

## Hakeem Jeffries wins historic bid to lead House Democrats after Nancy Pelosi

By Lisa Mascaró

Required Annotations		Student-Created Annotations		Summary / Questions / Reflection	
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Representative Hakeem Jeffries was chosen by Democrats to be the first Black American to head a major political group in Congress. He will lead Democrats in the U.S. House of Representatives in Washington, D.C., in 2023.

Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi and her team will step aside in 2023. Pelosi was the first woman to be speaker, the top job among lawmakers in the House.

Showing unity after their November election losses, the Democrats moved from one history-making leader to another, choosing Jeffries. He is 52. In a meeting on November 30, everyone voted for Jeffries. He promised to “get things done” in Congress, even after Republicans won control of the House.

Jeffries said he and other leaders stand on the work of Pelosi and her team. They plan to “do the best job that we can for the people,” he said.

### Show Of Rare Party Unity

It’s rare that a group that lost the elections would organize so easily. The Republicans have had more trouble. They struggled to unite around their leader Kevin McCarthy as the new House speaker. They are preparing to take control of the House in January 2023.

Democrats’ votes for Jeffries and other leaders came without challengers. Cheers broke out in the meeting, where elections were like church services, some people said. There is not always so much **consensus**.

Jeffries will become the Democratic minority leader in Congress. He will lead a trio that includes 59-year-old lawmaker Katherine Clark of Massachusetts as the Democratic whip. The whip tries to get members to vote with other Democrats in Congress. Lawmaker Pete Aguilar, 43, of California will be caucus chairman. The chairman is in charge of running the Democratic **caucus**. The caucus includes all Democrats in the House.

The new leaders will fill the jobs held by Pelosi, Majority Leader Steny Hoyer of Maryland and Democratic Whip James Clyburn of South Carolina. Pelosi, Hoyer and Clyburn are in their 80s. They will make way for younger leaders.

The new leaders and Pelosi have been preparing for this. Jeffries, Clark and Aguilar worked for several years in smaller leadership roles as Pelosi prepared to step down. Pelosi, of California, has led the House Democrats for 20 years.

### Leadership Election Historic

Lawmaker Cori Bush of Missouri called the leadership choices “historic.”

Even as Republicans control the House in 2023, Democrats will have some power. There are not many more Republicans than Democrats in the House.

### **Jeffries Vows To Work With Republicans**

Jeffries said he will work with Republicans “whenever possible.” However, he also said he will push back against **radical** actions.

On the other side of the Capitol, Jeffries will have a partner in Chuck Schumer, the Democrats’ leader in the Senate. Both are from New York.

Schumer said some Republicans won’t want to “go in the MAGA direction, and Hakeem’s the ideal type guy to work with them.” MAGA is former President Donald Trump’s “Make America Great Again” saying.

Clark, who will be second-ranking among House Democrats, invited Republicans to work with Democrats on projects.

They welcome any Republican “who wants to get to work for the American people,” she said.

At the same time Aguilar, the third-ranking member, said Democrats came from the November elections with a clear **mandate**. “What we’re fighting against is this MAGA extremism” in part of Trump’s group.

Jeffries’ views are considered to be in the middle among House Democrats. He has sometimes faced questions from lawmakers with different views.

However, Rashida Tlaib of Michigan, a Democratic lawmaker, said she is hopeful. Jeffries and his team are reaching out, she said.

It appears that he wants to have “partnerships with many of us,” she said.

### **Pelosi, Hoyer To Stay In Office**

Pelosi and Hoyer plan to remain in Congress. It’s an unusual arrangement that Jeffries called a “blessing.” The new leaders will be able to ask their advice

Jeffries’ rise is significant for Black Americans. Civil rights leader Al Sharpton called his election a “long overdue moment in America.”

## Questions

1. What is the relationship between Hakeem Jeffries and the House Democrats?
  - a) Jeffries will become the Democratic minority leader.
  - b) Jeffries will become the speaker of the House.
  - c) Jeffries will become the Democratic whip.
  - d) Jeffries will become the caucus chairman.
2. According to the article, how was Hakeem Jeffries elected?
  - a) The president appointed him.
  - b) Democratic leaders chose him.
  - c) The House speaker picked him.
  - d) The American public voted for him.
3. Read the section “Show Of Rare Party Unity.” Which sentence from the section supports the conclusion that House Republicans do not agree on who should be their leader?
  - a) They struggled to unite around their leader Kevin McCarthy as the new House speaker.
  - b) They are preparing to take control of the House in January 2023.
  - c) Democrats’ votes for Jeffries and other leaders came without challengers.
  - d) Jeffries, Clark and Aguilar worked for several years in smaller leadership roles as Pelosi prepared to step down.
4. Read the section “Jeffries Vows To Work With Republicans.” Which sentence from the section shows WHY the Senate leader thinks Hakeem Jeffries is the right leader for the House?
  - a) On the other side of the Capitol, Jeffries will have a partner in Chuck Schumer, the Democrats’ leader in the Senate.
  - b) Schumer said some Republicans won’t want to “go in the MAGA direction, and Hakeem’s the ideal type guy to work with them.”
  - c) At the same time Aguilar, the third-ranking member, said Democrats came from the November elections with a clear task.
  - d) However, Rashida Tlaib of Michigan, a Democratic lawmaker, said she is hopeful.