## Midterms Ups

### GOP won’t win

#### Republicans won’t win the senate—extreme candidates wreck chances

**Schoen**, **22** (Douglas E. Schoen is a political consultant who served as an adviser to former President Clinton and to the 2020 presidential campaign of Michael Bloomberg, 7-17-2022, "Fringe GOP nominees give Democrats hope for the midterms," Hill, <https://thehill.com/opinion/campaign/3562369-fringe-gop-nominees-give-democrats-hope-for-the-midterms/> //Finn p

Republicans have every reason to be optimistic about their party’s political prospects in this year’s midterm elections.

Democrats are widely blamed for soaring inflation, President Biden’s approval rating just hit a [record low](https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/whats-behind-bidens-record-low-approval-rating/) and the GOP has [approximately](https://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/other/2022-generic-congressional-vote-7361.html) a 2-point advantage in the generic ballot for Congress. On top of that, the party of the president has [lost](https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/why-the-presidents-party-almost-always-has-a-bad-midterm/) House seats in every midterm election — except for two — since 1946 and has only gained Senate seats in four.

Even though it is essentially a guarantee that the GOP will win control of the House, the fate of the Senate is much less uncertain. [Nate Silver’s](https://thehill.com/people/nate-silver/) FiveThirtyEight rates the Senate as a [toss-up](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/2022-election-forecast/senate/) and gives Republicans a 53 percent chance of taking control of the chamber; comparatively, his forecast gives the GOP an 88 percent chance of winning the House.

Ultimately, this pronounced disparity is explained by the fact that, in several key toss-up Senate races, Republicans are running weak candidates whose extreme positions, lack of experience or personal embattlements make them far more vulnerable in a statewide race than a more mainstream Republican would be.

In the race for Pennsylvania’s open Senate seat, which is being vacated by Republican Sen. Pat Toomey, the progressive Democrat [John Fetterman](https://thehill.com/people/john-fetterman/) leads Trump-ally and television doctor [Mehmet Oz](https://thehill.com/people/mehmet-oz/) in every general election [poll](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/polls/senate/2022/pennsylvania/) conducted thus far, and FiveThirtyEight’s [forecast model](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/2022-election-forecast/senate/) gives Fetterman an advantage.

During a red-wave election year in a purple state like Pennsylvania, one would expect a progressive candidate like Fetterman to fare much worse than his Republican opponent, especially in an open-seat race. However, Oz has a very high negative rating coming out of the primary because of opponent David McCormick’s effective [attacks](https://www.cnn.com/2022/05/06/politics/dr-oz-mccormick-turkey-pennsylvania-senate/index.html), and has few, if any, ties to Pennsylvania.

In Georgia, the GOP is also running a celebrity Senate nominee with no experience, who seems to be even less viable as a general election candidate than Oz, notwithstanding the fact that Georgia leans further right politically than Pennsylvania.

Former NFL star [Herschel Walker,](https://thehill.com/people/herschel-walker/) Trump’s handpicked nominee, has been embattled in a number of problematic personal scandals, including the [discovery of three children](https://www.thedailybeast.com/herschel-walker-lied-about-his-secret-kids-to-his-own-campaign) he told staff he did not have and [lying about working in law enforcement](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/06/14/herschel-walker-false-claims-senate-georgia/). Walker also openly espouses conspiracy theories surrounding the [2020 election](https://www.cnn.com/2021/08/28/politics/fact-check-herschel-walker-2020-election-january-6/index.html), [COVID-19](https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/politics-news/hershel-walker-covid-mist-resurfaced-interview-1283585/) and [evolution](https://www.npr.org/2022/03/16/1086898518/georgia-gop-senate-candidate-herschel-walker-questions-evolution).

As a result, Walker is [underperforming](https://www.ajc.com/politics/why-kemp-warnock-voters-could-factor-into-2022-race/F2WY5K3PABHL5IHYPXFNBZ72NE/) Georgia’s G.O.P. gubernatorial nominee Brian Kemp by roughly four points in public polling. Though Georgia is one of the redder swing states, both FiveThirtyEight and The Cook Political Report rate Walker’s race against incumbent Sen. Raphael Warnock as a [toss-up](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/2022-election-forecast/senate/).

In Arizona, another purple state, Trump-backed venture capitalist [Blake Masters](https://thehill.com/people/blake-masters/) will likely be the Republican candidate facing incumbent Democratic Sen. Mark Kelly, who FiveThirtyEight gives a [slight edge](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/2022-election-forecast/senate/) in their forecast.

