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FOR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC STUDIES



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RACIAL DIVERSITY AMONG TOP U.S. HOUSE STAFF

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September 2018

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President's Message



As the only component of the original federal government directly elected by the people, the U.S. House of Representatives was designed to reflect the will of the people. But the empirical data in this report reveal that 230 years after ratification of the original U.S. Constitution, top staff in the U.S. House fall woefully short of representing the racial diversity of our nation.

Conventional wisdom suggests the U.S. Senate is the congressional body that suffers most from a lack of diversity. The Joint Center's 2015 report *Diversity Among Top Senate Staff* confirmed diversity challenges in the Senate. This 2018 report, however, reveals that racial diversity is also a significant challenge in the U.S. House.

We hope that this House report brings renewed attention and commitment to increasing diversity, and we look forward to following up in the future to assess whether progress has been made.

We especially appreciate the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation for its generous support of this report. We also thank the Hewlett Foundation and the Democracy Fund for their support of the Joint Center's other activities designed to increase diversity among congressional staff.

Regards,

Spencer Overton
President
The Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies

Executive Summary

This report provides empirical evidence regarding the lack of racial diversity among top staff in the U.S. House of Representatives. This report defines top staff (or “key” or “senior” staff) to include: chiefs of staff, legislative directors, and communications directors in the Washington, DC personal offices of U.S. House Members; chiefs of staff, policy directors, and communications directors in the top four leadership offices of each political party; and staff directors assigned to full committees. The data reflect House employment on June 1, 2018. Key findings show:

- **People of color account for 38 percent of the U.S. population, but only 13.7 percent of all top House staff.**
- **Of the 329 personal offices of White Members, only sixteen (under 5 percent) are led by chiefs of staff of color. Six work for Democratic Members, and ten for Republican members.**
- **In the personal offices of White Democratic Members, less than 8 percent of top staff are people of color, even though these offices represent districts that are, on average, over 37 percent of color. Just over 2 percent of White Democratic Members’ top staffers are Black.**
- **In the personal offices of White Republican Members, only 3 percent of top staff are people of color, even though these Members represent districts that are, on average, 26 percent people of color. Less than 1 percent of these Members’ top staffers are Black.**
- **Nearly three-quarters of U.S. House Members (313 Members) have no top staff of color. Over a quarter of the U.S. House (114 Members) do not have any top staff of color even though they represent districts that are over 33 percent people of color.**
- **Not one Latina/o, Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI), or Native American serves in any of the 40 committee staff director positions or in any of the 24 top staff positions in the four top leadership offices of either party.**
- **While Democratic Congressional Hispanic Caucus Members, on average, have districts that are 61 percent Latina/o, collectively they have personal office top staff that are less than 28 percent Latina/o. Collectively, Members of the Republican Congressional Hispanic Conference are slightly more likely to have top Latina/o staff (just over 29 percent Latina/o). Almost 40 percent of Congressional Hispanic Caucus Members and half of Congressional Hispanic Conference Members have no Latina/o top staff.**
- **Women account for almost 61 percent of Black top staffers, almost 45 percent of Latina/o top staffers, and just over 31 percent of AAPI top staffers.**
- **For Asian American/Pacific Islander Members, just over 77 percent of personal office top staff are White, 20 percent are AAPI, and almost 3 percent are Latina/o.**
- **Congressional Black Caucus Members hire a greater percentage of top staff of color in their personal offices (just over 63 percent) than Members of other major caucuses.**

Table 1: Top Staff Diversity in Personal Offices, Full Committee Offices, and Leadership Offices

Race	Number of Top House Staff	Percentage of Top House Staff	Percentage of U.S. Population ¹
White	1013	86.3	62
African American	79	6.7	12.3
Latina/o	45	3.8	17.3
Asian American/Pacific Islander	32	2.7	5.4
Native American	1	0.1	0.7
Bi/Multiracial	4	0.3	2.3
TOTAL	1174	100	100

Introduction

The United States is changing. Within the next 25 years, a majority of the nation will be people of color. With an increasingly diverse population, a truly representative government (including the senior staffers who craft and communicate policy) must reflect the nation's changing demographics to ensure fairness and legitimacy.²

Hiring top staffers of color is not an act of charity. It is the right thing to do, and it results in better public policy. Diverse top staffers allow a Member to understand her or his constituents and effectively represent them in Congress. Economic and sociological studies demonstrate that diverse work teams lead to greater productivity, help organizations establish trust with their clients, and help organizations make more innovative decisions.³ A non-diverse top House staff, however, fortifies homogeneity in other sectors of American public life because top House staff positions are pathways to other high-ranking positions in the U.S. Senate, executive branch agencies, independent agencies, advocacy organizations, foundations, and the private sector.

Unfortunately, although people of color account for 38 percent of the U.S. population and 23.1 percent of elected House Members, staffers of color account for only 13.7 percent of top staff positions. The American public is more likely to elect a person of color to the House than House Members are to hire top staff of color.

The House does not consistently track and publish staff demographic data, and thus it fails to meet the legal standard it applies to other federal agencies and many businesses. On occasion, some researchers have attempted to fill this void. In 2001, the Congressional Management Foundation (CMF) released data showing that people of color made up 15.5 percent of all House staff.⁴ In 2010, the Congressional Hispanic Staff Association (CHSA) released a report that showed Latinas/os were underrepresented at all House staff levels, and accounted for only 2.7 percent of chiefs of staff and 2.1 percent of legislative directors.⁵ In the current Congress, LegiStorm data show that 19.2 percent of all House staff are African American, Latina/o, Asian American Pacific Islanders, or Native Americans.⁶

Hiring top staffers of color is not an act of charity. It is the right thing to do, and it results in better public policy.

Like the Joint Center's 2015 report *Racial Diversity Among Top Senate Staff*, this House study focuses on full committee staff directors and the top three positions typically found in congressional personal offices: chief of staff, legislative director, and communications director.

Persons holding these positions are invested with hiring and firing powers, as well as given immense latitude in legislative and policy development. They often are the public face of the office, meeting with Members, staffers, lobbyists, constituents, the media, and members of the public. This House study goes beyond the 2015 Senate study by examining the race of chiefs of staff, policy directors, and communications directors in the top four leadership offices of both political parties. Members have many other important staffers, and the methodology section below explains why this report focuses on particular positions. Additional materials, including an appendix with raw data, can be found at the following page: <http://jointcenter.org/research/racial-diversity-among-top-house-staff>.

