Public Opinion and Events

Confidence in the Presidency, Congress, and Supreme Court

1789-2026 context; 1973-2026 measured confidence

A continuous timeline pairing every available Gallup institutional-confidence observation with selected same-period national events

This companion paper tracks public confidence across the three constitutional branches during eleven presidential administrations. It uses one matched survey measure so the presidency, Congress, and Supreme Court can be compared without mixing unlike questions. Event labels provide historical context; they do not assert that a single event caused a polling change. Appendices align the series with recessions and major war periods, trace all fifty state admissions, and mark selected technology milestones.

Standalone public-opinion timeline

Current through November 9, 2026

Two-column reference; Chicago-style footnotes; Gallup historical trend

How to read the timeline

Measure. P, C, and S report the percentage telling Gallup they had a "great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence in the presidency, Congress, and Supreme Court. This institutional-confidence question is distinct from presidential job approval.[1]

Coverage. Gallup's matched series begins in 1973. It is intermittent before 1993 and annual thereafter. The presidency was not included in many early waves, so a dash means "not reported in this matched table," not zero confidence. The poll label is Gallup's published year; February and October are retained where Gallup separated 1991 readings.

Before comparable polls

No national approval scale reaches back to Washington. Before modern sampling, election returns, petitions, letters, public meetings, party newspapers, and later newspaper "straw polls" recorded political sentiment, but they are not equivalent to representative surveys. Newspapers used straw votes increasingly from the mid-nineteenth century; *Literary Digest* later mailed millions of ballots, a voluntary method whose famous 1936 failure exposed its bias. Modern sample polling began in 1935 with Gallup's American Institute of Public Opinion and Roper's *Fortune* surveys. Gallup tested presidential-performance questions in the late 1930s; the durable job-approval wording was established by the Truman administration, so the continuous Gallup presidential-approval record begins in 1945.[2]

Early quota polling also had serious coverage limits. In particular, voting-based quotas systematically underrepresented Black Americans, especially in the South. For that reason this paper does not convert early polls or pre-polling proxies into a false, continuous numeric series.[3]

Economic companion. MI is the Misery Index: the unemployment rate plus 12-month CPI inflation. It is calculated at the timeline anchor month (June for year-only Gallup labels; February or October for the two 1991 readings). Higher values mean more combined labor-market and price pressure. MI is intuitive but incomplete: it does not measure economic growth, wage gains, inequality, housing affordability, or financial instability.[4]

Events. Each row supplies concise same-period context, usually with a month. The pairing supports chronological comparison, not a causal claim. Administration essays and event chronologies from the Miller Center, along with the cited current-administration sources, guide the selections.

War, expansion, and technology. Pale-red graph bands mark selected major U.S. war periods; gray bands mark NBER recessions. A separate appendix lists all state admissions because territorial and constitutional expansion mostly predates modern polling. Technology markers are a deliberately selective chronology across navigation, communications, computing, cryptography, and biotechnology. None of these overlays is treated as an independent causal estimate.

Series at a glance

Branch	High	Low	2026
Presidency	72% (1991 Feb)	23% (2022)	27%
Congress	42% (1973)	7% (2014, 2022)	9%
Supreme Court	56% (1985, 1988)	25% (2022)	27%

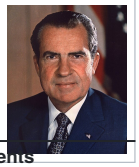
Other useful measures to track

Real GDP growth captures output; **real wage or disposable-income growth** captures household purchasing power; **consumer sentiment** captures perceived economic conditions; **NBER recession dates and financial-stress measures** identify acute downturns; and **interest rates, deficits, and debt service** show the policy environment. These complement MI rather than replace it.

Richard Nixon

1969-August 9, 1974

Republican; 1 Gallup observation[5]



Poll	P	C	S	MI	Selected same-period events
1973	–	42%	45%	10.9	Jan.: Roe v. Wade; Oct.: Watergate's Saturday Night Massacre; Nov.: War Powers Resolution.

Gerald Ford

1974-1977

Republican; 1 Gallup observation[6]



Poll	P	C	S	MI	Selected same-period events
1975	52%	40%	49%	18.0	Apr.: Saigon fell; Dec.: energy-conservation law answered the oil-shock era.

[1] Gallup, *Confidence in Institutions*, historical trend, accessed November 9, 2026, https://news.gallup.com/poll/1597/Confidence-Institutions.aspx.

[2] Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, "George Gallup," accessed November 9, 2026, https://ropercenter.cornell.edu/pioneers-polling/george-gallup; Roper Center, "From Alchemy to Home-Brewed Chemistry—Polling Transformed," https://ropercenter.cornell.edu/sites/default/files/2018-07/73008.pdf; Frank Newport and Lydia Saad, "Measuring Presidential Job Approval for 75 Years," Gallup, August 24, 2021, https://news.gallup.com/opinion/polling-matters/352739/measuring-presidential-job-approval-years.aspx.

[3] Roper Center for Public Opinion Research, "Researching Black American Public Opinion," accessed November 9, 2026, https://ropercenter.cornell.edu/researching-black-american-public-opinion.

[4] U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Unemployment Rate*, series UNRATE, and *Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers: All Items in U.S. City Average*, series CPIAUCSL, retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, November 9, 2026, https://fred.stlouisfed.org/.

[5] Miller Center, University of Virginia, "Richard Nixon: Key Events," accessed November 9, 2026, https://millercenter.org/president/nixon/key-events. The synthesis also draws on the linked administration essays.

[6] Miller Center, University of Virginia, "Gerald Ford: Key Events," accessed November 9, 2026, https://millercenter.org/president/ford/key-events. The synthesis also draws on the linked administration essays.

Jimmy Carter



1977-1981

Democratic; 2 Gallup observations[7]

Poll	P	C	S	MI	Selected same-period events
1977	–	40%	45%	13.9	Jan.: Carter took office; Aug.: Congress created the Department of Energy.
1979	–	34%	45%	16.8	Mar.: Egypt-Israel peace treaty; Nov.: Iran hostage crisis began.

Ronald Reagan



1981-1989

Republican; 7 Gallup observations[8]

Poll	P	C	S	MI	Selected same-period events
1981	–	29%	46%	17.2	Mar.: Reagan was shot; Aug.: tax cuts and the PATCO firings.
1983	–	28%	42%	12.6	Mar.: Strategic Defense Initiative; Oct.: Beirut barracks bombing.
1984	–	29%	51%	11.5	Recovery and Cold War debate framed Reagan's landslide reelection.
1985	–	39%	56%	11.1	Nov.: Reagan-Gorbachev Geneva summit; tax-reform drive gathered force.
1986	–	41%	54%	9.0	Jan.: Challenger; Oct.: Tax Reform Act; Nov.: Iran-Contra exposed.
1987	–	–	52%	9.9	Jun.: Berlin Wall speech; Oct.: Bork defeat and market crash.
1988	–	35%	56%	9.4	Aug.: Civil Liberties Act; Nov.: George H. W. Bush elected.

George H. W. Bush



1989-1993

Republican; 4 Gallup observations[9]

Poll	P	C	S	MI	Selected same-period events
1989	–	32%	46%	10.5	Nov.: Berlin Wall fell; Dec.: U.S. invaded Panama.
1990	–	24%	47%	9.9	Jul.: ADA; Aug.: Iraq invaded Kuwait; fall budget accord.
1991 Feb	72%	30%	48%	11.9	Jan.-Feb.: Gulf War produced a broad rally around government.
1991 Oct	50%	18%	39%	9.8	Recession anxiety and the Thomas confirmation hearings dominated politics.

Bill Clinton



1993-2001

Democratic; 8 Gallup observations[10]

Poll	P	C	S	MI	Selected same-period events
1993	43%	18%	43%	10.0	Feb.: family-leave law; Aug.: budget law; Nov.: NAFTA approved.
1994	38%	18%	42%	8.6	Sep.: crime law; Nov.: Republican congressional wave.
1995	45%	21%	44%	8.6	Apr.: Oklahoma City bombing; Nov.-Dec.: first budget shutdown.
1996	39%	20%	45%	8.1	Aug.: welfare overhaul; Nov.: Clinton reelected.
1997	49%	22%	50%	7.2	Aug.: balanced-budget and tax agreement became law.
1998	53%	28%	50%	6.1	Jan.: Lewinsky story broke; Dec.: House impeached Clinton.
1999	49%	26%	49%	6.3	Feb.: Senate acquitted Clinton; Mar.-Jun.: Kosovo air war.
2000	42%	24%	47%	7.7	Nov.-Dec.: disputed election culminated in Bush v. Gore.

George W. Bush



2001-2009

Republican; 8 Gallup observations[11]

Poll	P	C	S	MI	Selected same-period events
2001	48%	26%	50%	7.7	Sep.: 9/11; Oct.: Afghanistan war and USA PATRIOT Act.
2002	58%	29%	50%	6.9	Oct.: Iraq AUMF; Nov.: Homeland Security Department authorized.
2003	55%	29%	47%	8.2	Mar.: Iraq invasion; Nov.: Medicare Part D enacted.
2004	52%	30%	46%	8.8	Apr.: Abu Ghraib revelations; Nov.: Bush reelected.
2005	44%	22%	41%	7.5	Aug.: Hurricane Katrina; Iraq-war discontent intensified.
2006	33%	19%	40%	8.8	Nov.: Democrats won Congress amid Iraq backlash.
2007	25%	14%	34%	7.3	Jan.: Iraq surge; Dec.: recession began.
2008	26%	12%	32%	10.5	Sep.-Oct.: financial crash and TARP; Nov.: Obama elected.

