

He Divided, but Conquered

Full control of government gives Trump a record success rate

Donald Trump campaigned as a successful business mogul whose negotiating skills made him uniquely qualified to be a president capable of ending Washington's decades of bitter partisanship to get things done.

Trump, in fact, got his way on almost every vote last year where he publicly stated a position, setting a record for success. The results of votes by both House and Senate combined show he won 98.7 percent of the time on issues he supported. That set a new bicameral record, besting Obama's 96.7 percent success level in 2009 (the last time a president's party controlled both chambers.)

There's a back story to all that winning, of course. Because Trump's party controls the floor in both chambers and is loath to hold votes when facing the prospect of defeat, Republicans were primed somewhat for success. In addition, rules changes for judicial and executive nominees (all of which carry stated presidential positions) removed the threat of a 60-vote threshold for nominations, meaning Republicans could prevail on such votes with only members of their caucus.

Yet even with many advantages, in his first year Trump struggled to claim major legislative victories. And despite boasts that he would unify Washington, his presidency has only intensified a long-developing trend of party warfare.

So far, Trump has not shepherded major bipartisan legislation through the House and Senate. His single big accomplishment is a tax overhaul law that was written exclusively by congressional Republicans and his White House aides, which received nary a Democratic vote on either side of the Capitol. Trump also pushed unsuccessfully to repeal and replace the 2010 health law — working only with Republicans and securing only Republican votes.

Trump has deployed top deputies like his chief of staff, John Kelly, and top domestic policy adviser, Stephen Miller, to strike an immigration deal with Republicans and Democrats. But, so far, they have yet to fashion an agreement.

What's more, when members of both parties had to get together on a government shutdown-ending spending bill late last month, Trump took a back seat. His budget director, Mick Mulvaney, admitted as much on Jan. 23.

"Sometimes not going to the table is one of the best things you can do in a negotiation,"

Mulvaney told CNN.

Eventually, whether it is on immigration, an infrastructure package or federal spending, the president will have to work across the aisle.

Data of votes cast in 2017, however, show in a stark way that Trump simply has not done that one year into his presidency. CQ has long analyzed how members of both chambers voted when a president's position has been stated publicly. The data show Trump — like his immediate predecessor, Barack Obama — has enjoyed overwhelming support from his own party and staunch opposition from the opposing one.

Republican senators last year voted with Trump 96 percent of the time on legislation or nominations for which his stance was known before members cast their votes. On the House side, GOP members sided with the president 93 percent of the time his view was known.

Both of those scores are historically high, according to data compiled by CQ since 1954 — the highest in that time period for House and Senate Republicans standing by a chief executive. The Senate support level exceeded its previous high in 2001 and 2003, when GOP senators voted with George W. Bush 94 percent of the time.

How the Trump presidency has furthered the trend of partisanship also is reflected in how Democratic members of both chambers voted when they knew his stance beforehand.

House Democrats voted against the president 82 percent of the time, the second-highest opposition score recorded since CQ began tracking the data. The level was behind only the conference's opposition to Bush in 2003 (93 percent). On the Senate side, Democrats voted against Trump's positions 61 percent of the time. That level also is the second-highest, behind only Senate Democrats' 65 percent opposition to the elder George Bush as he was running for re-election in 1992.

The analysis measured 709 House votes and 325 Senate votes. Only 36 votes in the House (5.1 percent) were taken with Trump's stance clear beforehand. That's the lowest since the analysis began. (By comparison, Obama averaged 10 percent on the House side and the younger Bush came in at 8.4 percent.)

Of all Senate votes (117), 36 percent were taken with knowledge of where the president

Perfect Attendance

The count of those who never missed a roll-call vote fell in the House from 16 members in 2016 to 14 members in 2017. The number of senators who cast a "yea" or a "nay" on every recorded vote fell from 18 to 13 members.

HOUSE

Democrats

Levin, Sander M. Mich.
Schneider, Brad Ill.

