

# [***Trump-Backed Candidate Trounces Republican Rival***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6C34-65H1-DY68-13V1-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Byline:** Joe Edwards

**Highlight:** Vince Fong beat Mike Boudreaux to replace former House Speaker Kevin McCarthy with a majority of more than 60%.

**Body**

Vince Fong, a California state assemblymember, defeated fellow [*Republican*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/republican?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) Mike Boudreaux in a special election to replace former Speaker [*Kevin McCarthy*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/kevin-mccarthy?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) in the House of Representatives.

Fong won with 60.3 percent of the vote in the reliably Republican district after previously receiving backing from former President [*Donald Trump*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/donald-trump?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships), who praised him as a "true Republican" in February. The special election was called after McCarthy [*resigned in December*](https://www.newsweek.com/republicans-house-retiring-not-seeking-reelection-2024-1892298?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) and Fong will see out the rest of McCarthy's term.

"With the election over, the real work now begins," Fong said in a statement. Fong has said his focuses whilst in office will be on border and national security, water and energy investment, and support for small businesses.

*Newsweek* has contacted Fong's office for additional comment.

His ascent to the House means [*Republicans*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/republicans?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) now have 218 seats, though this is still a slim majority as [*Democrats*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/democrats?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) currently occupy 213.

The appointment lasts until what would have been the end of McCarthy's term – January. Fong and Boudreaux, the Tulare County Sheriff, will reignite their rivalry to secure a full term come November.

McCarthy announced his decision to resign two months after he was ousted as speaker, an act that made him the first person in history to be voted out of that position via a motion to vacate. He was eventually replaced by Rep. [*Mike Johnson*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/mike-johnson?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) of Louisiana after several failed bids by other Republican members of the House.

McCarthy only secured his position as speaker after a historically lengthy 15 rounds of voting.

Facing a potential government shutdown, McCarthy worked with Democrats in September to pass a continuing resolution to keep the government funded. This move, while preventing the shutdown, angered some far-right Republicans who felt McCarthy was compromising too much with the opposition.

A motion to vacate was filed soon after by Florida Rep. [*Matt Gaetz*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/matt-gaetz?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) and McCarthy was eventually ousted from his position in a narrow 216-210 vote.

Fong was elected to the California state Assembly in 2016 and has served as vice chairman of the budget committee. His time in the Assembly saw him emphasizing water, fiscal and public safety issues.

He previously faced legal hurdles over his bid to appear on the congressional ballot after California's chief election officer said he could not do so whilst already running for reelection for his Assembly seat.

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**Graphic**

Congress

Chip Somodevilla/Getty Images

Vince Fong will replace Republican Kevin McCarthy in Congress.

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