



September 14, 2026

Dear Candidate:

We at the Project On Government Oversight (POGO) want to offer our congratulations on your candidacy for Congress. As a nonpartisan, independent watchdog organization, we're looking forward to working with all members of the 120th Congress to advance reforms that stop corruption, waste, and abuse of power.

For 45 years, we've worked with both Republicans and Democrats in Congress to make our government more effective, ethical, accountable, and responsive to the people it serves. And in that time, we've never seen an election quite like this one. Across the country, Americans are increasingly concerned about corruption, abuses of power, and whether their government is working for them. Nine in 10 voters, including 90% of Republicans and 93% of Democrats and independents, now view corruption in government and politics as a major problem.¹

Those concerns inform what voters expect from Congress. Nearly 80% say "Congress not focusing on solving the problems faced by the public" is a form of corruption.² And while polls tend not to use the term "oversight," they clearly show that's what constituents want. In fact, roughly as many Americans say Congress should prioritize oversight of spending and the executive branch as say Congress should prioritize lawmaking.³

Across the country and across parties, voters say they want Congress to take back its oversight power. Asked whether Congress has "done its job" or "given up too many of [its] powers to the president and the executive branch to avoid making hard decisions," nearly seven in 10 Americans say Congress has given up too much power — a view shared by majorities of Republicans, independents, and Democrats.⁴ The good news is that voters have hope: Six in 10 Americans believe Congress can take back powers it has delegated, again with majorities across party lines agreeing.⁵

¹ Alex Brunet and Marina Pino, "Poll: Voters Want Solutions for Government Corruption," The Brennan Center, June 2, 2026, <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/poll-voters-want-solutions-government-corruption>.

² *Brennan Center for Justice Corruption Survey*, April 28-May 6, 2026, <https://www.brennancenter.org/media/15709/download/corruption-survey-toplines-2026-06-01-final.pdf?inline=1>.

³ When asked what Congress should prioritize, just over a third of Americans (37%) say "passing laws addressing problems facing the country," about a third (34%) say "overseeing the executive branch and holding it accountable," and just under a third (29%) say "controlling federal spending and eliminating waste." "Few Americans approve of how Congress is handling executive oversight," YouGov, May 27, 2026, <https://yougov.com/en-us/articles/54852-few-americans-approve-of-how-congress-is-handling-executive-oversight-may-22-26-2026-economist-yougov-poll>.

⁴ Charles Franklin, "Marquette Law School Poll finds national approval of Supreme Court now at 47%, has remained below 50% since November 2025," Marquette University Law School, August 5, 2026, <https://law.marquette.edu/poll/2026/08/05/marquette-law-school-poll-finds-national-approval-of-supreme-court-now-at-47-has-remained-below-50-since-november-2025/>.

⁵ Charles Franklin, "Marquette Law School Poll," Marquette University Law School, August 5, 2026, <https://law.marquette.edu/poll/2026/08/05/marquette-law-school-poll-finds-national-approval-of-supreme-court-now-at-47-has-remained-below-50-since-november-2025/> [see note 4].

At POGO, we agree as well. We know that oversight is one of the most important ways members of Congress can deliver for the people they represent. Effective congressional oversight can save taxpayer dollars, make government work better, and protect Americans from government overreach by ensuring that no administration, regardless of party, is able to exercise its authority without meaningful checks and accountability.

That's why we're sharing *What It Means to Be a Pro-Oversight Member of Congress*, a resource outlining eight principles for effective congressional oversight. It offers practical ways members of Congress on both sides of the aisle can use their constitutional authorities to strengthen accountability, improve government performance, safeguard taxpayer dollars, and more. We hope this resource is useful, and we look forward to working with all the members of the 120th Congress. Please don't hesitate to reach out to us to learn more about our work or how we can support you or your office.

Sincerely,

Isabel Munilla
Interim Executive Director
Project On Government Oversight