

= Speaker of the United States House of Representatives election , October 2015 =

An election for the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives took place on October 29 , 2015 , during the 114th U.S. Congress . The election was necessitated by the announcement of Speaker John Boehner 's resignation , set for October 30 . The Speaker of the House follows the Vice President in the line of succession to the presidency of the United States in accordance with the Presidential Succession Act .

Due to friction within the Republican Party caucus , Boehner decided to step down as speaker and resign his seat in Congress . He scheduled a Republican caucus non @-@ binding vote for speaker on October 8 , and a full floor vote on October 29 . Kevin McCarthy , the House Majority Leader and second @-@ in @-@ command to the Speaker , was initially viewed as the favorite to win the Speakership . However , due to the opposition of the Freedom Caucus , McCarthy dropped out of the race on October 8 , and the caucus vote was postponed .

Jason Chaffetz initially declared his candidacy to challenge McCarthy , and Bill Flores declared his candidacy after McCarthy withdrew , but both dropped out later to express their support for Paul Ryan , who entered the race after being widely viewed as a potential frontrunner . Daniel Webster of the Republican Party and former Speaker Nancy Pelosi of the Democratic Party were also declared candidates . Ryan won the rescheduled caucus vote on October 28 , and was elected Speaker of the House , receiving 54 @. @ 6 % of the House vote , on October 29 .

= = Background = =

= = = Process and conventions = = =

The Speaker of the United States House of Representatives is the presiding officer of the United States House of Representatives , and is second in the United States presidential line of succession , after the Vice President and ahead of the President pro tempore of the United States Senate . Though the Constitution does not require that the Speaker be an elected member of the House of Representatives , every Speaker to date has been elected from House membership .

The 435 members of the House of Representatives elect a Speaker by majority rule at the beginning of each session of the United States Congress , who serves until the end of the Congress . Typically , the election is a formality , as the majority party 's members vote as a bloc for their party 's previously @-@ chosen Speaker @-@ designate ( such as the speaker , majority leader , or minority leader from the previous term ) . Open elections are uncommon but have occurred . The last Speaker election to require multiple ballots occurred in 1923 .

= = = Speakership and resignation of John Boehner = = =

John Boehner , a member of the Republican Party from Ohio , served as the Majority Leader of the United States House of Representatives from February 2006 until January 2007 . As the Democratic Party assumed control of the House following the 2006 elections , Boehner served as Minority Leader from January 2007 until January 2011 . When Republicans reassumed control of the House of Representatives in January 2011 , Boehner was elected as Speaker , with the votes of all 241 of his fellow Republicans . In 2014 , some House Republicans reached out to Ben Carson about his interest in becoming Speaker should they be able to oust Boehner ; Carson declined , citing his impending candidacy for president . Boehner 's Republican opponents formed a congressional caucus , called the Freedom Caucus , in January 2015 to focus their opposition . Though Boehner was reelected as Speaker at the beginning of the 114th United States Congress that month , 25 conservative members of the Republican caucus did not vote for him . Daniel Webster , a Republican from Florida , received 12 votes .

Throughout 2015 , Boehner and the Freedom Caucus remained at odds . Boehner stripped his opponents of leadership posts and other perks , while the American Action Network , a group allied

with Boehner , aired television ads against Freedom Caucus members in their home districts . Meanwhile , the Freedom Caucus opposing Boehner 's plans , forcing him to rely on Democratic votes to pass bills . Needing to pass a federal budget for the 2016 fiscal year beginning October 1 , the Freedom Caucus , now consisting of approximately 40 conservative Republicans affiliated with the Tea Party movement , threatened to block a resolution from passing unless it would defund Planned Parenthood and to initiate a vote to vacate the speakership if Boehner did not support their demands . The caucus sought the following promises : ( 1 ) the decentralization of the House Steering Committee , so that the Speaker and House Majority Leader are not solely in charge of committee assignments , ( 2 ) not supporting an increase in the U.S. debt ceiling without entitlement reform , ( 3 ) willingness to impeach John Koskinen , the Commissioner of Internal Revenue , and ( 4 ) passing spending bills approved by the caucus rather than a continuing resolution favored by Democrats in the United States Senate .