Republicans

Bergman, Jack Mich.
Conaway, K. Michael Texas
Fleischmann, Chuck Tenn.
Foxx, Virginia N.C.
Latta, Bob Ohio
LoBiondo, Frank A. N.J.
McHenry, Patrick T. N.C.
Moolenaar, John Mich.
Paulsen, Erik Minn.
Rothfus, Keith Pa.
Womack, Steve Ark.
Young, David Iowa

SENATE

Independent

King, Angus Maine

Republicans

Boozman, John Ark.
Collins, Susan Maine
Cornyn, John Texas
Cotton, Tom Ark.
Daines, Steve Mont.
Fischer, Deb Neb.
Gardner, Cory Colo.
Grassley, Charles E. Iowa
Kennedy, John La.
Lankford, James Okla.
Rounds, Mike S.D.
Thune, John S.D.

stood on the issue. For the Senate, that is the highest score for a president's first year since Ronald Reagan's 128 in 1981.

When nominations are weeded out, the Senate voted 23 times knowing Trump's position (10 percent). But only 19.7 percent of Senate votes cast with the president's stance known were not nomination votes, the second-lowest total in three decades.

Senate Republicans opened the floodgates for nominations, giving Trump 94 confirmation floor votes last year, compared to 44 for Obama in the last two years of his presidency while the chamber was under GOP control.

Senate Democrats supported Trump 37 percent of the time when his position was known, the lowest score for either party since the same conference backed George W. Bush only 34 percent of the time in 2008. (By comparison, the lowest rate of support for Obama's known stances by GOP senators was 40 percent in 2013.) Still, Senate Democrats' 2017 score was only the fifth-lowest since the annual analysis started.

For House Democrats, their level of support for Trump was even lower, voting in support of the president's known positions just 16 percent of the time. That is the second-lowest level since 1954, behind only a 7 percent score of support for George W. Bush in 2007 (7 percent).

And while Senate Republicans have been the most outspoken about some of Trump's rhetoric on things like race and his suitability for the presidency, they voted with him at almost every opportunity.

Not only was the 96 percent of presidential support among Senate Republicans their highest ever in CQ's data, the 93 percent among House GOP set a record too.

Perhaps better than any other set of numbers, those seem to underscore how Trump's erratic, nationalist and conservative base-focused presidency has failed to match his campaign-trail rhetoric of becoming a master Washington deal-maker who works with Democrats as often as Republicans.

Nevertheless, the raw numbers show he succeeded in getting his way on nearly all the votes he weighed in on.

Of 117 Senate votes, Trump won 115 times

— his only defeats were the two failed attempts to gut the 2010 health law. That 98.3 percent success rate was second only to Obama's 98.7 percent score in 2009. His two Senate losses were the fewest since Obama's single loss in 2009. (That lone setback was related to a vote on closure of the Guantanamo Bay detention facility in Cuba. Obama pledged to close the facility. The Senate voted to keep it open.)

Trump went 94-0 on nomination votes last year, bested only by Obama's 124 in 2014. Excluding his perfect record on nominations, his 91.3 percent success rate was bested only by Obama, again in 2009, for any president over the past 30 years.

But, notably, the 21 legislative successes ranked 22nd over the same three decades, undercutting Trump's often-stated opinion that he is breaking "all" records when it comes to his legislative agenda.

On the House side, Trump was perfect: 36-0 on votes that members took knowing where he stood.

The 2017 data show Trump's first year only furthered a consistent trend line within the 63-year-old study that reveals a steady progression of partisanship building between Congress and the presidency. During the eight years between John F. Kennedy's inauguration and Lyndon B. Johnson's last day in office, the average Republican member voted with that Democratic duo 41 percent of the time. GOP House members voted with Jimmy Carter 36 percent of the time and with Bill Clinton 31.5 percent of the time. But since Clinton left office, the chasm has only gotten wider. So what changed since 2008, when America elected its first African-American chief executive?

Both political parties became less and less politically diverse; in the past, ideological diversity likely encouraged compromise. Those days appear to be over — at least for now.