This study, like the Senate study, adds substantive data that congressional leadership and individual congressional offices can use to set hiring goals and assess their diversity progress. Community leaders and other constituents can also use this report to encourage their Members to hire more diverse staff members.

Methodology

This study is a census of the top positions in each U.S. House Member’s Washington, DC personal office, each full U.S. House committee, and the top four leadership offices of each party in the U.S. House. Data reflect employment in the U.S. House on June 1, 2018.

The authors used LegiStorm, a database that contains the most comprehensive and accurate biographical and contact data for each Member and congressional staffer, to identify top staff initially. To identify the race of each staffer, the authors used photographs from LegiStorm and visited social networking sites listed for each staffer, such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Roll Call, constituent photographs, news clippings, and press releases. During this initial stage, the authors identified the race of approximately 93 percent of top staff.

The authors also met with members of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Staff Association, Congressional Black Associates, the Congressional Hispanic Staff Association, the Congressional Native Staff Association, and the Senate Black Legislative Staff Caucus to confirm the data and to identify the 7 percent of staffers whose race could not be determined. Calls were made to each office that had a top staffer whose race could not be determined.

Researchers also emailed the chiefs of staff, legislative directors, and communications directors of each personal office; staff directors of each committee; and chiefs of staff, policy directors, and communications directors in each leadership office. The email described this study, listed all top staff of color by name and position in the office (or indicated that the data showed the office had no top staff of color), and asked the recipients to reply and correct any errors. About 23 percent of the offices responded, and a few corrected the data (for example, “this person identifies as biracial”). A few offices that responded were uncooperative and did not provide information. Offices that did not respond were contacted a second and third time.

The 114 offices listed in Table 15 (representing districts with over 33 percent people of color and which lack a top staffer of color) that did not respond were sent two additional emails (for a total of five emails). For the offices listed in Table 15 that did not respond to any of the five emails, the researchers hand-delivered paper letters individually addressed to the chiefs of staff, legislative directors, and communications directors in those offices to give them an opportunity to respond and correct the data.

Near the end of the process, the researchers also sent a list of top staff of color to top staff with similar profiles, and asked whether any top staff of color were missing from the list (for example,

researchers emailed to all Latina/o Republican legislative directors our list of Latina/o Republican legislative directors, and researchers did the same for 19 other groups that collectively totaled all top staff of color).

After this entire process (including repeatedly emailing offices listing their top staff of color and asking for a correction of any errors), the researchers lacked racial information for 24 of the 1174 top staffers (2 percent). For the purposes of calculating racial diversity, this report classifies these 24 top staffers as White.

Vacant offices that lacked a Member were not included, and thus this report includes an analysis of only 428 personal offices (rather than 435). Also, in offices with sitting Members, staff positions that were vacant were not included in our analysis. In instances where staffers hold multiple titles and roles (for example, one staffer serves as both chief of staff and legislative director in an office), only the most senior role was counted to ensure each top staffer was counted as a unique individual. Omitting vacant staff positions and the lower role for staffers who held two titles in the offices of voting Members, this report analyzed 421 chiefs of staff, 376 legislative directors, and 313 communications directors in personal offices.

The authors collected data on top staff of non-voting Members (that is, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and Northern Mariana Islands), but their diversity numbers are separated from the voting Members' top staff diversity numbers (see Table 3 for an analysis of non-voting Members). As illustrated below, giving non-voting Members permanent full voting rights would increase the top staff diversity of voting Members of Congress.

This report defines top staff as:
(1) chiefs of staff, legislative directors, and communications directors for personal offices;
(2) chiefs of staff, policy directors, and communications directors for party leadership offices; and
(3) full committee staff directors.

This study includes a section on racial diversity in the offices of some of the Congressional caucuses. The raw data on Members of the various caucuses were obtained from LegiStorm. The authors verified the Members in each prospective caucus by using information from each caucus's website (except the House Freedom Caucus, which does not have an official public membership list).

Due to rounding, total percentages presented throughout this document may not add up to 100 percent precisely.

The Census Bureau defines *race* as a person’s self-identification with one or more social groups. This report contains five racial categories: White, African American, Latina/o, Asian American/Pacific Islander (AAPI), and Native American. The terms *African American* and *Black* are used interchangeably throughout the report. The report also includes a racial category for staffers who identify as biracial or multiracial to ensure that each individual is accurately represented.

This report defines top staff as chiefs of staff, legislative directors, and communications directors for personal offices; chiefs of staff, policy directors, and communications directors for party leadership offices; and staff directors for the full committee offices (including Republican, Democratic, and Bipartisan staff directors). The structure of each office varies, but these positions are the most consistent throughout each office, and they provide a comprehensive assessment of top staff diversity.

While some Members deem their district directors as top staff, this report focuses on staff diversity in Washington, DC offices. Although district directors were not included in this analysis, staffers are counted who hold the title of chief of staff, legislative director, or communications director when their Members decided to locate these positions within the district. However, if a Member had the same position in both the Member’s district and DC offices, only the staffer located in the DC office was counted.

Many offices deem positions as “top staff” that differ from the definition of this report, such as “senior counsel.” These positions were omitted from the report’s analysis, however, because they were not consistently found in most offices, and the responsibilities associated with the roles varied.

Some offices deem positions as “top staff” that differ from the definition used in this report, such as “deputy chief of staff” and “senior counsel.” These positions were omitted from the analysis, however, because they were not consistently found in most offices, and the responsibilities associated with the roles varied. About one-third of the personal offices have deputy chiefs of staff, and of that one-third, one-third of them also serve as legislative directors or communications directors (and thus are captured by this report). Committees also have significant positions such as “deputy staff director” and “counsel” that were omitted from this report to maintain consistency.

Even though this report focuses on top staff, people of color are employed in mid- and junior-level positions who make significant contributions to the diversity of congressional offices. This report, however, highlights a crucial issue within the House—that few people of color hold senior-level positions. While there may be influential individual staffers of color who are not calculated in the data because their title is not included in our analysis, this fact should not deflect from the larger

insight that the House top staff positions examined in this report do not reflect the racial diversity of the United States. This is a structural challenge for the entire institution, rather than a problem attributable to a single Member, a small group of Members, or a single political party.

