

Meet Eight MAGA Groups That Will Yield Massive Influence Over The 118th Congress And Their Extreme Agenda

As Republicans take over control of the U.S. House of Representatives, GOP leaders have wasted no time in [announcing a slate of investigations](#) into President Biden, his family, and his administration and put forth an extreme MAGA-fueled agenda that would radically [reshape Congress](#) and [cut vital programs](#) like Social Security and Medicare. This agenda is being pushed by the extreme MAGA groups that stand to have the most say in the 118th Congress.

Some of these groups, like the **Heritage Foundation** and the **Club for Growth**, have been mainstays of Republican politics for decades. Others have emerged more recently and are helmed by former staffers and members of Donald Trump's administration. Among them are [Linda McMahon](#), who chairs the board of the **America First Policy Institute**, and [Stephen Miller](#), now president of the **America First Legal Foundation**.

These MAGA extremists have already begun to prove their strength in shaping the Republicans' agenda. Right-wing activists connected to the **American Accountability Foundation**, the **Conservative Partnership Institute**, and other Trump-aligned organizations [have joined far-right members of the House GOP caucus](#) in calling on Rep. Kevin McCarthy to abandon his bid to become Speaker of the House.

Meanwhile, groups like **Susan B. Anthony Pro-Life America** and **Judicial Watch** will demand action in the House based on [COVID-19 conspiracy theories](#) and push Congress to pass [a virtual ban on abortion](#) nationally.

While dozens of right-wing groups will likely have a voice in the new House, Accountable.US has documented **eight** that are currently seeking to influence committees and House leadership. Rather than promoting policies that would benefit the American people, the incoming House GOP majority will likely launch wasteful investigations and hold hearings that give a platform to groups championing ideas that further erode public trust in American democracy and its institutions.

American Accountability Foundation (AAF)

Founded in 2021, The **American Accountability Foundation** is a conservative-leaning opposition research organization, which *The New Yorker* has [called a "slime machine"](#) that has escalated "partisan warfare" in the post-Trump era. The group's most notable effort to derail the Biden presidency has been its opposition to a slate of executive branch nominees with a particular focus on ["blocking women and people of color."](#)

Targets of AAF's campaign have included the nomination of Sarah Bloom Raskin to be the vice-chair for supervision of the Federal Reserve Board; David Chipman to be director of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives; [Kalpana Kotagal](#) to be a member of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission; and [Gigi B. Sohn](#) to be commissioner of the Federal

Communications Commission. In the cases of Raskin and Chipman, AAF's efforts played a key role in ending their nominations.

The American Accountability Foundation has also taken up government spending as one of its areas of interest. The group currently runs the '[Congressional Pork Map](#)' jointly with the Center for Renewing America. The project documents what the AAF views as wasteful government spending across the U.S. In practice, however, the map focuses almost exclusively on earmarked federal funding spent in Democratic congressional districts.

In the new Congress, AAF will likely bandwagon with right-wing members of the GOP caucus who want to shrink the federal ledger. Representatives Paul Gosar and Lauren Boebart, among other Congressmembers, [have already cited AAF](#) in their communications with Biden officials.

Club for Growth

The **Club for Growth** is a conservative organization, [backed by the right-wing billionaire Richard Uihlein and other monied interests](#), which has focused on cutting corporate taxes and deregulating the American economy at the expense of working-class Americans and the environment. The Club for Growth was largely supportive of the MAGA agenda throughout the Trump presidency but fell out with the former president and his allies during the 2022 midterms when the group [challenged a number of his endorsed candidates in key races](#). The Club for Growth [endorsed 18 House candidates in 2022 backed by a \\$100 million war chest](#). Of those candidates, 14 were elected to the 118th Congress. Half are freshmen legislators.

Before the new Congress was sworn in, the Club for Growth urged Republicans to vote no on Kevin McCarthy's Speakership unless he agreed to [a slate of rules changes](#) that would weaken his position and allow rank-and-file members to bring their amendments to a floor vote. On January 5, 2022, OpenSecrets [reported](#) that the Club for Growth and the Congressional Leadership Fund, a hybrid PAC endorsed by Rep. McCarthy, had reached a deal on McCarthy's speakership. In exchange for the Club for Growth's support, CLF agreed to not spend money in open-seat GOP primaries in safe Republican districts or give money to other groups to do so. Rep. McCarthy's office, the Congressional Leadership Fund, and the Club for Growth [denied that McCarthy's office played a role](#) in brokering the deal.

The Club for Growth [has stated its objections to the Biden Administration's](#) supposed "excessive spending" on programs that have sought to combat climate change and rescue the American economy and its workers after the COVID-19 pandemic. The Club for Growth will likely press the new Republican House majority to pass legislation that reduces federal spending, cuts taxes, and exploits the United States' nonrenewable energy sources.

Heritage Foundation & Heritage Action for America

The **Heritage Foundation** is a Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit organization and conservative think tank. Since its founding in 1973, Heritage has become one of the [world's most influential think tanks](#) through its relationships with Republican administrations and influence in Congress.