The growing distance between the parties in Washington reflects a broader societal trend. A recent Pew Research Center poll found there is a 36 percentage-point chasm between Republicans and those who lean Republican and Democrats and those who lean Democratic. ■

Guide to the Vote Studies

CQ has analyzed voting patterns of members of Congress since 1945. The three current studies — presidential support, party unity and voting participation — have been conducted in a consistent manner since 1954.

SELECTING VOTES CQ bases its vote studies on all floor votes for which senators and House members were asked to vote "yea" or "nay." In 2017, there were 709 such roll-call votes in the House and 325 in the Senate. The House total excludes one quorum call in 2017.

The House total counts all votes on procedural matters, including votes to approve the journal.

The presidential support and party unity studies are based on a set of votes selected according to the criteria detailed on pages 33 and 38.

INDIVIDUAL SCORES

Member scores are based only on the votes each actually cast. This makes individual support and opposition scores total 100 percent. The same method is used to identify the leading scorers on pages 28-29 and 35.

Overall scores To be consistent with previous years, calculations of average scores by chamber and party are based on all eligible votes, whether or not all members cast a "yea" or "nay." The lack of participation by lawmakers in a roll call vote reduces chamber and party average support and opposition scores.

ROUNDING SCORES in the tables that follow are rounded to the nearest percentage point. Scores for the presidential and party support leaders are reported to one decimal point in order to rank them more precisely.

LEADING SCORERS: PRESIDENTIAL SUPPORT

SUPPORT shows those who, in 2017, voted most often for President Donald Trump's position when it was clearly known. **OPPOSITION** shows those who voted most often against his position. Absences do not count. Members with identical scores are listed alphabetically.

SENATE



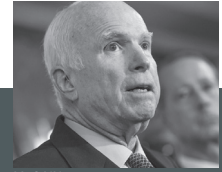
MANCHIN



BARRASSO



GILLIBRAND



McCAIN

SUPPORT

OPPOSITION

Democrats		Republicans	
Manchin, Joe III	70.7	Barrasso, John	100.0
Heitkamp, Heidi	66.7	Blunt, Roy	100.0
Donnelly, Joe	62.3	Boozman, John	100.0
McCaskill, Claire	58.2	Burr, Richard M.	100.0
Warner, Mark	54.8	Cassidy, Bill	100.0
Tester, Jon	52.2	Cochran, Thad	100.0
Carper, Thomas R.	50.4	Cornyn, John	100.0
Nelson, Bill	50.0	Hatch, Orrin G.	100.0
		Hoeven, John	100.0
		Inhofe, James M.	100.0
		Isakson, Johnny	100.0
		McConnell, Mitch	100.0
		Perdue, David	100.0
		Roberts, Pat	100.0
		Rubio, Marco	100.0
		Shelby, Richard C.	100.0
		Sullivan, Dan	100.0
		Thune, John	100.0
		Tillis, Thom	100.0
		Wicker, Roger	100.0

Democrats		Republicans	
Gillibrand, Kirsten	92.3	McCain, John	8.4
Warren, Elizabeth	91.5	Paul, Rand	7.3
Booker, Cory	86.4	Collins, Susan	6.0
Harris, Kamala	85.3	Heller, Dean	4.4
Merkley, Jeff	82.8	Corker, Bob	4.4
Markey, Edward J.	81.9	Murkowski, Lisa	3.5
Wyden, Ron	73.5	Lee, Mike	3.4
Hirono, Mazie K.	71.3	Graham, Lindsey	2.6
Schatz, Brian	69.8	Sasse, Ben	2.6
Schumer, Charles E.	69.2	Ernst, Joni	2.6
Blumenthal, Richard	69.0	Kennedy, John	2.6
Duckworth, Tammy	68.7	Flake, Jeff	1.8
Heinrich, Martin	68.1	Toomey, Patrick J.	1.8
		Six Senators	1.7