Personal Office Diversity

Table 2 provides racial diversity data on the percentage of people of color serving in the top staff positions—chief of staff, legislative director, and communications director—commonly found in the personal offices of most members of the House of Representatives. Of the 1110 staffers occupying those positions, 13.7 percent (152) are people of color. This is significantly less than the 38 percent of the U.S. population who identify as people of color.⁷

Chief of staff is the highest-ranking staff position in each office, and almost all offices have a chief of staff. The chief of staff generally directs all activities and staff in the Member’s Washington, DC and district offices. Of the 421 chiefs of staff, 67 (15.9 percent) are people of color.

The legislative director establishes the Member’s legislative agenda and directs legislative staff. Of the 376 legislative directors in the House, 44 (11.7 percent) are people of color.

The communications director manages the flow of information between the Member, constituents, the media, and the public. Of the 313 communications directors, 41 (13.1 percent) are people of color.

African Americans account for 12.3 percent of the U.S. population but only 6.3 percent of U.S. House personal office top staff of voting Members. African Americans, however, are more likely than other people of color to have top positions in personal offices. As discussed below, this is in large part because Black Members hire a significant number of Black top staff.

**Table 2: Racial Diversity of Top Staff in Personal Offices of Voting Members
(in percentages)**

Race	Chief of Staff	Legislative Director	Communications Director	Total
White	84.0	88.3	86.9	86.3
African American	8.8	3.7	6.1	6.3
Latina/o	4.3	3.7	4.2	4.1
Asian American/Pacific Islander	1.9	4.0	2.9	2.9
Native American	0.2	0	0	0.1
Bi/Multiracial	0.7	0.3	0	0.4

Table 3 provides data on the diversity of the top staff of the non-voting Members of the House. Non-voting Members are over four times more likely to hire top staffers of color for their personal offices than are voting Members of the House. Eighty-three percent of non-voting Members have at least one personal office top staffer of color, compared with 25 percent of voting Members.

Table 3: Racial Diversity of Top Staff in Personal Offices of Non-Voting Members (in percentages)

District/Territory	White	All POC	Black	Latina/o	AAPI	Native	Multi-racial
U.S. Virgin Islands	0	100	66.7	33.3	0	0	0
Puerto Rico	0	100	0	100	0	0	0
Guam	0	100	0	0	100	0	0
District of Columbia	66.7	33.3	33.3	0	0	0	0
American Samoa	66.7	33.3	0	0	33.3	0	0
Northern Mariana Islands	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
Cumulative of All Non-Voting Members	42.9	57.1	21.4	21.4	14.3	0	0
Cumulative of All Voting Members	86.3	13.7	6.3	4.1	2.9	0.1	0.4

Full Committee Diversity

Of the 21 full committees in the U.S. House,⁸ most have a Republican staff director and a Democratic staff director. Two exceptions exist. The House Ethics Committee and the Armed Services Committee function as bipartisan committees, and therefore each has only one staff director (we have classified them as bipartisan staff directors in Table 4).

Committee staffers generally possess expertise in the subject matter over which the committee has jurisdiction. The staff director manages the work of the committee, including committee hearings and legislative markups. Staff directors hire and manage staff and may speak on behalf of the committee.

Of the 40 staff director positions, six are held by people of color (15 percent)—all of whom are African American (Table 4). One African American serves as a Republican staff director, and five serve as Democratic staff directors. There are no Latina/o, Asian American/Pacific Islander, or Native American staff directors.

Table 4: Racial Representation of Top Staff in House Committees (in percentages)

Race	Republican Staff Director	Democratic Staff Director	Bipartisan Staff Director	% of All Staff Directors
White	94.7	73.7	100	85
African American	5.3	26.3	0	15
Latina/o	0	0	0	0
Asian American/Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0
Native American	0	0	0	0
Bi/Multiracial	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	100	100	100	100

Leadership Office Diversity

Separate from personal offices and committees, each political party has several leadership offices. These offices have many important staff, some of whom are people of color (the Democratic Caucus Chair, for example, has an executive director who is Latino). This report, however, focuses on chiefs of staff, policy directors, and communications directors in leadership offices to ensure consistent analysis. All three top staff positions exist in all eight leadership offices, whereas a position like “legislative director” exists only in the Republican Conference Chair’s office.

The data below show the racial breakdown of the chiefs of staff, policy directors, and communications directors of the top four Republican and top four Democratic leadership offices.⁹ Of these 24 positions, three are held by African Americans (12.5 percent), and the remaining 21 are held by White staff. None are held by Latinas/os, AAPIs, or Native Americans.

Table 5: Racial Representation of Top Staff in Leadership Offices (by raw numbers)

	White	Black	Latina/o	AAPI	Native American	Multi-racial
Speaker	2	1	0	0	0	0
Democratic Leader	2	1	0	0	0	0
Assistant Democratic Leader	2	1	0	0	0	0
Republican Leader	3	0	0	0	0	0
Democratic Whip	3	0	0	0	0	0
Republican Whip	3	0	0	0	0	0
Republican Conference Chairman	3	0	0	0	0	0
Democratic Caucus Chair	3	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL NUMBERS	21	3	0	0	0	0
TOTAL PERCENTAGES	87.5%	12.5%	0	0	0	0

The Republican and Democratic parties both have White staff in over 80 percent of their leadership office top staff positions (Table 6).

Table 6: Party Affiliation of Top Staff in Leadership Offices (in percentages)

Race	Republican Party	Democratic Party
White	91.7	83.3
African American	8.3	16.7
Latina/o	0	0
Asian American/Pacific Islander	0	0
Native American	0	0
Bi/Multiracial	0	0
TOTAL	100	100

Political Party Diversity

Almost 83 percent of top staff of color in the House work for Democrats. Ninety-two percent of Black top staffers, 81 percent of AAPI top staffers, and 71 percent of Latina/o top staffers work for Democratic House members. The one Native American top staffer works for a Republican.

