ELECTION 2022

The US Capitol building, where Congress meets

VOTER TURNOUT
About 60% of eligible voters usually vote in US Presidential elections and about 40% in midterms.

Max Frost

Maxwell Alejandro Frost, age 25, made history as the first member of Gen Z (people born between 1996–2012) to win a seat in the House of Representatives. Frost is a Democrat who will represent Florida's 10th district. Two of his top issues are providing health care for all Americans and ending gun violence.

Close races in midterm elections

Millions of Americans voted in the midterm elections on November 8, deciding hundreds of races across the US. Many of the races were extremely close, reflecting a clear divide between Republicans and Democrats (the two major political parties) in the nation.

Why are the midterms important?
The midterm elections happen halfway through a President's four-year term and determine which party controls one or both parts of Congress (the branch of government that makes laws). Congress decides which laws to consider, vote on, and send to President Joe Biden for his signature. That means the party in charge can determine what Biden can accomplish during the last two years of his term. The Senate also approves the President's nominations for

Herschel Walker (left) and Senator Raphael Warnock

judges and important government posts. Political experts say the midterms serve as a statement on how the first two years of a President's term have gone and what kind of leadership voters are looking for. The current President's party usually loses many seats in Congress in the midterm elections, but that didn't happen this year.

What happened in the House?
The US House of Representatives (one half of Congress) has 435 seats, all of which are up for election every two years. In 2020, Democrats gained control of the House, winning 222 seats to Republicans' 213. When *The Week Junior* went to press on November 15, control of the House had not yet been determined. Democrats made a strong showing, unexpectedly winning seats in Ohio, Texas, and North Carolina. But many experts predicted Republicans would wind up with control of the House. Republicans had won 217 seats compared to 204 for Democrats, and votes in the remaining 14 races were still being counted.

What about the Senate?
The Senate (other half of Congress) has 100 seats that were divided 50–50 for the past two years. Senators serve six-year terms that do not all end at the same time, and 34 seats were on the ballot in this election. On November 13, Democrat Catherine Cortez Masto defeated Republican Adam Laxalt in Nevada. This win gave Democrats a total of 50 seats. Republicans had 49, and one seat in Georgia was still undecided. In that contest, current Senator Raphael Warnock, a Democrat, will face Republican Herschel Walker in a runoff on December 6. A runoff is an election held between the top two vote-getters when neither candidate receives more than 50% of the vote in the general election. Even if Walker wins and each party has 50 seats, Democrats will be in control because Vice President Kamala Harris, a Democrat, can cast a tie-breaking vote in the Senate.

How was voter turnout?
Overall voter turnout was slightly lower than in 2018, which had the highest midterm turnout in the past 100 years. In some states, however, voter turnout was higher than in 2018. Researchers said the 2022 election had the second highest turnout among voters under age 30 in at least the past 30 years. At the University of Michigan, some students waited in line until 2 am to cast a vote. Early voters also set a record this year: More than 44 million people voted ahead of Election Day, either by mailing in a ballot or voting early in person.

What will happen next?
Vote counting will continue in undecided races, with most winners expected to be determined within days. In Georgia, Warnock and Walker will continue to campaign before the runoff election. The next Congress will be sworn in on January 3.