[7] Miller Center, University of Virginia, "Jimmy Carter: Key Events," accessed November 9, 2026, https://millercenter.org/president/carter/key-events. The synthesis also draws on the linked administration essays.

[8] Miller Center, University of Virginia, "Ronald Reagan: Key Events," accessed November 9, 2026, https://millercenter.org/president/reagan/key-events. The synthesis also draws on the linked administration essays.

[9] Miller Center, University of Virginia, "George H. W. Bush: Key Events," accessed November 9, 2026, https://millercenter.org/president/bush/key-events. The synthesis also draws on the linked administration essays.

[10] Miller Center, University of Virginia, "Bill Clinton: Key Events," accessed November 9, 2026, https://millercenter.org/president/clinton/key-events. The synthesis also draws on the linked administration essays.

[11] Miller Center, University of Virginia, "George W. Bush: Key Events," accessed November 9, 2026, https://millercenter.org/president/gwbush/key-events. The synthesis also draws on the linked administration essays.

Barack Obama

2009-2017

Democratic; 8 Gallup observations[12]

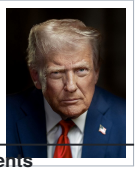


Poll	P	C	S	MI	Selected same-period events
2009	51%	17%	39%	8.3	Feb.: Recovery Act; summer: Affordable Care Act debate.
2010	36%	11%	36%	10.5	Mar.: ACA; Jul.: Dodd-Frank; Nov.: Tea Party wave.
2011	35%	12%	37%	12.6	May: bin Laden killed; Aug.: debt-ceiling crisis.
2012	37%	13%	37%	9.9	Jun.: Supreme Court upheld most of ACA; Nov.: Obama reelected.
2013	36%	10%	34%	9.2	Oct.: federal shutdown coincided with the ACA rollout.
2014	29%	7%	30%	8.2	Jun.: ISIS surge; Aug.: Ferguson; Nov.: Republicans won the Senate.
2015	33%	8%	32%	5.5	Jun.: Obergefell; Jul.: Iran nuclear agreement.
2016	36%	9%	36%	6.0	Feb.: Scalia died; Garland blockade; Nov.: Trump elected.

Donald Trump

First presidency, 2017-2021

Republican; 4 Gallup observations[13]

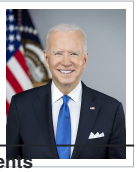


Poll	P	C	S	MI	Selected same-period events
2017	32%	12%	40%	5.9	Jan.: travel ban; Aug.: Charlottesville; Dec.: tax law.
2018	37%	11%	37%	6.8	Jan.: shutdown; Oct.: Kavanaugh confirmed; Nov.: Democratic House.
2019	38%	11%	38%	5.3	Dec.: House impeached Trump for the first time.
2020	39%	13%	40%	11.7	Mar.: COVID emergency and CARES; summer unrest; Nov.: election.

Joe Biden

2021-2025

Democratic; 4 Gallup observations[14]

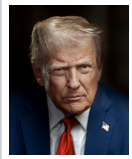


Poll	P	C	S	MI	Selected same-period events
2021	38%	12%	36%	11.2	Jan.: Capitol attack; Mar.: Rescue Plan; Aug.: Afghanistan exit.
2022	23%	7%	25%	12.6	Feb.: Russia invaded Ukraine; Jun.: Dobbs; Aug.: Inflation Reduction Act.
2023	26%	8%	27%	6.7	Jun.: debt-ceiling law; Oct.: McCarthy ouster and Israel-Hamas war.
2024	26%	9%	30%	7.1	Jul.: presidential-immunity ruling; Nov.: Trump won election.

Donald Trump

Second presidency, 2025-present

Republican; 2 Gallup observations[15]



Poll	P	C	S	MI	Selected same-period events
2025	30%	10%	27%	6.8	Jan.: Trump returned; Jul.: reconciliation law amid tariffs and removals.
2026	27%	9%	27%	7.7	Spring: DHS funding impasse; Jun.: U.S.-Iran operations; Nov.: midterms.

Portrait source register

Portraits are identification aids. The linked Wikimedia file page controls creator and rights information. **Richard Nixon**: Richard_Nixon_presidential_portrait_(2).jpg
Gerald Ford: Gerald_Ford_presidential_portrait_(cropped).jpg
Jimmy Carter: Jimmy_Carter_Official_Portrait2_(3x4_cropped).jpg
Ronald Reagan: Official_Portrait_of_President_Reagan_1981.jpg
George H. W. Bush: George_H._W._Bush_presidential_portrait_(cropped)_(2).jpg
Bill Clinton: Bill_Clinton.jpg
George W. Bush: George-W-Bush.jpeg
Barack Obama: President_Barack_Obama.jpg
Donald Trump: Official_Presidential_Portrait_of_President_Donald_J._Trump_(2025).jpg
Joe Biden: Joe_Biden_presidential_portrait.jpg

[12] Miller Center, University of Virginia, "Barack Obama: Presidential Essays," accessed November 9, 2026, https://millercenter.org/president/obama. The synthesis also draws on the linked administration essays.

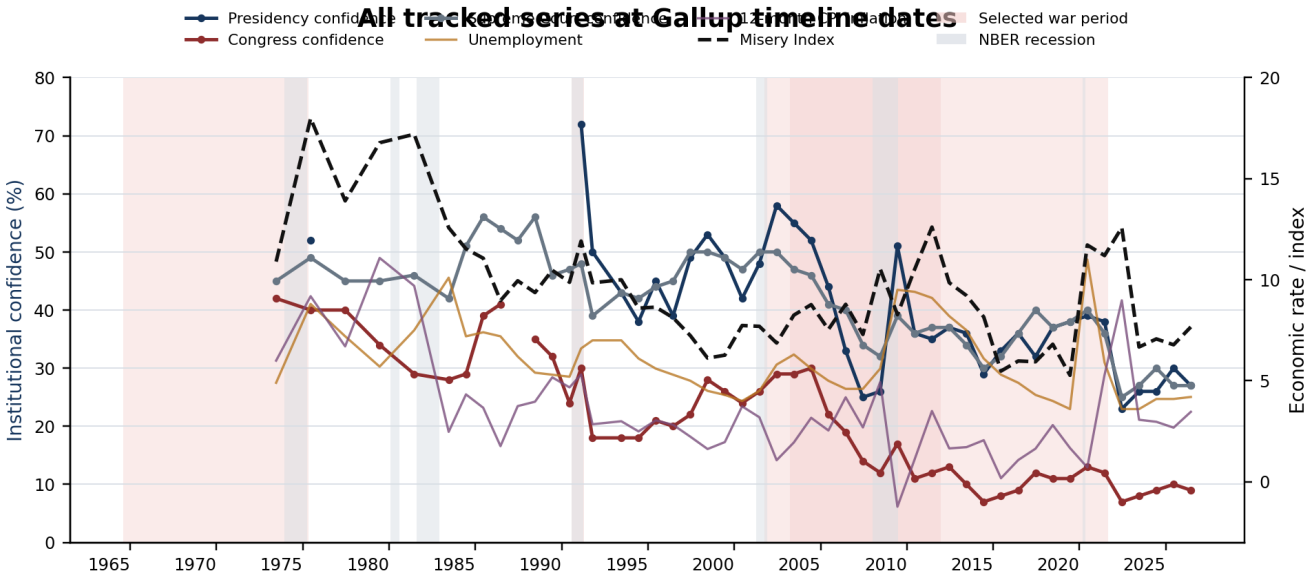
[13] Miller Center, University of Virginia, "Donald Trump: Key Events," accessed November 9, 2026, https://millercenter.org/president/trump/key-events. The synthesis also draws on the linked administration essays.