Table 7: Racial Representation of Top Staff by Political Party (by raw numbers)

Race	Republican	Democratic	Total
White	610	401	1011
African American	6	73	79
Latina/o	13	32	45
Asian American/Pacific Islander	6	26	32
Native American	1	0	1
Bi/Multiracial	2	2	4
TOTAL	638	534	1172

Note: This table reflects racial diversity among top staff in personal offices, full committees, and leadership offices. Bipartisan staff directors of full committees (both of whom are White) were not included in this analysis.

A significant amount of the Democrats' top staff diversity comes from staff who work for Members of the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC). CBC Members account for 62 of the 73 Black Democratic top staff in personal offices, full committees, and leadership offices. While the total number of African Americans who live in districts represented by Congressional Black Caucus Members is almost two times as large as the total number of African Americans who live in districts represented by White Democrats, CBC Members employ over nine times as many Black personal office top staff as do White Democrats. A detailed analysis of top staff of color in the personal offices of White Democratic Members and White Republican Members is below in Table 10.

While there is a 1.1 point difference between the percentage of Republican registered voters who are Black and the percentage of Republican top staff who are Black, the gap for Democrats is almost 7 points. For Latinas/os, the Republican gap is 4 points, and the Democratic gap is 6 points.

Table 8: Racial Representation of Top Staff Compared With Nationwide Party Registrations¹⁰

Race	% of Republican Registered Voters in 2016	% of Republican House Top Staff	% of Democratic Registered Voters in 2016	% of Democratic House Top Staff
White	86	95.6	57	75.3
Black	2	0.9	21	13.7
Latina/o	6	2.0	12	6.0
AAPI	1	0.9	3	4.9
Native American	N/A	0.2	N/A	0

Note: Native Americans were not included in this analysis due to the lack of information available on the percentage of registered voters.

Staff Diversity by Congressional Caucuses

Generally, Members of more progressive caucuses have more top staff of color than Members of conservative caucuses, in part because the more progressive caucuses have more Members of color. People of color make up close to one-third of the top staffers who work for Members of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, compared with just over 25 percent of top staffers working for Blue Dog Coalition Members. The House Freedom Caucus has only 3.3 percent top staffers who are people of color, but that percentage is slightly higher than the 3.0 percent for White Republican Members as a whole (Table 10).

Table 9: Diversity of Top Staffers in Personal Offices of Congressional Caucus Members (in percentages)

Caucus	% White	% Black	% Latina/o	% AAPI	% Native American	% Multiracial	Total % POC
Congressional Black Caucus	36.7	53.2	0.9	7.3	0	1.8	63.3
Congressional Hispanic Caucus	62.5	2.8	27.8	6.9	0	0	37.5
Congressional Hispanic Conference	64.7	0	29.4	5.9	0	0	35.3
Congressional Progressive Caucus	67.3	18.8	5.9	7.4	0	0.5	32.7
Blue Dog Coalition	74.5	7.8	11.8	2.0	0	3.9	25.2
New Democrat Coalition	76.2	9.9	7.2	5.0	0	1.7	23.8
Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus	78.7	7.7	5.2	8.4	0	0	21.3
Republican Main Street Partnership	93.6	0.5	4.3	1.1	0	0.5	6.4
House Freedom Caucus	96.6	2.2	0	1.1	0	0	3.3

Members of the Congressional Black Caucus hire a greater percentage of top staff of color in their personal offices (63.3 percent) than do Members of other major caucuses.

Members of the Congressional Hispanic Conference (made up of Hispanic Republican Members) have a slightly larger share of top staffers who are Latina/o (29.4 percent) than members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus (27.8 percent), which is made up of Hispanic Democratic Members.

Both Congressional Hispanic Caucus and Congressional Hispanic Conference Members, however, generally have a much larger share of Latina/o constituents than Latina/o top staff. While Congressional Hispanic Caucus Members on average have districts that are 61 percent Latina/o, collectively their top staff is only 27.8 percent Latina/o.¹¹ Congressional Hispanic Conference Members on average have districts that are 50.3 percent Latina/o, but collectively their top staff is 29.4 percent Latina/o. Half (50 percent) of Congressional Hispanic Conference Members have no Latina/o top staff, and 39.3 percent of Congressional Hispanic Caucus Members have no Latina/o top staff.¹² By comparison, 17.4 percent of Black Members have no Black top staff, and 0 percent of White Members have no White top staff.

Latina/o Members of Congress generally have a much larger share of Latina/o constituents than Latina/o top staff.

While Members of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC) need not be of AAPI ancestry (and a majority are not), the 12 Asian American/Pacific Islander voting Members of the House are not significantly more likely to hire AAPI top staff than other CAPAC members. People of color account for 21.3 percent of top staff of the 59 Members of CAPAC and 22.9 percent of the top staff of the 12 AAPI Members. For AAPI Members, 77.1 percent of top staff are White, 20 percent are AAPI, and 2.9 percent are Latina/o.

The Congressional Black Caucus, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, and the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus collectively have 109 Members and make up an informal group called the Tri-Caucus. Of the 152 top staff of color in personal offices, 108 (71 percent) work for a Member of the Tri-Caucus.

Staff Diversity of White Members

If you remove Members of color, there is little difference between Republican and Democratic Members with regard to top staff diversity, despite these Members representing relatively diverse districts.

Table 10: Racial Representation of Top Staffers in Personal Offices of White Members by Political Party (in percentages)

Political Party	White	Black	Latino/a	AAPI	Native American	Multiracial	% of POC
White Democratic Members	92.3	2.1	3.5	2.1	0	0	7.7
White Republican Members	97	0.7	1.2	0.7	0	0.4	3.0

Members of color—especially the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) Members—account for much of the top staff diversity among Democratic Members. CBC Members make up less than a quarter of the voting Democrats in the House, but they employ 54.8 percent of all the Democratic top staff of color who work in personal offices. By comparison, White Democratic Members make up over half of voting Democrats in the House, but they employ only 17.5 percent of all the Democratic top staff of color who work in personal offices.¹³ Only 35 percent of African Americans in the United States live in districts represented by CBC Members, but 78.5 percent of the Black top staff in the U.S. House are employed by CBC Members.¹⁴

Of the 329 personal offices of White Members, only sixteen (under 5 percent) are led by chiefs of staff of color. Ten of the 221 White Republican Members (4.5 percent) have chiefs of staff who are people of color, while six of the 108 White Democratic Members (5.6 percent) have chiefs of staff who are people of color.

