

April 12, 2018

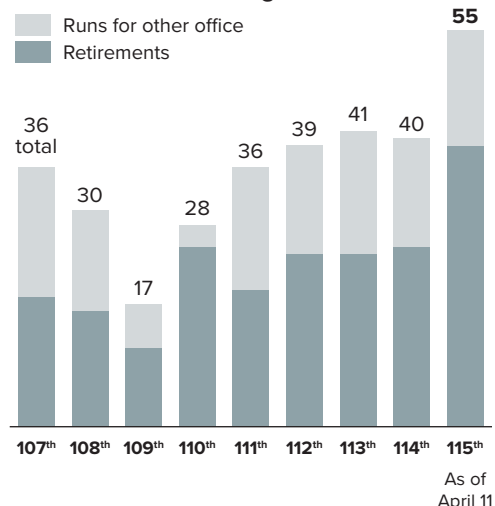
Paul Ryan Joins Massive House Exodus

House Speaker Paul Ryan's retirement announcement comes after a surge of members heading for the exits — especially Republicans — after this Congress, a record since at least the 107th Congress. Rep. Dennis Ross (R-Fla.) announced his retirement shortly after Ryan's, bringing the total to 55 members who have announced they will not run for reelection.

Since the 110th Congress, at least half of representatives leaving the chamber — especially retirees — made their announcements somewhere between 300 to 500 days into the current Congress. As of April 11, the 115th Congress is 463 days in. If history is a guide, there will likely be additional retirement announcements by Day 500 on May 18.

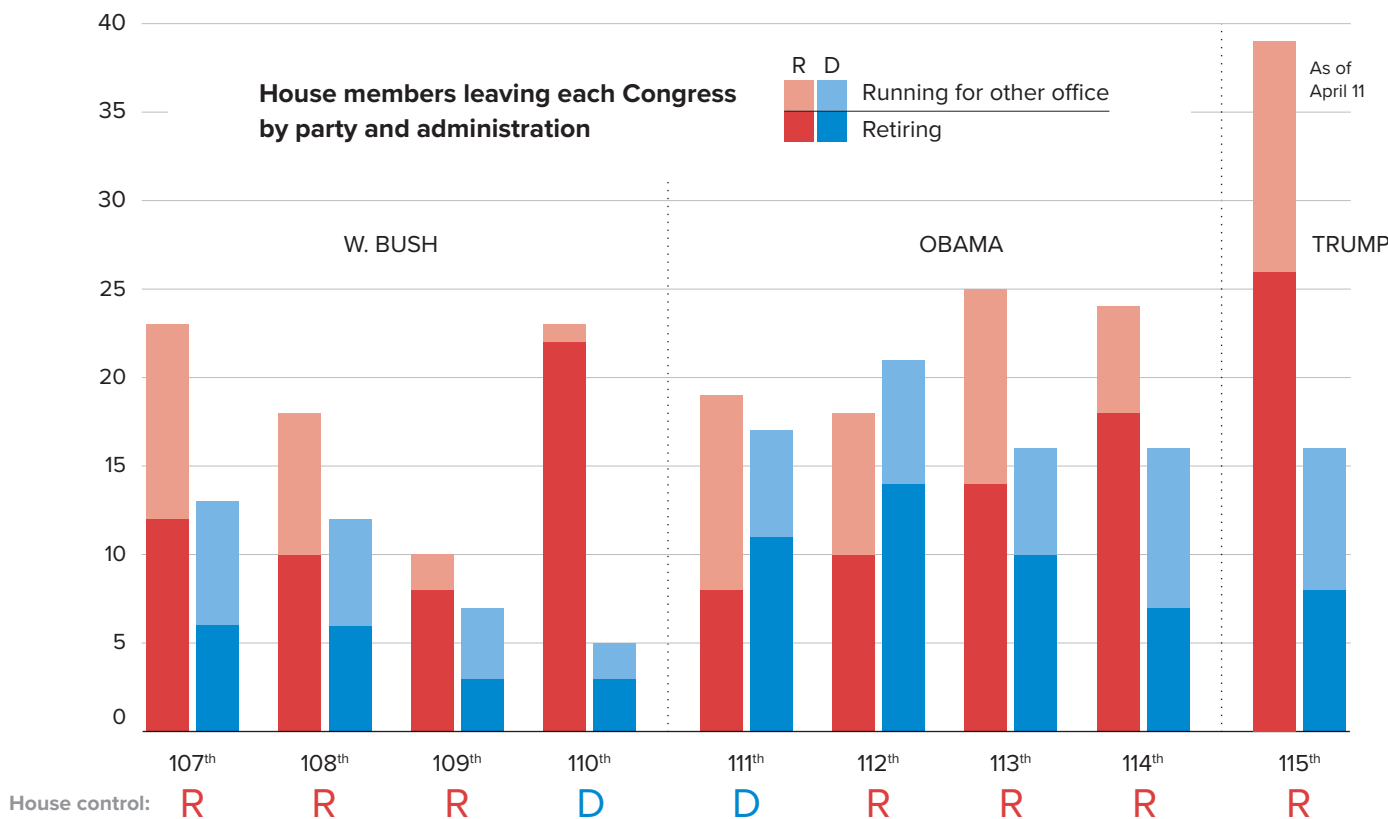
The analysis includes both "true retirements," in which members plan to retire for good, leaving politics altogether, as well as those "retiring" from the House to run for another office — usually for a Senate or gubernatorial bid. Both announcements have major implications for the upcoming midterm elections because of the crucial open seats incumbents leave behind, which are typically much easier for the opposing party to gain without a sitting representative to play defense. It does not include members who resign before the end of each Congress.

