

The Freshmen

16 NEW SENATORS, 93 NEW HOUSE MEMBERS

SENATOR FROM ARKANSAS

John Boozman, R

Pronounced: BOZE-man

Election: Defeated Sen. Blanche Lincoln, D

Residence: Rogers

Born: Dec. 10, 1950; Shreveport, La.

Religion: Baptist

Family: Wife, Cathy Boozman; three children

Education: U. of Arkansas, attended 1969-72; Southern College of Optometry, O.D. 1977

Career: Optometrist; cattle farm owner

Political highlights: Rogers Public Schools Board of Education, 1994-2001; U.S. House, 2001-present



When Boozman defeated Democratic incumbent Lincoln, Arkansas lost its home-state Agriculture chairwoman. But the nation's top rice producer still will have a member on the panel.

That's because Republican leader Mitch McConnell has promised Boozman a seat on the Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Committee, the incoming senator says.

Agriculture won't be the only area of focus. Boozman also plans to remain active on veterans' issues and public works, but he is less sure he will get the Senate equivalents of his House assignments on the Veterans' Affairs and Transportation and Infrastructure committees.

Boozman's top priority will be "getting people back to work [by] giving businesses incentives."

In the House, Boozman was a champion of local interests, including retail giant Wal-Mart Stores Inc., which is headquartered in Bentonville, and the Springdale-based poultry and meat player Tyson Foods Inc.

Because he sees lower taxes as a way to revive the economy, Boozman not only wants to extend income tax breaks Congress approved in 2001 and 2003 under President George W. Bush, but also thinks additional tax cuts may be necessary.

"Right now the industrialized world is cutting its taxes," Boozman says. "I think I would be in favor, in order to get the economy back on track, to cut taxes on business to create jobs."

The emphasis on business reflects Boozman's experience as a cattle rancher and co-founder with his brother, Fay, of an eye clinic.

As his state's lone Republican House member since winning a 2001 special election, Boozman modeled himself after Republican John Paul Hammerschmidt, who represented the 3rd District from 1967 until 1993. Boozman, a fiscal and social conservative, says Congress could cut taxes, spend wisely on priority needs and still chip away at the federal deficit.

"We're going to have to be very, very careful where we spend our dollars and make sure they are for projects that will not only create jobs when they're being done but create tremendous economic opportunity after that," he says.

Boozman says the 112th Congress should work to regain constituents' trust. "The business community, the people of America have lost confidence in Congress. We're going to need to come up with a plan . . . to restore that confidence."

SENATOR FROM CONNECTICUT

Richard Blumenthal, D

Election: Defeated Linda McMahon, R, to succeed Christopher J. Dodd, D, who retired

Residence: Greenwich

Born: Feb. 13, 1946; Brooklyn, N.Y.

Religion: Jewish

Family: Wife, Cynthia Blumenthal; four children

Education: Harvard U., A.B. 1967 (political science); Cambridge U., attended 1967-68; Yale U., J.D. 1973

Military: Marine Corps Reserve 1970-75

Career: Lawyer; congressional aide; White House aide

Political highlights: U.S. attorney, 1977-81; Conn. House, 1984-87; Conn. Senate, 1987-91; Conn. attorney general, 1991-present



A traditional Northeastern Democrat on most issues, Blumenthal is unlikely to depart significantly from the voting pattern of retiring Democrat Christopher J. Dodd, who held the seat for the past 30 years and was chairman of the Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee.

Yet like many candidates who sought to distance themselves from their national parties during the 2010 campaign, Blumenthal says he'll be an independent voice. Most notably, he says he would have voted against the 2008 financial industry bailout that Dodd helped draft and the 2009 economic stimulus law enacted in the first months of the Obama administration.

More parochially, Blumenthal, like Dodd, opposed President Obama's decision to cancel the F-22 fighter program — the engine is made in Connecticut — and says he'll fight to restart production.

Blumenthal got a taste of the Senate when he worked as an administrative assistant to Connecticut Democrat Abraham A. Ribicoff early in his career. He promises to bring an attorney general's mind-set to the job, with a focus on consumer protection — particularly with regard to the pharmaceutical and energy industries. He was a critic of BP following the 2010 Gulf of Mexico oil spill, and he recently called for an investigation into banks' handling of rampant foreclosures. His 20 years as Connecticut's attorney general could make him a good fit for the Judiciary Committee.

Blumenthal wants to repeal tax breaks for companies that do business overseas and supports more "Buy American" provisions that steer government funding to U.S. companies. Connecticut has sought to position itself as a leader in fuel cell technology, and Blumenthal wants to extend the federal "48c" tax credit, enacted as part of the 2009 stimulus, for clean-energy manufacturers. Utility costs are a major issue in Connecticut, and Blumenthal has promised to press changes to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. Along with other attorneys general, he expressed support for the cap-and-trade bill passed in the House in 2009.

He also has said he wants to push a "No Veteran Left Behind" program to improve the Department of Veterans Affairs' claims-processing system, expand mental health services, tax breaks and training opportunities for veterans, and support female veterans. Blumenthal wants the administration to label China as a currency manipulator, a move that could lead to economic penalties.

