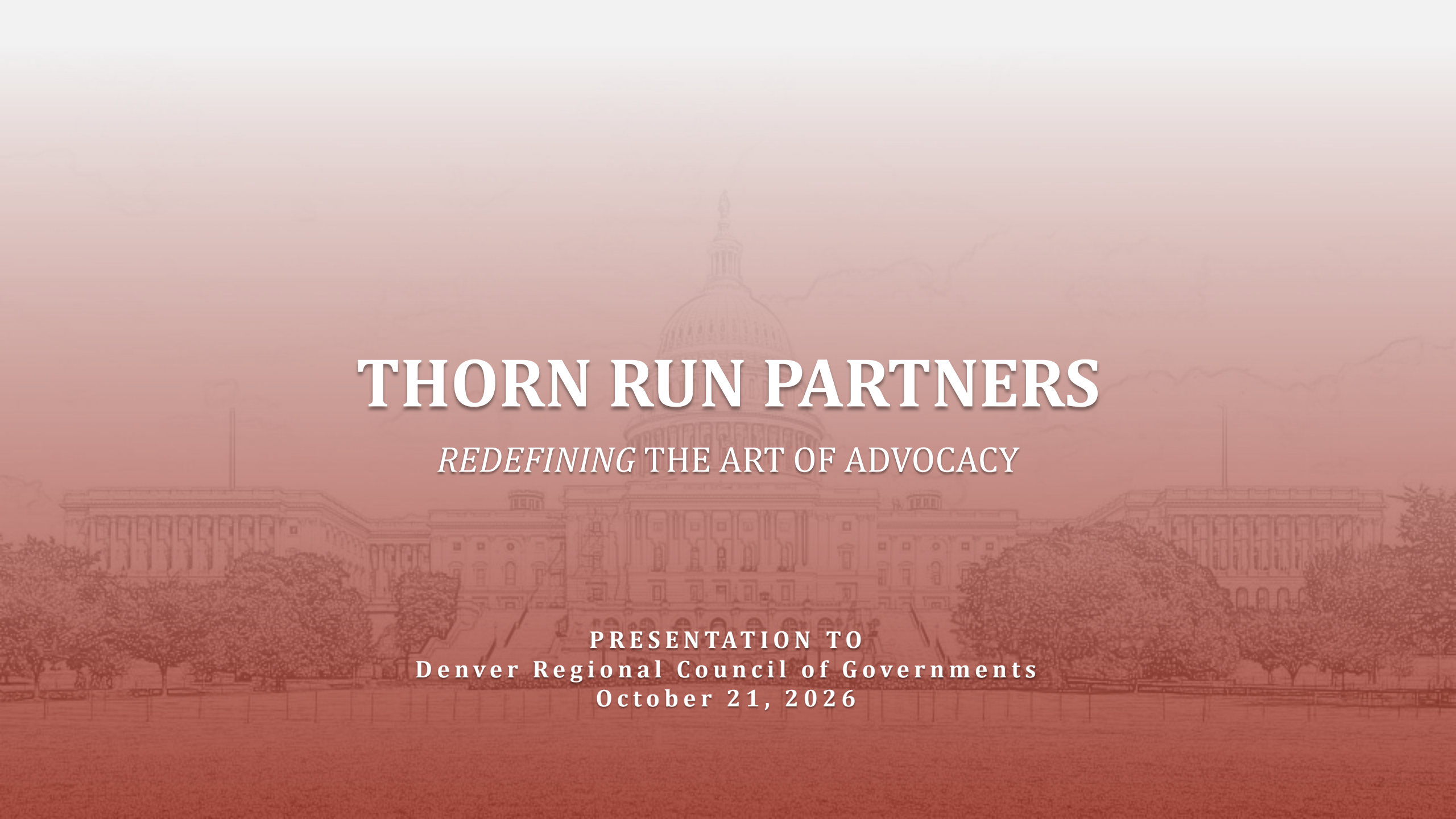




THORN RUN PARTNERS

REDEFINING THE ART OF ADVOCACY

PRESENTATION TO
Denver Regional Council of Governments
October 21, 2026

Who We Are



Top-10 Washington, DC Bipartisan Government Affairs Firm

Since its founding in 2010, TRP has consistently ranked among Washington’s top tier lobbying firms according to analyses from POLITICO, The Hill, Bloomberg, and others.



