

Presidential agenda for 2nd year

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Presidential

Top items: Health care, economy and Danish isle

ONLY IN NEWSDAY

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WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump is entering the second year of his second term with a razor-thin Republican majority in Congress, a competitive midterm election season on the horizon, a delicate situation in Venezuela and looming Supreme Court decisions on some of his most sweeping policies.

In the year ahead, more legal and political battles await the president as he looks to launch more of his agenda, including a new health care plan that proposes direct payments to consumers to offset the cost of insurance and a hawkish foreign policy vision that eyes a greater role for the United States in Venezuela and Greenland.

“Going into 2026 his plate is filling up pretty fast,” said Christopher Malone, a political-science professor at Farmingdale State College.

The hurdles come after Trump spent his first year back in office rapidly executing major pieces of his agenda through executive orders and via a tax-and-spending megabill approved by the Republican-majority Congress last summer.

Now Trump must grapple with tighter margins in the House of Representatives after a number of early departures in the chamber, and must brace for a midterm season that is historically tough for the sitting president’s party.

Trump — who signed 225 executive orders last year — will likely keep rolling out

more orders but could still need to act fast to secure congressional Republican support to pass other legislative priorities, including his push to ban mail-in voting nationally and to implement national voter ID requirements, said Meena Bose, director of Hofstra University’s Kalikow Center for the Study of the American Presidency.

“In the modern presidency the window of opportunity for action is greatest in the first 12 to 18 months,” Bose told Newsday in a phone interview. After that period the midterms and the focus on the next presidential election, “start to overshadow policy and legislative prospects.”

Focus on midterms

Congressional Republicans in competitive districts, including Reps. Andrew Garbarino (R-Bayport) and Nick LaLota (R-Amityville), have started to show an increasing willingness to break with Trump on some of his legislative demands or unilateral actions.

As the election season draws closer more rank-and-file Republicans may try to distance themselves from Trump depending on the state of the economy, making “nuanced political calculations depending on the moods of their districts,” said Grant Reeher, a political-science professor at Syracuse University.

“I would think some will look for ways to demonstrate some distance from the president, perhaps picking one significant thing on which to break with him in order to show their constituents they are not in lockstep,” Reeher said.

With the economy remaining the top issue for voters heading into the midterms, according to national polls — Trump’s chief of staff Susie Wiles has said in media interviews that Trump expects to hit the road more often to talk



agenda for 2nd year



President Donald Trump will likely keep issuing executive orders at frenetic pace before fall's midterm elections. Above, Trump sits in Oval Office in September, with Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, right.

WHAT NEWSDAY FOUND

- **President Donald Trump** is entering the second year of his second term with a razor-thin Republican majority in Congress, a competitive midterm election season on the horizon, a delicate situation in Venezuela and looming Supreme Court decisions on some of his most sweeping policies.
- **More legal and political battles** await the president as he looks to launch more of his agenda, including a new health care plan that proposes direct payments to consumers to offset the cost of insurance and a hawkish foreign policy vision that eyes a greater role for the United States in Venezuela and Greenland.
- **Trump must also grapple** with tighter margins in the House of Representatives after a number of early departures in the chamber, and must brace for a midterm season that is historically tough for the sitting president's party.

up his economic agenda.

Recent polls show the majority of Americans are unsatisfied with his handling of the economy in his first year, but Trump and White House officials maintain those numbers will improve once tax-filers

take advantage of the tax exemptions and credits included in the tax megabill passed last summer.

The president has publicly said congressional Republicans need to do more to sell voters on the different tax components

of the megabill, such as new exemptions on tipped earnings and a boost in the child tax credit for most families.

"You have so much ammunition, all you have to do is sell it," Trump told House Republicans at their annual winter conference on Jan. 6, his message coming as congressional Democrats rally around an economic message of affordability that proved successful for the party in key local races last year.

Global conflicts

On the foreign policy front, Trump continues to face questions about his administration's plans for Venezuela, after the president authorized an operation to depose the oil-rich country's authoritarian leader

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