SENATOR FROM DELAWARE

Chris Coons, D

Election: Defeated Christine O'Donnell, R, to succeed Ted Kaufman, D, who retired

Residence: Wilmington

Born: Sept. 9, 1963; Greenwich, Conn.

Religion: Presbyterian

Family: Wife, Annie Lingenfelter; three children

Education: Amherst College, A.B. 1985 (chemistry & political science); Yale U., J.D. 1992, M.A.R. 1992 (ethics)

Career: Lawyer; education foundation aide; campaign aide

Political highlights: New Castle County Council president, 2001-05; New Castle County executive, 2005-present



Cut from a decidedly progressive cloth, Coons is the rarest type of freshman entering the Senate in January — an avowed liberal who believes government can and should do more.

While much of the new freshman class was swept in on a wave of economic discontent and anti-Obama sentiments, Coons may end up being the sole new supporter that the administration and Democratic leaders can consistently count on in the Senate.

Like Democratic predecessors Ted Kaufman and Joseph R. Biden Jr., Coons — a lawyer and New Castle County executive — can be expected to bring a fairly traditional liberal approach to his work in the Senate.

Like both Kaufman and Biden, Coons is expected to be a vigorous supporter of infrastructure spending. In particular, Coons will become one of the new standard-bearers for Amtrak, the passenger train service that runs the length of Delaware and is an important employer in the state.

With the economy expected to dominate the political landscape for the foreseeable future, Coons will likely line up behind Democratic leaders on issues such as Social Security, unemployment benefits and efforts to boost the economy through government action.

One area where Coons and the White House could be at odds, however, is taxes.

Coons ultimately backed the idea of extending all of the George W. Bush-era tax cuts, including those for people in the upper income brackets — if it is done as part of a bipartisan agreement that includes tax breaks for small businesses and extension of the research and development tax credit.

A second area where Coons might come in conflict with the administration is trade. While the White House will look to move a series of trade agreements early next year, Coons sides with organized labor and other liberal constituencies in demanding protections for the environment and workers.

But on most other issues, Coons should be a supporter of Democratic proposals.

On education, Coons has been critical of the Bush-era overhaul known as No Child Left Behind and has vowed to work for changes to the law. Similarly, he supports climate change legislation and alternative-energy projects.

On social issues, Coons will be a reliably liberal vote. He opposes attempts to impose restrictions on abortion rights and supports same-sex marriage.

SENATOR FROM FLORIDA

Marco Rubio, R

Election: Defeated Kendrick B. Meek, D, to succeed George LeMieux, R, who retired

Residence: West Miami

Born: May 28, 1971; Miami, Fla.

Religion: Roman Catholic

Family: Wife, Jeanette Rubio; four children

Education: Tarkio College, attended 1989-90; Santa Fe Community College, attended 1990-91; U. of Florida, B.S. 1993 (political science); U. of Miami, J.D. 1996

Career: Lawyer; campaign aide

Political highlights: West Miami City Commission, 1998-2000; Fla. House, 2000-08 (majority leader, 2003-06; Speaker, 2006-08)



The youngest U.S. senator and the only Hispanic Republican in the chamber, Rubio is a telegenic rising star in the GOP who is already being talked about as a future presidential candidate.

He got to the Senate by consolidating conservative support in the Sunshine State and forcing his powerful primary competitor, Gov. Charlie Crist, to abandon the Republican Party and run as an independent. Rubio, who describes himself as a “mainstream conservative,” rode the tea party wave into office, promising to oppose President Obama’s agenda, seek the repeal of Democrats’ March 2010 health care overhaul, block tax increases and roll back federal spending.

“By and large, government needs to get out of the way and allow us to go out and get for ourselves those things we want,” he says.

Rubio opposes abortion rights, backs a balanced budget constitutional amendment and says he would have voted against Elena Kagan’s nomination to the Supreme Court. On national defense and foreign policy, Rubio argued against Obama’s plans to close the U.S. detention center at Guantánamo Bay and has questioned the president’s support for Israel.

In his campaign, Rubio tacked to the right of Crist on immigration, proclaiming his support for Arizona’s right to pass a law toughening local law enforcement’s role in combating illegal immigration and promoting a focus on border security. But as a son of immigrants — his parents were refugees from Fidel Castro’s Cuba — he frequently describes himself as “pro-immigration” and says he supports efforts to bolster legal immigration to the country.

Rubio says he favors offshore oil and gas drilling, despite general opposition to drilling off the state’s coasts by most Floridians. But he has emphasized his opposition to Republicans’ proposed privatization of Social Security. Florida has the highest percentage of people 65 and older of any state.

As Florida House Speaker, Rubio developed an initiative called “100 Innovative Ideas for Florida’s Future” and sought to turn those ideas into legislative proposals. He followed a similar strategy as a Senate candidate, proposing 80 “Ideas to Reclaim America.” As a result, he is likely to assume a role in the Senate Republican caucus as a policy and legislative strategist.

