

Running the United States from 1977 forward (post-Vietnam War era)

Years	President	Senate*	House of Representative*
1977-79	D-Carter	D 61-38	D 292-143
1979-81	D-Carter	D 58-41	D 277-158
1981-83	R-Reagan	R 53-46	D 242-192
1983-85	R-Reagan	R 54-46	D 269-166
1985-87	R-Reagan	R 53-47	D 253-182
1987-89	R-Reagan	D 55-45	D 258-177
1989-91	R-Bush I	D 55-45	D 260-175
1991-93	R-Bush I	D 56-44	D 267-167
1993-95	D-Clinton	D 57-43	D 258-176
1995-97	D-Clinton	R 52-48	R 230-204 Gingrich/DeLay/Limbaugh** era
1997-99	D-Clinton	R 55-45	R 228-206 (Gingrich resigns after 98 election
1999-01	D-Clinton	R 55-45	R 223-211 Delay resigns June, 2006)
2001-03	R-Bush II	T 50-50	R 221-212 Afghanistan War begins Oct 2001
2003-05	R-Bush II	R 51-48	R 229-204 Iraq War begins Mar 2003
2005-07	R-Bush II	R 55-44	R 232-202
2007-09	R-Bush II	T 49-49	D 235-198 U.S. Economic meltdown Fall 2008
2009-11	D-Obama	D 57-41	D 256-178 Dems majority since Jan 20, 2009

* - reasonably accurate numbers from standard sources. There are occasional and small shifts during a Congress - somebody dies or resigns. Very rarely are there members of parties other than Republican or Democrat in Congress, usually these are people who call themselves Independents.

The "sausage making" aspect of law-making is well known. George W. Bush (2001-2009) was the closest we ever came to an imperial Presidency that considered itself sole and supreme authority, essentially ignoring other branches of government. The era of Republican dominance of the U.S. Government was 1995 through 2008. Even today Republican threat of filibuster in the U.S. Senate means that it is almost impossible for the Democrats to attain the 60 votes (60%) needed to pass even watered-down bills on substantive matters. And this makes an assumption that all Democrats are ideologically the same, which they are not. "Reform" legislation is almost impossible to achieve.

** - Rush Limbaugh was lionized as a hero by the Republicans for his talk-radio role in overturning Congress in the 1994 elections.