Lobbying, Policy, & Public Affairs

TRP provides government relations, policy analysis, and communications services with experience across the federal government and private sector, including the largest local government practice among top DC firms.



65 Partners and Professional Staff

In addition to DRCOG’s dedicated project team, TRP leverages its experienced staff and partners to deliver a collaborative and comprehensive effort for clients.



Proven Track Record of Accomplishments

TRP relies on experience, creativity, and competence to achieve measurable legislative and regulatory outcomes for its clients.

TRP Client Team Leads for DRCOG



JIM DAVENPORT
PARTNER



GREG BURNS
PARTNER

50+ years of combined experience representing public sector entities

*Deep expertise in a wide variety of areas, including appropriations,
environment, transportation, and public safety*

More than \$4B in secured federal funding

TRP Public Sector Practice



Expertise

- **Led by TRP Partners, Jim Davenport, Greg Burns and Pamela Welsh**
 - Supported by 10+ member policy team plus other partners
 - More than a century of combined experience
- **Represent 60+ public sector entities in 14 states: AZ, CA, CO, FL, IL, KS, LA, MT, NC, NV, OR, PA, SC, TX**
 - Have represented some clients for more than 20 years
 - Large, urban communities, suburban, and small urban and rural areas
 - Handle a wide variety of complex issues and projects



TRP's Areas of Expertise



*TRP has nearly 300 clients in the corporate, association, non-profit, education, and public sector spaces.
We have experts in the following practice areas:*



Appropriations



Artificial Intelligence



Education



Financial Services



Health Care



Local Government



Energy



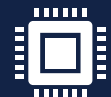
Tax



Telecom & Tech



Grant Support



Advanced
Manufacturing



Transportation &
Infrastructure

Successes for DRCOG



2023 - 2026



Federal Grant Funding — supported DRCOG priorities, which received the following awards:

- \$199 million via the competitive Climate Pollution Reduction Grant from the EPA to initiate Power Ahead Colorado
- \$118+ million to accompany a full funding grant agreement for the East Colfax Avenue Bus Rapid Transit project
- \$996,716 from the competitive DOT Innovative Finance and Asset Concession Grants program to advance Bus Rapid Transit implementation in the Denver region
- \$400,000 Safe Streets and Roads for All grant for planning activities



Congressionally Directed Spending — \$820,000 for a community care hub to provide supportive services to the elderly, Denver Regional Council of Governments, Colorado



Policy Efforts — Engaged on other issues like federal housing policy, reauthorization of the Economic Development Administration, and various Administration rulemaking efforts, among other things

EXPIRATION OF THE BIPARTISAN INFRASTRUCTURE LAW

Nov. 2021

December 11, 2026

2027+

BIL Enacted
\$1.2T law

Surface programs
expire

Reauthorization

WHAT THE BIL WAS

- ~\$1.2 trillion, 5-year law enacted November 2021
- ~\$650 billion for surface transportation authorization
- ~\$550 billion for transportation and other programs

CONGRESSIONAL ACTION ON A NEW BILL

- House drafted BUILD 250 Act – \$580B, bipartisan, passed by House T&I
- Yet to be considered in full House
 - Formula funds often increased, overall funding (incl. supplemental funds) decreased
- Senate has yet to develop its version of the bill