Masters is one of the most politically extreme GOP Senate candidates in a swing state. He is a staunch [proponent of far-right conspiracy theories](https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2022/05/27/blake-masters-thiel-arizona-senate-profile-00034781), including Trump’s ‘Big Lie’ about the 2020 election and the anti-immigrant Great Replacement Theory. He is also [anti-gay marriage](https://www.thedailybeast.com/arizona-senate-candidate-blake-masters-views-on-gay-marriage-may-surprise-his-political-master-peter-thiel), anti-abortion and anti-American aid to Ukraine, placing him well out of the mainstream.

In Nevada, Republican [Adam Laxalt,](https://thehill.com/people/adam-laxalt/) former state attorney general, is running against Democratic Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto. While Laxalt supports Trump and largely [embraces the right’s 2020 election lies](https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/big-lie-looms-tuesdays-primaries-nevada-south-carolina/story?id=85315187), he is an experienced politician who is considered somewhat more mainstream within his own party compared to Oz, Walker and Masters.

The result of this [toss-up](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/2022-election-forecast/senate/nevada/) Senate race — between an establishment Democratic incumbent and an experienced Republican — will arguably be more indicative of Democrats’ overall midterm performance than the races in Pennsylvania, Georgia and Arizona. Indeed, a Cortez-Masto victory could signal pared-down House and state-level losses for Democrats this year.

To be sure, Democrats are by no means a shoo-in to win any of these races — or control of the Senate — in November. However, the G.O.P.’s failure to nominate more moderate and palatable candidates in these key statewide races is giving Democrats a reasonable chance of retaining their slim Senate majority, even in a red-wave election year.

On the other hand, the fact that these Senate races are rated as toss-ups — even with Republicans running fringe candidates — is indicative of how favorable the national political climate is for the G.O.P.

And to be sure, if 2022 ends up being a red-wave election like 1994 or 2010, the weakness of individual GOP candidates will be less important than the overall pro-Republican tide.

In that same vein, the [Biden](https://thehill.com/people/biden/) administration’s policies on the border and immigration could end up badly hurting both Cortez-Masto and Kelly, notwithstanding the individual positions these candidates might well take.

If Democratic candidates in these swing-state Senate races — and national Democrats as a whole — aren’t able to effectively sell themselves as a reasonable and moderate alternative to extreme Republicans, President Biden and his party will face several trying years in opposition in both the House and Senate.

### GOP win

**Republicans currently have the upper hand, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin are red.**

**Trende 7/13** (Sean Trende is the Senior Elections Analyst for RealClearPolitics. He is the author of "The Lost Majority: Why the Future of Government Is Up for Grabs and Who Will Take It," and co-authored the Almanac of American Politics 2014. Before becoming a full-time political analyst, Sean practiced law for eight years at Kirkland & Ellis LLP, and Hunton & Williams LLP, where he represented clients in a variety of contexts, from state trial courts to the Supreme Court of the United States. Sean earned a juris doctorate from Duke University, a master's degree in political science from Duke University and bachelor's degree from Yale University. 7-13-2022, "Republicans Are Favored to Win the Senate," [https://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2022/07/13/gop\_likely\_to\_take\_senate\_but\_its\_far\_from\_a\_lock\_147883.html 7/23/22](https://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2022/07/13/gop_likely_to_take_senate_but_its_far_from_a_lock_147883.html%207/23/22) JY).

Recently there has been a spate of stories about Republicans’ difficulties in taking over the Senate. These analyses typically focus on candidates’ poor polling numbers in key states and the weakness of the Republican recruiting class.

These aren’t absurd analyses; I’ve referred to the battle between the overall electoral environment and Republican candidate quality as “the irresistible force versus the immovable object” in previous columns. Had the Republican Party fielded its A-team in states like Georgia, Pennsylvania and Arizona, we probably would not be talking about Democrats even having a shot at retaining the Senate.

At the same time, we shouldn’t get carried away. While Republican candidate quality is an issue, good analysis should not lose sight of the fact that environment matters as well, and probably more so these days. President Joe Biden’s job approval is 37.7% in the RealClearPolitics Average, a mark reached only briefly by former President Donald Trump in August and December of 2017, and never touched by former President Barack Obama. While the map isn’t as favorable for Republicans as it will be in 2024, it isn’t unfavorable, either.

