



10 Most Highly Contested U.S. House Races of 2012

Summary:

Every two years, all 435 seats in the U.S. House of Representatives are up for re-election. Members elected this year will serve in the 113th United States Congress from January 3, 2013, to January 3, 2015. There are 40 incumbent Representatives retiring, 21 Democrats and 19 Republicans. This is due to redistricting, which forces incumbents to compete against each other. Thirteen representatives lost re-nomination – 8 were to redistricting battles, 5 incumbents lost re-nomination to non-incumbent challengers, and 1 failed to make the ballot for re-nomination. This will be the first congressional election using congressional districts apportioned based on the 2010 United States Census.

While it is difficult to narrow down 435 house races to just 10, NATA has highlighted below the 10 most highly contested races in the U.S. House.

State	Candidates <i>Incumbents in bold; challengers in italics</i>	Snapshot of Race
Illinois - 12th District	<i>William Enyart (D) vs. Jason Plummer (R)</i>	Thirteen-term Representative, and former Chairman of the House Aviation Subcommittee, Jerry Costello decided not to re-run, opening a seat in this typically Democratic district; the seat has been held by a Democrat since 1944. <u>Enyart</u> was the third nominee, after illness and bow-outs affected the previous two candidates. <u>Plummer</u> previously ran against Costello in 2010, and is looking to use the district's large and economically depressed profile in his favor.
Pennsylvania - 12th District	Mark Critz (D) vs. Keith Rothfus (R)	The seat, currently held by second-term incumbent <u>Critz</u> , fell under Republican advantaged redistricting, in which he narrowly defeated Jason Altmire (D-4th district). Attorney <u>Rothfus</u> , who ran against Altmire in 2012 and lost, is the GOP candidate for the seat. Hot debate topics among the competitors include ties to Rep. Paul Ryan's budget and Obamacare, tax breaks and jobs. This is considered to be the most competitive race in the state.
New York - 27th District	Kathy Hochul (D) vs. Chris Collins (R)	After Rep. Chris Lee (R) resigned in February 2011, <u>Hochul</u> narrowly won a special election that, despite a huge fundraising backing, faces a challenge in the conservative district with a big NRCC presence. <u>Collins</u> , a former NY county executive, has a spotty track record and seems not to take firm stances on issues that face the county. Current polls show either a tie, or a marginal Collins lead.

<p>California - 7th District</p>	<p>Dan Lungren (R) vs. Ami Bera (D)</p>	<p>At the last primary, <u>Lungren</u> (District 3 incumbent) was ahead in the polls, with a marginal 11% lead on challenger <u>Bera</u>. However, in 2010 Bera ran against Lungren and came within 7 points of beating him. Known to be a Republican district, shifts in demographics have swung the district Democratic.</p>
<p>Minnesota - 8th District</p>	<p>Chip Cravaack (R) vs. Richard Nolan (D)</p>	<p>Incumbent <u>Cravaack</u>, who shockingly beat former Representative Jim Oberstar in 2012, is in the fourth most expensive Congressional race in the country. In a recent debate, challenger <u>Nolan</u>, Representative from 1975-1981, highlighted his ties to small business and review of the mining industry - a topic of debate.</p>
<p>New Hampshire - 1st District</p>	<p>Frank Guinta (R) vs. Carol Shea-Porter (D)</p>	<p>Along with his colleague in District 2, Charles Bass, <u>Guinta</u> is looking to maintain his marginal lead over his challenger <u>Shea-Porter</u>, former NH Representative whom he beat in 2010. All of the top races in New Hampshire, the most politically active state - president, governor, both House seats - are toss-ups.</p>
<p>North Carolina - 7th District</p>	<p>Mike McIntyre (D) vs. David Rouzer (R)</p>	<p><u>McIntyre</u>, an 8-term Blue Dog incumbent with a lot of fundraising money, faces a tough reelection against state Senator <u>Rouzer</u>. Both nominees have criticized the other's budget handlings and votes on topics such as the stimulus and immigration. The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee is supporting McIntyre's narrow lead.</p>
<p>Texas - 23rd District</p>	<p>Francisco Canseco (R) vs. Pete Gallego (D)</p>	<p>In a race considered to be one of the nation's most competitive, <u>Canseco</u> fights for a second term and hopes that his push for redistricting is in his favor. Popular state representative <u>Gallego</u> has huge fundraising backing, but is still looking to gain support from his narrow win against former Rep. Ciro Rodriguez in the state's run-off primary.</p>
<p>Iowa - 3rd District</p>	<p>Leonard Boswell (D) vs. Tom Latham (R)</p>	<p>Due to redistricting, 8-term incumbent <u>Boswell</u> faces a battle with neighboring district incumbent <u>Latham</u>, who is seeking a 10th term. An avid supporter of general aviation and a member of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Boswell currently represents half of the redistricted area while Latham represents only about 20%.</p>

Ohio - 16th District	James Renacci (R) vs. Betty Sutton (D)	Redistricting has forced district incumbent <u>Renacci</u> to face off against 13th district incumbent <u>Sutton</u> in Ohio's most competitive House election of the cycle. Both considered to be vulnerable incumbents, Renacci has raised more fundraising dollars. Increased voter turnout for the presidential election will ultimately decide the 16th district's representative.
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Additional races to watch:

- Colorado's 6th District – **Mike Coffman (R)** vs. *Joe Miklosi (D)*
- Georgia's 12th District – **John Barrow (D)** vs. *Lee Anderson (R)*
- New York's 18th District – **Nan Hayworth (R)** vs. *Sean Patrick Maloney (D)*