GOP leaders have also said Rubio could be a good national spokesman for the party and help Republicans reach out to Hispanic and young voters.

SENATOR FROM ILLINOIS

Mark Steven Kirk, R

Election: Defeated Alexi Giannoulias, D, to succeed Roland W. Burris, D, who retired

Residence: Highland Park

Born: Sept. 15, 1959; Champaign, Ill.

Religion: Congregationalist

Family: Divorced

Education: Cornell U., B.A. 1981 (history); London School of Economics, M.S. 1982; Georgetown U., J.D. 1992

Military: Navy Reserve 1989-present

Career: Lawyer; U.S. State Department aide; World Bank officer; congressional aide

Political highlights: U.S. House, 2001-present



Kirk, who has charted a path of fiscal conservatism and social moderation during his five terms in the House, says he plans to continue in that vein as his state's junior senator.

Despite his concerns about the deficit, he wants to expand the Small Business Administration, the Agriculture Department and the U.S. Trade Development Agency to help Illinois farmers and small businesses boost exports into growing markets.

He pledges to be an advocate for heavy manufacturing and agriculture — both major drivers of the Illinois economy — and he cites the Agriculture Committee as a good fit for his priorities.

He also has his eye on the Commerce, Science and Transportation Committee — a perch that would help him update the state's rail, aviation and highway systems, which Kirk says would boost the Illinois economy by making it easier to get goods to markets.

Kirk wants to improve airport security and continue his work on Transportation Security Administration measures.

The self-described “national security hawk” hopes to be an asset on defense issues as well. He took part in two weeks of training missions in Afghanistan as a Navy reservist in 2008 and says his background could be useful in both military policy and homeland security issues. He has pushed to boost the rewards for information on international terrorists, including Osama bin Laden, and opposes moving prisoners from Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, to detention facilities in the United States. He serves on three Appropriations subcommittees in the House, including the Homeland Security panel.

He also has an interest in veterans' issues, including providing housing vouchers for homeless veterans and their families and increasing health care and educational opportunities.

A moderate, Kirk has backed gun control measures but supported the Supreme Court decision negating the Washington, D.C., handgun ban. He supports an energy policy that includes nuclear energy, offshore oil exploration, and a tax credit for renewable hydro, wind, solar and biomass energy production.

At the same time, he pushes for fiscal restraint, an end to earmarking and a balanced budget.

He supports making the George W. Bush-era tax cuts permanent, as well as permanently repealing the estate tax and “marriage penalty” and doubling the child tax credit.

Kirk says a slot on the Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee would help him pursue some of his goals on economic issues.

SENATOR FROM INDIANA

Dan Coats, R

Election: Defeated Rep. Brad Ellsworth, D, to succeed Evan Bayh, D, who retired

Residence: Indianapolis

Born: May 16, 1943; Jackson, Mich.

Religion: Presbyterian

Family: Wife, Marsha Coats; three children

Education: Wheaton College, B.A. 1965 (political science); Indiana U., Indianapolis, J.D. 1972

Military: Army Corps of Engineers, 1966-68

Career: Lobbyist; congressional district aide; lawyer

Political highlights: U.S. House, 1981-89; U.S. Senate, 1989-99; U.S. ambassador to Germany, 2001-05



Coats has extensive experience working on national security issues, having served on the Armed Services and Select Intelligence committees during his previous tenure in the Senate. Coats' post-Congress career has included service as U.S. ambassador to Germany and time spent as a lobbyist.

That experience is “something I'll be able to employ to address the critical national security issues we face from day one,” he says.

He supports continuing to operate the U.S. base at Guantánamo Bay, Cuba, and vows to prevent the transfer of terrorism suspects detained there to the United States.

Coats opposes what he refers to as the Obama administration's “nice diplomacy” approach in the Middle East and says he will pursue sanctions to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons. If such sanctions fail to persuade the leaders in Tehran to abandon their nuclear weapons program, Coats says, the White House should consider a military strike against Iranian nuclear facilities.

He wants to halt the funding of any new federal programs, regardless of their need or popularity, in order to find ways to shrink the budget. He says that at current levels, federal spending is adding to the growing number of problems that future generations must address.

Coats, who is the son of an immigrant, says the government must focus on improving its immigration policies. He says he would expedite deportation of people found to be in the country illegally, reimburse states for the costs of incarcerating violators and prohibit the payment of federal benefits to illegal immigrants.

“People have to be convinced before they look at anything else that we need to stop the bleeding, stop the flow of illegal immigrants into this country,” he says.

Coats also favors hiring additional immigration officers, increasing penalties for individuals found to have smuggled undocumented workers into the country and establishing pilot programs for worker verification.

He does not support the Obama administration's health care policies and instead favors plans that would allow privatization of federal health care programs.

He opposes abortion and has been endorsed by the National Right to Life group. During his previous time in the Senate, he supported legislation to ban the procedure known as “partial birth” abortion.

