

National Journal

Charlie Cook Pegs Nancy Pelosi's Speakership Odds at 60 Percent at National Journal's Day After the Election Summit

Washington, D.C. (November 7, 2018)— Speaking Wednesday at [National Journal's 7th Annual Day After the Election Summit](#) in Washington, D.C., political analyst Charlie Cook projected House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi's odds of winning the House speakership at "just a touch above 60 percent."

"The conventional wisdom was that the lower the majority, the more difficult it would be for Nancy Pelosi. Since we ended up with 35-36 seats, I would say it's just a touch above a 60 percent chance that Pelosi wins the speakership. There are all kinds of names of people who are mentioned that, if push comes to shove, Democrats may turn to. You hear Hakeem Jeffries, Cheri Bustos, Adam Schiff and others. I tend to think that if Pelosi gets pushed out, it will be generational change, and the new speaker would be younger than 65," said Cook.

At the Summit, Cook offered his analysis of yesterday's midterm results, explaining what the outcomes of key races say about about current voting trends that could carry over into the 2020 election cycle. Key excerpts from Cook's commentary at The Day After the Election Summit are below and should be credited to [National Journal](#).

- On what he expects to see from the field of Democratic 2020 hopefuls: "We'll see things that we've never had before. You have 2, 3, 4 well recognized, well funded African Americans running like Kamala Harris, Cory Booker, Eric Holder, Deval Patrick. Women have been well funded before, but you'll have 2,3,4 women running such as Elizabeth Warren and Amy Klobuchar. I don't think we've had a strong Latino candidate before, but we'll have Julian Castro and Michael Garcetti this time. I think we'll have a ton of former governors and mayors running. We're going to have a big boisterous, complex Democratic primary."
- On whether Democrats have done enough to win back the white working class: "You would have a hard time trying to make the case that Democrats did enough to offset the job losses due to trade. There were a lot of people in manufacturing who were hurt...Democrats are having enormous problems with working class white voters. I think they ought to look in the mirror and think about what they did to lose these people."

- On the impact of the Kavanaugh confirmation battle: “I think the Kavanaugh Supreme Court fight didn’t change many people’s minds, but it did do a lot of motivating. Because Democrats were already motivated, it didn’t benefit them much, especially in the suburbs. I think it made a real difference in a couple Senate races out there.”
- On the changing faces of both parties: “We are seeing signs of a realignment that’s happening in this country. We’re seeing a lot of high-income, educated people that are moving from the Republican Party towards Democrats. At the same time you have these working class whites that are moving equally fast over towards the Republican Party. I don’t know what the Republican Party is going to look like in 2021 or 2015 once President Trump is gone, but I don’t think it will look like it used to look.”
- On the Georgia governor race: Referencing private conversations between his team and Stacey Abrams’ campaign in the week leading up to election day, Cook said, “The Abrams campaign was really trying to win without a run-off...They had considerable doubt about what it would be like to be in a run-off against GA Secretary of State Brian Kemp. Cook added that he thought ”winning a run-off would be pretty tough” for Abrams’ campaign.
- On the Trump effect: I think President Trump did make a very positive difference for Republicans in the Senate, but you also have a bunch of former members who might [have won] if Trump was a bit tamer.”

###

About National Journal

[National Journal](#) is a premier research and insights company committed to helping organizations effectively navigate Washington. Best known as one of Washington’s most trusted media brands for nearly 50 years, National Journal supports thousands government and business leaders in the nation’s capital by providing services in government affairs, communications and political research in addition to exceptional journalism. National Journal is a division of Atlantic Media. Kevin Turpin is National Journal’s President.

Media Contact:

Brandon Stallings

bstallings@atlanticmedia.com

(202) 266-7347