

# [***House Republicans' Party-Line Majority Hangs by a Thread***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BKN-P9V1-JBR6-9007-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Length:** 700 words

**Byline:** Ewan Palmer

**Highlight:** GOP will soon not be able to lose more than 2 votes in any party-line vote, with Democrats expecting to gain back seat next month.

**Body**

The [*Republican*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/republican?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) Party's razor-thin majority in the House of Representatives looks set to be reduced further amid a number of special elections and suggestions of further resignations.

Panic set in within the GOP after Colorado Representative Ken Buck announced that he will not retire at the end of his current term, as he previously said, but [*instead will leave Congress*](https://www.newsweek.com/ken-buck-takes-aim-donald-trump-after-suddenly-leaving-congress-1878534?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) sometime this week.

The decision means that the GOP will soon be down to 218 members in the House, with the [*Democrats*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/democrats?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) at 213, meaning that the party in control of the House cannot afford to lose more than two members on any given party-line vote in order to pass legislation.

However, the narrow margin is almost [*guaranteed to be reduced*](https://www.newsweek.com/mike-johnson-republican-resignations-house-1880202?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) in April following the conclusion of the special election in New York's 26th Congressional District. The election was triggered when Democrat Brian Higgins resigned in February to become president of Shea's Performing Arts Center in Buffalo.

Tim Kennedy, the Democrat candidate, is widely expected win the seat vacated by Higgins over Republican hopeful Gary Dickson. Higgins won reelection in 2022 with nearly 64 percent of the vote.

If Kennedy wins, the Democrats will once again have 214 members in the lower chamber and leave the GOP's majority at just four seats.

In February, Democrat Tom Suozzi won back his former seat in New York's 3rd Congressional District in a [*special election following Republican George Santos'*](https://www.newsweek.com/donald-trump-rages-republicans-lost-george-santos-seat-1869746?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) expulsion from [*Congress*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/congress?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) after being criminally indicted on fraud charges.

There are other special elections to fill the vacancies on the GOP side that could help give them more breathing room in the House by putting them back on 221 seats, as all these races are expected to go back to a Republican candidate.

On May 21, an election will take place in California to replace former House Speaker [*Kevin McCarthy*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/kevin-mccarthy?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships)'s seat in the state's 20th District. [*McCarthy resigned from Congress in December,*](https://www.newsweek.com/kevin-mccarthy-resignation-fears-republicans-1850180#:~:text=McCarthy%2C%20a%20California%20Republican%2C%20announced,the%20speakership%20nine%20months%20later.?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) weeks after getting ousted as speaker in a motion to dismiss vote.

In June, a special election will take place in Ohio to replace Bill Johnson's vacated 6th District seat. Johnson left ***politics*** in January to take the position of president of Youngstown State University.

The same month, there will be a special election to determine who will replace Buck in Colorado. The seat is also expected to go to a Republican. There will be further races to determine control of the House in November.

Buck issued a warning to the GOP that [*more Republicans may abruptly leave office*](https://www.newsweek.com/ken-buck-teases-more-republican-resignations-coming-1878601?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships)early, telling Axios: "It's the next three people that leave that they're going to be worried about."

The suggestion that there are more GOP resignations on the horizon has led to speculation that the GOP could lose the majority in the House if enough vacated seats are flipped, putting the Democrats temporarily in charge and the [*prospect*](https://twitter.com/TheRickyDavila/status/1767765749349876155) of [*Hakeem Jeffries*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/hakeem-jeffries?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) of New York replacing [*Mike Johnson*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/mike-johnson?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) as speaker.

However, Nathan Price, an associate professor of political science and international affairs at the University of North Georgia, said it would be "unprecedented" if members of the GOP Conference purposely took steps that would result in the[*party losing its House majority.*](https://www.newsweek.com/republicans-against-donald-trump-ken-buck-1878848?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships)

"The theme of this Congress has been the lack of party discipline for this conference from the onset, with the 15 speaker votes [to elect McCarthy] which has rendered the majority ineffectual as both speakers have had to rely on Democratic votes to advance bills," Price told *Newsweek.*

"I think the bigger issue for House [*Republicans*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/republicans?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) is messaging in an election year when approval of Congress is very low."

A similar sentiment was expressed by Grant Reeher, a professor of political science at Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs.

"Even though there have been rumors of further resignations on the Republican side of the aisle, in part as a reaction to [*Donald Trump*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/donald-trump?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) capturing the nomination, I have a hard time seeing the party voluntarily giving the majority and the speakership to the Democrats," Reeher told *Newsweek*.

"That would be a level of strategic dysfunction that we haven't seen so far and would deal a real blow to the Trump campaign in November. I'd be really surprised to see that."

[*Link to Image*](https://d.newsweek.com/en/full/2364526/house-republicans-majority-hangs-thread.jpg)

**Graphic**

House Republicans' Majority Hangs by a Thread

Photo-illustration by Newsweek/Getty

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