
Republicans Take Control of US Senate and House

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The Republicans have won control of the Senate in the US mid-term elections, increasing its power in the final two years of Barack Obama's presidency. However, even with control of the Senate, the Republicans will not gain the 60-vote super majority needed to pass major legislation.

Republican Senate candidates won sweeping victories Tuesday, capturing seven Democratic-held Senate seats and giving the party control of both houses of Congress for the first time in eight years.

The GOP acquired wins in Montana, South Dakota, Arkansas, West Virginia and North Carolina — all seats that had been previously been held by Democrats.

Republicans will hold a comfortable majority over Democrats in the U.S. Senate, with at least 52 of the chamber's 100 seats after Tuesday's election. The Senate race in Louisiana will head to a second round runoff scheduled to take place December 6.

In the House of representatives, the GOP won 246 of 435 seats, its largest majority since 1946.

The Republican victory coincides with an already deeply divided House. According to a Congressional Quarterly Roll Call analysis, which measured all roll call votes through September 18, found that a majority of Republicans has differed with a majority of Democrats on close to three-quarters of these House votes.

Congressional division is measured by how often the two main parties vote against each other in roll call votes. Party voting tendencies broke modern day records in 2011 in the House, when the parties opposed each other in 76 percent of the votes.

The election will transform the political landscape for President Obama in the last quarter of his presidency, sharply reducing his room to negotiate.

Leading up to the elections, Democrats launched campaigns largely focused on women's issues, wage inequity, allowing students to refinance their loans at lower interest rates, among other themes popular with their base voters.
