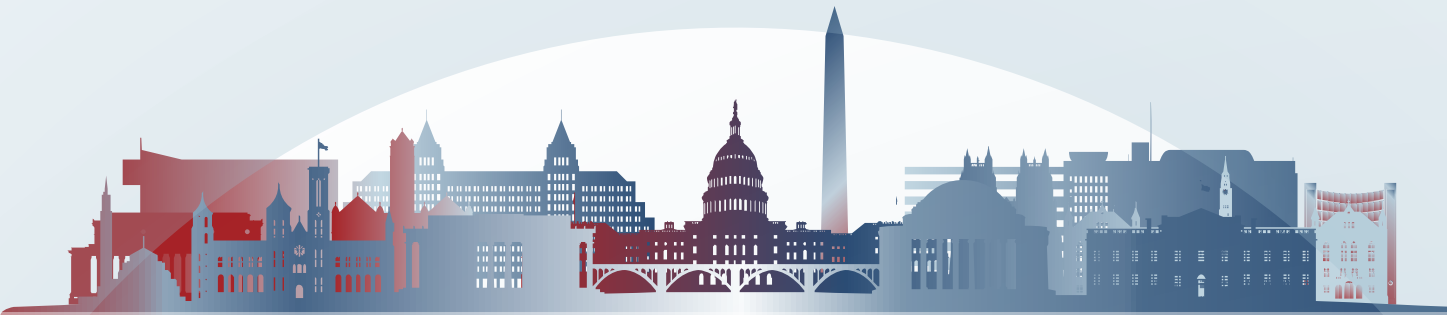




2026 MIDTERM ELECTION OUTLOOK: FOOD & AGRICULTURE



ANALYSIS BY

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OVERVIEW: *High Turn Over*

2027 will be a time of great transition in the House and Senate Committees on Agriculture.

Ranking Member of the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee, Sen. Amy Klobuchar is the Democratic nominee for Governor in Minnesota this November, House Agriculture Committee Ranking Member Angie Craig (D-MN) did not run for reelection to her House seat, instead running for the U.S. Senate. Chairman GT Thompson has indicated that he will seek a waiver to remain Chairman of the House Committee, but it's unclear how willing a restive House Republican Conference will be to keep Chairs that have been in their positions for 6 years. It could turn out that Chairman Boozman in the Senate is the only one of the "Big Four" still at the table, which could make this lame duck either incredibly productive or send this Congress out like a whimper.

**6 DEPARTURES
from Senate Agriculture**
*including four retirements
(McConnell, Durbin, Smith,
Ernst) and two runs for governor
(Klobuchar, Tuberville).*



IF THE HOUSE FLIPS

If Democrats win control of the House next Congress, the House Agriculture Committee would likely see a significant shift in both priorities and oversight posture. One could expect the committee to devote substantially more attention to oversight of USDA and the Trump administration, including the farm economy, trade policy, USDA staffing and reorganization, input costs, animal disease response, and implementation of recently enacted agriculture policies. SNAP would also move higher on the agenda, particularly implementation of new state benefit and administrative cost-sharing requirements that committee Democrats have opposed and sought to delay. Trade and farm economics would likely be another major focus, with hearings examining lost export markets, tariffs, production costs, and whether federal assistance is adequately addressing underlying market conditions.

Depending on what happens with the Farm Bill before the end of this Congress, Democratic control could also reopen key policy debates rather than simply continuing the current Republican framework – which could entail an entire rewrite of the current draft under consideration.



IF BOTH CHAMBERS FLIP

Should Democrats win both the House and the Senate, major changes would be expected to the outlook for a farm bill. Currently, the farm bill is stuck having passed the House with controversial policies and passed only by the narrowest partisan margins through the Senate Ag Committee. Should Dems prevail in the midterms in both chambers, it would make a wholesale renegotiation of the farm bill more likely next year. In this environment, you could expect them to return in the new Congress with new policy priorities – including greater focus on nutrition equity and food access, climate and sustainability in agriculture policy, urban agriculture and food system innovation, and broader, less traditional food systems approach alongside core programs.

Oversight of the Trump administration would move into the front seat for the Committee, with major hearings teed up in the early days.



IF NEITHER FLIPS

Should neither the House nor Senate flip, the math for Democrats on the Committees changes drastically. They have been waiting for a more favorable negotiating hand as they have fought to stave off new cost-share requirements following the passage of One Big Beautiful Bill. If there is no prospect for them to take the helm of the Committee – they will be faced with the costs to the States dramatically rising post-election for administering SNAP programs. The choice would then be to take the risk of the cost share going into effect – forcing states to make a new political choice between paying for and/or cutting their services or taking a deal to head off major pain in the near term. Both have inherent risks.

MEMBERS TO WATCH

THE SENATE

Members of the Senate Agriculture Committee running for other office or retirement:

- McConnell (R-KY)
- Smith (D-MN)
- Ernst (R-IA),
- Durbin (D-IL)
- Tuberville (R-AL)
- Sen. Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), current Ranking Member departing due to gubernatorial run



SEN. JOHN BOOZMAN
R-AR

Likely the only member of the Big Four still at the table in 2027, which makes him the continuity anchor for anything that carries over.



SEN. MICHAEL BENNET
D-CO

Succeeding Klobuchar, Bennet is the heir apparent for the top Dem slot on the Committee. He would bring a Western perspective to the Committee with a focus on conservation, lending, and water issues.

THE HOUSE



REP. G.T. THOMPSON
R-PA

Chairman Thompson plans to request a waiver from the Steering Committee, but already Rep. Austin Scott (R-GA) has also declared his candidacy to be Ranking Member.



REP. AUSTIN SCOTT
R-GA

Cong. Scott has expressed his frustration at division in the Ag Committee and wants to focus on traditional row crops and farmer focused policies to drive a new Farm Bill if it doesn't get done in lame duck. He has challenged Rep. G.T. Thompson for his role at the top of the Ag Committee.



REP. SHONTEL BROWN
D-OH

First candidate to declare their interest in leading Democrats on the House Agriculture Committee. Cong. Brown says she wants to work with all parts of her Conference from urban and rural, has a focus on rebuilding the Farm Bill Coalition (working with Anti-Hunger, Conservation and Farm Groups)



REP. JIM COSTA
D-CA

A deep track record of working across the aisle in support of agriculture. He would be expected to be a bipartisan deal maker in this space.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- House leadership changes could significantly reshape committee priorities
- Farm Bill and SNAP remain central policy drivers
- Growing attention to crypto regulation within agriculture jurisdiction (CFTC)
- Senate leadership shifts may broaden policy scope beyond traditional agriculture
- Emerging themes include climate and innovation in food systems

ADDITIONAL POLICY FOCUS AREAS:

- Crypto and digital asset regulation under the CFTC
- Support for farm and rural economies and looking at ad hoc disaster assistance
- Food safety reforms such as foods generally recognized as safe (GRAS) and packaging. Energy and Commerce has jurisdiction over these policies and the HELP Committee in the Senate.
- Child Nutrition programs and any modifications will be done in the House Education and the Workforce Committee, but in the Senate the jurisdiction remains under Senate Ag.

MONUMENT'S FOOD & AGRICULTURE PRACTICE AREA

This analysis is brought to you courtesy of Monument Advocacy's Food & Agriculture policy experts.

With deep roots in farming and ranching as well as experience with CPG and nutrition, we work with trade associations, nonprofits, coalitions, companies, and other organizations to advise them and translate their needs to the policymaking community in Washington.

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