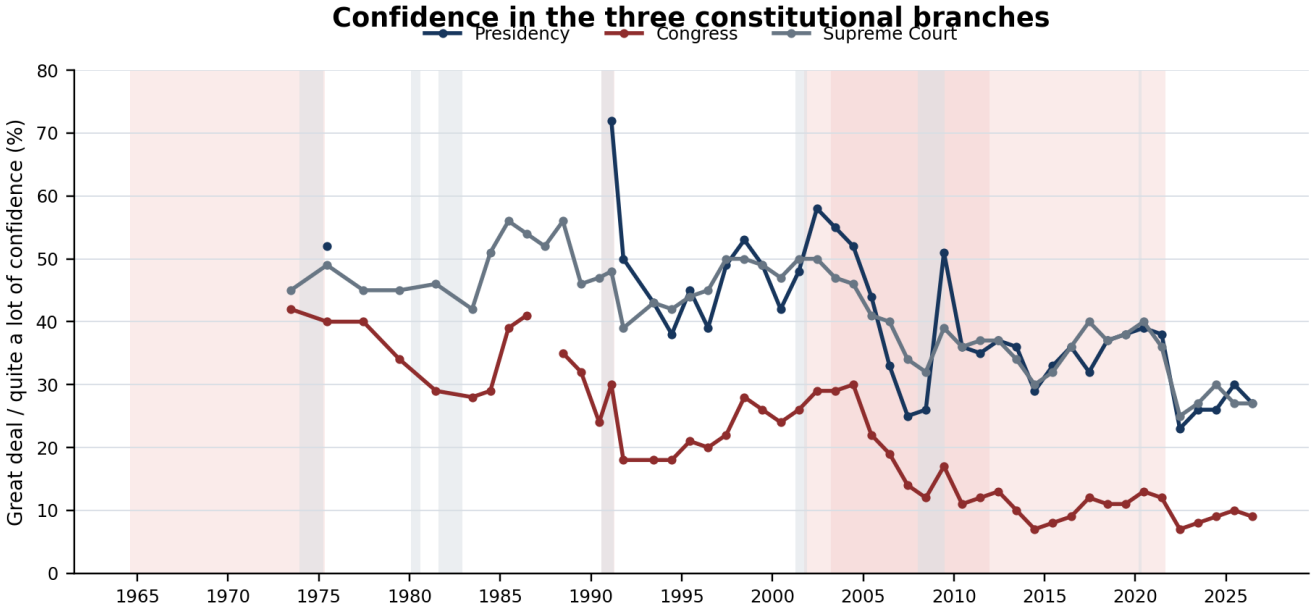
[14] Miller Center, University of Virginia, "Joe Biden: Key Events," accessed November 9, 2026, https://millercenter.org/president/biden/key-events. The synthesis also draws on the linked administration essays.

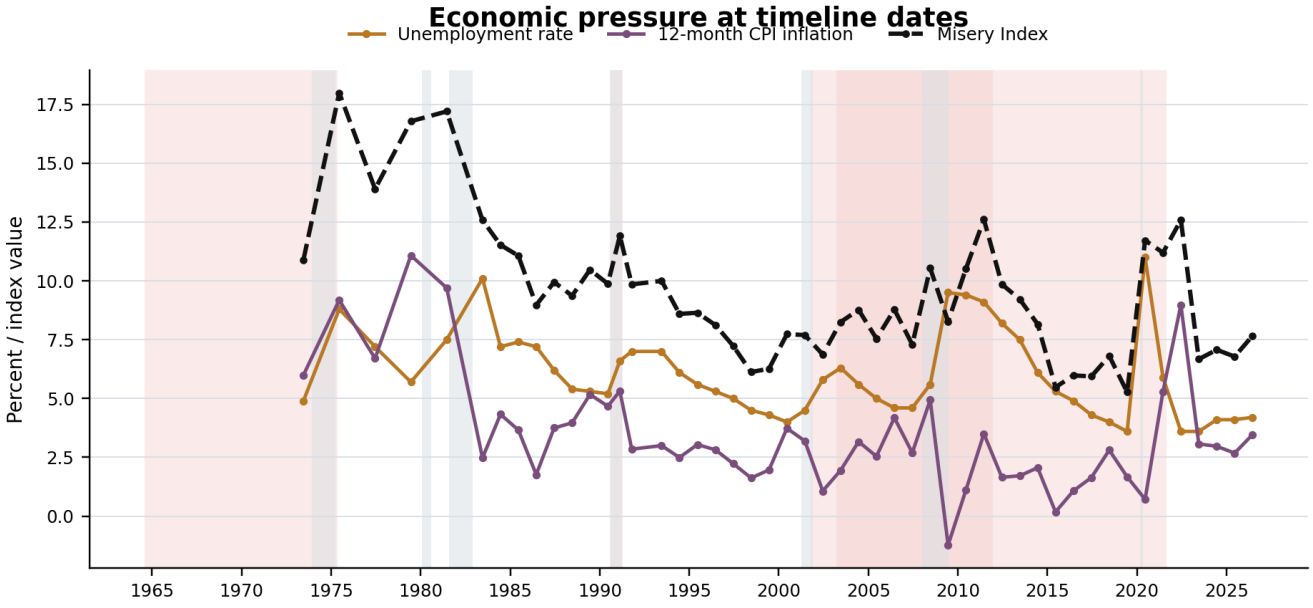
[15] The White House, "Ending Certain Tariff Actions," February 20, 2026, https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2026/02/ending-certain-tariff-actions/; U.S. Congress, Public Law 119-21, July 4, 2025, https://www.congress.gov/119/plaws/publ21/PLAW-119publ21.pdf; and Associated Press, "Congress Returns to a Changed Washington after GOP's Election Wipeout," November 9, 2026, https://apnews.com/article/231d18d536141d9c19ac7e8cfca66eec. Accessed November 9, 2026; current events are provisional.

