

Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D)



Elected June 1987; 10th full term

With her elevation to Speaker of the House, Pelosi made history as the highest-ranking woman ever in U.S. government. Her barrier-shattering rise was the most remarkable personal story of a dramatic midterm election that gave Democrats control of both the House and the Senate in the 110th Congress (2007-08). The 52nd Speaker of the House is a former stay-at-home mother who waited to run for office until her children reached their teens. Now she is second in the constitutional line of presidential succession and arguably the most powerful woman in American politics.

Republicans have a tough opponent in Pelosi (pa-LO-see) despite her ready smile and studied graciousness. Petite and impeccably turned out in an Armani business suit, she has the style of Jackie Kennedy and the iron will of Margaret Thatcher. She demands discipline from the ranks, and punishes those who cross her. When a member tries to dodge her on a tough vote with, "I'm sorry, but I can't be with you this time," Pelosi's response is, "Then we can't be with you." During her triumphant march to deliver a Democratic majority to the House in 2006, she told the Los Angeles Times, "I'm fighting a battle here. I'm not getting my hair done."

She is indeed the "San Francisco liberal" her GOP detractors say she is. But she's a bleeding heart with a ward-boss mentality, inherited from her machine-Democrat father, a former Baltimore mayor who maintained an old-fashioned system of favors and patronage jobs. In the run-up to the 2006 elections, Pelosi worked tirelessly, flying to several cities a week and ultimately raising \$50 million for fellow Democrats.

Pelosi demands absolute loyalty in return, and that trait can lead her astray. Just four days before Democrats elected their leaders for the 110th Congress, she intervened in the contest for majority leader by publicly endorsing her longtime ally John P. Murtha of Pennsylvania. She tried to pressure members into choosing him over Maryland's Steny H. Hoyer, the minority whip who had earned the respect of many Democrats. Irked at her heavy-handedness, Democrats chose Hoyer by a vote of 149 to 86.

After more than a dozen years in the minority, Pelosi lost no time resetting the House agenda. She successfully pushed through a "first 100 hours" set of six bills focused on long-held party goals, such as increasing the minimum wage and letting the government use its purchasing power to negotiate with manufacturers for lower Medicare drug prices. She held Democrats together on nearly all of the bills, losing the greatest number — 16 of them — on expanding embryonic stem cell research, which many conservatives oppose. Some bills also won a significant number of GOP votes.

She also left the door open to compromise with Republicans on some issues, such as a guest worker program for illegal immigrants. And she shut down talk of possible political retaliation against the Republican president, saying, "Impeachment is off the table." But Pelosi moved aggressively against the White House on the war in Iraq, threatening to cut the flow of money to the war effort unless President Bush began troop withdrawals.

As minority leader for the four years preceding the election, Pelosi consolidated power by showering rewards on allies and opening up opportunities for junior members. She pressed several senior Democrats to part with coveted committee assignments so that she could give them to junior lawmakers, moderates, Hispanics and African-Americans. When she became Speaker, she quietly left in place a Republican policy of six-year term limits for committee chairmen, a move sure to enhance her power at

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COMMITTEES

Speaker of the House - no committee assignments

RESIDENCE

San Francisco

BORN

March 26, 1940, Baltimore, Md.

RELIGION

Roman Catholic

FAMILY

Husband, Paul Pelosi; five children

EDUCATION

Trinity College (D.C.), A.B. 1962

CAREER

Public relations consultant; senatorial campaign committee finance chairwoman; homemaker

POLITICAL HIGHLIGHTS

Calif. Democratic Party chairwoman, 1981-83

ELECTION RESULTS

2006 GENERAL

Nancy Pelosi (D)	148,435	80.4%
Mike DeNunzio (R)	19,800	10.7%
Krissy Keefer (GREEN)	13,653	7.4%
Philip Zimt Berg (LIBERT)	2,751	1.5%

2006 PRIMARY

Nancy Pelosi (D)	unopposed
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2004 GENERAL

Nancy Pelosi (D)	224,017	83.0%
Jennifer Depalma (R)	31,074	11.5%
Leilani Dowell (PF)	9,527	3.5%
Terry Baum - write-in	5,446	2.0%

PREVIOUS WINNING PERCENTAGES

2002 (80%); 2000 (84%); 1998 (86%); 1996 (84%);
1994 (82%); 1992 (82%); 1990 (77%); 1988 (76%);
1987 Special Runoff Election (63%)

the expense of the chairmen. Several of them objected to no avail.

Throughout her career, Pelosi has demonstrated the political skills learned from her father, Thomas D'Alesandro Jr., a New Deal-era House member who went on to be Baltimore mayor. In the working-class enclave near downtown called Little Italy, the D'Alesandro row house on Albarle Street was a refuge for people who needed food, some wood for heat or a job on the city payroll.

With her five brothers, "Little Nancy" took turns at the desk near the door, keeping a "favor file" to be consulted at re-election time. Copies of the daily Congressional Record were stacked beneath her bed. Pelosi's mother, Annunciata, balanced caring for the kids with political organizing, a model her daughter would adopt.