To see this best, let’s consider the races on an individual basis. Republicans need to net just one seat to win control of the Senate. Right now, Democrats have two realistic targets: Wisconsin and Pennsylvania. (Others, like Missouri and North Carolina, probably only come into play if the environment shifts in a dramatically favorable way for Democrats.) In Wisconsin, incumbent Senator Ron Johnson is a poor fit for the state ideologically. In Pennsylvania, Republicans nominated Dr. Mehmet Oz, who is most famous for dispensing sometimes-questionable medical advice on the Oprah Winfrey show, and who resides in a multi-million dollar home in New Jersey. This is compounded by the fact that Democrats have nominated Lt. Gov. John Fetterman, who doesn’t code as an East Coast progressive and who may be able to peel off working class voters in the state. Also, if we are being honest, Oz’s dual Turkish citizenship is unlikely to help him here.

But let’s also be honest about the daunting nature of the task facing Democrats. Both Pennsylvania and Wisconsin have been, on average, two points more Republican than the country as a whole in presidential elections. As elections analyst Harry Enten has pointed out, since 1982 the president’s party has defeated one incumbent senator in 87 attempts in such races (GOP Sen. Lauch Faircloth lost in 1998). But in that election, President Bill Clinton’s disapproval was roughly where President Biden’s approval sits today. Maybe Johnson is a special case, and there’s always a chance he loses. But we should probably start with a strong bias against it happening.

**Democrats are losing seats and ballots – can’t catch up.**

**Trende 7/13** (Sean Trende is the Senior Elections Analyst for RealClearPolitics. He is the author of "The Lost Majority: Why the Future of Government Is Up for Grabs and Who Will Take It," and co-authored the Almanac of American Politics 2014. Before becoming a full-time political analyst, Sean practiced law for eight years at Kirkland & Ellis LLP, and Hunton & Williams LLP, where he represented clients in a variety of contexts, from state trial courts to the Supreme Court of the United States. Sean earned a juris doctorate from Duke University, a master's degree in political science from Duke University and bachelor's degree from Yale University. 7-13-2022, "Republicans Are Favored to Win the Senate," [https://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2022/07/13/gop\_likely\_to\_take\_senate\_but\_its\_far\_from\_a\_lock\_147883.html 7/23/22](https://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2022/07/13/gop_likely_to_take_senate_but_its_far_from_a_lock_147883.html%207/23/22) JY).

The president’s party has performed better in open seats that lean toward the opposition in presidential elections, but even then they are just 3 for 35 in the past 40 years. Republicans won an open seat in Minnesota in 2002, while Democrats won the Indiana Senate seat in 1998 and held the West Virginia Senate seat in 2010. But these three pickups all involved some combination of strange circumstances (the death of Sen. Paul Wellstone shortly before the election in 2002), an extremely popular president (1998 and 2002), or unusually strong candidates for the opposition (Evan Bayh, Joe Manchin, and, arguably, Norm Coleman). We might posit that Fetterman qualifies as an unusually strong candidate, but that remains to be seen; his endorsement of Bernie Sanders and his health issues are potential minefields for him to navigate.

In any event, it isn’t impossible for Democrats to flip one of these seats. It would just be unusual, especially with a president whose job approval sits in the 30s, and we should treat the possibility as such.

Democrats then have the task of defending three clearly vulnerable seats. Another one, in New Hampshire, is in some jeopardy, but probably doesn’t fall unless at least two of the other three seats also flip (Colorado and, to a much lesser degree, Washington State, could also come into play in the fall, but are unlikely to do so unless the previous seats are lost). Two of these states – Arizona and Georgia – have PVIs (Partisan Voter Index, which measures how each district or state performs at the presidential level compared to the nation as a whole) that lean toward Republicans, while a third (Nevada) has no lean in either direction. The president’s job approval in these states likely mirrors his national job approval; this means that a successful Democratic candidate is going to have to convince about one in six voters who don’t approve of the president to nevertheless pull the lever for the Democratic Senate candidate.

That’s a tall order, especially in Nevada, where Republicans have a reasonably good, if not spectacular, candidate in former Attorney General Adam Laxalt. Laxalt hails from a famous Nevada family, and is a capable enough politician that he lost the gubernatorial race by just four points in the solid Democratic year of 2018. He’s a candidate that is at least at the Mendoza line in an environment where Mendoza-line candidates should win.