On July 28 , 2015 , Mark Meadows , a member of the Freedom Caucus from North Carolina , filed a motion to vacate the speakership , only the second time the motion had been filed . The next day , Boehner referred to the motion as " no big deal . " However , following continued pressure from the Freedom Caucus , and to avoid the vacation of his speakership , Boehner announced on September 25 that he would resign the Speakership and retire from Congress effective October 30 . Sources from his office indicated he chose to resign due to the increasing discord within the Republican caucus so that he could manage passage of a continuing resolution to fund the government and avoid a government shutdown .

= = Candidates = =

On September 28 , Kevin McCarthy of California , the House Majority Leader , and Webster announced that they would run for Speaker of the House . McCarthy was considered the presumptive favorite in the race . Jason Chaffetz , a Republican from Utah and the Chairman of the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee , announced his candidacy on October 4 , claiming that McCarthy did not have the votes to win the election . Several Republicans urged Paul Ryan of Wisconsin , the running mate of Mitt Romney in the 2012 presidential election , to run for Speaker , but he declined , saying he is a " policy guy " with a preference to focus on his role as Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee .

Democrat Nancy Pelosi , who served as the Speaker from January 2007 through January 2011 , asked her Democratic colleagues for their vote in the election . Steny Hoyer , the House Minority Whip , said that he expects that the " overwhelming majority " of Democrats will vote for Pelosi . He said that if a Republican cannot get the votes needed , Democrats may consider their options .

On October 7 , the day before the Republican caucus scheduled a non @-@ binding vote for speaker , Ryan and former Vice President Dick Cheney endorsed McCarthy , as did 11 of the 13 House Republicans from Pennsylvania . The Freedom Caucus decided to endorse Webster in the race . Other Republicans said they would vote against McCarthy , including Thomas Massie of Kentucky , who called McCarthy " absolutely not an option " because of his previous role as Boehner 's " right @-@ hand man " . Also , Walter B. Jones , Jr. of North Carolina sent a letter to the Republican Conference Chairwoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers stating that any candidates for a leadership position with " misdeeds " should withdraw from the race . Jones has stated that his comment did not specifically refer to McCarthy , but it was widely seen as referring to rumors that McCarthy had been committing an extramarital affair with a fellow Representative , a rumor that both have denied ; the basis for such an allegation and interpretation is unclear .

Citing opposition from within the Republican Party , as well as fallout from controversial comments he made about the United States House Select Committee on Benghazi , McCarthy dropped out of the race on October 8 . Following McCarthy 's departure from the race , Republicans renewed their efforts to recruit Ryan as a candidate . Boehner personally called Ryan twice to ask him to run , and Chaffetz said that he would not run against Ryan if he chose to enter the race . Ryan also received calls from Mitt Romney and Trey Gowdy , among others , encouraging him to run for Speaker . Additional Ryan endorsements came from Wisconsin Senator Ron Johnson , 2016 Republican

presidential frontrunner Donald Trump , and House Majority Whip Steve Scalise from Louisiana . On October 9 , close aides of Ryan confirmed that Ryan was reconsidering the possibility of a run .

A possible Ryan candidacy received support from the same Freedom Caucus that opposed Boehner and McCarthy , as Meadows said on October 11 that Ryan running would " definitely change the equation , " and Chairman Jim Jordan described Ryan as " a good man " and stated that the Freedom Caucus would view a Ryan run " favorably . "

Others who expressed their interest in running included Texas representatives Bill Flores and Michael McCaul , Georgia representative Lynn Westmoreland , Montana representative Ryan Zinke , and California representative and former Oversight Committee Chairman Darrell Issa . However , several candidates have made clear that they would only run if Ryan chooses not to , including Issa , McCaul , and Minnesota representative John Kline . On October 12 , Flores confirmed that he would run for Speaker . He stated that he would run only if Ryan stayed out of the contest .