HOUSE



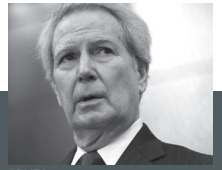
PETERSON



ADERHOLT



ELLISON



JONES

SUPPORT

OPPOSITION

Democrats		Republicans (100%)	
Peterson, Collin C.	61.8	Aderholt, Robert B.	100.0
Cuellar, Henry	58.3	Allen, Rick W.	100.0
Sinema, Kyrsten	45.5	Amodei, Mark	100.0
O'Halleran, Tom	38.9	Barletta, Lou	100.0
Lipinski, Daniel	33.3	Bergman, Jack	100.0
Murphy, Stephanie	31.4	Bishop, Mike	100.0
Gottheimer, Josh	30.6	Bost, Mike	100.0
Rosen, Jacky	28.6	Brady, Kevin	100.0
Costa, Jim	28.1	Brooks, Susan W.	100.0
Ruiz, Raul	27.8	Buchanan, Vern	100.0
Schneider, Brad	27.8	Bucshon, Larry	100.0
Crist, Charlie	27.3	Burgess, Michael C.	100.0
Peters, Scott	25.7	Calvert, Ken	100.0
Bishop, Sanford D. Jr.	25.0	Carter, John	100.0
Bustos, Cheri	25.0	Carter, Earl L.	100.0
		"Buddy"	100.0
		Chaffetz, Jason	100.0
		Cole, Tom	100.0
		Collins, Chris	100.0
		Conaway, K. Michael	100.0
		Cook, Paul	100.0
		Cramer, Kevin	100.0
		Crawford, Rick	100.0
		Culberson, John	100.0
		Davis, Rodney	100.0
		Denham, Jeff	100.0
		Dunn, Neal	100.0
		Fleischmann, Chuck	100.0
		Flores, Bill	100.0
		Gowdy, Trey	100.0
		Granger, Kay	100.0
		Graves, Tom	100.0
		Guthrie, Brett	100.0
		Harper, Gregg	100.0
		Higgins, Clay	100.0
		Johnson, Bill	100.0
		Kelly, Mike	100.0
		Kinzinger, Adam	100.0
		Knight, Steve	100.0
		LaMalfa, Doug	100.0
		Lucas, Frank D.	100.0
		McCarthy, Kevin	100.0
		McCaul, Michael	100.0
		McHenry, Patrick T.	100.0
		McKinley, David B.	100.0
		McMorris Rodgers, Michael	100.0
		Cathy	100.0
		Moolenaar, John	100.0
		Murphy, Tim	100.0
		Newhouse, Dan	100.0
		Nunes, Devin	100.0
		Paulsen, Erik	100.0
		Pittenger, Robert	100.0
		Reed, Tom	100.0
		Rice, Tom	100.0
		Rogers, Harold	100.0
		Rutherford, John	100.0
		Scalise, Steve	100.0
		Scott, Austin	100.0
		Sessions, Pete	100.0
		Shimkus, John	100.0
		Shuster, Bill	100.0
		Simpson, Mike	100.0
		Smucker, Lloyd K.	100.0
		Stivers, Steve	100.0
		Taylor, Scott	100.0
		Tenney, Claudia	100.0
		Thompson, Glenn	100.0
		Tiberi, Pat	100.0
		Trott, Dave	100.0
		Upton, Fred	100.0
		Valadao, David	100.0
		Walberg, Tim	100.0
		Walden, Greg	100.0
		Walters, Mimi	100.0
		Wilson, Joe	100.0
		Womack, Steve	100.0
		Woodall, Rob	100.0
		Young, David	100.0