After graduating from Trinity College, an all-women Catholic school in Washington, D.C., Pelosi worked briefly in 1963 as a receptionist for U.S. Sen. Daniel B. Brewster of Maryland. But she left the job after a few months to marry college sweetheart Paul Pelosi. The couple moved to his native San Francisco, where he became a successful investment banker and she a stay-at-home mother of five, albeit a wealthy one with live-in help.

Pelosi juggled caring for her family with political activism, developing into a crack Democratic fundraiser by keeping lists, memorizing names and faces, and meticulously hand-writing thank-you notes to donors. Her five kids served food at political events and canvassed door-to-door as soon as they could walk. In the 1980s, Pelosi rose to chair the California Democratic Party. But she waited until she was 47, and her youngest was in high school, to run for office. When San Francisco's main House seat came open with the death of Rep. Sala Burton, Pelosi used her insider's contacts to nail the nomination, which was tantamount to election in one of the nation's most Democratic districts. She has won re-election easily since.

Pelosi took a big step upward in 2001, when she was elected party whip over Hoyer, 118-95. Some Democrats trace her cool relationship with Hoyer to that race. When Richard A. Gephardt of Missouri stepped aside as minority leader after the party's losses in the 2002 election, Pelosi was ready to make a play for the top job.

Martin Frost, a Texan with more seniority who chaired the Democratic Caucus, ran against her, promising leadership from the center. But Democrats embraced Pelosi's more confrontational politics, which made no apologies for liberal ideology. Ultimately, Frost bowed out of the race, and Pelosi was chosen, 177 to 29, over Harold E. Ford Jr. of Tennessee, a late entrant. She is the first woman elected to the top leadership post of either party.

KEY VOTES

2006

- Yes Stop broadband companies from favoring select Internet traffic
- No Affirm U.S. commitment to war in Iraq and reject setting a withdrawal date for troops
- No Repeal requirement for bilingual ballots at the polls
- Yes Permit U.S. sale of civilian nuclear technology to India
- No Build a 700-mile fence on the U.S.-Mexico border to curb illegal crossings
- No Permit warrantless wiretaps of suspected terrorists

2005

- ? Intervene in the life-support case of Terri Schiavo
- Yes Lift President Bush's restrictions on stem cell research funding
- Yes Prohibit FBI access to library and bookstore records
- No Approve free-trade pact with five Central American countries
- No Pass energy policy overhaul favored by President Bush emphasizing domestic oil and gas production
- No End mandatory preservation of habitat of endangered animal and plant species
- Yes Ban torture of prisoners in U.S. custody

CQ VOTE STUDIES

	PARTY UNITY		PRESIDENTIAL SUPPORT	
	Support	Oppose	Support	Oppose
2006	98%	2%	25%	75%
2005	99%	1%	16%	84%
2004	97%	3%	21%	79%
2003	98%	2%	20%	80%
2002	99%	1%	23%	77%

INTEREST GROUPS

	AFL-CIO	ADA	CCUS	ACU
2006	93%	95%	40%	8%
2005	93%	95%	36%	0%
2004	93%	100%	35%	8%
2003	87%	100%	34%	12%
2002	100%	100%	37%	0%

CALIFORNIA 8

Most of San Francisco

San Francisco is famous for its landmarks, food and diverse collection of neighborhoods, from the Italian and Hispanic centers of North Beach and the Mission District to spots such as Chinatown, hippie haven Haight-Ashbury and the gay mecca of Castro.

More than 80 percent of the city's residents live in the 8th, which takes in the city's north and east and at 35 square miles is the state's smallest district. The 8th's sizable Asian population (29 percent) is the third-largest in the country. San Francisco's Chinatown neighborhood is one of the largest Chinese communities in North America.

The city boasts many tourist destinations. Alcatraz prison — used as a federal maximum-security facility from 1934 to 1963 and where Al Capone, George "Machine Gun" Kelly and Robert "Birdman" Stroud were once jailed — receives more than one million visitors annually. Fisherman's Wharf, on the city's northern waterfront, the Golden Gate Bridge, which connects San Francisco to Marin County, and the Bay Bridge, which traverses the neck of the bay over Treasure Island to

Oakland, are other popular attractions. The city's part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area hosts a Lucasfilm facility that opened in 2005 on the site of the former Letterman Army Medical Center at the Presidio.

The 8th also is home to San Francisco's financial district along Montgomery Street, known as the "Wall Street of the West." The Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco is there, as is the Transamerica Pyramid and the headquarters of brokerage firm Charles Schwab and financial company Wells Fargo. The city also has a biomedical industry led by the University of California at San Francisco, the city's second-largest employer after local government.

The 8th is safely Democratic, and Phil Angelides took 64 percent of the 2006 gubernatorial vote here, despite winning only 39 percent statewide.

MAJOR INDUSTRY

Tourism, financial services, health care

CITIES

San Francisco (pt.), 639,088

NOTABLE

The city's famous cable cars were developed by Andrew Smith Hallidie after he witnessed an accident involving a horse-drawn streetcar.