



**Congressional  
Research Service**

Informing the legislative debate since 1914

---

# Leaving Congress: House of Representatives and Senate Departures Data, 1989-2020

**Jennifer E. Manning**

Senior Research Librarian

**R. Eric Petersen**

Specialist in American National Government

Updated April 20, 2022

**Congressional Research Service**

7-5700

[www.crs.gov](http://www.crs.gov)

R41428



## Leaving Congress: House of Representatives and Senate Departures Data, 1989-2020

Members of Congress leave the House or Senate for a variety of reasons; these may include resignation, death, or chamber action during a Congress, and retirement, electoral defeat, or pursuit of another office at the end of a Congress. In the 101<sup>st</sup> Congress (1989-1990) through 116<sup>th</sup> Congress (2019-2020), on average, two Senators and nine Members of the House of Representatives have left before the conclusion of a Congress. Over the same period, on average, 10 Senators and 59 Members of the House left Congress upon expiration of their terms of office.

The data provided here may offer insight concerning the turnover of membership in each chamber, but any such conclusions should be drawn with care, as there appears to be no pattern to Member departures. This may be due in part to the individualized nature of congressional careers, which might include numerous events or actions that could affect Members' decisions to end their congressional service.

### SUMMARY

R41428

April 20, 2022

**Jennifer E. Manning**

Senior Research Librarian  
jmanning@crs.loc.gov

**R. Eric Petersen**

Specialist in American  
National Government  
epetersen@crs.loc.gov

For a copy of the full report,  
please call 7-5700 or visit  
[www.crs.gov](http://www.crs.gov).

## **Contents**

### **Tables**

Table 1. Congresses and Meeting Years, 1989-2020 .....	1
Table 2. House of Representatives Departures Data, 101 <sup>st</sup> -116 <sup>th</sup> Congresses .....	2
Table 3. House of Representatives Departure Percentages, 101 <sup>st</sup> -116 <sup>th</sup> Congresses.....	3
Table 4. Senate Departures Data, 101 <sup>st</sup> -116 <sup>th</sup> Congresses.....	4
Table 5. Senate Departure Percentages, 101 <sup>st</sup> -116 <sup>th</sup> Congresses.....	5

### **Contacts**

Author Contact Information .....	5
----------------------------------	---

In each Congress, Members leave the House or Senate for a variety of reasons. In the course of a Congress, those reasons could include resignation, death, or chamber action. At the conclusion of a Congress, Members depart due to retirement, electoral defeat, or pursuit of another office. In the 101<sup>st</sup> Congress (1989-1990) through 116<sup>th</sup> Congress (2019-2020), on average, two Senators and nine Members of the House of Representatives<sup>1</sup> have left before the conclusion of a Congress. Over the same period, on average, 10 Senators (10% of Senate membership)<sup>2</sup> and 59 Members of the House (13.4% of House membership) have left Congress upon expiration of their terms of office.

This report provides data on Members who have left Congress between 1989 and 2020. Data are divided into two broad categories. The first category, “in-term” departures, addresses Members who leave prior to the conclusion of a Congress. Circumstances of in-term departures include a Member’s resignation or death, or the action of a chamber regarding a Member’s status.<sup>3</sup> The second category, “complete-term” departures, includes Members who leave the House or Senate at the completion of their terms. This includes Members who retired, were defeated for reelection, or who did not run for reelection to the House or Senate because they sought other elective office.

**Table 2** provides departure information for the House from the 101<sup>st</sup> Congress (1989-1990) through the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress (2019-2020). **Table 3** provides House departures as a percentage of chamber membership for the same period. **Table 4** and **Table 5** provide Senate departure information, and departures as a percentage of chamber membership, respectively, for the 101<sup>st</sup>-116<sup>th</sup> Congresses.

**Table I. Congresses and Meeting Years, 1989-2020**

Congress, Years	Congress, Years	Congress, Years	Congress, Years
101 <sup>st</sup> , 1989-1990	105 <sup>th</sup> , 1997-1998	109 <sup>th</sup> , 2005-2006	113 <sup>th</sup> , 2013-2014
102 <sup>nd</sup> , 1991-1992	106 <sup>th</sup> , 1999-2000	110 <sup>th</sup> , 2007-2008	114 <sup>th</sup> , 2015-2016
103 <sup>rd</sup> , 1993-1994	107 <sup>th</sup> , 2001-2002	111 <sup>th</sup> , 2009-2010	115 <sup>th</sup> , 2017-2018
104 <sup>th</sup> , 1995-1996	108 <sup>th</sup> , 2003-2004	112 <sup>th</sup> , 2011-2012	116 <sup>th</sup> , 2019-2020

**Source:** CRS.

<sup>1</sup> Data include Representatives, Delegates, and the Resident Commissioner.