Democrats		Republicans	
Ellison, Keith	94.4	Jones, Walter B.	46.7
Espaillet, Adriano	94.4	Amash, Justin	36.1
Grijalva, Raul M.	94.4	Ros-Lehtinen, Ileana	32.3
Waters, Maxine	94.4	Smith, Christopher H.	28.6
Gutierrez, Luis V.	94.1	LoBiondo, Frank A.	27.8
Hastings, Alcee L.	93.9	Donovan, Dan	22.2
Cohen, Steve	91.7	Massie, Thomas	22.2
DeSaulnier, Mark	91.7	King, Peter T.	19.4
Fudge, Marcia L.	91.7	Sanford, Mark	19.4
Jayapal, Pramila	91.7	Curbelo, Carlos	17.1
Lee, Barbara	91.7	Biggs, Andy	16.7
Pallone, Frank Jr.	91.7	Duncan, John J. Jr.	16.7
Raskin, Jamie	91.7	Fitzpatrick, Brian	16.7
Schakowsky, Jan	91.7	Zeldin, Lee	16.7
Serrano, Jose E.	91.7	Brooks, Mo	15.6
Watson Coleman, Bonnie	91.7	Faso, John J.	13.9
Lewis, John	91.4	Frelinghuysen, Rodney	13.9
Velazquez, Nydia M.	91.4	Lance, Leonard	13.9
Wasserman Schultz, Debbie	91.4	Meehan, Patrick	13.9
Bass, Karen	91.2	Reichert, Dave	13.9
Carson, Andre	91.2	Stefanik, Elise	13.9
Davis, Danny K.	91.2	Gosar, Paul	12.9
Deutch, Ted	91.2	Griffith, Morgan	11.8
Payne, Donald M. Jr.	91.2	Hollingsworth, Trey	11.4
Richmond, Cedric L.	90.9	Seven Representatives	11.1
Smith, Adam	90.9		
Cummings, Elijah E.	89.7		
Pocan, Mark	89.7		

2017 VOTES: PRESIDENTIAL POSITION

These were the 36 House and 117 Senate roll-call votes in 2017 on which the president took a clear position. A victory is a vote on which the president's position prevailed. For full captions with the president's positions, see CQ.com.

HOUSE

Defense and Foreign Policy

VOTE NUMBER DESCRIPTION

1 Victory

136 Appropriations

Domestic Policy

VOTE NUMBER DESCRIPTION

31 Victories

65 Abortion funding
 73 Environmental regulation
 76 Labor regulation
 77 Firearms regulation
 78 Environmental regulation
 83 Public Lands
 84 Education policy
 85 Education policy
 97 Labor regulation
 121 Labor regulation
 184 Health care policy
 186 Health care policy
 202 Telecommunications regulation
 244 Labor regulation
 249 Appropriations
 256 Health care policy
 306 Health care policy
 307 Veterans affairs
 337 Tort law
 342 Immigration policy
 344 Immigration policy
 412 Labor regulation
 480 Disaster supplemental
 517 Immigration policy
 528 Appropriations
 542 Appropriations
 549 Abortion rights
 604 Health care policy
 630 Flood insurance
 670 Appropriations
 708 Appropriations

Economic Policy and Trade

VOTE NUMBER DESCRIPTION

4 Victories

72 Financial regulation
 637 Tax overhaul
 692 Tax overhaul
 699 Tax overhaul

House Success

Victories 36
 Defeats 0
 Total 36
 Success rate **100.0%**

SENATE

Domestic Policy

VOTE NUMBER DESCRIPTION

17 Victories

43 Environmental regulation
 66 Firearms regulation
 81 Labor regulation
 82 Public lands
 83 Education policy
 84 Education policy
 87 Labor regulation
 93 Labor regulation
 99 Labor regulation
 109 Senate procedure
 120 Labor regulation
 121 Appropriations
 167 Health care policy
 192 Disaster supplemental
 219 Budget resolution
 311 Appropriations
 325 Appropriations

2 Defeats

169 Health care policy
 179 Health care policy

Economic Policy and Trade

VOTE NUMBER DESCRIPTION

4 Victories

51 Financial regulation
 249 Financial regulation
 303 Tax overhaul
 323 Tax overhaul

Nominations

VOTE NUMBER DESCRIPTION

94 Victories

29 James Mattis
 30 John F. Kelly
 32 Mike Pompeo
 33 Nikki R. Haley
 35 Elaine L. Chao
 36 Rex W. Tillerson
 54 Elisabeth Prince DeVos
 59 Jeff Sessions