HOUSE BUILD 250 ACT: DRCOG'S PERSPECTIVE

Nov. 2021

December 11, 2026

2027+

BIL Enacted
\$1.2T law

Surface programs
expire

Reauthorization

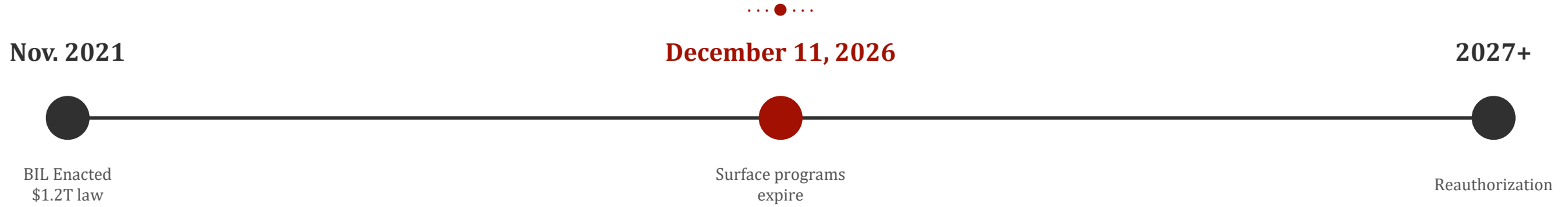
WHAT DRCOG SUPPORTS

- MPO Planning funds increase; local match decreases from 20 to 10 percent; MPO's may also be able to be direct recipients
- Increases STBG funding
- Continuation of key programs: bridge funding and SS4A, for example
- Creation of new STAG grant program
- Increase in CIG "small starts" threshold to \$1B
- NEPA streamlining

DRCOG CONCERNS

- Loss of "advance" appropriations, meaning generally less funding for key programs
- Significantly less funding for the CIG program
- Funding decrease proposed for SS4A
- Does not update formula funding allocations to account for high growth states like CO
- Concern with proposal to initiate a consolidated funding pilot program; needs to ensure CO won't be negatively impacted
- Elimination of supported programs like NEVI, PROTECT, and Carbon Reduction Program

DEVELOPMENT OF NEXT SURFACE TRANSPORTATION AUTHORIZATION



WHAT TO EXPECT NEXT

- TBD: Senate develops its own version of the bill
- Passage this year will be challenging given the fiscal environment and congressional calendar
- Much also depends on the mid-term elections
- Opportunities remain to influence next iteration of the bill

Capital Investment Grant Program Proposed Changes



- Trump Administration proposed changes to the CIG transit capital investment grant program in early October
- Comments due in mid-November
- CIG is the primary method by which the federal government invests in major transit capital projects
- DRCOG, CDOT, and other entities are proposing several of these projects for the greater metro region
- Main Concerns:
 - More difficult to enter the program, more work must be done up front, and more local money must be brought to the table to even enter the program
 - Federal cost share may decrease
 - More weight on cost-effectiveness, ridership, and congestion relief. The weight on economic development, land use, and environmental benefits goes down.
 - More points for areas with higher birth and marriage rates
 - No grandfathering, so these changes will impact projects in the pipeline
- Potential Positives:
 - BRT projects that replace existing service could benefit, particularly those that cost less than \$600M
- Congress could legislate that these changes not be implemented; new Admin, either R or D, could have different approaches

Older Americans Act: Reauthorization



Priorities

- Reauthorization of Older Americans Act (OAA) to include:
 - Clarification of State Units on Aging's role when OAA funds are used, while protecting AAAs' autonomy to expand services when not leveraging OAA funds
 - Expansion of the Aging Network's ability to deliver emerging health-promotion and disease-prevention interventions
 - Flexibility for grab-and-go and other innovative meal delivery, emphasizing maximum local decision-making on where meals can be provided

Status

- OAA Reauthorization (S.4776) passed Senate in 2024, and was included on an Omnibus Appropriations Bill awaiting House approval but ultimately failed at the 11th hour
- OAA Reauthorization was reintroduced (S.2120) in 2026, passed Senate on July 14th.
- No further action in House and not currently perceived as a must pass bill for 2026.