Ryan held a closed @-@ door meeting with the Republican Caucus on October 20 , where he explained that he would run for Speaker if he could be guaranteed an overwhelming majority of the Republican caucus would support him . Specifically , Ryan requested an increased threshold for the political maneuver of vacating the Speakership , stated that he would not lessen the amount of time he spends with his family , and requested an official endorsement from the Freedom Caucus , Republican Study Committee , and The Tuesday Group by October 23 , before he could make his decision . Immediately after Ryan 's announcement , Chaffetz announced that he would be dropping out of the race to support Ryan . The next day , the Freedom Caucus held a vote to determine which of its members would support Ryan ; although the exact tally was not revealed , roughly two @-@ thirds of the caucus voted to endorse Ryan . Although this was shy of the 80 % vote needed for an official endorsement over Webster , both the caucus leaders and Ryan were satisfied with the result , and Ryan made efforts to move forward with a potential Speaker bid .

On October 22 , Ryan announced his bid for Speaker . Flores , who chairs the Republican Study Committee , dropped out of the race and endorsed Ryan . Mo Brooks of Alabama , a member of the Freedom Caucus , announced on the floor of the House on October 27 that Ryan had agreed not to advance immigration reform legislation while Barack Obama is President of the United States , or unless it meets the " Hastert Rule " , as it has the support of the majority of Republicans .

= = = Declared = = =

The following officially declared their candidacy :

Nancy Pelosi , ( Democratic Party ) , Minority Leader of the United States House of Representatives ( since 2011 ; 2003 ? 2007 ) , United States representative for California 's 12th congressional district ( since 2013 ) , and Speaker of the United States House of Representatives ( 2007 ? 2011 ) .

Paul Ryan , ( Republican Party ) , United States representative for Wisconsin 's 1st congressional district ( since 1999 ) , Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee ( since 2015 ) , Republican Party nominee for Vice President of the United States in the 2012 election .

Daniel Webster , ( Republican Party ) , United States representative for Florida 's 10th congressional district ( since 2013 ) .

= = = Publicly expressed interest = = =

The following publicly expressed interest in becoming candidates :

Darrell Issa , ( Republican Party ) , United States representative for California 's 49th congressional district ( since 2003 ) , Chairman of the House Oversight Committee ( 2011 ? 2015 ) .

Newt Gingrich , ( Republican Party ) , Speaker of the United States House of Representatives ( 1995 ? 1999 ) , House Minority Whip ( 1989 ? 1995 ) , United States representative for Georgia 's 6th congressional district ( 1979 ? 1999 ) .

Michael McCaul , ( Republican Party ) , United States representative for Texas 's 10th congressional district ( since 2005 ) , Chairman of the House Homeland Security Committee ( since

2013 ) .

Mike Pompeo , ( Republican Party ) , United States representative for Kansas 's 4th congressional district ( since 2011 ) .

Lynn Westmoreland , ( Republican Party ) , United States representative for Georgia 's 3rd congressional district ( since 2007 ) .

Ryan Zinke , ( Republican Party ) , United States representative for Montana 's at @-@ large congressional district ( since 2015 ) .

= = = Received speculation = = =

The following received speculation about a possible candidacy in at least two reliable sources :

Diane Black , ( Republican Party ) , United States representative for Tennessee 's 6th congressional district ( since 2011 ) .

Mike Conaway , ( Republican Party ) , United States representative for Texas 's 11th congressional district ( since 2005 ) .

Mike Kelly , ( Republican Party ) , United States representative for Pennsylvania 's 3rd congressional district ( since 2011 ) .

John Kline , ( Republican Party ) , United States representative for Minnesota 's 2nd congressional district ( since 2003 ) , Chairman of the House Education Committee ( since 2011 ) .

