

# McCarthy is Speaker under new rules

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By Terry A. Hurlbut

January 8, 2023



Early yesterday morning – literally after midnight – Rep. Kevin McCarthy (R-Bakersfield, Calif.) finally became Speaker of the House of Representatives. The assembly of so many Representatives-elect took fifteen votes to make this happen, the longest Speaker contest since 1859-60. To make this happen, McCarthy agreed – in writing – to new House Rules. Now every conservative must ask himself: can these Rules changes suffice against having a different Speaker? And: will Speaker McCarthy honor these Rules changes – or revoke them at the earliest opportunity?

## McCarthy wins – fifth longest contest on record

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CNAV has, of course, detailed why an election contest for the office of Speaker of the House broke out. The office of Speaker has changed hands fifty-four times, in addition to the selection of the very first Speaker. Of those fifty-five, only *fifteen* have required more than one ballot to happen. The Historian of the House keeps the tally, and will shortly have to update to reflect McCarthy requiring fifteen ballots. The longest contest ever happened in 1855-56 and needed 133 ballots to settle. The most recent contest happened 100 years ago with nine ballots. Before then came a forty-four-ballot contest in 1859-60. Kevin McCarthy will go down in history as requiring the fifth longest contest on record.

Reportage on this vote came from *We Love Trump*, *The Western Journal*, *Creative Destruction Media*, *Clash Daily*, and *Self-reliance Central*. Additional reportage, including an altercation on the House floor (see below), comes from *The Washington Examiner*.

## The House chamber nearly becomes a combat zone

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The Clerk of the House, Cheryl Johnson, ran the voting session, as she had run every other voting session. Tempers flared after several of these votes. (Whether any Member will face sanctions as a result, is an open question. Technically the House of Representatives does not exist, and has no Rules, unless and until the House has a Speaker.) But after the fourteenth vote, a fistfight almost broke out. Rep. Matt Gaetz (R-Fla.) stopped voting for persons other than McCarthy and simply voted “Present,” the usual form of abstention. McCarthy, having failed again to secure a majority of Members present and voting, approached Gaetz. The two exchanged some heated words that, so far, no one has recorded. McCarthy then turned on his heel and walked away – but then Rep. Mike Rogers (R-Ala.) “lunged” at Gaetz. At once Rep. Rich Hudson (R-N.C.) stepped forward and held Rogers back from behind.

Kevin McCarthy confronts Matt Gaetz during 14th House Speaker vote.  
[#118thCongress pic.twitter.com/nMa9bm0KSN](https://pic.twitter.com/nMa9bm0KSN)

— CSPAN (@cspan) [January 7, 2023](#)

What the [pic.twitter.com/nyywaMTNK1](https://pic.twitter.com/nyywaMTNK1)

— Addison Smith (@AddisonSmithOAN) [January 7, 2023](#)

Video of [@RepRichHudson](#) pulling Rep. Mike Rodgers back from charging Rep. Matt Gaetz on the House floor. [#ncpol pic.twitter.com/x2h6xvPyQ0](#)

— Josh Bergeron (@Joshpberg) [January 7, 2023](#)

So if members who refused to Coronate Kevin McCarthy are “terrorists”, what do you call McCarthy and Mike Rogers going after [@MattGaetz](#) and trying to intimidate him for voting present?

[pic.twitter.com/P4DnydKRd6](https://pic.twitter.com/P4DnydKRd6)

— ALX 🇺🇸 (@alx) [January 7, 2023](#)

Here is video of [@RepHudsonNC](#) physically holding back Rep.-Elect Mike Rogers of Alabama on the House floor. [@SpecNews1CLT #ncpol pic.twitter.com/9PRvIVJ9eE](#)

— Reuben Jones (@ReubenJones1) [January 7, 2023](#)

Guys used to beat each other with canes on the House floor. A lunging is nothing.  
[pic.twitter.com/sSo68z3rOv](https://pic.twitter.com/sSo68z3rOv)

— Eric Matheny 🗣️ (@EricMMatheny) [January 7, 2023](#)

Rep. Hudson, R-N.C., left, pulls Rep. Rogers, R-Ala., as he confronts Rep. Matt Gaetz, R-Fla., during the 14th round of voting for speaker as the House meets for the fourth day to try and elect a speaker in Washington, Friday, Jan. 6, 2023. (@AP Photo/@andyharnik) [pic.twitter.com/ok3K8ERtfU](https://pic.twitter.com/ok3K8ERtfU)

— Andrew Harnik (@andyharnik) [January 7, 2023](#)

As tensions boiled over on the House floor during the speaker votes, Republican Mike Rogers of Alabama started to charge toward Matt Gaetz before Richard Hudson physically pulled him back.