<sup>2</sup> In some instances, Senators were appointed to fill a Senate vacancy, and did not stand for election to a full term. In this report, those Senators are counted as retiring.

<sup>3</sup> In one instance since 1989, a Member was expelled from the House pursuant to H.Res. 495, 107<sup>th</sup> Congress, adopted on July 24, 2002.

**Table 2. House of Representatives Departures Data, 101<sup>st</sup>-116<sup>th</sup> Congresses**

Cong.	Total Departures	In-Term Departures	Complete-Term Departures	Resigned	Died	Retired	Defeated	Other Office
101 <sup>st</sup>	51	12	39	9	3	15	14	10
102 <sup>nd</sup>	117	10	107	7	3	51	46	10
103 <sup>rd</sup>	89	9	80	6	3	28	36	16
104 <sup>th</sup>	73	9	64	8	1	32	24	8
105 <sup>th</sup>	46	9	37	5	4	21	8	8
106 <sup>th</sup>	42	4	38	1	3	20	10	8
107 <sup>th</sup>	59	10	49	5	4	22	17	10
108 <sup>th</sup>	41	6	35	6	0	17	9	9
109 <sup>th</sup>	56	8	48	7	1	15	24	9
110 <sup>th</sup>	64	13	51	6	7	25	21	5
111 <sup>th</sup>	106	13	93	12	1	19	58	16
112 <sup>th</sup>	87	8	79	7	1	25	40	14
113 <sup>th</sup>	78	7	71	6	1	24	19	28
114 <sup>th</sup>	60	9	51	7	2	25	12	14
115 <sup>th</sup>	104	16	88	15	1	32	39	17
116 <sup>th</sup>	64	11	53	8	3	28	22	3
<b>Average</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>12</b>

**Source:** *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*, <https://bioguide.congress.gov/>, and CRS calculations.

**Notes:** Averages are rounded to the whole number; in-term and complete-term averages may not equal the averages of their subcategories. 107<sup>th</sup> Congress in-term departures include one Member who was expelled from the House pursuant to H.Res. 495, 107<sup>th</sup> Congress, adopted on July 24, 2002.

**Table 3. House of Representatives Departure Percentages, 101<sup>st</sup>-116<sup>th</sup> Congresses**

Cong.	Total Departures	In-Term Departures	Complete-Term Departures	Resigned	Died	Retired	Defeated	Other Office
101 <sup>st</sup>	11.6%	2.7%	8.9%	2.0%	0.7%	3.4%	3.2%	2.3%
102 <sup>nd</sup>	26.6%	2.3%	24.3%	1.6%	0.7%	11.6%	10.5%	2.3%
103 <sup>rd</sup>	20.2%	2.0%	18.2%	1.4%	0.7%	6.4%	8.2%	3.6%
104 <sup>th</sup>	16.6%	2.0%	14.5%	1.8%	0.2%	7.3%	5.5%	1.8%
105 <sup>th</sup>	10.5%	2.0%	8.4%	1.1%	0.9%	4.8%	1.8%	1.8%
106 <sup>th</sup>	9.5%	0.9%	8.6%	0.2%	0.7%	4.5%	2.3%	1.8%
107 <sup>th</sup>	13.4%	2.3%	11.1%	1.1%	0.9%	5.0%	3.9%	2.3%
108 <sup>th</sup>	9.3%	1.4%	8.0%	1.4%	0.0%	3.9%	2.0%	2.0%
109 <sup>th</sup>	12.7%	1.8%	10.9%	1.6%	0.2%	3.4%	5.5%	2.0%
110 <sup>th</sup>	14.5%	3.0%	11.6%	1.4%	1.6%	5.7%	4.8%	1.1%
111 <sup>th</sup>	24.0%	2.9%	21.1%	2.7%	0.2%	4.3%	13.2%	3.6%
112 <sup>th</sup>	19.7%	1.8%	17.9%	1.6%	0.2%	5.7%	9.1%	3.2%
113 <sup>th</sup>	17.7%	1.6%	16.1%	1.4%	0.2%	5.4%	4.3%	6.3%
114 <sup>th</sup>	13.6%	2.0%	11.6%	1.6%	0.5%	5.7%	2.7%	3.2%
115 <sup>th</sup>	23.6%	3.6%	20.0%	3.4%	0.2%	7.3%	8.8%	3.9%
116 <sup>th</sup>	14.5%	2.5%	12.0%	1.8%	0.7%	6.3%	5.0%	0.7%
<b>Average</b>	<b>16.1%</b>	<b>2.2%</b>	<b>13.9%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>0.5%</b>	<b>5.6%</b>	<b>5.6%</b>	<b>2.6%</b>

**Source:** *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*, <https://bioguide.congress.gov/>, and CRS calculations.