Heritage Action For America, an affiliated [organization of](#) Heritage since 2010, is a powerful 501(c)(4) that uses [lobbying](#), organizing, and [political spending](#) to advance conservative political goals. Heritage Action provides training and [organizing opportunities](#) to its [20,000](#) members to help them hold public officials' "[feet to the fire](#)."

Although historically a research institution, Heritage has increasingly ventured into political advocacy and grassroots organizing through Heritage Action. Both the think tank and Heritage Action [have advanced debunked claims of widespread voter fraud](#) that have been [used to enact restrictive voting laws across the country](#) following the 2020 presidential election. The organization has also been active in the fight [to limit access to abortion](#), [roll back environmental regulations](#), and [curtail the rights of LGBTQ+ Americans](#).

Congressional Republicans and the Heritage Foundation have also found common cause on the following issues:

- The Heritage Foundation has promoted the fringe theory that the Biden administration politicized the FBI when the bureau raided Mar-a-Lago. Heritage has cited Rep. James Comer of Kentucky in a number of their [statements](#) on the raid. Rep. Comer is the incoming chair of the House Oversight Committee. Heritage [was also highly critical](#) of the \$79 billion appropriation for the IRS that was part of Biden's signature 'Build Back Better' initiative, which later became the Inflation Reduction Act.
- On November 23, 2022, before a single hearing has been held in the 118th Congress, the "Heritage Border Security Team" released a [statement](#) "in support of Leader Kevin McCarthy's call for Department of Homeland (DHS) Security Alejandro Mayorkas to resign...or face fresh House investigations that could lead to his impeachment."
- On climate change, the **Heritage Foundation** has [attacked](#) the Biden administration's plans to push defense policy to meet climate goals.
- A senior research fellow at Heritage [called for the removal of "woke ideology"](#) and specifically critical race theory from the military and highlighted the role for Republicans in Congress to play in doing so.
- [Hans von Spakovsky](#), a leading voice in the "election integrity" movement, has long been a fixture at the Heritage Foundation and is currently the senior legal fellow at Heritage's Edwin Meese III Center for Legal and Judicial Studies. Von Spakovsky has urged lawmakers to pass restrictive voting reforms, like [banning voting by mail](#). Policies that would disproportionately make it harder for the elderly, young voters, and poor Americans to cast their ballot.
- Jessica Anderson, executive director of Heritage Action, participated in an ["in-person strategy session with 20+ conservative leaders to discuss issues pertaining to Big Tech censorship"](#) hosted by FSA in June 2022. Other participants [included](#) Rep. Ken Buck of Colorado; Ryan Long, a senior policy analyst for Rep. Kevin McCarthy; and Greg Mueller of Leonard Leo's CRC Advisors.

Judicial Watch

Conservative activist Tom Fitton's **Judicial Watch** has fixated on Hunter Biden since the 2020 election, going as far as to [sue for records](#) from the Department of Justice concerning Republican Senators' investigation of Hunter Biden.

Fitton maintains close relations with MAGA extremists within the Republican Party, including former President Trump. In its [report published in December 2022](#), the House Select Committee to Investigate the January 6th Attack on the United States Capitol wrote that “Fitton was in direct contact with President Trump and understood that President Trump would falsely declare victory on election night and call for vote counting to stop.” Fitton even “drafted a victory statement for the President to read on election night,” according to the committee.

Since the January 6th attack, members of Congress allied with Fitton have accused the Biden administration of colluding with social media companies to censor content produced by Judicial Watch. In December 2022, Representative Andrew Clyde of Georgia [introduced a resolution of inquiry](#) requesting that the executive branch turn over “certain documents or records relating to coordination between social media companies and the Biden administration on information, censorship, and censorship meetings in order to suppress or deplatform persons or information the administration views as misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation on COVID–19, Hunter Biden, and elections.” Among the requested documents were communications specifically naming Fitton.

Fitton, [who has previously appeared before Congressional panels](#), will likely appear as a witness in hearings concerning Hunter Biden or Big Tech’s purported censorship of right-wing causes.

Susan B. Anthony Pro-Life America

Susan B. Anthony Pro-Life America (formerly Susan B. Anthony List) is one of the most influential anti-choice groups in the United States. During the Trump administration, SBA Pro-Life America ran a number of media campaigns in support of President Trump’s nominees to the Supreme Court. Particularly during Justice Kavanaugh’s confirmation hearings, the group [played an outsized role in rallying conservative women in support of Kavanaugh](#), in spite of the credible accusations of sexual misconduct against the nominee. Their successful effort ultimately resulted in the confirmation of all three of Trump’s nominees to the high court and the overturn of the Roe decision in June 2022.

SBA Pro-Life America endorsed dozens of anti-choice Republican candidates during the 2022 midterms. Many lost to candidates who supported pro-choice policies.

Despite these defeats, the group [has called on GOP leadership to pass legislation establishing a federal ban on abortion after 15 weeks of pregnancy](#). SBA Pro-Life America’s ultimate goal is to eliminate access to safe, legal abortion care in the United States.