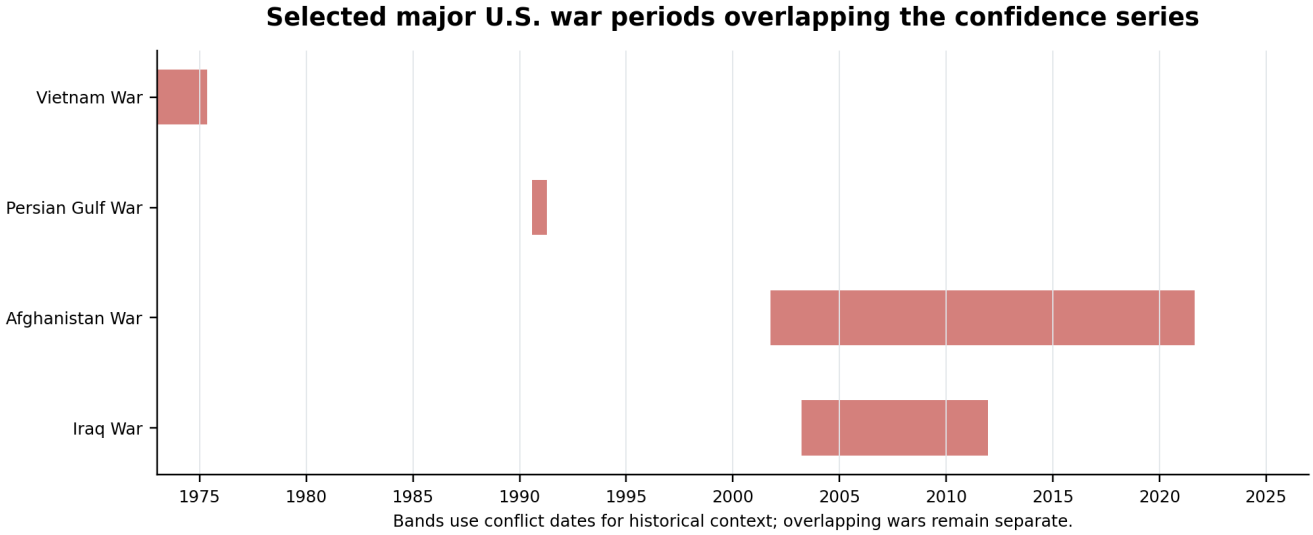
Graphs

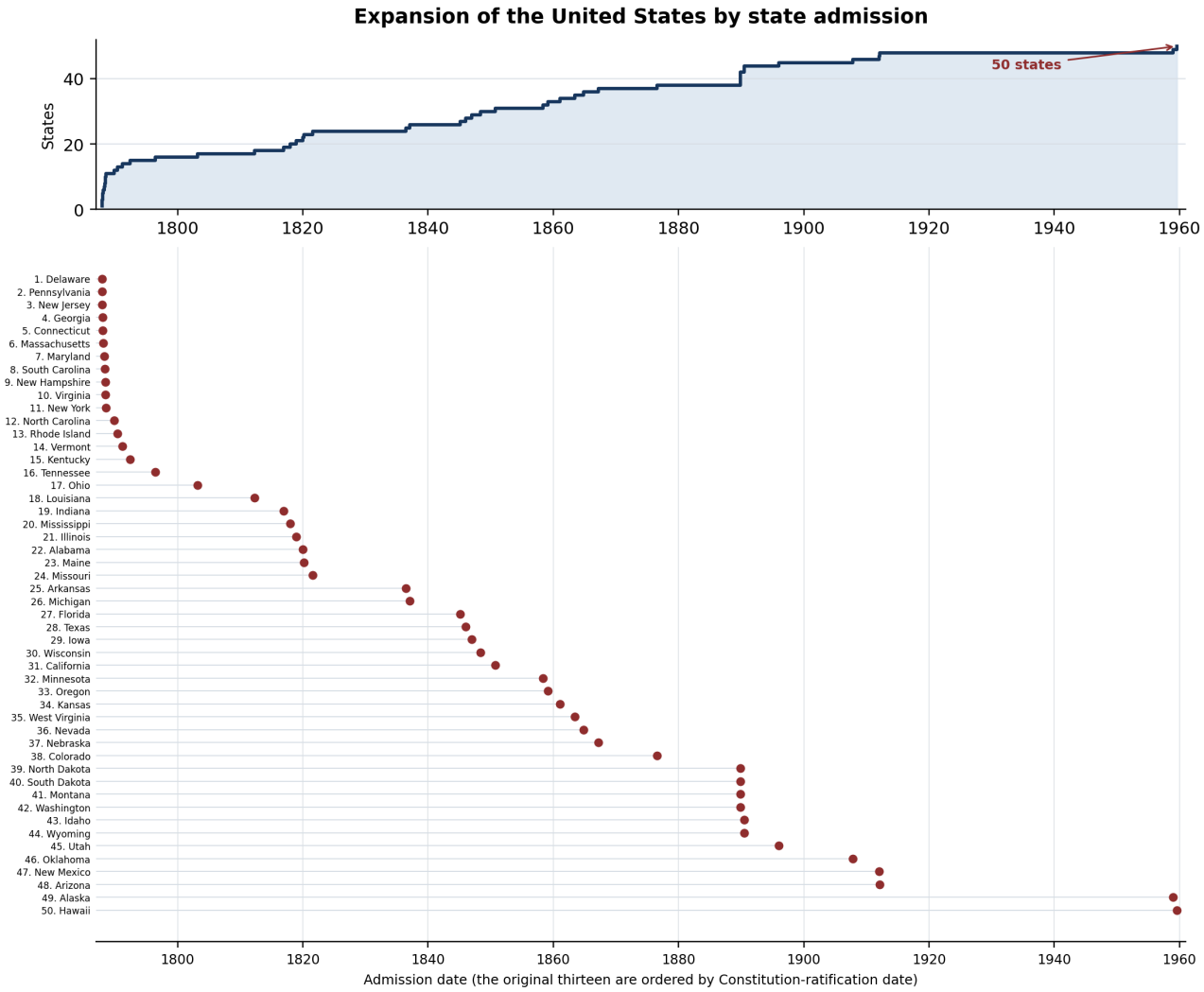
Pale-red bands mark the selected major war periods listed below; gray bands mark NBER recessions. Confidence uses Gallup's matched institutional measure; economic values are observed at the same timeline anchor months. Lines connect available observations and should not be read as interpolated survey estimates.



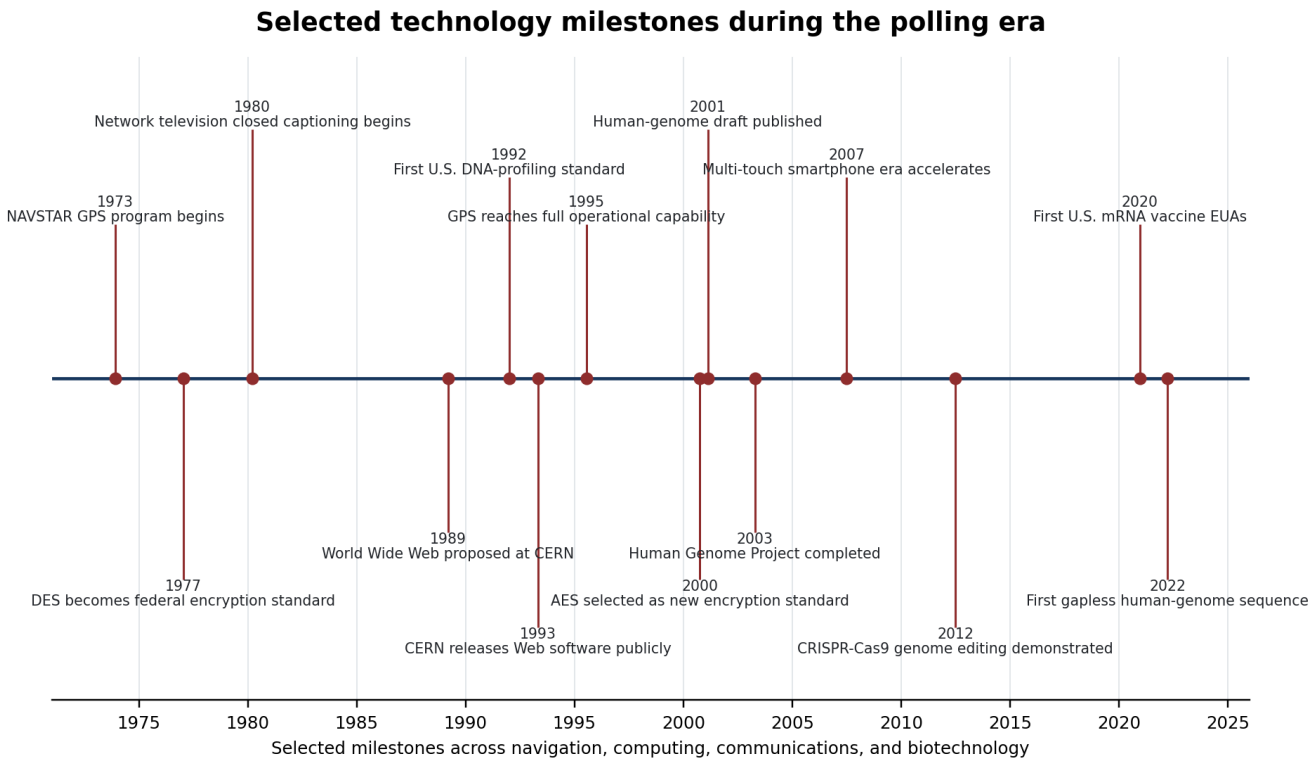



Economic pressure at timeline dates
Unemployment rate
12-month CPI inflation
Misery Index
Percent / index value
17.5
15.0
12.5
10.0
7.5
5.0
2.5
0.0
1965
1970
1975
1980
1985
1990
1995
2000
2005
2010
2015
2020
2025

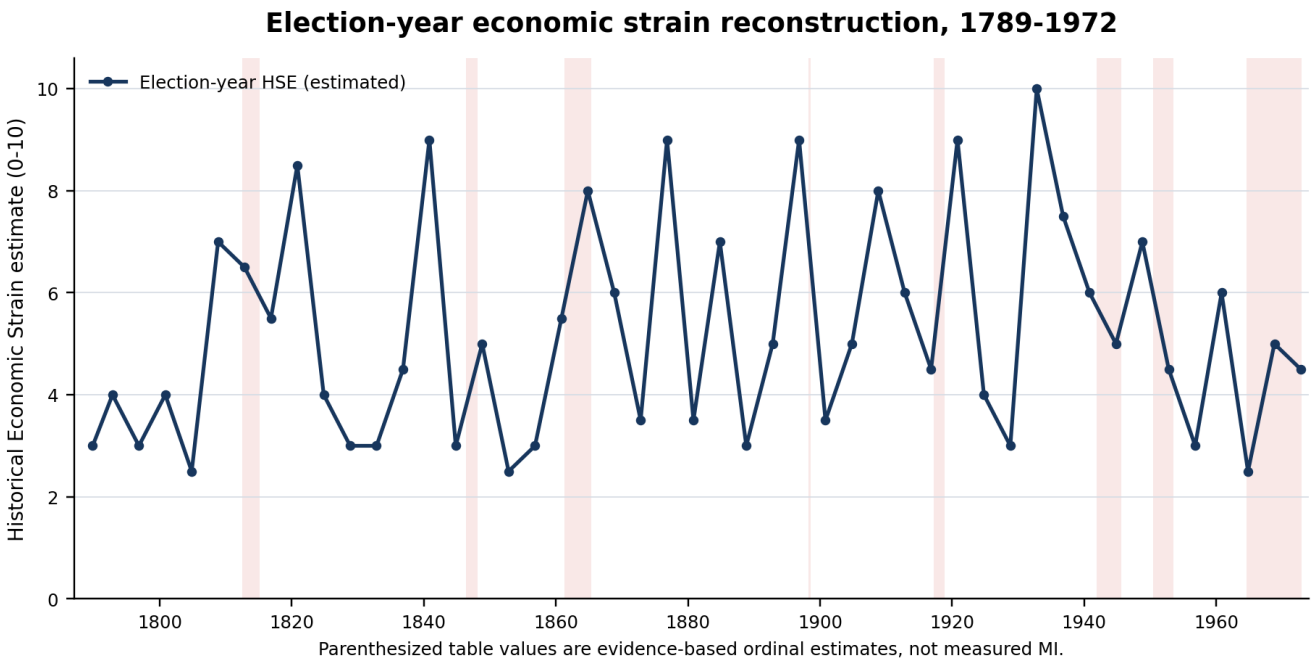

Selected major U.S. war periods overlapping the confidence series
Vietnam War
Persian Gulf War
Afghanistan War
Iraq War
1975
1980
1985
1990
1995
2000
2005
2010
2015
2020
2025
Bands use conflict dates for historical context; overlapping wars remain separate.