Of the 286 top staffers who work in the personal offices of White Democratic Members, 92.3 percent are White. Only 7.7 percent of the top staff who work for White Democratic Members are people of color, despite the fact that these White Democratic Members represent districts that are, on average, 37.4 percent of color.

White Republican Members have 566 top staffers working in their personal offices, 97 percent of whom are White. These Members represent districts that are, on average, 26 percent people of color.

Gender Among Top Staff of Color

The number of women serving in top staff positions is increasing. A March 2018 *Roll Call* article reported that in 32 Senate offices, women run the office.¹⁵ The article did not have total figures for women serving as chiefs of staff in the House, but it reported that both Republican and Democratic No. 2 leaders in the House had female chiefs of staff. For the first time, the heads of the top staff associations of color in Congress are all women. With the increase in women running for Congress, the number of female House Members and top staff may increase.

Among top staffers of color in personal offices, committees, and leadership offices, men slightly outnumber women—84 to 77. Over three-fifths of Asian American/Pacific Islander top staffers are men, but the opposite is true for African American top staffers.

Table 11: Gender Breakdown Among Top Staff of Color (in percentages)

Race	Women	Men
African American	60.8	39.2
Latina/o	44.4	55.6
Asian American/Pacific Islander	31.3	68.7
Native American	0	100
Bi/Multiracial	0	100

Table 12: Gender Breakdown Among Top Staff of Color by Political Party (in raw numbers)

Race	Women Democratic Top Staffers	Men Democratic Top Staffers	Women Republican Top Staffers	Men Republican Top Staffers	Total
African American	45	28	3	3	79
Latina/o	14	18	6	7	45
Asian American/Pacific Islander	7	19	2	4	32
Native American	0	0	0	1	1
Bi/Multiracial	0	2	0	2	4

House vs. Senate Top Staff Diversity

The U.S. House has more Black and Latino diversity among top staff than the U.S. Senate, but the Senate has more AAPI and Native American diversity among top staff. Due to the larger numbers of Black and Latino top staffers in the U.S. House, as a whole the House is more diverse (13.7 percent of color) than the Senate (7.1 percent of color). Nevertheless, the U.S. population as a whole (38 percent of color) is almost three times more diverse than top U.S. House staff.

The charts below compare the percentage of top staff of color in the U.S. House in June 2018 to the percentages in the Joint Center’s 2015 U.S. Senate report. The House numbers below do not include top staff in leadership offices or bi/multiracial top staff, as the U.S. Senate report did not analyze them.

Table 13: Comparison of Top Staff of Color in 2018 House and 2015 Senate Reports (as a percentage of all in that position)*

	2018 U.S. House	2015 U.S. Senate
Chiefs of Staff	15.9	6
Legislative Directors	11.7	7.1
Communications Directors	13.1	8.2
Staff Directors	15	7.7
Total	13.7	7.1

*Party leadership office top staff and bi/multiracial top staff are not included above because they were not analyzed in the 2015 Senate report.

Table 14: Comparison of Black, Latina/o, AAPI, and Native American Top Staff in 2018 House and 2015 Senate Reports (as a percentage of all in that position)*

	Black 2018 House	Black 2015 Senate	Latina/o 2018 House	Latina/o 2015 Senate	AAPI 2018 House	AAPI 2015 Senate	Native 2018 House	Native 2015 Senate
Chiefs of Staff	8.8	1	4.3	3	1.9	2	0.2	0
Legislative Directors	3.7	0	3.7	1	4	6	0	0
Communications Directors	6.1	1	4.2	3	2.9	3	0	1
Staff Directors	15	2.6	0	0	0	2.6	0	2.6
Total	6.6	0.9	3.9	2.1	2.7	3.6	0.1	0.6

*Party leadership office top staff and bi/multiracial top staff are not included above because they were not analyzed in the 2015 Senate report.

Diverse Congressional Districts Without Top Staffers of Color

Most personal offices have three top staffers—a chief of staff, a legislative director, and a communications director. Thus, this section focuses on offices that represent districts in which at least one out of every three residents is a person of color. Of the 216 Members that represent a district with a population that is at least one-third people of color, 114 (52.8 percent) do not have a top staffer of color in their personal office, leadership office, or full committee (if they serve as a chair or ranking Member).

As with all of the data in this report, the chart below focuses only on top spots in positions that are consistent across DC offices, and they are often less visible to constituents than staff in district offices. The analysis does not include many positions in DC offices that may have important responsibilities but do not exist in a majority of offices, such as deputy chief of staff. Many Members have people of color as district directors or in important DC positions that are not as widely recognized as the positions this report focuses on.

After making an assessment that the offices listed in Table 15 lacked top staff of color, researchers emailed the chiefs of staff, legislative directors, and communications directors for each, described this study, indicated that the data showed the office had no top staff of color, and asked the recipients to correct any errors. Offices that did not respond were contacted four more times via email over several weeks. For those that did not respond to the five emails, the researchers hand-delivered paper letters individually addressed to the chiefs of staff, legislative directors, and communications directors in these offices to give them an opportunity to respond and correct the data.

Table 15: Congressional Districts With Over 33 Percent People of Color That Have No Top DC Staffers of Color