SENATOR FROM KANSAS

Jerry Moran, R

Election: Defeated Lisa Johnston, D, to succeed Sam Brownback, R, who ran for governor

Residence: Hays

Born: May 29, 1954; Great Bend, Kan.

Religion: Methodist

Family: Wife, Robba Moran; two children

Education: Fort Hays Kansas State College, attended 1972-73; U. of Kansas, B.S. 1976 (economics), J.D. 1981

Career: Lawyer; banker

Political highlights: Kan. Senate, 1989-97 (vice president, 1993-95; majority leader, 1995-97); U.S. House, 1997-present



Moran is prepared to reach across the aisle in the Senate, where he plans to focus on the economy and the needs of his constituents, particularly veterans and rural residents.

"I'm a conservative, but I am not an overly partisan member," he says, emphasizing his ability to work with lawmakers of both parties and bridge the gap between conservatives and moderates. "I respect other people's points of view."

He demonstrated his independent streak as a House member, voting against the GOP's program for Medicare prescription drug benefits in 2003, for example.

Democrats "got off track by making health care first and foremost" in the 111th Congress, he says. "Employment, jobs, economy need to remain the top priority." In setting goals for the 112th, Moran says, lawmakers should get spending under control, overhaul the earmarking process, balance the budget and promote "the opportunity for business to succeed."

While he admits there are serious problems with the current health care system, Moran is frustrated with the Democrats' health care overhaul. Immediately after Congress cleared the bill, he presented legislation to repeal the law, but recognizes a repeal is very unlikely while President Obama is in office. He plans to take part in efforts to reduce the law's "effects and burdens" by altering or refusing to fund portions of it. As a former co-chairman of the House Rural Health Care Coalition, he is particularly concerned about the law's effect on health care delivery in rural areas.

Moran helped write two farm bills during his time on the House Agriculture Committee, and he sees himself as an important voice for farmers when lawmakers consider a new farm bill in the 112th, which he calls a "very urban and suburban Congress."

Moran hopes to work with members of both parties on energy policy as well, and he expresses strong support for expanding nuclear power and developing renewable sources of energy.

He served on the House Transportation and Infrastructure and Veterans' Affairs committees and hopes to continue working on those panels' issues. Moran also desires a seat on the Armed Services Committee, noting that Kansas has "almost always" had a senator on the panel but is not currently represented there.

True to his pragmatic brand of conservatism, Moran says he is waiting for a report from military leaders before taking a position on the "don't ask, don't tell" policy that bans openly gay service-members. He backs making the Defense budget more efficient, while supporting the significant military presence in Kansas.

SENATOR FROM KENTUCKY

Rand Paul, R

Election: Defeated Jack Conway, D, to succeed Jim Bunning, R, who retired

Residence: Bowling Green

Born: Jan. 7, 1963; Pittsburgh, Pa.

Religion: Presbyterian

Family: Wife, Kelley Paul; three children

Education: Baylor U., attended 1981-84; Duke U., M.D. 1988

Career: Ophthalmologist

Political highlights: No previous office



Paul comes to the Senate as perhaps the best-known of the new conservative firebrands. The son of Rep. Ron Paul, a Texan who sought the presidency as a Libertarian in 1988 and as a Republican in 2008, he hopes to form a tea party caucus in the Senate.

"I think the mood of the country is for reining in big government, for controlling the deficit and for bringing attention back to a government that should be restrained by the Constitution," he said in an interview posted in August on a libertarian website.

Paul calls himself a "constitutional conservative" and has criticized the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Americans with Disabilities Act as examples of government overreach.

His priorities include term limits for lawmakers, a balanced-budget amendment to the Constitution and a requirement that members of Congress cite the specific parts of the Constitution that allow for the measures they introduce.

Paul has said that the health care overhaul enacted in 2010 is unconstitutional, and he opposes U.S. participation in organizations such as the United Nations and the World Trade Organization. He takes a dim view of the Federal Reserve and supports his father's proposal to audit the central bank's books.

"Given that this incredible power is granted to a semi-private institution, one wonders why we don't hear more about the Fed and its actions from the Congress," he said in the same interview. "As senator, I would make sure that the Federal Reserve is held accountable and restore transparency to our monetary system."

Like most conservatives, Paul opposes abortion rights, gun control and the naturalization of illegal immigrants. He also has said that he is "absolutely opposed to cap-and-trade, absolutely opposed to any carbon tax," and that he would be "a great friend of coal" — a linchpin of Kentucky's economy.

He is likely to diverge from most Senate Republicans on national security and foreign policy matters. Paul is a vocal critic of the anti-terrorism law known as the Patriot Act, viewing it as an infringement on civil liberties, and he has expressed skepticism about the war in Afghanistan.

"How long is long enough? It's too simplistic to say there is never a time to come home, or that it's unpatriotic to debate," he told the conservative magazine *National Review* in July. "There are reasonable people, conservatives like me, who believe that defense is the primary role of the federal government, but do not believe that you can make Afghanistan into a nation. It never has been one."