Older Americans Act: Annual Funding



Priorities

- Congress extends many expired authorizations through appropriations legislation
- While OAA's authorization has expired, OAA programs continue to operate through annual appropriations
- Enactment of the FY27 Labor, HHS, and Education Appropriations, which provides funding to the Administration for Community Living (ACL), to include robust formula funding for OAA programs

Status

- House FY27 Labor, HHS, and Education Appropriations includes (\$2.522B) for OAA programs, which is \$68M more than requested by administration but \$14M less than provided in FY26
 - Nutrition (\$1+B)
 - Home & Community-Based Supportive Services (\$414M)
 - Family Caregivers (\$209M))
 - State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) (\$55M)
- Continue to engage with DRCOG congressional delegation and Committee staff to boost funding

Housing Policy – Federal Initiatives



- The One Big Beautiful Bill Act included a permanent extension and enhancement of the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)
- 21st Century Road to Housing Act became law:
 - New grant programs, including:
 - The Regional Planning Grant program will provide competitive grants to states, metropolitan cities, urban counties, and regional planning agencies to support affordable housing planning and implementation activities, including updating regulatory processes and coordinating housing development with transportation planning
 - The Competitive Supply-Incentive program, known as the Innovation Fund, will provide grants of up to \$10 million to localities that demonstrate measurable increases in housing supply through reforms such as streamlined permitting, density bonuses, and zoning changes
 - Raises income eligibility to 100 percent of area median income (AMI) to address workforce housing
 - Allowing CDBG funds to be used for construction of new affordable housing
 - CDBG grantees must maintain a searchable, publicly accessible website database identifying all undeveloped land parcels they own

Lame Duck: A Crowded Runway



MUST ADDRESS

GOVERNMENT FUNDING
Dec. 11 Deadline

SURFACE TRANSPORTATION
Dec. 11 Deadline

FLOOR PRIORITIES

NDA

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

RECONCILIATION?