**Notes:** Percentages are based on 440 House Members in 101<sup>st</sup>-110<sup>th</sup> Congresses, and 441 Members (435 Representatives, 5 Delegates, and Resident Commissioner) in the 111<sup>th</sup>-116<sup>th</sup> Congresses.

**Table 4. Senate Departures Data, 101<sup>st</sup>-116<sup>th</sup> Congresses**

Cong.	Total Departures	In-Term Departures	Complete-Term Departures	Resigned	Died	Retired	Defeated	Other Office
101 <sup>st</sup>	5	2	3	1	1	2	1	0
102 <sup>nd</sup>	15	4	11	2	2	6	5	0
103 <sup>rd</sup>	15	3	12	3	0	8	4	0
104 <sup>th</sup>	17	2	15	2	0	13	2	0
105 <sup>th</sup>	9	0	9	0	0	6	3	0
106 <sup>th</sup>	13	2	11	0	2	5	6	0
107 <sup>th</sup>	10	3	7	2	1	4	3	0
108 <sup>th</sup>	9	0	9	0	0	7	1	1
109 <sup>th</sup>	14	1	13	1	0	4	9	0
110 <sup>th</sup>	10	2	8	1	1	5	3	0
111 <sup>th</sup>	24	7	17	5	2	12	4	1
112 <sup>th</sup>	15	3	12	2	1	10	2	0
113 <sup>th</sup>	17	4	13	3	1	8	5	0
114 <sup>th</sup>	6	0	6	0	0	5	1	0
115 <sup>th</sup>	14	5	9	4	1	3	6	0
116 <sup>th</sup>	8	1	7	1	0	4	3	0
<b>Average</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>

**Source:** *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*, <https://bioguide.congress.gov/>, and CRS calculations.

**Notes:** Averages are rounded to the whole number; in-term and complete-term averages may not equal the averages of their subcategories.

**Table 5. Senate Departure Percentages, 101<sup>st</sup>-116<sup>th</sup> Congresses**

Cong.	Total Departures	In-Term Departures	Complete-Term Departures	Resigned	Died	Retired	Defeated	Other Office
101 <sup>st</sup>	5%	2%	3%	1%	1%	2%	1%	0%
102 <sup>nd</sup>	15%	4%	11%	2%	2%	6%	5%	0%
103 <sup>rd</sup>	15%	3%	12%	3%	0%	8%	4%	0%
104 <sup>th</sup>	17%	2%	15%	2%	0%	13%	2%	0%
105 <sup>th</sup>	9%	0%	9%	0%	0%	6%	3%	0%
106 <sup>th</sup>	13%	2%	11%	0%	2%	5%	6%	0%
107 <sup>th</sup>	10%	3%	7%	2%	1%	4%	3%	0%
108 <sup>th</sup>	9%	0%	9%	0%	0%	7%	1%	1%
109 <sup>th</sup>	14%	1%	13%	1%	0%	4%	9%	0%
110 <sup>th</sup>	10%	2%	8%	1%	1%	5%	3%	0%
111 <sup>th</sup>	24%	7%	17%	5%	2%	12%	4%	1%
112 <sup>th</sup>	15%	3%	12%	2%	1%	10%	2%	0%
113 <sup>th</sup>	17%	4%	13%	3%	1%	8%	5%	0%
114 <sup>th</sup>	6%	0%	6%	0%	0%	5%	1%	0%
115 <sup>th</sup>	14%	5%	9%	4%	1%	3%	6%	0%
116 <sup>th</sup>	8%	1%	7%	1%	0%	4%	3%	0%
<b>Average</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>0%</b>

**Source:** *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*, <https://bioguide.congress.gov/>, and CRS calculations.

**Notes:** Averages are rounded to the whole number; in-term and complete-term averages may not equal the averages of their subcategories.

The data provided in this report offer insight into the manner by which Members of Congress leave the House or Senate, and offer preliminary insight about some of the factors that may influence the turnover of membership in each chamber. At the same time, any conclusions based on these data should be drawn with care, since there do not appear to be patterns to Member departures. This may be due in part to the individualized nature of congressional careers, which might include numerous events or actions that could affect Members' decisions to end their congressional service.

## Author Contact Information

Jennifer E. Manning  
Senior Research Librarian  
jmanning@crs.loc.gov, 7-7565

R. Eric Petersen  
Specialist in American National Government  
epetersen@crs.loc.gov, 7-0643



## **Acknowledgments**

Parker H. Reynolds, formerly a staff member at CRS, coauthored an earlier version of this report.