SENATOR FROM MISSOURI

Roy Blunt, R

Election: Defeated Robin Carnahan, D, to succeed Christopher S. Bond, R, who retired

Residence: Strafford

Born: Jan. 10, 1950; Niangua, Mo.

Religion: Baptist

Family: Wife, Abigail Blunt; four children

Education: Southwest Baptist U., B.A. 1970 (history); Southwest Missouri State U., M.A. 1972 (history & government)

Career: University president; teacher

Political highlights: Greene County clerk, 1973-84; Republican nominee for lieutenant governor, 1980; Mo. secretary of state, 1985-93; sought Republican nomination for governor, 1992; U.S. House, 1997-present



Blunt was able to ride the Republican wave to the Senate after serving 14 years in the House, including nearly half of them in the leadership.

An ally of House Majority Leader Tom DeLay of Texas, Blunt rose quickly through the ranks and became majority whip in 2003, six years after being elected and earlier in his congressional career than any lawmaker in the past eight decades. In total, he spent six years as the party's whip.

He sought a seat in the Senate because that is "where the real battles will be fought," he said on his campaign website, and because "America needs experienced leadership, and I offer that leadership."

Blunt has vowed to repeal the 2010 health care overhaul, "replacing it with common-sense health care solutions that will create jobs and drive down health care costs." And he has blasted "record deficits and debts and out-of-control federal spending" by Democratic lawmakers. He supports extending the 2001 and 2003 tax cuts.

He also hopes to see final approval of pending trade agreements with Colombia, Panama and South Korea to bolster the exports from Missouri's farms and agribusinesses. As majority whip in 2005, he helped push the Central American Free Trade Agreement to a narrow victory in the House.

Blunt has made energy policy one of his top priorities, and he is strongly opposed to cap-and-trade proposals for addressing greenhouse gas emissions. He urges an "all of the above" policy that encourages increased production of domestic oil, coal and natural gas. During the 110th Congress, he chaired a GOP energy task force that led to a push for more oil and gas drilling and incentives for alternative energy.

As a House member, Blunt earned high grades from National Right to Life and the National Rifle Association, and during the Senate campaign he accused his opponent, Missouri Secretary of State Robin Carnahan, of being too liberal for the Show-Me State.

Still, Blunt knows how to reach across the aisle and has earned a reputation as a deal-cutter. In 2008, he teamed up with Majority Leader Steny H. Hoyer, a Maryland Democrat, on a clarification of the Americans with Disabilities Act and on an electronic surveillance overhaul that shielded telecommunications firms from liability suits when assisting the government. He also helped pass bipartisan legislation to reduce access to the chemicals used in making methamphetamines, a scourge of the Midwest.

SENATOR FROM NEW HAMPSHIRE

Kelly Ayotte, R

Pronounced: EYH-ott

Election: Defeated Rep. Paul W. Hodes, D, to succeed Judd Gregg, R, who retired

Residence: Nashua

Born: June 27, 1968; Nashua, N.H.

Religion: Roman Catholic

Family: Husband, Joseph Daley; two children

Education: Pennsylvania State U., B.A. 1990 (political science); Villanova U., J.D. 1993

Career: Gubernatorial aide; state prosecutor; lawyer; state deputy attorney general

Political highlights: N.H. attorney general, 2004-09



Ayotte's demographic characteristics — she's a young woman from the Northeast, where Republicans have struggled in recent years — immediately make her a potentially prominent face on the national scene for her party.

During the campaign, Ayotte demonstrated the ability to walk a careful political line, backing numerous positions favored by tea party activists and winning the endorsement of former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin while running as the party favorite and appealing to the often more centrist sensibilities of New Hampshire's electorate.

She backed Arizona's law empowering police officers to check the immigration status of people they detain and espoused hawkish budgetary ideals, while never tacking so far to the right that she alienated moderates and independents.

"I stand with [the tea party] on those issues, on protecting individual freedom," she told the conservative magazine *National Review* before her primary victory. "We need to stop the unprecedented expansion of government, appeasing our enemies, and creating an entitlement culture."

Ayotte is a military spouse who takes a tough line on national security issues, saying President Obama's "policies do not match his rhetoric." Her husband, Joe, flew combat missions over Iraq and still serves in the Air National Guard.

She also takes conservative stands on social issues, opposing abortion — she defended the state's parental notification law in court — and same-sex marriage, and strongly supporting gun owners' rights.

Her work as attorney general makes her a potential pick for the Judiciary Committee, while her emphasis on deficit and spending issues could lead her to follow in the footsteps of her predecessor, Republican Judd Gregg, on the Budget Committee.

One place where Ayotte doesn't follow Gregg is on the health care overhaul law enacted in March.

In October, Gregg expressed reservations about GOP plans to push for repeal; Ayotte has endorsed the idea, backing what a campaign spokesman called "market-based reforms" in the law's place.

She also might be a candidate for a spot in the party's leadership, even as a freshman. Republicans could be keen to add a conservative woman to the leadership ranks, especially with Lisa Murkowski of Alaska losing her spot after losing the GOP primary and mounting a write-in campaign.