District	%Non-White	Rep.	District	%Non-White	Rep.	District	%Non-White	Rep.
CA-44	93.2%	Barragán-D	CA-20	63.2%	Panetta-D	TX-2	51.9%	Poe-R
CA-51	86.9%	Vargas-D	NY-16	62.7%	Engel-D	TX-24	51.6%	Marchant-R
TX-16	85.8%	O'Rourke-D	NM-2	62.7%	Pearce-R	CA-5	50.4%	M. Thompson-D
FL-20	78.8%	Hastings-D	NJ-9	61.7%	Pascrell-D	CA-30	50.1%	Sherman-D
NY-14	77.0%	Crowley-D	CA-53	60.7%	S. Davis-D	TX-32	50.1%	Sessions-R
TN-9	75.7%	Cohen-D	CA-22	59.9%	Nunes-R	TX-6	49.8%	Barton-R
TX-23	75.3%	Hurd-R	CA-36	59.8%	Ruiz-D	IL-8	48.7%	Krishnamoorthi-D
CA-17	75.3%	Khanna-D	TX-22	58.7%	Olson-R	TX-14	48.6%	Weber-R
CA-41	74.9%	Takano-D	CA-42	57.2%	Calvert-R	TX-10	47.5%	McCaul-R
NJ-8	74.9%	Sires-D	CA-10	57.1%	Denham-R	IL-11	47.5%	Foster-D
CA-19	74.8%	Lofgren-D	TX-7	55.3%	Culberson-R	TX-5	46.7%	Hensarling-R
CA-31	72.9%	Aguilar-D	GA-7	54.4%	Woodall-R	TX-19	45.7%	Arrington-R
AZ-3	70.9%	Grijalva-D	VA-11	54.1%	Connolly-D	CA-7	45.4%	Bera-D
CA-39	70.0%	Royce-R	MD-5	54.0%	Hoyer-D	CA-18	44.9%	Eshoo-D
CA-47	69.4%	Lowenthal-D	CA-8	53.9%	Cook-R	GA-12	44.7%	Allen-R
NV-1	69.3%	Titus-D	CA-11	53.9%	DeSaulnier-D	CA-50	44.4%	Hunter-R
CA-15	67.4%	Swalwell-D	WA-9	52.8%	Adam Smith-D	AZ-9	43.9%	Sinema-D
CA-14	65.9%	Speier-D	NJ-6	52.6%	Pallone-D	CA-28	43.8%	Schiff-D
NY-6	65.7%	Meng-D	CA-3	52.60%	Garamendi-D	NY-4	43.8%	K. Rice-D
CA-6	63.4%	Matsui-D	NC-4	52.40%	Price-D	CA-48	43.7%	Rohrabacher-R

Table 15 continued...

District	%Non-White	Rep.	District	%Non-White	Rep.	District	%Non-White	Rep.
IL-3	43.3%	Lipinski-D	FL-22	39.0%	Deutch-D	TX-31	43.3%	J. Carter-R
NV-3	42.7%	Rosen-D	NY-10	38.8%	Nadler-D	TX-13	36.2%	Thornberry-R
CA-52	42.5%	Peters-D	CT-4	38.8%	Himes-D	CA-33	36.2%	Lieu-D
OK-5	42.4%	Russell-R	NC-8	38.7%	Hudson-R	NC-2	35.5%	Holding-R
CO-1	42.4%	DeGette-D	CA-49	38.5%	Issa-R	SC-7	35.5%	T. Rice-R
FL-20	42.4%	Frankel-D	VA-10	38.3%	Comstock-R	FL-2	35.4%	Dunn-R
PA-13	42.0%	Boyle-D	TX-21	38.3%	Lamar Smith-R	TX-8	35.1%	K. Brady-R
IL-10	41.9%	Schneider-D	AZ-2	38.0%	McSally-R	NY-12	35.1%	C. Maloney-D
TX-3	41.5%	S. Johnson-R	CT-1	37.8%	Larson-D	AL-1	35.0%	Byrne-R
LA-4	41.4%	M. Johnson-R	AL-2	37.8%	Roby-R	SC-5	34.7%	Norman-R
GA-1	40.6%	B. Carter-R	FL-15	37.6%	Ross-R	TX-26	34.7%	Burgess-R
MD-3	40.2%	Sarbanes-D	TX-1	37.5%	Gohmert-R	NJ-2	34.3%	LoBiondo-R
LA-5	40.0%	Abraham-R	NY-2	37.5%	P. King-R	WA-10	33.7%	Heck-D
TN-5	39.9%	Cooper-D	NJ-1	37.3%	Norcross-D	VA-1	33.7%	Wittman-R
NY-11	39.8%	Donovan-R	TX-36	37.3%	Babin-R	NV-2	33.5%	Amodei-R
GA-8	39.7%	A. Scott-R	MN-5	37.2%	Ellison-D	GA-3	33.4%	Ferguson-R
GA-6	39.5%	Handel-R	TX-12	36.6%	Granger-R	LA-6	33.2%	G. Graves-R
MS-3	39.5%	Harper-R	CO-7	36.3%	Perlmutter-D	SC-2	33.0%	J. Wilson-R

Offices With Diversity Among Top Staff

We recognize the personal House offices in Washington, DC, leadership offices, and committees that had at least one person of color in a top staff position as of June 1, 2018.

Table 16: Personal Offices in DC With Top Staff of Color (by state)

District	Rep. Name		District	Rep. Name		District	Rep. Name
AK- At-large	D. Young-R		CO-4	Buck-R		IL-4	Gutierrez-D
AL-6	Palmer-R		CO-6	Coffman-R		IL-5	Quigley-D
AL-7	Sewell-D		CT-3	DeLauro-D		IL-6	Roskam-R
AZ-1	O'Halleran-D		DE- At-large	Blunt Rochester-D		IL-7	D. Davis-D
CA-9	McNerney-D		FL-5	Lawson-D		IL-9	Schakowsky-D
CA-13	B. Lee-D		FL-7	Murphy-D		IN-1	Visclosky-D
CA-16	J. Costa-D		FL-9	Soto-D		IN-4	Rokita-R
CA-21	Valadao-R		FL-10	Demings-D		IN-6	Messer-R
CA-23	McCarthy-R		FL-11	Webster-R		IN-7	Carson-D
CA-24	Carbajal-D		FL-14	Castor-D		LA-2	Richmond-D
CA-25	Knight-R		FL-23	Wasserman Schultz-D		MA-7	Capuano-D
CA-26	Brownley-D		FL-24	F. Wilson-D		MA-8	Lynch-D
CA-27	Chu-D		FL-25	Díaz-Balart-R		MD-2	Ruppersberger-D
CA-29	Cárdenas-D		FL-26	Curbelo-R		MD-4	Brown-D
CA-32	Napolitano-D		FL-27	Ros-Lehtinen-R		MD-6	Delaney-D
CA-34	Gomez-D		GA-2	S. Bishop- Jr.-D		MD-7	Cummings-D
CA-35	Torres-D		GA-4	H. Johnson Jr.-D		MD-8	Raskin-D
CA-37	Bass-D		GA-5	J. Lewis-D		MI-14	Lawrence-D
CA-38	Sánchez-D		GA-10	Hice-R		MO-1	Clay-D
CA-40	Roybal-Allard-D		GA-13	D. Scott-D		MO-5	Cleaver II-D
CA-43	Waters-D		HI-1	Hanabusa-D		MS-2	B. Thompson-D
CA-45	Walters-R		HI-2	Gabbard-D		NC-1	Butterfield-D
CA-46	Correa-D		IL-1	Rush-D		NC-12	Adams-D
CO-2	Polis-D		IL-2	R. Kelly-D		NJ-10	Payne-D

Table 16 continued...