LIMITED FLOOR TIME
Senate is the tighter bottleneck

COMPETING FOR OXYGEN

FARM BILL

FISA 702

COLLEGE SPORTS

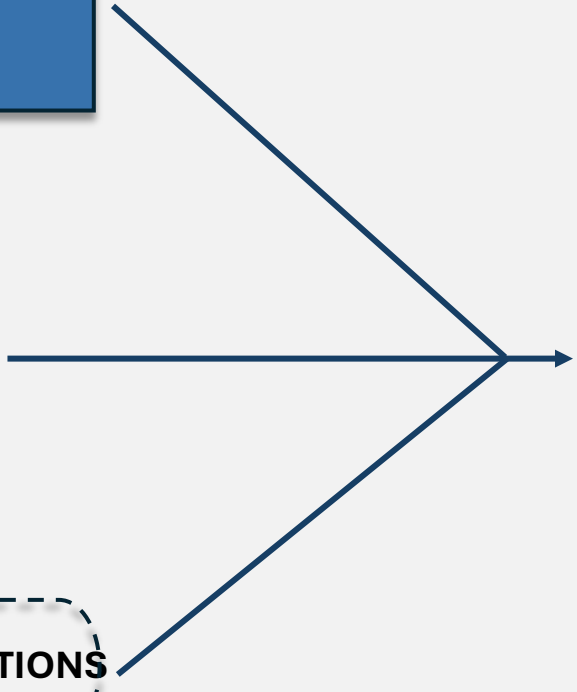
SAVE ACT

NOMINATIONS

AI

INSULIN PRICING

PERMITTING REFORM



2026 Midterm Election Issues



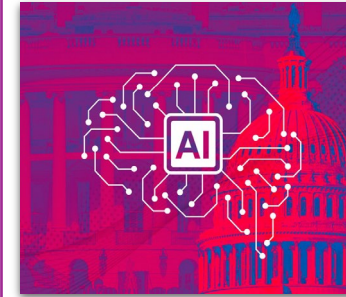
War in Iran



Immigration



Inflation/Affordability



AI



Gas Prices



Tariffs



Health Care



Housing



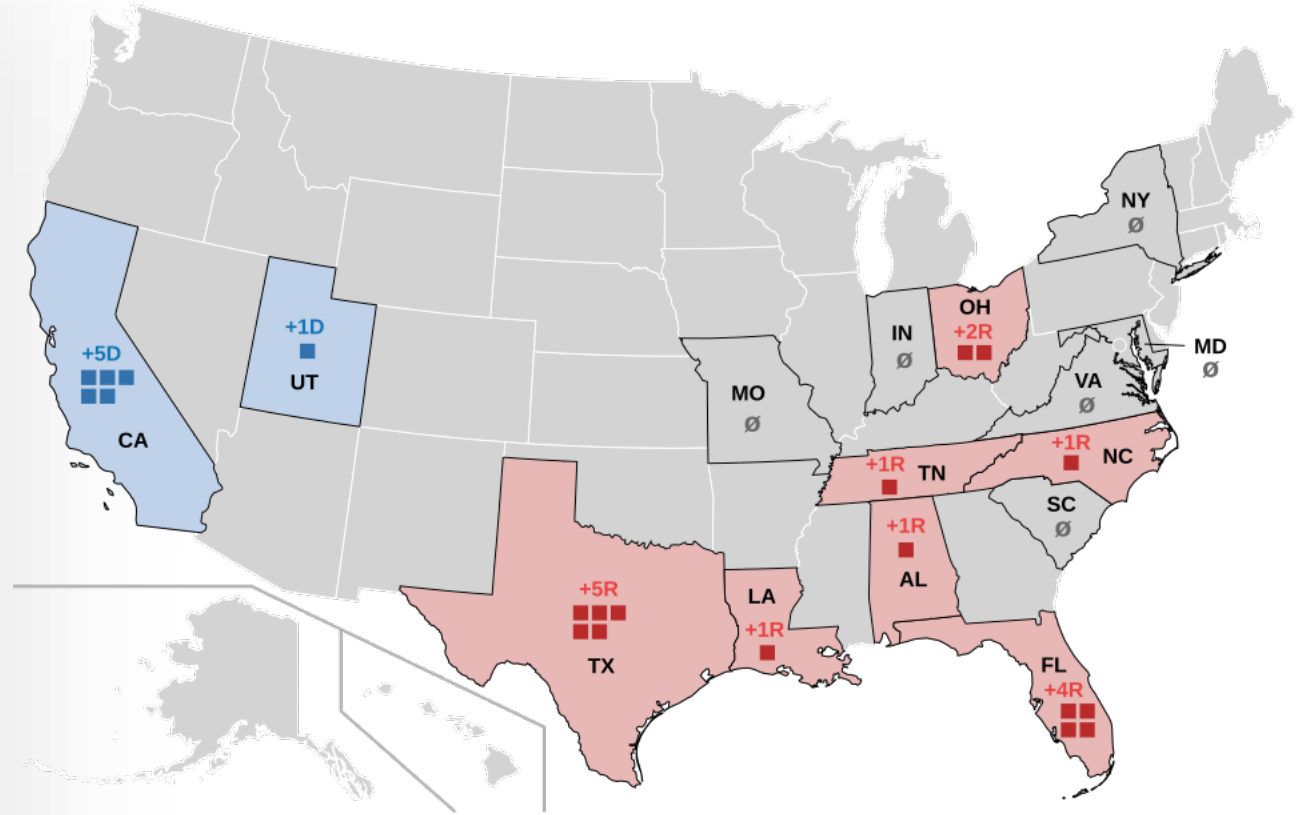
Crypto



**Federalism &
Democracy**

Overview of Mid-Decade Redistricting

- States typically redistrict every 10-years, but multiple states pursued “mid-decade” redistricting.
- Redistricting battles intensified in the aftermath of the Supreme Court’s ruling in *Louisiana v. Callais*.
- The impact of the *Callais* decision on redistricting will last beyond 2026 midterm elections and into the 2028 presidential cycle given most states’ lack of time to implement map changes.



Closing Thoughts on the November Election

The Case for Democrats

- Democrats are upbeat about their chances to retake both chambers thanks to low Trump approval ratings and momentum in downballot elections since the start of the second Trump administration.

The Case for Republicans

- Republicans remain optimistic on their chances of retaining control of the Senate, as they're defending more than a dozen solidly-red states. And in the House, they're pointing to fewer and fewer competitive seats to make the case that they can retain their majority.

Situational awareness

- Retirements & departures on both sides of the aisle signal significant and ongoing generational & ideological changes for the 120th Congress & beyond the second Trump administration.
- Proximity to "lame-duck" presidency offers crucial window of opportunity to educate & relationship build ahead of 2028 transition, regardless of who's in control.