SENATOR FROM NORTH DAKOTA

John Hoeven, R**Pronounced:** HO-ven**Election:** Defeated Tracy Potter, D, to succeed Byron L. Dorgan, D, who retired**Residence:** Bismarck**Born:** March 13, 1957; Bismarck, N.D.**Religion:** Roman Catholic**Family:** Wife, Mical Hoeven; two children**Education:** Northwestern U., M.B.A. 1981; Dartmouth College, B.A. 1979 (history & economics)**Career:** Bank CEO**Political highlights:** Governor, 2000-present

Hoeven, the longest-serving active governor in the country, was heavily recruited to run for the Senate seat held by retiring Democrat Byron L. Dorgan. Consequently, he is likely to be spared the kind of dues-paying that usually awaits freshmen.

Before declaring his Senate candidacy, Hoeven — phenomenally popular in North Dakota — received promises from Minority Leader Mitch McConnell of Kentucky that he would be given seats on the Appropriations and Energy and Natural Resources committees. That positions him to bring funding and projects to his state, which has experienced a boom as a result of its growing energy industries. Under his leadership, North Dakota has achieved the lowest unemployment rate in the nation.

“I want to be able to come down and have an immediate impact, work on issues important to our state and to our country,” Hoeven says. “Appropriations touches just about everything that goes through Congress.”

A banker most of his life, Hoeven was financially supported by organizations such as the American Bankers Association (ABA). But the ABA and others who donated to and backed Hoeven’s run will likely be disappointed that the former CEO and president of Bank of North Dakota does not see banking issues as one of his top legislative priorities in the 112th Congress.

Instead, Hoeven wants to focus on shaping energy policy, with a mind to encouraging investment by keeping standards consistent and taxes on businesses low.

“In the energy world right now, they don’t know what the rules of the road are going to be when it comes to carbon emissions,” he says. “That holds them on the sidelines, so they don’t invest. We have to make sure we can give them a favorable tax policy.”

Hoeven does not support a cap-and-trade policy for carbon emissions. But he says there may be pieces of the energy bills that were in the works in the 111th Congress that he would support once the new Congress convenes.

Although other new GOP senators are likely to be hard-line partisans, Hoeven may be more willing than others to work with Democrats. “I do think that’s something that a governor brings to the mix,” he says. “Governors have to work with people from both sides of the aisle.”

Agriculture is a major industry in North Dakota, and Hoeven expects to back legislation to support food production as well as biofuels. He also hopes to have a hand in international trade policy, health care legislation and moving a six-year highway bill.

SENATOR FROM OHIO

Rob Portman, R**Election:** Defeated Lee Fisher, D, to succeed George V. Voinovich, R, who retired**Residence:** Terrace Park**Born:** Dec. 19, 1955; Cincinnati, Ohio**Religion:** Methodist**Family:** Wife, Jane Portman; three children**Education:** Dartmouth College, B.A. 1978 (anthropology); U. of Michigan, J.D. 1984**Career:** Lawyer**Political highlights:** White House associate counsel, 1989; White House Legislative Affairs director, 1989-91; U.S. House, 1993-2005; U.S. trade representative, 2005-06; Office of Management and Budget director, 2006-07

As a former House member, U.S. trade representative and director of the White House Office of Management and Budget, Portman brings an insider’s expertise to the Senate, as well as a decidedly more centrist approach to policy making than some of his fellow GOP freshmen.

In endorsing him in the general election, the Cleveland Plain Dealer said he would “serve the state well” if he follows in the footsteps of his predecessor, Voinovich, and “resists . . . the siren call of blind party loyalty.” The paper added: “The way he has run his campaign — in an old-school ‘senatorial’ fashion — offers hope that he would do just that.”

Portman has vowed to “focus like a laser on jobs and Ohio’s economy.” He has a six-point job-creation plan that includes some state priorities, such as a national policy on manufacturing and enforcement of trade laws, and some themes common to nearly all GOP candidates, including a vow to repeal the 2010 health care overhaul.

He also advocates reducing taxes and regulations on small businesses. With his brother and sister, he owns a small business: the historic Golden Lamb Inn in Lebanon, the oldest continuously operating hotel in Ohio.

Though he gained intimate knowledge of fiscal policy as President George W. Bush’s budget director, Portman has made only vague promises about reducing appropriations and “addressing the unsustainable growth in entitlement spending.”

And, unlike several tea party-backed Republicans who will be his colleagues in the Senate, he has not disavowed earmarks, opting to sign onto a one-year moratorium instead and defending earmarks that can “withstand public scrutiny.”

Besides taking a middle-of-the-road approach on earmarks, Portman also espouses some ideas that could garner Democratic support, though perhaps raising eyebrows among more conservative members of his own party. Portman wants to see changes to the unemployment benefits system that would allow states with high unemployment rates, such as Ohio, to access additional funding without congressional action. Senate Republicans have spent the second half of 2010 trying to block Democrats from extending jobless benefits without offsetting the cost.