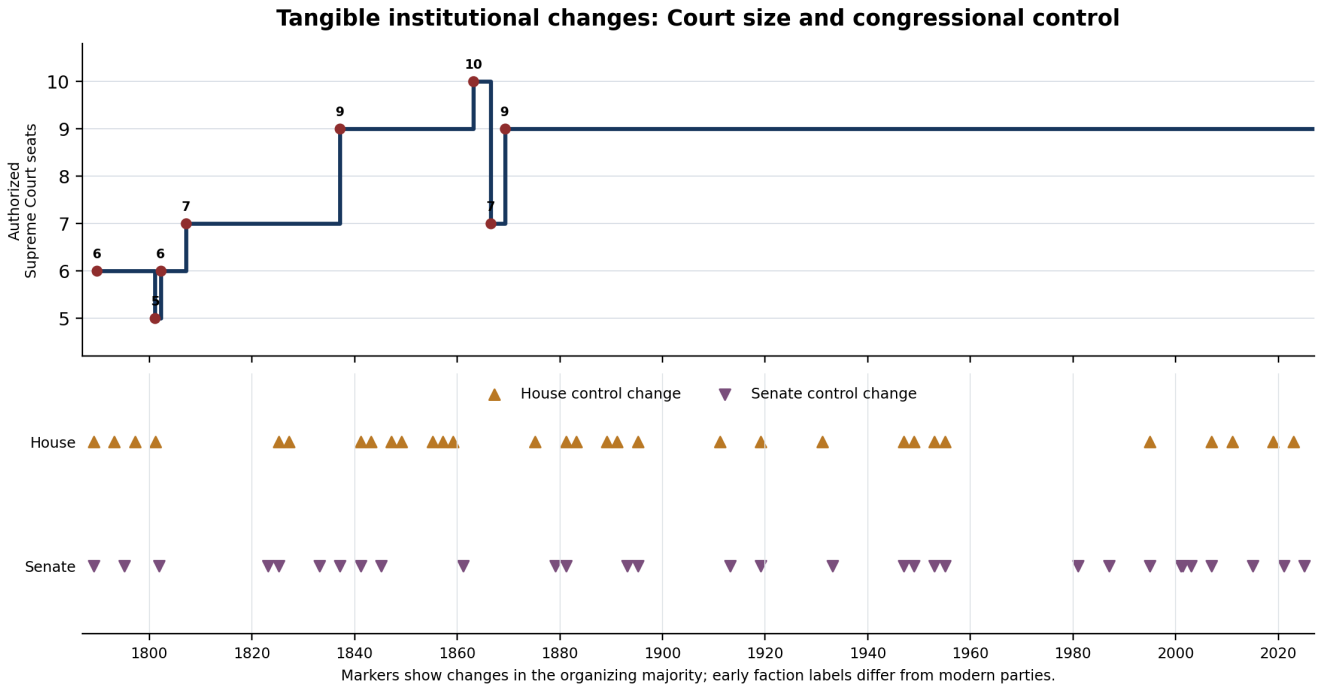
North Dakota and South Dakota were admitted on the same date; the Constitution-ratification order supplies the numbering of the original thirteen.



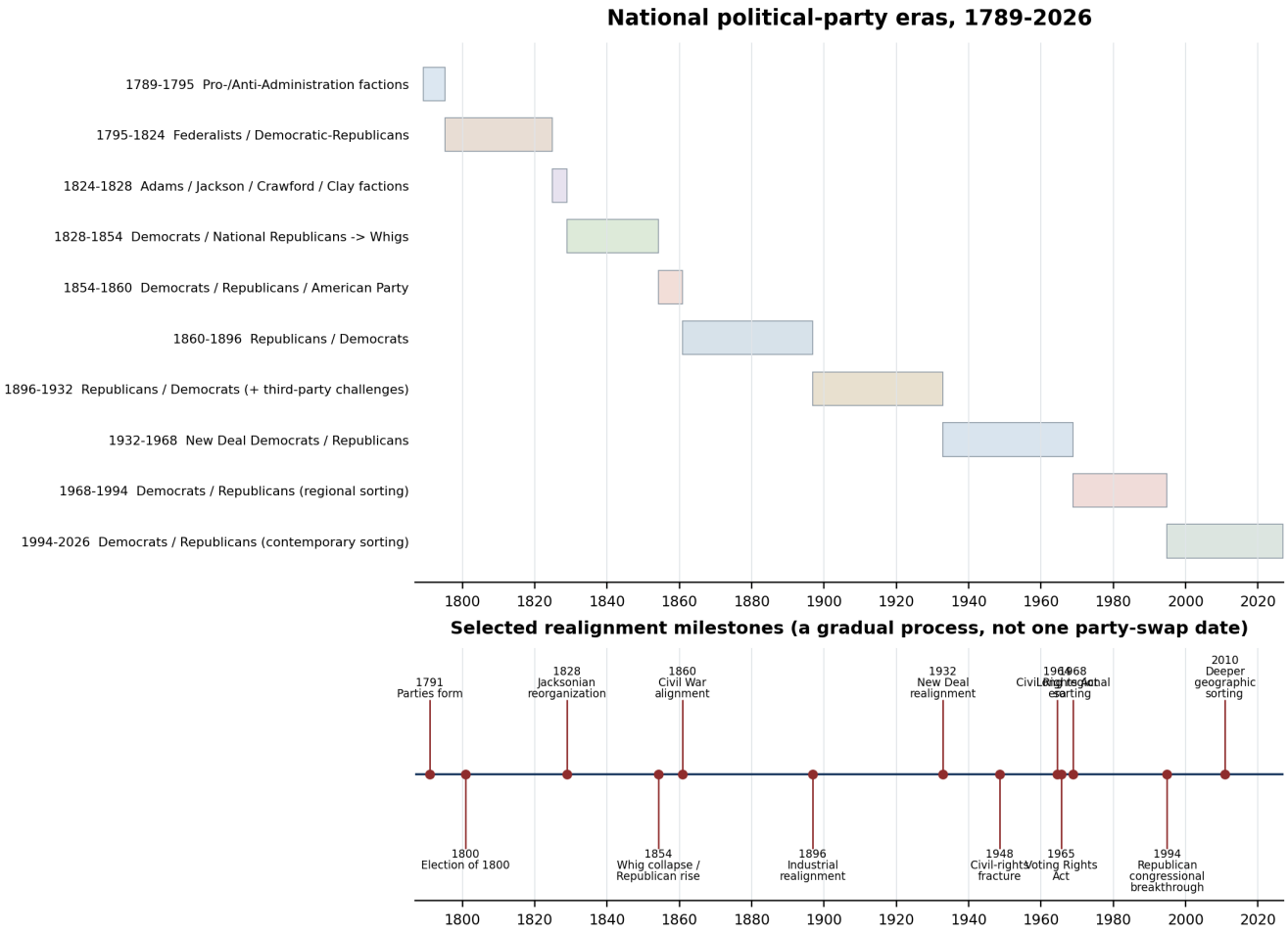
These markers are selective rather than exhaustive. They span public infrastructure, consumer computing, communications, cryptography, and biotechnology; placement beside political and economic data establishes chronology, not causation.



The HSE is an ordinal reconstruction for election years before the measured Gallup-era series. It is shown separately because its units are not interchangeable with unemployment-plus-inflation MI.



Court values are statutory authorized seats, not necessarily the number simultaneously serving. Congressional markers show changes in the organizing majority; the raw table explains unusual coalition and tie-breaking cases.



There was no single Democratic-Republican “switch.” The major-party coalitions, regions, constituencies, and ideologies realigned through several distinct episodes. Era boundaries are practical guides, not universally agreed cutoffs.

Master U.S. public-opinion and national-change timeline, 1789-1819 (1 of 12)

Aligned chronology only: annotation arrows and background overlaps do not establish causation.



Background cycles use NBER chronology where available (beginning in 1854); pale red marks selected wars. HSE is parenthesized and is not merged with measured MI.