**Democrats need to win at least three more seats**

**Trende 7/13** (Sean Trende is the Senior Elections Analyst for RealClearPolitics. He is the author of "The Lost Majority: Why the Future of Government Is Up for Grabs and Who Will Take It," and co-authored the Almanac of American Politics 2014. Before becoming a full-time political analyst, Sean practiced law for eight years at Kirkland & Ellis LLP, and Hunton & Williams LLP, where he represented clients in a variety of contexts, from state trial courts to the Supreme Court of the United States. Sean earned a juris doctorate from Duke University, a master's degree in political science from Duke University and bachelor's degree from Yale University. 7-13-2022, "Republicans Are Favored to Win the Senate," [https://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2022/07/13/gop\_likely\_to\_take\_senate\_but\_its\_far\_from\_a\_lock\_147883.html 7/23/22](https://www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2022/07/13/gop_likely_to_take_senate_but_its_far_from_a_lock_147883.html%207/23/22) JY).

That leaves Georgia and Arizona. Former Heisman Trophy winner Herschel Walker is a weak candidate with a penchant for outlandish comments, and Sen. Raphael Warnock is a charismatic incumbent. But this is still a seat that Warnock barely won against another weak candidate in a low turnout 2020 runoff, and he will have to convince a large number of voters who disapprove of the president to vote for him. Arizona is an under-polled race with a late primary. We don’t yet know what kind of candidate Blake Masters, the seemingly likely victor of the GOP primary, is going to be, although recent comments about the possibility that the Jan. 6 attack on the Capitol was an FBI false flag operation aren’t particularly promising. But again, all he has to do to win is convince about 80% of the Arizona voters who disapprove of President Biden to vote for him.

In short, the battle for the Senate comes down to Democrats’ ability to win at least three of four seats that would likely be highly competitive if President Biden’s job approval were about ten points higher than it is today. But in a situation where Senate outcomes correlate heavily with presidential job approval in the state, that’s a tough row to hoe. While we should give more than a cursory nod to the possibility that Democrats will hold the Senate (unlike the possibility that Democrats will hold the House, which is barely worth that nod), we should also say with some confidence that Republicans are the favorites to win.

Probably the best counter-argument is that our high levels of polarization insulate Democrats from Biden’s job approval. In other words, there are voters who may disapprove of the job the president is doing, but will nevertheless vote Democratic. We saw this in 2008, where Republican candidates ran far ahead of President Bush’s job approval in many states. Republican voters may have recognized the poor job he was doing, but in the end, they were still Republicans.

There’s no doubt that we’ve reached that point, as most Democratic Senate candidates are running ahead of Biden’s job approval right now. We’ve become much more polarized since 2008, and Democratic candidates in these states probably have a higher floor than we might have seen 10 years ago. But this is a two-way street; Republican candidate quality won’t matter as much as it might have a decade ago either.

### No Link - FoPo

#### Foreign policy doesn’t matter in midterms, no soldiers invested

Charlie **Cook 22** ("Foreign Policy Unlikely To Save Democrats in the Fall," Cook Political Report, 2-24-2022, <https://www.cookpolitical.com/analysis/national/national-politics/foreign-policy-unlikely-save-democrats-fall>)//Finn p