61 Thomas Price
 63 Steven T. Mnuchin
 64 David J. Shulkin
 65 Linda E. McMahon
 68 Mick Mulvaney
 71 Scott Pruitt
 73 Wilbur L. Ross, Jr.
 75 Ryan Zinke
 77 Benjamin S. Carson, Sr.
 79 James Richard Perry
 86 Seema Verma
 89 Daniel Coats
 90 Herbert R. McMaster Jr.
 91 Charles R. Breyer and Danny C. Reeves
 96 David Friedman
 103 Elaine C. Duke
 111 Neil M. Gorsuch
 112 Sonny Perdue
 114 Rod J. Rosenstein
 116 R. Alexander Acosta
 118 Jay Clayton
 122 Heather Wilson
 124 Scott Gottlieb
 127 Robert Lighthizer
 129 Jeffrey A. Rosen
 131 Rachel L. Brand
 133 Terry Branstad
 135 John J. Sullivan
 137 Amul R. Thapar
 139 Courtney Elwood
 141 Scott P. Brown
 142 Kenneth P. Rapuano
 148 Brock Long
 150 Sigal Mandelker
 152 Marshall Billingslea
 154 Kristine L. Svinicki
 156 Neomi Rao
 158 David C. Nye
 160 William Francis Hagerty IV
 162 Patrick M. Shanahan
 164 John Kenneth Bush
 166 David Bernhardt
 181 Christopher A. Wray
 182 Kevin Christopher New-
 som
 184 Marvin Kaplan
 186 Dan R. Brouillette
 188 Timothy J. Kelly
 194 Kevin Allen Hassett
 196 Pamela Hughes Patenaude
 201 Noel J. Francisco
 203 William J. Emanuel
 204 Heath P. Tarbert

205 Makan Delrahim
 207 Ralph R. Erickson
 209 Ajit Varadaraj Pai
 211 Eric D. Hargan
 213 Randal Quarles
 215 Lee Francis Cissna
 217 Callista L. Gingrich
 218 David Joel Trachtenberg
 251 Scott L. Palk
 253 Trevor N. McFadden
 255 Amy Coney Barrett
 257 Joan Louise Larsen
 259 Allison H. Eid
 261 Stephanos Bibas
 262 John H. Gibson II
 264 Steven Andrew Engel
 266 Peter B. Robb
 268 William L. Wehrum
 270 Derek Kan
 272 Steven Gill Bradbury
 274 Mark T. Esper
 275 David G. Zatezalo
 277 Joseph Otting
 280 Donald C. Coggins, Jr.
 281 Dabney Langhorne Friedrich
 283 Gregory G. Katsas
 305 Kirstjen Nielsen
 310 Joseph Balash
 313 Leonard Steven Grasz
 315 Don R. Willett
 317 James C. Ho
 318 J. Paul Compton, Jr.
 319 Owen West
 320 Jennifer Gillian Newstead

SENATE SUCCESS

Victories 115
 Defeats 2
 Total 117
 Success rate **98.3%**
 Success rate without nomination **71.4%**

TOTAL Congress Success

Victories 151
 Defeats 2
 Total 153
 Success rate **98.7%**

It's All About Togetherness

Senate Republicans set a record for harmony in 2017; The House GOP came close

The chasm between the parties deepened in President Donald Trump's inaugural year as Republicans, working with narrower majorities in both chambers, united to slash taxes, nullify regulations and, in the Senate, confirm nominees.

CQ's annual vote study shows the House in 2017 was more deeply divided than at any time in more than six decades of such analyses. Party unity votes — defined as those with each party's majority on opposing sides — accounted for more than 3 of every 4 roll-call votes. The House had 539 party unity votes.

On the other side of the Capitol, party unity tallies accounted for more than 2 of every 3 Senate roll-call votes, the fifth-highest mark since Congressional Quarterly began the reviews in a consistent manner in 1954. The Senate had 224 party unity votes in 2017.