Portman also supports increasing and expanding the federal Pell grants program to workers pursuing certifications and short-term training programs, and allowing people to use job-training funds for community or technical college tuition.

SENATOR FROM PENNSYLVANIA

Patrick J. Toomey, R

Election: Defeated Rep. Joe Sestak, D, to succeed Arlen Specter, D, who lost in the primary

Residence: Zionsville

Born: Nov. 17, 1961; Providence, R.I.

Religion: Roman Catholic

Family: Wife, Kris Toomey; three children

Education: Harvard U., A.B. 1984 (political philosophy)

Career: Restaurateur; investment banker; Club for Growth president

Political highlights: Allentown Government Study Commission, 1994-96; U.S. House, 1999-2005; sought Republican nomination for U.S. Senate, 2004



Toomey arrives in the Senate a seasoned veteran of Congress and a down-the-line conservative who puts his faith in free markets and limited government. Long a favorite of movement conservatives, Toomey adheres to the right on both economic and social issues.

His economic agenda reflects the philosophy of the Club for Growth, the low-tax/free-market advocacy group he once led.

Toomey supports cutting taxes and easing the regulatory burden on business. He says America is in danger of becoming a "bail-out nation" and has argued that the Troubled Asset Relief Program created in 2008 to rescue the ailing financial services sector rewarded unnecessary risk-taking and defied sound principles of capitalism, in addition to being wasteful and lacking transparency.

"These guys in Washington are creating an environment that is having a chilling effect on small businesses, and medium and big businesses as well, and that's a big part of why we don't have the job growth that we badly need," Toomey has said.

He served on the Budget and Financial Services committees during his House tenure, which ran from 1999 to 2005. And given his emphasis on economic issues, he will likely pursue matching assignments in the Senate.

Toomey would repeal the Democrats' health care law, arguing that it costs too much and will kill jobs. Instead, he supports overhauling the medical liability system and creating market-based incentives to make it easier and less expensive for people to buy insurance.

"These reforms will neither bankrupt the country nor force people to lose their current, private coverage as the House bill would," he wrote in the Philadelphia Daily News in late 2009.

When he served in the House, Toomey was among the group of lawmakers who re-invigorated the Conservative Action Team and renamed it the Republican Study Group, turning it into a force in the GOP Conference. While he made a name for himself on tax and budget issues, Toomey also opposes abortion and same-sex marriage and backs gun owners' rights.

Before his election to the House of Representatives, Toomey spent seven years working in international finance, trading futures contracts, swaps and other financial instruments while living in New York, London and Hong Kong. He then invested in Rookies, a chain of sports-themed restaurants in Allentown and Lancaster.

SENATOR FROM UTAH

Mike Lee, R

Election: Defeated Sam Granato, D, to succeed Robert F. Bennett, R, who was not renominated

Residence: Alpine

Born: June 4, 1971; Mesa, Ariz.

Religion: Mormon

Family: Wife, Sharon Lee; three children

Education: Brigham Young U., B.A. 1994 (political science), J.D. 1997

Career: Lawyer; gubernatorial aide

Political highlights: Assistant U.S. attorney, 2002-05



Like many Republicans, Lee wants to tackle the federal deficit. "I've been worrying about the deficit for a long time, since the 1980s," he says. "We had a \$3 trillion deficit back then. Now that's multiplied, and soon it will be five times more than when I first started worrying."

He plans to propose a balanced-budget amendment to the Constitution that would limit federal spending to 15 percent of gross domestic product unless two-thirds of the House and Senate override the restriction. Lee would like to see Congress follow the example set by state legislatures that have imposed balanced-budget requirements.

Lee believes that lowering the deficit will lead to jobs. "In order to create jobs, Congress has to control what it spends so it's not stuck with so much debt that it has to inflate the dollar to pay it off," he says. "Any time you require Congress to discipline itself to spend less, it increases confidence in investments and people investing, and when they invest more, they create more jobs."

The issue is also a matter of principle for Lee, who says the deficit increases corruption by allowing members to avoid accountability for spending taxpayer money on unnecessary programs.

"Every war we fought, starting with the Revolution, required the country to incur debt, but it has become so easy that it's gotten out of control," he says. "It allows Congress to overspend and create new programs and benefits for constituents without having any new money to pay for it."

Lee believes his background in law will serve him well as a lawmaker, and he views his transition from the judiciary to the legislative branch as a "continuum," as opposed to a career change.

As a lawyer, he came across laws that were muddled and riddled with loopholes and complicated wording. Lee has been looking for a way to "clean up the mess" and believes the best method is legislation. He hopes to land a spot on the Judiciary Committee.

"There are limits on what the court can do," he says. "The courts aren't there to be the first and last interpreter of the Constitution. They are prohibited from acting unless there are two or more parties to a dispute. That is the only time, but there are a lot of questions that never result in this kind of dispute."

Lee also hopes to join the Energy and Natural Resources Committee. He would back legislation to open up the nation's natural energy resources, including a proposal to drill for oil and gas in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska and to extract shale oil from rock in Utah, Colorado and Wyoming. He is also interested in the Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee.

