

We're now two months from Election Day. With control of the House and Senate at stake, the election will shape the remainder of Biden's term, including climate policy. Biden's ability to appoint officials and judges is at stake in the Senate. Republican control of the House would make new energy or environmental legislation extremely difficult and could leave environmental agencies under heavy fire.

Let's start with the Senate. When looked at the race in a July blog post, there were four races rated as toss-ups: Arizona, Georgia, Nevada, and Pennsylvania. The Democrats need to win at least three of the four. There were three other states that could also be considered in play: Wisconsin (leaning slightly Republican), New Hampshire (leaning Democratic), and North Carolina (leaning Republican).

How has the picture changed in that past two months? A month ago, the major change was a shifting the Pennsylvania Senate race from "tossup" to "leans Democratic," though that might now be shifting back a bit. There are also some signs that Arizona and New Hampshire are leaning toward the Democrats. Still, control of the Senate is very much in contest now.

In terms of the House, the assumption all along has been that the Republicans would regain a majority. Six months ago, there was talk of a Republican wave that would give the GOP a sweeping majority. That has looked increasingly unlikely. House Republicans have been divided between full-throated MAGA supporters and those with a degree of pragmatism. If the GOP get only a narrow majority in the House, these divisions could get in the way of pursuing a coherent program. Democratic control of the House, while still unlikely, would allow Biden to pursue additional environment and energy measures, perhaps using the reconciliation process again to avoid being blocked by filibusters.

Early voting has already started in some states and will begin in the next few days in others. But we won't know the outcomes until November 8. If there are a lot of very close races, we may have to wait even longer to find out who will control Congress.