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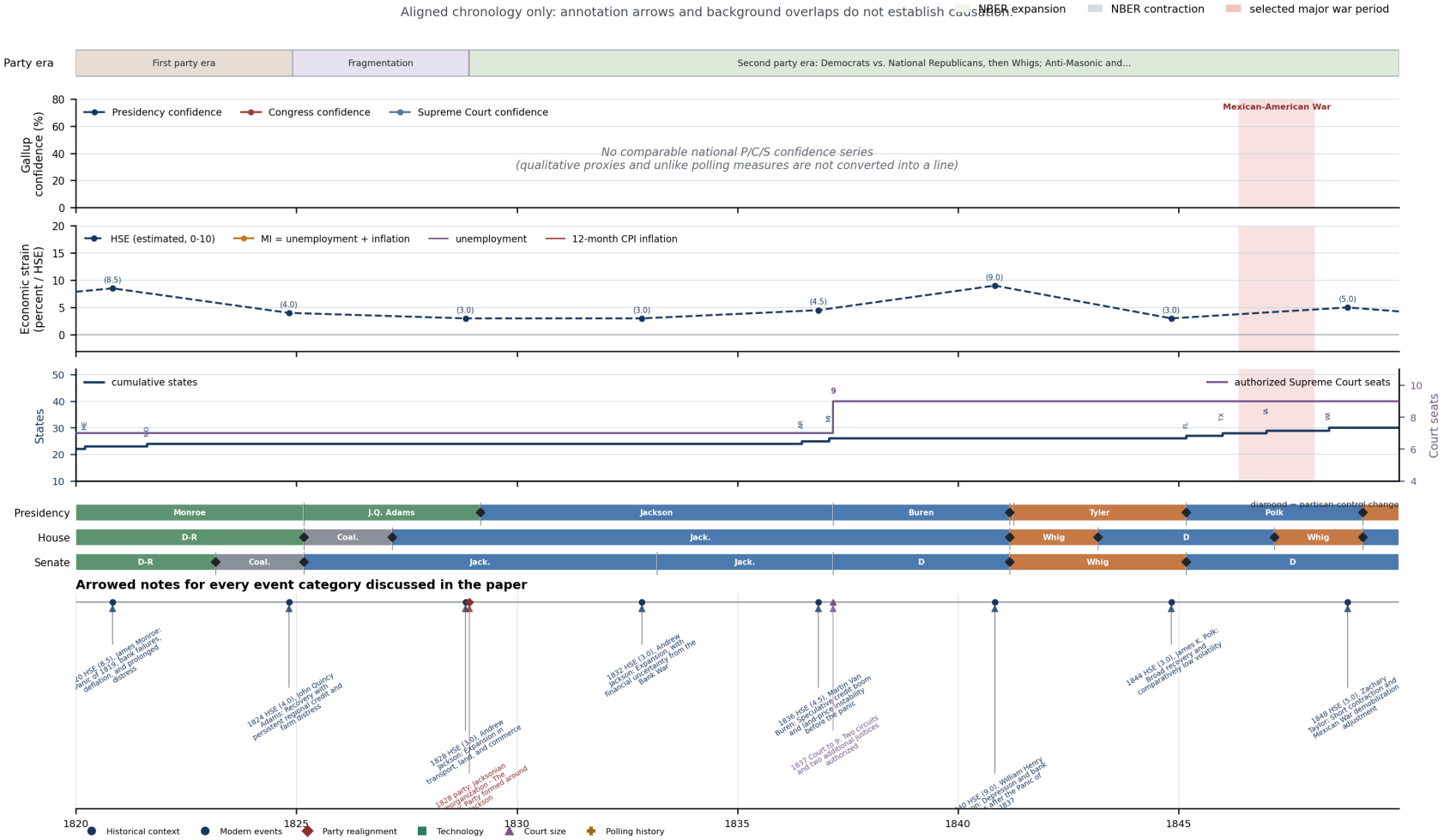
Master U.S. public-opinion and national-change timeline, 1820-1849 (2 of 12)

Aligned chronology only: annotation arrows and background overlaps do not establish causation.



Background cycles use NBER chronology where available (beginning in 1854); pale red marks selected wars. HSE is parenthesized and is not merged with measured MI.

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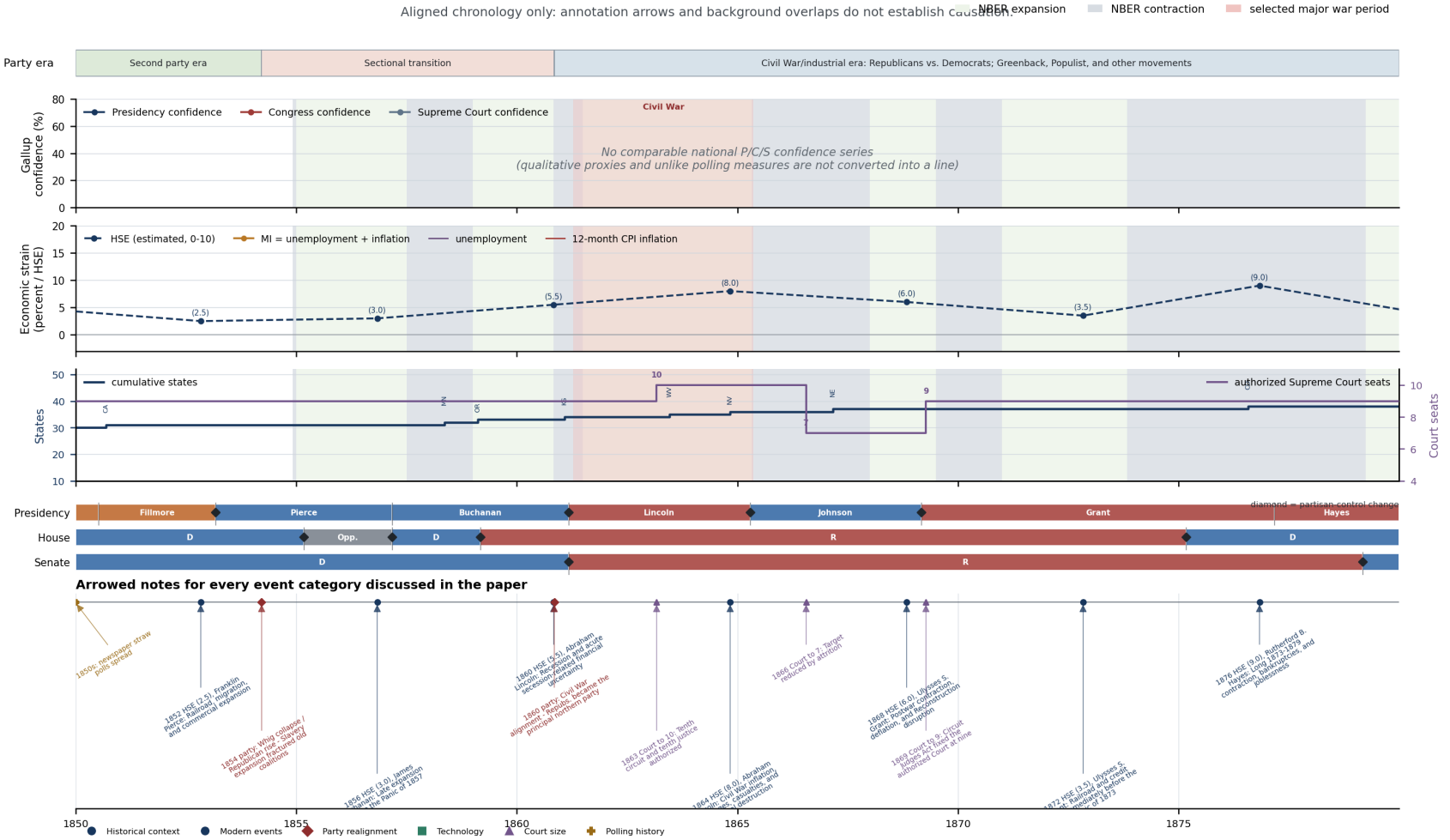
Master U.S. public-opinion and national-change timeline, 1850-1879 (3 of 12)

Aligned chronology only: annotation arrows and background overlaps do not establish causation.



Background cycles use NBER chronology where available (beginning in 1854); pale red marks selected wars. HSE is parenthesized and is not merged with measured MI.

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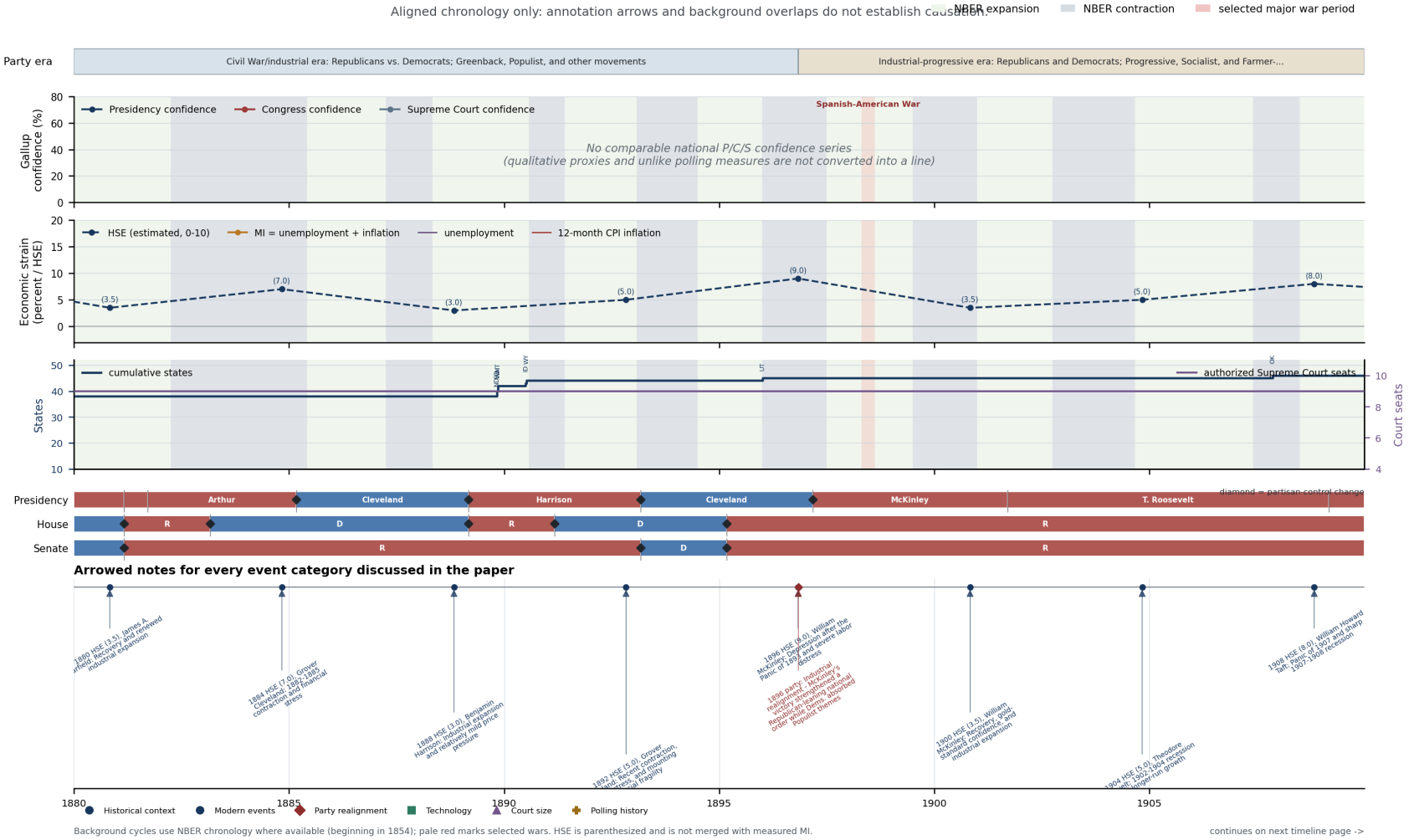
Master U.S. public-opinion and national-change timeline, 1880-1909 (4 of 12)