= = = Withdrawn = = =

The following were candidates , but subsequently withdrew :

Jason Chaffetz , ( Republican Party ) , United States representative for Utah 's 3rd congressional district ( since 2008 ) , Chairman of the United States House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform ( since 2015 ) ( Withdrew on October 20 , 2015 ; endorsed Paul Ryan ) .

Bill Flores , ( Republican Party ) , United States representative for Texas 's 17th congressional district since 2011 . ( Withdrew on October 22 , 2015 ; endorsed Paul Ryan ) .

Kevin McCarthy ( Republican Party ) , United States representative for California 's 23rd congressional district ( since 2013 ) , Majority Leader of the United States House of Representatives ( since 2014 ) . ( Withdrew on October 8 , 2015 ) .

= = = Declined to run = = =

The following received some speculation about a possible candidacy , but subsequently ruled themselves out :

Marsha Blackburn , ( Republican Party ) , United States representative for Tennessee 's 7th congressional district ( since 2003 ) .

Trey Gowdy ( Republican Party ) , United States representative for South Carolina 's 4th congressional district ( since 2011 ) , Chairman of the House Benghazi Committee ( since 2014 ) .

Jeb Hensarling ( Republican Party ) , United States representative for Texas 's 5th congressional district ( since 2003 ) , Chairman of the House Committee on Financial Services ( since 2013 ) .

Cathy McMorris Rodgers ( Republican Party ) , United States representative for Washington 's 5th congressional district ( since 2005 ) , Chairman of the House Republican Conference ( since 2013 ) .

Peter Roskam , ( Republican Party ) , United States representative for Illinois 's 6th congressional district ( since 2007 ) .

Steve Scalise ( Republican Party ) , United States representative for Louisiana 's 1st congressional district ( since 2008 ) , Majority Whip of the United States House of Representatives ( since 2014 ) .

= = Election = =

House Republicans planned to hold a non @-@ binding caucus vote on October 8 , followed by the

official floor vote on October 29 . The winning candidate requires a 218 @-@ vote majority to win . Multiple ballots may be cast if the majority of the House cannot agree on a candidate . While McCarthy and Chaffetz both said they would vote for the winner of the caucus vote in the floor vote , Webster did not make the same promise .

Following McCarthy dropping out of the race on October 8 , the caucus vote was indefinitely postponed . Massie and Peter T. King referred to the House as a " banana republic . " Massie also criticized Boehner for postponing the election , saying they " called off the election because they didn't like the result , " which was echoed by Tom Rice , Louie Gohmert , and Justin Amash . McMorris Rodgers and Conference Vice Chairwoman Lynn Jenkins defended Boehner , saying the matter was handled properly , as conference rules give him sole discretion . Rich Lowry of National Review asked McCarthy in a phone interview if the House was governable , to which McCarthy replied " I don't know . Sometimes you have to hit rock bottom . " Charlie Dent , a Republican from Pennsylvania who had supported McCarthy , suggested that if Republicans are unable to agree on a candidate , the best option might be for a bipartisan coalition to select a Speaker .

Once it appeared certain that Ryan would run , and win an overwhelming majority of the caucus 's votes , Boehner rescheduled the Republican caucus vote for October 28 . Ryan won the nomination , defeating Webster 200 to 43 in the secret ballot voting . Blackburn and McCarthy each received one vote . The next day , Webster reportedly urged Republicans to vote for Ryan instead of him .

= = = Final result = = =

On October 29 , Ryan was elected Speaker with 236 of the 432 votes cast . Others receiving votes were Pelosi ( 184 ) , Webster ( 9 ) , Jim Cooper , John Lewis , and Colin Powell ( 1 each ) . Votes were cast by 432 of the 435 House members .

Following the election , Raúl Labrador , a Freedom Caucus member from Idaho , said that Paul will need to " realize the honeymoon is over and start bringing us some conservative policy , " and that " the final exam for Paul Ryan will be in January 2017 , when there is a Speaker election , and we will look at his body of work and determine whether he gets a passing grade or not . "