As the situation on the Russian-Ukrainian border intensifies, I wonder how many people like me are checking the news several times an hour, wondering whether Russia has finally attacked its smaller neighbor. Of course, no one can know where this is headed, how long it will dominate the news, what role the U.S. and its NATO allies will play, or what sanctions will be levied on Russia. We know what kind of shape President Biden and his party were in going into this crisis (pretty bad); we just can’t know how either will look coming out the other end. In the last several months, Biden’s job-approval numbers have mostly stabilized, largely fluctuating between 40 and 44 percent in the [*RealClearPolitics*](https://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/other/president-biden-job-approval-7320.html) and [*FiveThirtyEight*](https://projects.fivethirtyeight.com/biden-approval-rating/?cid=rrpromo) poll averages. The [Gallup Organization](https://news.gallup.com/poll/329384/presidential-approval-ratings-joe-biden.aspx.) released its monthly polling covering the first half of February, putting Biden’s approval rating at 41 percent, a point above his 40 percent in January. That’s 2 points better than Donald Trump’s 39 percent at this point, but 9 points below Barack Obama’s 50 percent and 12 points below Bill Clinton’s. In the final Gallup poll before their first midterm elections, Trump had a 43 percent approval rating (resulting in a net loss of 40 House seats), Obama was at 45 percent approval (losing 52 seats), and Clinton at 46 percent (losing 64 seats). We can put George W. Bush’s numbers to the side, given their stratospheric increase after 9/11. But his stood at 62 percent at this stage and 63 percent going into the 2002 midterms, en route to Republicans gaining eight seats in the House. Biden’s 41 percent overall approval rating in Gallup was bracketed by a [47 percent approval on handling the coronavirus](https://news.gallup.com/poll/390086/biden-ratings-economy-foreign-affairs-russia-near.aspx), 36 percent on handling “the situation with Russia,” 37 percent on the economy, and 40 percent for foreign policy. Given how monolithic partisans are in their approval ratings and actual voting, it is always useful to look only at independents, the ‘jump ball’ Americans. Biden’s overall rating among them was 35 percent (5 points below his approval among all adults). His best marks were on dealing with the coronavirus (45 percent approval), followed by foreign policy (37 percent), Russia (35 percent), and the economy (30 percent). It is pretty clear the president and his administration’s denial of the threat of inflation and slow reaction to it was exceedingly damaging to him. (While we are on the subject, it is fascinating to see Senate Democrats, after so passionately advocating for more infrastructure spending this past year, propose suspending the gasoline tax for the rest of the year, no matter that the gas tax is the primary regular funding source for transportation infrastructure. Panic is never pretty.) While we don’t know the trajectory that the Russia/Ukraine crisis will take, and there are [many factors that can impact on midterm elections](https://www.vox.com/22899204/midterm-elections-president-biden-thermostatic-opinion), we do know that in the absence of a large number of U.S. military deaths, Americans rarely vote on foreign-policy issues, particularly in midterms. The state and direction of the economy, particularly [change in real disposable personal income](https://www.mischiefsoffaction.com/post/2022-midterm-forecast), is far more determinative. Turnout and the relative levels of enthusiasm between the two parties’ bases is key. There was a big gap heading into the 2018 midterm elections with, as usual, the party out of power much more motivated going into the fall of that year—though the Brett Kavanaugh Supreme Court nomination did a lot to close the gap in predominantly rural areas, which helped Republicans actually score a net gain in the Senate while getting hosed (a political science term) in the House. Right now, Democrats are the party suffering from a lack of motivation among their base. If someone wanting a read on a midterm is only going to watch two things, it should be a president’s approval rating and the [generic congressional ballot test](https://centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/articles/forecasting-the-2022-midterm-election-with-the-generic-ballot/), both pretty good barometers of which way the wind is blowing and whether it’s light, moderate, or heavy. In my view, Biden and his team are handling this incredibly challenging crisis far better than many other things over the last year. But this is unlikely to save Democrats from what is increasingly looking to be a pretty horrible midterm election.

#### Foreign policy not important in midterms—other matters take precedence

Dr. James **Hughes** **and** Dr. Ross **Baker**, Dr. James Hughes, Dean Emeritus, School of Planning and Public Policy at Rutgers University, is a nationally recognized expert on economic, demographic, housing market, and real estate development issues. Baker is a Distinguished Professor of Political Science at Rutgers University **22**, 7-15-2022, "U.S. 2022 Midterm Elections: Role of the Economy in Elections," United States Department of State, <https://www.state.gov/briefings-foreign-press-centers/role-of-the-economy-in-elections> //Finn p