District	Rep. Name		District	Rep. Name		District	Rep. Name
NJ-12	Watson Coleman-D		OH-11	Fudge-D		TX-28	Cuellar-D
NM-1	Lujan Grisham-D		OK-2	Mullin-R		TX-29	G. Green-D
NM-3	Ray Luján-D		OK-4	Cole-R		TX-30	Bernice Johnson-D
NV- 4	Kihuen-D		PA-1	R. Brady-D		TX-33	Veasey-D
NY-5	Meeks-D		PA-2	Evans-D		TX-34	Vela-D
NY-7	Velázquez-D		PA-8	Fitzpatrick-R		TX-35	Doggett-D
NY-8	Jeffries-D		TX-9	A.Green-D		VA-2	Taylor-R
NY-9	Y. Clarke-D		TX-11	Conaway-R		VA-4	McEachin-D
NY-13	Español-D		TX-15	González-D		VA-8	Beyer- Jr.-D
NY-15	Serrano-D		TX-17	Flores-R		WA-4	Newhouse-R
OH-1	S. Chabot-R		TX-18	Jackson Lee-D		WA-7	Jayapal-D
OH-3	J. Beatty-D		TX-20	Castro-D		WI-4	Moore-D

Table 17: Committee Offices With Top Staff of Color

Committee	Rep. Name
Appropriations	Nita Lowey-D
Education and the Workforce	Bobby Scott-D
Financial Services	Maxine Waters-D
Homeland Security	Bennie Thompson-D
Oversight and Government Reform	Trey Gowdy-R
Ways and Means	Richard Neal-D

Table 18: Leadership Offices With Top Staff of Color

Leadership Offices	Rep. Name
Speaker of the House	Paul Ryan-R
Democratic Leader	Nancy Pelosi-D
Assistant Democratic Leader	Jim Clyburn-D

Recommendations

House Democrats and Republicans both have staff tasked with increasing diversity. In 2017, House Democrats created a diversity initiative and hired a director to help offices identify and hire strong, diverse candidates. The Republican House Conference has a director of outreach who works with internal and external groups to increase diversity.¹⁶

Additional steps are required. Some of the recommendations below were in the Joint Center's 2015 Senate report. Others are specifically directed at the House. All are informed by the data presented in this report, research, and discussions with relevant stakeholders on the Hill.

No single solution is sufficient. Change requires a clear commitment, strategic implementation, and monitoring of progress by leadership in both parties and by individual Members. House Members with top staff of color should help facilitate the discussions on recruitment and retention of people of color.

Increase Transparency by Collecting and Disclosing Detailed Demographic Data

Currently, no mechanism exists to collect and analyze demographic House workforce data. It is difficult to fix a problem that goes unmeasured. Congress requires this disclosure from many federal agencies, government contractors, and other work organizations, and Congress should require the same disclosure from congressional offices.¹⁷

The Congressional Accountability Act requires the Board of Directors of the Office of Compliance to make recommendations to Congress for changes to the Congressional Accountability Act to advance workplace equality.¹⁸ Congress should authorize the Office of Compliance (or a chief diversity officer) to collect and publish House demographic data, as well as analyze aggregate trends in gender and racial diversity for all positions in the House.

Until this step is taken, the House should reinstitute yearly employment studies conducted by outside organizations, such as the Congressional Management Foundation, that report on the state of the House and Senate workforces. These studies should not be internal documents that can be viewed only by Members and staffers; rather, they should be released as public documents.

Recognition of Members who have successfully hired diverse staff sets a tone and encourages others to do the same. Every year, House leadership should officially recognize all Members who have at least one top staffer of color.

In the absence of institutional requirements for all Members to disclose demographic data on staff, House Democrats and House Republicans should independently require that their Members release this information. Senate Democrats have disclosed this information since 2017, and House Democrats and House Republicans should follow this model (but also provide more granular position data to reveal the extent to which top staff, mid-level staff, and support staff are diverse).

Adopt a “Diversity Rule” in the House

When the 116th Congress begins in 2019, the House of Representatives can meaningfully change the culture of the chamber by adopting a set of rules that take tangible steps to promote diversity and inclusion. This “rules package” would include bipartisan measures to increase diversity and inclusion, such as the establishment of mandatory unconscious bias training for Members and chiefs of staff during new Member orientation, as well as mandatory role-appropriate training for staff and new hires (similar to workplace rights training); training for all managerial staff in recruitment, hiring, evaluation, and retention; the collection of publicly available demographic data for all of the House (including administrative offices); the development of a recruitment strategy for diverse staff; and the establishment of a nonpartisan chief diversity officer.

Adopt a “Rooney Rule” in Hiring

In 2017, House Democrats stated they would adopt a version of the National Football League’s “Rooney Rule,” which requires that at least one candidate of color be interviewed for each vacant senior position. To date, House Democrats have not formally adopted such a rule. The House should adopt the Rooney Rule and provide a mechanism for collecting data on the long-term effectiveness of the rule. Offices should define two-, five-, and ten-year benchmarks for recruiting, interviewing, and hiring and make the benchmarks publicly available to ensure transparency and accountability.

Establish Paid Internships and Fellowships

The Senate has passed a bill that will provide \$5 million for paid internships, and the House should do the same. Paid internships and fellowships open avenues for learning the legislative process, meeting potential mentors, and becoming part of the jobs pipeline for staff positions. Many House staff positions require experience working on the Hill. Congressional internships and fellowships provide pathways to full-time employment in Members’ personal offices and on committee staffs.

Many people of color do not have the option to spend a summer or semester in Washington, DC working on Capitol Hill because they cannot afford the housing and other expenses related to

internships and fellowships. Paid internships and fellowships can help to increase the number of people of color with experience working in congressional offices.