Total number of House members leaving at the end of each Congress



House Exits by Party and President

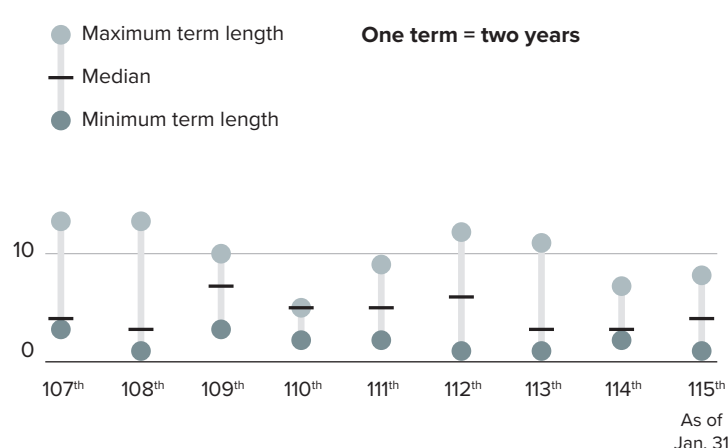
To date, 39 Republicans and 16 Democrats have announced they intend to leave the House after the 115th Congress. Of those, 21 will run for another office, with 10 running for Senate and 10 for governor in their home states. The other 34 are "true retirements," 26 Republicans and eight Democrats.



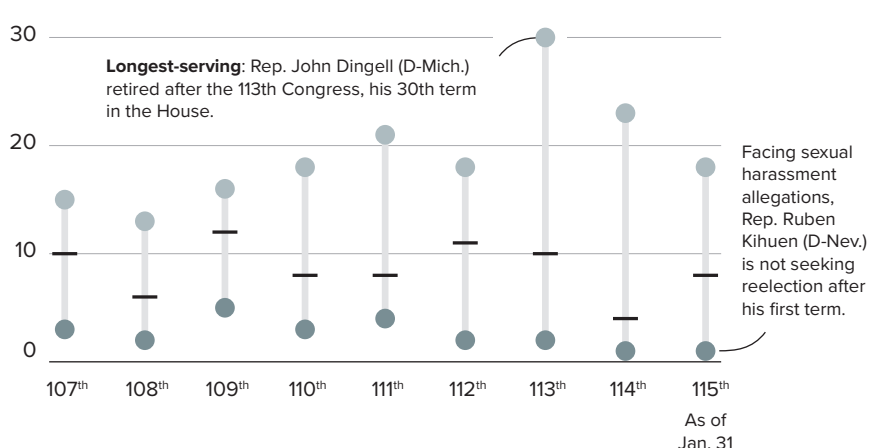
How Many Terms House Members Serve Before Leaving

Members have long used their positions in the House as springboards for higher office. For the past two Congresses (the 113th and 114th), members have stayed a median three terms before moving on for other political offices. During the 114th Congress, most of the members retiring had also served a handful of terms before leaving politics altogether. The median service for retirees fell to four terms in the 114th, the lowest since at least the 107th Congress.