**QUESTION:** Thank you so much and good morning. I’m Pearl Matibe with Power FM 98.7. Coverage is generally the continent of Africa. My question is for both professors. So, Professor Hughes, please, can you just help me understand – I understand that the employment numbers seem to be good, that the fact that all these jobs that had been lost with the closures due to COVID-19, that 97 percent number seems pretty good. So can you help me make the connection: What, then, explains the fact that we’re having issues with the economy? What is that stemming from? What is the root causes, I guess, is what I really want to understand? If people are back to work producing and doing what they were doing pre-COVID, why do we have this problem now? So please help me understand that, and it would be nice if you can explain what impact does that have for the rest of the world, bearing the fact that we are foreign journalists, so we want to understand the link of what impact this has on the rest of the world, particularly perhaps places like Africa. For Professor Baker, my question to you would be: Given what is – what we think might happen for these midterm elections, how different are these from the past midterm election? So I’d like to understand the comparison between the one during the Trump administration versus the Biden administration. And then, if you do have data or whatever on these battleground states, maybe if you could pass that on to the Foreign Press Center, they can maybe send that to us. I’d like to understand which states those are so that that can help me, for example, track that. What I’d like to understand as well is what then does this have an impact to other countries given the fact that United States has this narrative of being a global leadership? So what impact, if any, will the midterm elections have? What should the rest of the world be expecting as maybe a boomerang effect or something of that nature? So I’d like to understand those linkages, please. Thank you. **MR HUGHES:** Well, let me start on the economy. Basically, the labor markets are strong. Consumers currently are in good financial shape. One metric of that is they have $18.5 trillion – $18.5 trillion basically in savings – money market accounts, savings accounts, checking accounts, and the like. That is $5 trillion higher than it was before the pandemic began in February of 2020. And they also have low debt levels and the like. And so part of the reason for that was the federal relief checks that they received during the pandemic and the economic downturn. However, looking forward, even though they are in reasonably good shape right now, they see real problems ahead. When gasoline per gallon in the United States is over $5 a gallon, a dramatic increase from where it was a year ago, they are very unhappy, and that gives them a negative perception of the future. The same thing with food and groceries and the like where prices have been soaring. And some of this stems obviously from the supply chain issues that emerged during the pandemic, pushed up the prices of various commodities and the like, and that’s reflected in a number of other segments, certainly, of the economy. So there’s also concerns – I’m not sure exactly how to weigh these in – that we have sort of a challenge to globalization in that maybe the world economy is deglobalizing, and that does not bode well for prices of many goods and the like. There’s also unease in terms of the war in Ukraine. And there may well be a sense that things are out of control. So they’re okay today, but boy, we have – there are storm clouds on the horizon, there are issues on the horizon. Now, one of the things that’s going to – that is impacting many parts of the world are the actions of the Federal Reserve. In order to combat inflation, they have pushed up interest rates. In historical terms, they’re not that high yet, but compared to the ultra-low interest rates of 2018, 2019, and 2020, they are exploding upwards. Now, this is strengthening the dollar. Its – the strengthening dollar hurts many developing nations, the value of their currency. The value of the euro in Europe against the dollar has plummeted and the like. So high U.S. interest rates do not bode well for the global – for much of the global economy. And if demand diminishes in the United States, if there is a recession, that’s going to impact consumers purchasing foreign (inaudible) as the year proceeds. Again, the election technically is three and a half months away. We’ll be getting a series of economic metrics. We’ll have a series of federal month – actions taking place in each of the months to come. So again, there’s highly uncertain economic conditions around the election time. **MODERATOR:** Professor Baker, over to you. **MR BAKER:** Yes. I guess as a general rule, foreign policy issues don’t play a very large role in American midterm elections or even in presidential elections unless the United States happens to be at war. The most recent example, of course, is 2002, when President George W. Bush defied historical trends of midterm elections going against the president’s party in which the Republicans made modest gains in the House and Senate. The – clearly, in this – in the 2022 midterm elections, foreign policy issues are not very high on the agenda unless you define things like energy prices as foreign policy issues, and clearly, the price of energy in the United States has been profoundly affected by the war in Ukraine and the sanctions that have been taken against Russia. But really, energy prices are seen more or less as an economic issue rather than as a foreign policy issue. And interestingly enough, Ukraine, the war in Ukraine, the attack by Russia on Ukraine, has not figured very prominently in the run-up to the 2022 election, largely because American troops are not directly involved in the hostilities even though we are providing very, very significant military assistance to Ukraine. There are – clearly, there are other things going on in the world. For example, in terms of Africa and the advent of monkeypox as a health risk in the United States, which is being treated as a sexually transmitted disease in the United States. There’s a problem in terms of the availability of vaccine to inoculate people against monkeypox. We did have stocks of that in the United States, but there have again been problems with supplying it in the quantities that are needed. So barring some other event – I mean, there are kind of background factors certainly involving international relations and foreign policy. The evacuation, hasty evacuation of American forces from Afghanistan, which President Biden pledged that he would do based upon the belief that the Afghan Government could hold out for a period of time, the very quick collapse of the Ghani regime was very much a blot on President Biden’s foreign policy ledger. But that took place quite a while ago, and has been superseded by other concerns and other problems which the President may have to deal with, most conspicuously domestic inflation. **MODERATOR:** Thank you, professors, for that response. I’ll turn it over to Alex. Alex, please state your whole name and your media outlet and ask your question. Thank you.