On the other hand, analysts suggest that Republicans may begin to lay the groundwork for a president from their own party in 2024. Currently, a notable degree of evidence points to former President Trump filling that role. A



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Republican-occupied U.S. House and Senate would give him a powerful tool, and would likely cause sweeping changes to the way we handle issues such as energy, immigration, international organizations, Iran, and global aid. Experts project that there would be a lower commitment to protecting the environment, more domestic production of coal and nuclear energy, sealed borders, less cooperation with international organizations, staunch resistance to an Iran deal, and a decrease in global aid.