Aligned chronology only: annotation arrows and background overlaps do not establish causation.



Background cycles use NBER chronology where available (beginning in 1854); pale red marks selected wars. HSE is parenthesized and is not merged with measured MI.

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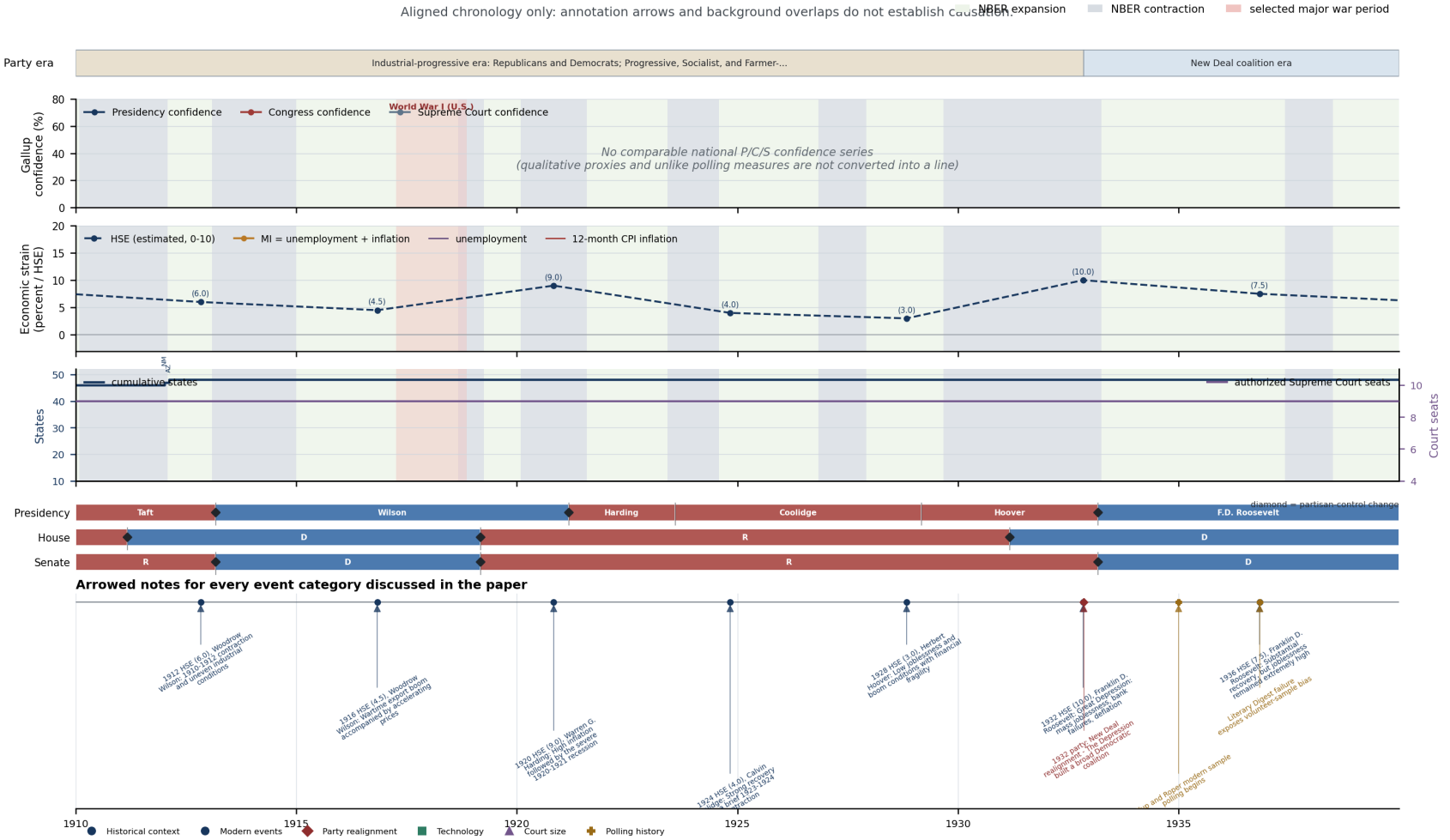
Master U.S. public-opinion and national-change timeline, 1910-1939 (5 of 12)

Aligned chronology only: annotation arrows and background overlaps do not establish causation.



Background cycles use NBER chronology where available (beginning in 1854); pale red marks selected wars. HSE is parenthesized and is not merged with measured MI.

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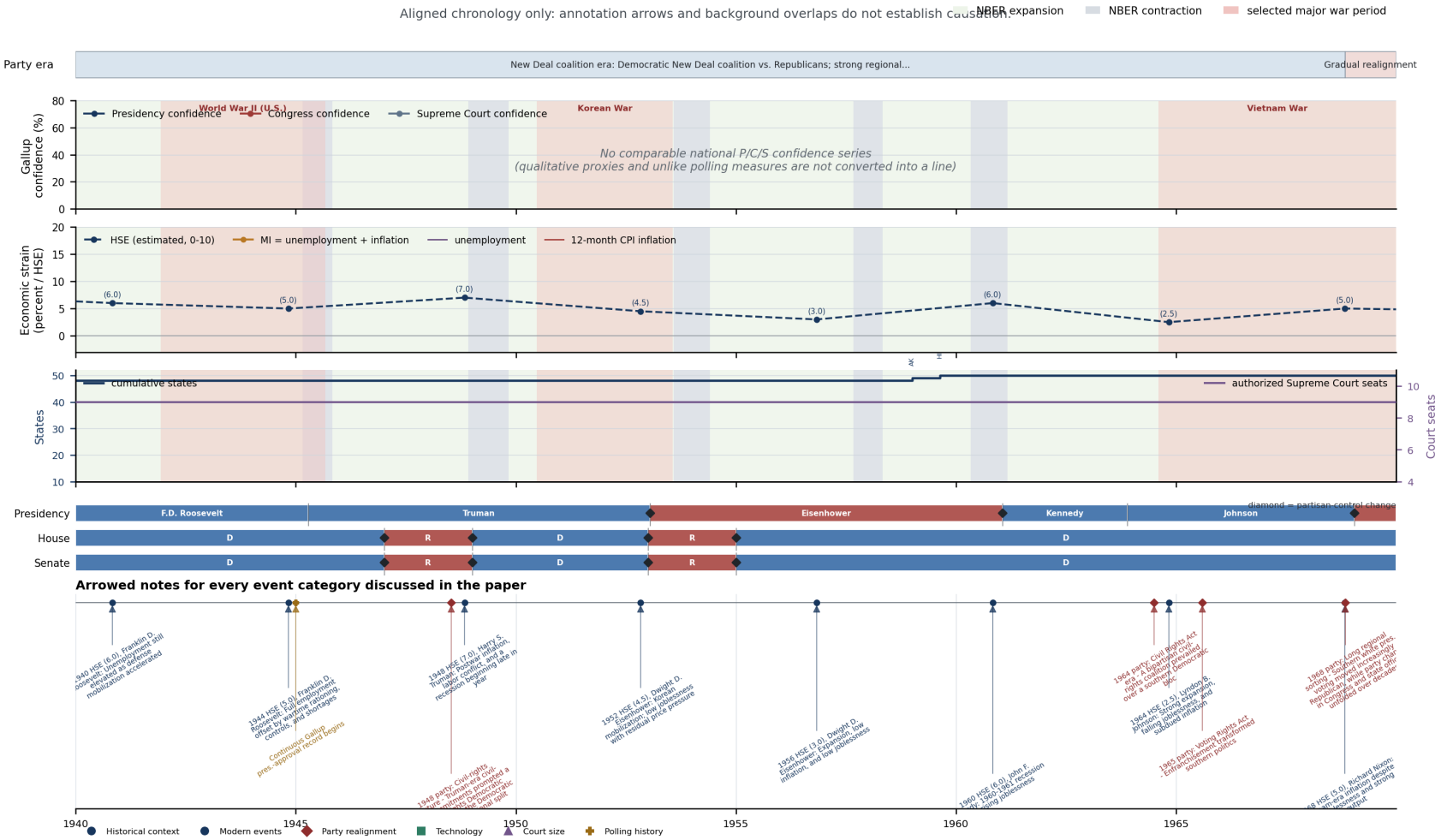
Master U.S. public-opinion and national-change timeline, 1940-1969 (6 of 12)

Aligned chronology only: annotation arrows and background overlaps do not establish causation.