Terms served by members running for other office



Terms served by members retiring

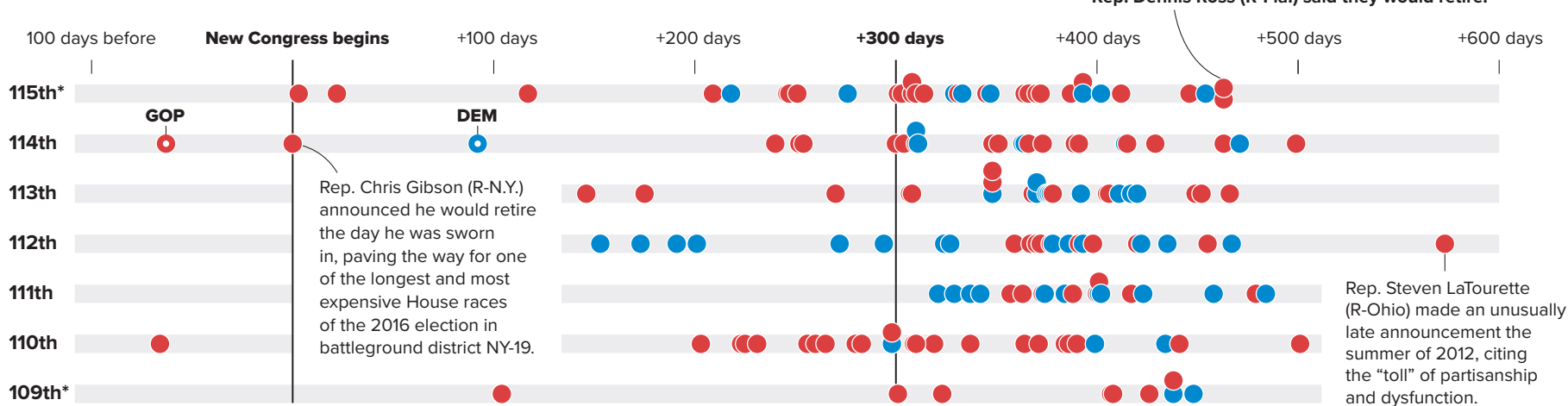


When Members of Congress Announced They Were Leaving the House

Representatives tend to launch their campaigns for other political offices early into a new Congress, giving them extra time to raise money and build a campaign while giving leadership time to recruit replacements and defend their seat. Most true retirees, however, announce their exit from the House (and politics) after 300 days but before 500 days into a new Congress, giving plenty of notice before filing deadlines. As of April 11, the 115th Congress is 463 days in, suggesting there could be an additional retirement announcements by Day 500 on May 18.

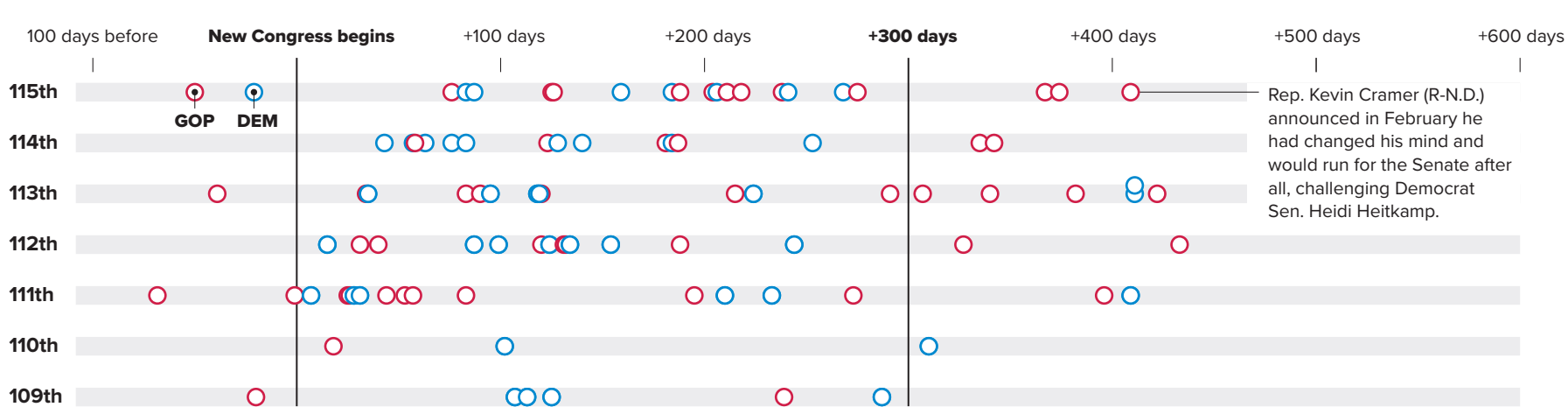
Announced plan to retire

Number of days before or after the new Congress begins



Announced plan to run for other office

Number of days before or after the new Congress begins



*The 115th timeline does not include Rep. Jim Bridenstine (R-Okla.), who announced before the 2016 election that he would be running for his third and final term. The 109th timeline does not show Reps. Mike Bilirakis (R-Fla.) and Major Owens (D-N.Y.), who made their retirement announcements more than 300 days and 400 days, respectively, before their final term began.

Note: Analysis includes all voting members of Congress who retired or ran for another office, but does not include appointments to other office or incumbents who lost reelection. Terms served include total terms, including breaks in service.

Sources: POLITICO staff reports, CQ Roll Call casualty lists, ages and term lengths via House Office of the Historian website