America First Works & America First Policy Institute

America First Works, originally called [America First Policies](#), [is a pro-Trump nonprofit that launched after the 2016 U.S. presidential election](#). The group’s leadership features numerous high-ranking, former members of President Trump’s executive branch, including former Small Business Administration Administrator and pro-wrestling mogul [Linda McMahon](#) and former chief White House economic advisor [Larry Kudlow](#). Since 2020, America First Works has directed tens of millions of dollars to conservative and right-wing causes.

America First Works is affiliated with **America First Policy Institute**, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit research organization. AFPI is the originator of the [‘America First Agenda,’](#) a sprawling

collection of policy proposals covering the economy, healthcare, education, border security, energy, and election reform, among other issue areas. Specific proposals include the following:

- Achieving a balanced budget by cutting federal spending on programs that help boost poor and working-class Americans and their families
- Making the Trump tax cuts permanent
- Lowering the corporate tax rate
- Gutting the Affordable Care Act by ending the employer insurance mandate, making it easier for employers to deny their workers healthcare coverage
- Finishing construction of Trump's border wall along the U.S.-Mexico border
- Make family reunification more difficult by exclusively prioritizing merit-based immigration programs
- Creating processes by which parents can challenge teaching materials in public schools

AFPI has already [pledged to champion its America First Agenda](#) in the new Congress, although [the nonprofit group cannot solicit express support for its far-reaching plan from members of Congress](#). That said, numerous Republican House members have participated in AFPI-sponsored events. They include [Rep. Claudia Tenney of New York](#), [Rep. Jim Jordan of Ohio](#), and [Rep. Mike Johnson of Louisiana](#), among others.

America First Legal Foundation

America First Legal is [an organization launched by former Trump White House advisor Stephen Miller and the Conservative Partnership Institute](#) in early 2021. At the time of its creation, America First Legal was envisioned as ["a conservative version of the American Civil Liberties Union"](#) intended to challenge the Biden administration.

During President Biden's first two years in office, the America First Legal Foundation was particularly active in filing Freedom of Information requests and suing the administration. The group has also identified several issue areas that are shared by Congressional Republicans. For example, the group has been particularly critical of the Biden administration's [handling of the southern border](#) and [the supposed politicization of the Department of Justice](#).

Like other MAGA extremist groups, the America First Legal Foundation has obsessed over LGBTQ+ issues, in particular transgender rights. In the lead up to the 2022 midterms, the group [ran ads and sent out mailers](#) in at least 25 states attacking trans adolescents.

Given the number of former Trump administration officials staffing the America First Legal Foundation, it can be expected that the group will maintain close contact with the House GOP in the 118th Congress. As a case in point, following House Republicans' narrow victory in the 2022 midterm election, Jim Jordan, the incoming chair of the House Judiciary Committee, sent [a letter to Secretary Mayorkas](#) concerning planned investigations of the Department of Homeland Security. The correspondence specifically cited an amicus brief filed by the America First Legal Foundation.

Conservative Partnership Institute

The **Conservative Partnership Institute** is a Washington, D.C.-based 501(c)(3) organization that has been called the [“secret hub of the radical right.”](#) Founded in 2017 by former Senator Jim DeMint, CPI operates out of a townhouse just half a mile from the Capitol, where members of Congress, congressional staffers, donors, right-wing groups, and activists regularly convene.

CPI has been called an [“extension of the Trump infrastructure”](#) and [“the most powerful messaging force in the MAGA universe.”](#) CPI and its nearly one dozen affiliate groups employ a [“who’s who” of Jan. 6](#), earning it the title of [“the insurrectionists’ clubhouse.”](#) CPI runs the Election Integrity Network, an influential election monitoring group that mobilizes [“conspiracy-minded MAGA activists”](#) to employ [“Jim Crow-style voter suppression techniques”](#) under the leadership of Cleta Mitchell, a former Trump lawyer, and prominent 2020 election denier. Voting rights groups have warned that EIN’s ostensible “election integrity” organizing efforts are [“a recipe for more verbal and physical threats against election administration officials”](#) and, as a result, [“partisans and vigilantes will mobilize to intimidate voters and thwart their participation.”](#)

[CPI](#) is expected to highlight purported problems of “election integrity” in the new Congress. One of CPI’s closest allies in this effort will likely be Representative Jim Jordan. According to Denver Riggleman, an ex-Congressman and former senior advisor to the House select committee investigating January 6th, Rep. Jordan worked with the Conservative Partnership Institute [to fight Trump’s election loss](#). Following the January 6th attack, CPI [paid to take several members of the House of Representatives](#), including Jim Jordan, Paul Gosar, and Scott Perry, on a policy retreat in Florida. CPI has since [paid for three additional trips](#) for Jordan or his staffers, most recently in October 2022.

In addition to sponsored trips, CPI has trained a number of congressional staffers. For example, in August 2022, CPI [provided training](#) to staffers working for Reps. Marjorie Taylor Green, Chip Roy, Andy Biggs, Lauren Boebart, Ken Buck, and Mike Johnson. All are members of the far-right House Freedom Caucus.