The internships and fellowships sponsored by nonprofit associations that service people of color (for example, the Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies (APAICS), the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation (CBCF), INSIGHT America, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute (CHCI), the Congressional Hispanic Leadership Institute, and the GW Native American Political Leadership Program) serve as good models for how such programs can be structured and managed.

Although we encourage all Members to hire interns and fellows from these organizations, House Members should not rely on these nonprofits exclusively to diversify congressional internship and fellowship programs. Congress should establish its own nonpartisan intern and fellowship program—complete with a staff—that can assist offices in recruiting, interviewing, and tracking interns and fellows. Paid internships and fellowships under this program should collect demographic and socioeconomic data, allocate paid internships based on economic need, and ensure a diverse intern pool.

Empower the Democratic Diversity Initiative Director and Establish a Similar Republican Initiative

As mentioned above, the Democrats hired a diversity initiative director in 2017. The director must have significant support from leadership and Member offices in order to have the resources, flexibility, and power to take necessary steps to increase diversity and inclusion. The director should collect data on diversity (in the absence of an institutional mechanism), produce annual reports of progress, and work with offices to develop diversity and inclusion plans, implement the Rooney Rule, and hire staff of color. Currently, the House Democratic diversity initiative has only one staffer, and Democrats should allocate more staff and other resources to the initiative to ensure its effectiveness. Further, Republicans should create a formal diversity initiative tailored to the unique challenges and opportunities in hiring and retaining Republican staff of color.

Best Practices for Individual Members

Individual House Members committed to diversity should not wait for bipartisan consensus or a directive from party leadership to take action. Individual Members can take several steps to improve and maintain diversity in their offices:

- **Develop a written office diversity plan**, just as an office develops its own budget. The plan should include recruitment and hiring goals, as well as strategies that will be employed to retain people of color once they are hired. Existing staff should be tasked with implementing the plan, and Members should monitor and evaluate the performance of individual staff members and the office as a whole.
- **Track and annually disclose** staff office demographic data.
- **Adopt the Rooney Rule**, which requires that the office interview at least one candidate of color for each vacant senior position.
- **Recruit diverse interns from their district, and pay them.** Unpaid internships often limit internship opportunities to young people from affluent families, and that creates a pool of talent for entry-level positions that does not reflect the diversity of the nation. This entry-level pool eventually shapes the talent pool for mid-level and top staff positions. Members should collaborate with local businesses and law firms for funding to pay interns. Members should also recruit interns and fellows from the Asian Pacific American Institute for Congressional Studies (APAICS), the Congressional Black Caucus Foundation (CBCF), INSIGHT America, the Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute (CHCI), the Congressional Hispanic Leadership Institute, and the GW Native American Political Leadership Program.
- **Build a diverse pipeline of mid-level staff.** Ensure diversity among legislative assistants, press secretaries, and counsel. Provide regular feedback and opportunities for growth. A diverse mid-level staff increases the probability of diverse top staff in the future.
- **Consult with colleagues who have diverse staffs and with staff associations of color** for ideas on recruitment and retention. Many congressional staff associations of color already have informal partnerships with offices and hiring managers in the House. Formalize these relationships, and create an integrated database of candidates for House positions.
- **Take unconscious bias training** (for the Member, the chief of staff, and all managerial staff involved in recruitment, hiring, evaluation, and retention).

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Acknowledgments

We are especially appreciative of the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation for its support of this report. We also thank the Hewlett Foundation and the Democracy Fund for their support of the Joint Center's other activities designed to increase diversity among congressional staff.

We thank the Congressional Black Associates, the Congressional Hispanic Staff Association, the Congressional Asian Pacific American Staff Association, and the Senate Black Legislative Staff Caucus for providing input on this report's methodology, assistance in identifying staff members, and recommendations for presenting the data. We thank all offices that responded to our emails and phone calls to help us get accurate data. A special thanks goes to Attia Little, Sean Michael Love, and P.J. Stinson, who worked tremendously hard to ensure we created a strong product, and to Fane Wolfer and Harin Contractor for closely reviewing our language and numbers. Thanks to Keturah Brown, Yosef Getachew, James Jones, Will Searcy, Mia Woodard, and others who have worked on earlier House datasets and/or our 2015 Senate report and have directly or indirectly helped us refine the process used in producing this report. Thanks to SKDKnickerbocker for stellar communications guidance. We thank each person who will use this report to improve the diversity in their office and in the House of Representatives as a whole.

Finally, we appreciate our partnership with the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) on congressional staff diversity, as well as the support of dozens of civil rights and community organizations that have helped educate their members and the public about this issue.

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- ⁶ LegiStorm. n.d. "The 115th Congress By the Numbers." Accessed August 15, 2018. https://www.legistorm.com/congress_by_numbers/index/by/house/mode/race/term_id/62.html
- ⁷ U.S. Census Bureau. n.d. "ACS 2012-2016 Five Year Estimates" https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=ACS_16_5YR_DP05&src=pt
- ⁸ "Committees." n.d. Branches of Government | House.gov. Accessed August 1, 2018. <https://www.house.gov/committees>
- ⁹ A fifth Republican office, the House Republican Policy Committee, is not included in this analysis because it is structured differently than other leadership offices. The House Republican Policy Committee had only two staffers (neither of whom is a person of color), while the other leadership offices ranged in size from 5 to 38 staff members. Further, none of the staff in the House Republican Policy Committee carried the title of chief of staff, policy director, or communications director.
- ¹⁰ The data on party registrations is from 2016. Pew Research Center. September 13, 2016. "The Parties on the Eve of the 2016 Election: Two Coalitions, Moving Further Apart." This table does not include Native American registered voters because Pew Research did not provide the data. <http://www.people-press.org/2016/09/13/the-parties-on-the-eve-of-the-2016-election-two-coalitions-moving-further-apart/>
- ¹¹ U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 American Community Survey Estimates for 115th Congress. <https://www.census.gov/mycd/>
- ¹² Ibid.
- ¹³ Congressional Black Caucus Members make up 22.3 percent of voting Democrats in the House, while White Democratic Members account for 56 percent of voting Democrats in the House.
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- ¹⁵ Gangitano, Alex. March 16, 2018. "Women Who Run the Show," Roll Call. <https://www.rollcall.com/news/hoh/women-run-show>
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