Senate Republicans stuck with their caucus an average of 97 percent of the time on such votes, an all-time high for either party, surpassing by 3 percentage points the previous record set by Republicans in 2003 and duplicated by Democrats in 2013. Senate Democrats voted with their party an average of 92 percent of the time.

In the House, Republicans were united an average of 92 percent of the time, a notch below their record in 2016, while Democrats voted with their party an average of 93 percent of the time, just above previous high points of 92 percent in 2007, 2008 and 2015.

John J. Pitney Jr., a professor of politics at Claremont McKenna University and a former GOP aide, says that the rise in party unity mirrored a polarization of the electorate and all levels of government, and predicted it would be a kind of template.

"Maybe not at the 97 percent level, but I think we are going to see polarized voting in the House and Senate stretch to the horizon," Pitney says.

From the session's start, Speaker Paul D. Ryan of Wisconsin and Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky and their teams worked through an ambitious to-do list, tailoring bills and structuring votes to build consensus within their parties.

The irony of the intense party unity in 2017 is that it wasn't always enough. The majorities, thinner than they were in the previous Congress, especially in the Senate, meant that Republicans had little margin to spare.

Fissures among Senate Republicans unraveled the drive for a filibuster-proof reconciliation bill to repeal the 2010 health care overhaul. Even in the House, Republicans needed two runs at the health care bill to get their repeal passed. Party leaders abandoned the vote in the initial run.

Strong Senate GOP unity secured other victories for Trump, such as a resounding December triumph with enactment of a second reconciliation measure to rewrite the tax code, repeal of the individual mandate under the health care law and permit oil drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Senate Republicans were also able to reverse 15 regulations us-

ing the Congressional Review Act in 2017.

Overall, Senate Republicans won 201, or 89.7 percent, of the party unity votes. That was well above the previous top GOP win rate of 83.1 percent in 1981, President Ronald Reagan's first year in office.

And House Republicans won on 90.5 percent of the party unity votes, just a tad less than their record winning percentage in 2016.

In the Senate, McConnell set the stage for the year as Republicans unilaterally ended the filibuster for Supreme Court judges, while leaving it in place for legislation.

The move cleared the way for confirmation of Supreme Court Justice Neil Gorsuch and mirrored the Democrats' use of the same tactic, dubbed the nuclear option, to end filibusters of executive and other judicial nominations in 2013.

Senate Majority Whip John Cornyn, a Texas Republican, links the GOP's tough playbook not to revenge, but to necessity. He points to the Democrats' "monolithic resistance to everything that this president has tried to do or has his name on it" and to near parity in the Senate.

Republicans there have since seen their numbers shrink by one, to 51, following the December election of Democrat Doug Jones from Alabama.

"My hope is that 2018 will be different because, obviously, the margin is thinner, and thankfully there are a number of things we agree on," Cornyn says.

He refers to Trump's expected infrastructure package and possible bipartisan measures dealing with issues such as financial services regulation and criminal justice.

One early test could be on an immigration bill, where some Senate Democrats and Republicans appear to have found common ground. But conservative Republicans and progressive Democrats could nevertheless be tugging them apart.

Republicans like Marco Rubio of Florida say a high level of Senate GOP unity — and division between the parties — might be sustained if the leadership continues its emphasis on moving items with broad GOP support.

"What comes to the floor is so tightly controlled now," Rubio says.

With little room for bipartisan bills or compromise, Senate Minority Whip Richard J. Durbin, the second-ranking Democrat, says frustration was increasing on both sides last year. He predicts more rough patches ahead.

"When Republicans are more Republican, and Democrats are more Democrat, we tend to get very little done," he says.

Durbin links the sour relations between the parties in part to the targeting of vulnerable Democrats.

"Some of it could relate to half of our caucus being up for reelection. Historically — they deny it — but you don't want to give the senator in cycle a good headline or a good result," Durbin says.

Despite the partisanship, some lawmakers found reasons to join