Full coverage:<https://t.co/rT1rrJ7Ayy> [pic.twitter.com/kIMbHN02iV](https://pic.twitter.com/kIMbHN02iV)

— The Associated Press (@AP) [January 7, 2023](#)

Rep. Hudson grabbed Rep. Mike Rogers by the face after he confronted Matt Gaetz. This happened right after Kevin McCarty Kevin McCarthy also confronted Matt Gaetz. First physical altercation on the floor of the House since 1985.

Complete meltdown. [pic.twitter.com/gS5WkWeknK](https://pic.twitter.com/gS5WkWeknK)

— Alejandra Caraballo (@Esqueer\_) [January 7, 2023](#)

With the restoration of order, the fifteenth vote took place. The results: Kevin McCarthy had 216 votes, Hakeem Jeffries (D-N.Y.) 212, with six voting “Present.” They were: Any Biggs (Ariz.), Lauren Boebert (Colo.), Eli Crane (Ariz.), Matt Gaetz, Matt Rosendale (Mont.), and Bob Good (Va.).

BREAKING: Republican Kevin McCarthy elected House Speaker after 15 rounds of votes [pic.twitter.com/XMrO1uxdvB](https://pic.twitter.com/XMrO1uxdvB)

— Katie Davis court  (@KatieDavis court) [January 7, 2023](#)

Gaetz had threatened to resign if McCarthy went to Democrats to secure votes for his Speakership. This did not happen; not one Democrat, in all fifteen ballots, voted for anyone other than Jeffries. Thus this contest happened entirely among Republicans.

## What did the holdouts gain?

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Hakeem Jeffries, without meaning to, gave everyone a taste of what Midterms 2022 had prevented. He made a rambling speech, perhaps trying to pretend he was the outgoing Speaker he wasn't. Then, at last, he handed the gavel to McCarthy.

What even is this

[pic.twitter.com/BoeIPV2oxb](https://pic.twitter.com/BoeIPV2oxb)

— ALX 🇺🇸 (@alx) [January 7, 2023](#)

That aside, Jenna Ellis offered this congratulation for the most significant concession McCarthy offered:

Bottom line: With this rules package, the 20 have achieved an historic accountability oversight and check on leadership and the Speaker's power.

I would consider this a TOTAL WIN for Gaetz & Co, the MAGA movement, and therefore America.

Declare victory and let's get to work! 🍊🍊

— Jenna Ellis 🍊🐔 (@JennaEllisEsq) [January 7, 2023](#)

This twelve-page [Analysis](#) of the Resolution Adopting Rules for the 118<sup>th</sup> Congress gives the details.

It means Kevin McCarthy had to promise – in writing – to change the Rules of the House. These mostly revert the Rules to where they stood before Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.), his predecessor, last changed them. Significantly, these changes require most Committees to adopt an “authorization and oversight plan.” Under it, each Committee must review every federal agency within its purview that:

- Has no authorization, or:
- Has received no review in the last three terms of Congress.

Tax rate increases will also require a three-fifth supermajority in the House to pass.

Probably the most important change concerns Motions to Vacate the Chair. From now on, any *one* Member may offer a privileged resolution *vacating* the Office of Speaker. This subjects the Speaker to an up-or-down vote of confidence. If he loses, the House must then choose another Speaker.

In addition, the new Speaker agreed to place “non-establishment” Republicans on key committees, some of which will conduct investigations of the Biden administration. Rep. Chip Roy (R-Texas), the chief negotiator, wrung this particular concession.

## Will McCarthy keep his word?

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Establishment organs like *National Review* suspect McCarthy has committed himself and *must* keep his word. That applies especially to the Rules package that includes an enhanced Motion to Vacate the Chair power. This prompted Philip Klein to lament that McCarthy became “Speaker in name only.”

