Summary

Aggressive gerrymandering has given Republicans a better chance of holding control of the House of Representatives. Democrats have an uphill battle in trying to take control of the Senate because of the specific Senate seats that are up for grabs. The ultimate outcome remains anyone's guess.

Given partisan polarization on climate change and other environmental issues, the composition of Congress makes a big impact. We're three months from election day. This post scopes out what things look like now.

Obviously, things will change between now and the election. It's worth reflecting, however, on how it would impact policy if current trends continue. President Trump will continue to have a huge amount of power either way, but a new Congress could still make a difference. As in past posts on elections, I will use political forecasts by Cook and Sabato as guidance.

Democrats would need to flip 4 seats to take control of the Senate. According to Cook's tally, they would need to hold Michigan, win North Carolina (where they're somewhat favored), and win toss-up races in Alaska, Maine, and Ohio. If they lose any of those, they would have to carry Texas or Iowa, which are leaning Republican. Sabato's forecast was a bit different than Cook's earlier in the cycle, but they now seem to have converged. Other experts see some likely Democratic pickups in the Senate but doubt the Democrats can win a majority.

Even if Democrats don't win Senate control, narrowing the gap might be significant even if Democrats don't gain control. For instance, if Democrats picked up three seats, Lisa Murkowski would be the swing voter, and she's quite independently minded. That would seriously undermine Trump's influence.

In the House, the Supreme Court opened the door to a furious round of gerrymandering aimed at getting rid of majority-black districts. The result was to push the House elections, which had been leaning Democratic, back towards the Republicans. Cook lists 18 toss-up elections. Republicans would need to win 6 of them to control the House, while Democrats would need to win 12.

Before last week, Sabato's assessment was very similar. But Sabato made major updates on Thursday, which now show twenty toss-up seats, with Democrats and

Republicans basically tied. It's worth noting that experts who are looking at national trends rather than trying to assess individual districts seem more bullish on Democratic chances. Sabato, at least, is moving in their direction.

Considering Trump's unpopularity, Republicans are doing better than you might expect. In the House, that's largely due to gerrymandering set off by the Supreme Court's intervention during primary season. In the Senate, it's a tribute to how bad the 2026 Senate election map is for the Democrats. Democrats still have a good chance of picking up at least one house of Congress, but it's not as good as it was before the conservative Supreme Court Justices jumped into the fray.

All of this matters because, even in an era of powerful Presidents, Congress still retains significant power of its own. It can engage in investigations, block spending, add riders to spending bills, and in the case of the Senate, reject judicial nominations. All of that matters in terms of environmental policy.

We should know three months from now about whether those powers are going to remain in Republican hands, assuming that we're allowed to have a halfway normal election.