SENATOR FROM WEST VIRGINIA

Joe Manchin III, D

Election: Defeated John Raese, R, to succeed Carte P. Goodwin, D, who retired

Residence: Fairmont

Born: Aug. 24, 1947; Fairmont, WVa.

Religion: Roman Catholic

Family: Wife, Gayle Manchin; three children

Education: West Virginia U., B.A. 1970 (business administration)

Career: Carpet store owner; coal brokerage company owner

Political highlights: WVa. House, 1983-85; WVa. Senate, 1987-97; sought Democratic nomination for governor, 1996; WVa. secretary of state, 2001-05; governor, 2005-present



SENATOR FROM WISCONSIN

Ron Johnson, R

Election: Defeated Sen. Russ Feingold, D

Residence: Oshkosh

Born: April 8, 1955; Mankato, Minn.

Religion: Lutheran

Family: Wife, Jane Johnson; three children

Education: U. of Minnesota, B.S. 1977 (accounting), attended 1977-79 (business administration)

Career: Plastics manufacturing company owner; shipping supply company machine operator; accountant

Political highlights: No previous office



Manchin's victory in the special election to fill the seat once held by the late Democrat Robert C. Byrd promises a continuation of the legendary senator's practice of using the federal government to benefit the Mountain State.

The governor hopes for a seat on the Appropriations Committee, which Byrd chaired for years and used to steer millions of federal dollars in earmarks to West Virginia, one of the poorest states. He is also interested in the Energy and Natural Resources Subcommittee on Energy because of its jurisdiction over coal, a key component of the state economy.

But Manchin will not limit himself to parochial matters.

He wants to serve on the Finance Subcommittee on Taxation, IRS Oversight, and Long-Term Growth because it has jurisdiction over tax policy. He is also targeting Armed Services, particularly its Personnel Subcommittee or its Readiness and Management Support Subcommittee; the Veterans' Affairs Committee; and the Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee.

Manchin, who heads to Washington in what would have been the middle of his second term as governor, has a long list of legislative priorities, including a proposal for a balanced-budget amendment to the Constitution.

He also intends to work toward implementing tax cuts; expanding small-business tax credits and lending to small businesses; pushing legislation aimed at encouraging domestic companies to relocate overseas jobs back in the United States; and approving new mine safety regulations.

He probably won't always be a reliable vote for his own party because he opposes abortion rights and same-sex marriage, and he wants to reduce government spending and the federal deficit. Manchin also advocates for Second Amendment rights and opposes most gun-control measures. He plans to focus on improving services for military veterans and creating a "pro-growth tax environment that facilitates job growth and economic expansion," according to information provided by his campaign.

As governor, Manchin has enjoyed approval ratings consistently around 70 percent. Before being elected governor, he served as secretary of state and in both houses of the West Virginia Legislature. He worked in several family-owned businesses before entering politics.

Considered a moderate, he campaigned at a distance from the White House, promising not to "rubber stamp" President Obama's policies.

Initially dismissed as a long shot, Johnson rode the nationwide anti-incumbent, anti-government wave into office.

He is a political novice who assailed the three-term incumbent, Democrat Russ Feingold, as a "career politician." He jumped into the race at the urging of conservative tea party activists who cheered his attacks on the 2010 health care overhaul. Like other Republican candidates this year, he has called for the law's repeal.

He is also a sharp critic of the 2009 economic stimulus law, which he condemns as ineffectual, and of Congress' repeated extensions of unemployment benefits over the past two years. He says the extended jobless benefits deter recipients from taking new jobs that might pay less than their old ones.

Backed by the conservative Club for Growth, Johnson urges an overall cap on government spending, reduced regulation and lower taxes. "Ron's first priorities will be to address our ailing economy and the government's out of control spending," campaign spokeswoman Sara Sendak said.

Johnson was criticized during the campaign for being vague on how he would go about slashing spending and spurring job creation. "I don't think this election is about details," he responded at one point, according to the St. Paul Pioneer Press. But he has indicated on other occasions that he favors an across-the-board spending cut.

He was among a number of conservative GOP candidates who signed the "Contract from America," proposed by tea party supporters at FreedomWorks. The contract calls for a moratorium on earmarks until Congress balances the budget, a two-thirds majority in Congress to pass earmarks as well as tax increases, a flat tax system and limits on federal spending.

He is a social conservative, opposing abortion rights and embryonic stem cell research. "My basic belief is you don't want to get in a situation where you're creating life though destroying it," Johnson told the Associated Press in October. He also supports gun owners' rights, winning endorsement from the National Rifle Association.

Johnson is a skeptic on global warming, saying "it's not settled science" and speculating that sunspots create natural changes in Earth's temperature. "We certainly should not penalize our economy to the tune of a trillion dollars when we have this weakened economy," he told Fox News.

As an accountant, Johnson would like to serve on the Budget Committee in order to help redirect fiscal policy.