Not everyone is so sanguine. George Behizy (?) told his followers to watch McCarthy for two weeks, to see whether he will renege on his promises.

Please don't turn on the original 20, they did everything they could in good faith to get McCarthy to make concessions. Obviously McCarthy is not a man of his word but they tried their best

— George (@BehizyTweets) January 7, 2023

Kevin McCarthy will act good for about two weeks but watch closely as he starts changing his tune. They will ask him questions about Trump v DeSantis and he'll start giving cryptic answers like "We'll wait and see" "2024 isn't a priority, we have work to do"

Trump played himself

— George (@BehizyTweets) January 7, 2023

At the same time he listed two things the new Speaker can do to gain his confidence:

If Kevin McCarthy opens an investigation into Epstein's Island, he'll win me over

— George (@BehizyTweets) January 7, 2023

If Kevin McCarthy opens an investigation into the 2020 election, he'll win me over

— George (@BehizyTweets) January 7, 2023

Laura Loomer flat-out accused McCarthy and Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene (R-Ga.) of having an affair. This, she said, was “the REAL reason she voted for him for Speaker of the House.”

I'm convinced they are sleeping together.

I don't care who I piss off by saying this.

I've been in DC all week and many GOP staffers who work for members of the Freedom Caucus have told me they also think MTG & Kevin McCarthy are having an affair.

It sure would explain a lot. <https://t.co/yR31oyute9>

— Laura Loomer (@LauraLoomer) [January 7, 2023](#)

Does Judy McCarthy know about this?

I know she knows about Renee Ellmers.

McCarthy dragged his wife to some of the votes this week.

But in these pics with MTG, Kevin is not wearing his wedding ring.

A few months ago, MTG's husband is the one who filed for divorce from her.  
<https://t.co/MWAj3vHCGT>

— Laura Loomer (@LauraLoomer) [January 7, 2023](#)

She also objected to the new Speaker having a case of champagne literally rolled into his new office in celebration.

Disgusting.

Drinking on the "job", & then of course, I'm sure we the taxpayers are the ones paying for all of that expensive alcohol so the RINOS can party their asses off while our country burns to the ground w/ failed leadership.

McCarthy is a Gluttonous career politician. <https://t.co/UV1TJqVFr1>

— Laura Loomer (@LauraLoomer) [January 7, 2023](#)

Representative Good left this thread on Twitter at about a quarter of seven Friday evening:

"I came to Washington to challenge the status quo, bring transformative change to Congress, and protect the interests of the American people, and I intend to keep that promise." (1/13)<https://t.co/hcuLnYt3VU>

— Congressman Bob Good (@RepBobGood) [January 6, 2023](#)

"Important negotiations often take months or even years in a legislative body. Yet this is the one and only opportunity we have to debate how the House is run every two years, both with the election of a speaker and with the passage of the new House rules." (3/13)

— Congressman Bob Good (@RepBobGood) [January 6, 2023](#)

"That is why the selection of a speaker requires the votes of a majority of the House. A majority of the people's representatives must trust that person to lead us." (5/13)

— Congressman Bob Good (@RepBobGood) [January 6, 2023](#)

"As such, Republicans in the majority must have total confidence in our leader to fight President Biden's agenda." (7/13)

— Congressman Bob Good (@RepBobGood) [January 6, 2023](#)

"We already know what a House under Mr. McCarthy's leadership looks like. He has had 12 years to prove himself a bold and courageous conservative leader who was willing to stand up against the left's agenda." (9/13)

— Congressman Bob Good (@RepBobGood) [January 6, 2023](#)

"There are many members within our conference who would be well equipped to become speaker, push back against the Biden administration and stand strong for conservative values." (11/13)

— Congressman Bob Good (@RepBobGood) [January 6, 2023](#)

"But choosing a strong, conservative speaker lays the groundwork needed for the rest of the Congress." (13/13)

— Congressman Bob Good (@RepBobGood) [January 6, 2023](#)

Still, he voted Present, and in so doing lowered the threshold for McCarthy – just enough.

Congress will likely have its first full session at noon Tuesday. The various committees will start work the day before. Beyond that, how this "deal" will work out, remains for people to see.