Background cycles use NBER chronology where available (beginning in 1854); pale red marks selected wars. HSE is parenthesized and is not merged with measured MI.

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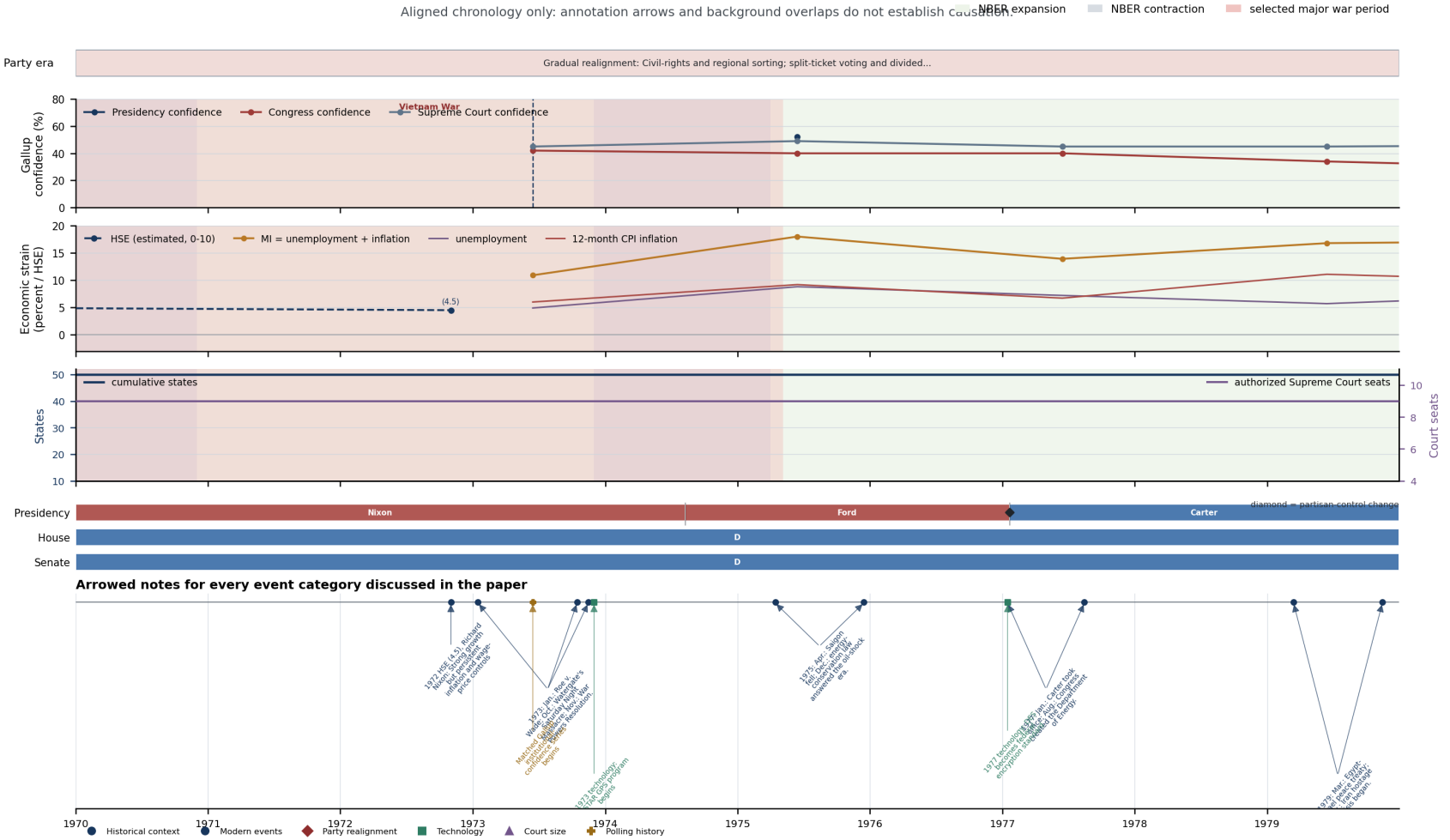
Master U.S. public-opinion and national-change timeline, 1970-1979 (7 of 12)

Aligned chronology only: annotation arrows and background overlaps do not establish causation.



Background cycles use NBER chronology where available (beginning in 1854); pale red marks selected wars. HSE is parenthesized and is not merged with measured MI.

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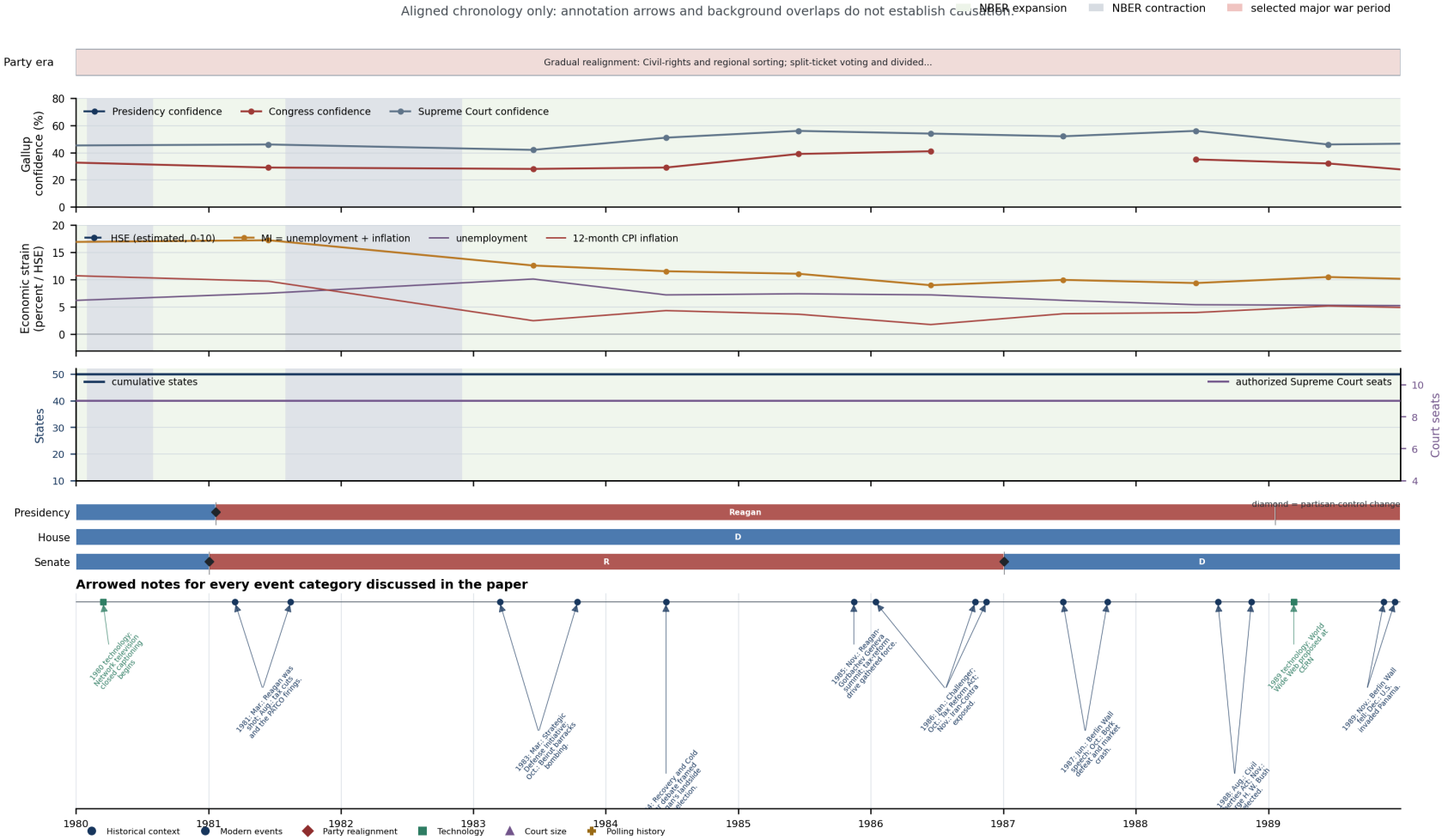
Master U.S. public-opinion and national-change timeline, 1980-1989 (8 of 12)

Aligned chronology only: annotation arrows and background overlaps do not establish causation.



Background cycles use NBER chronology where available (beginning in 1854); pale red marks selected wars. HSE is parenthesized and is not merged with measured MI.

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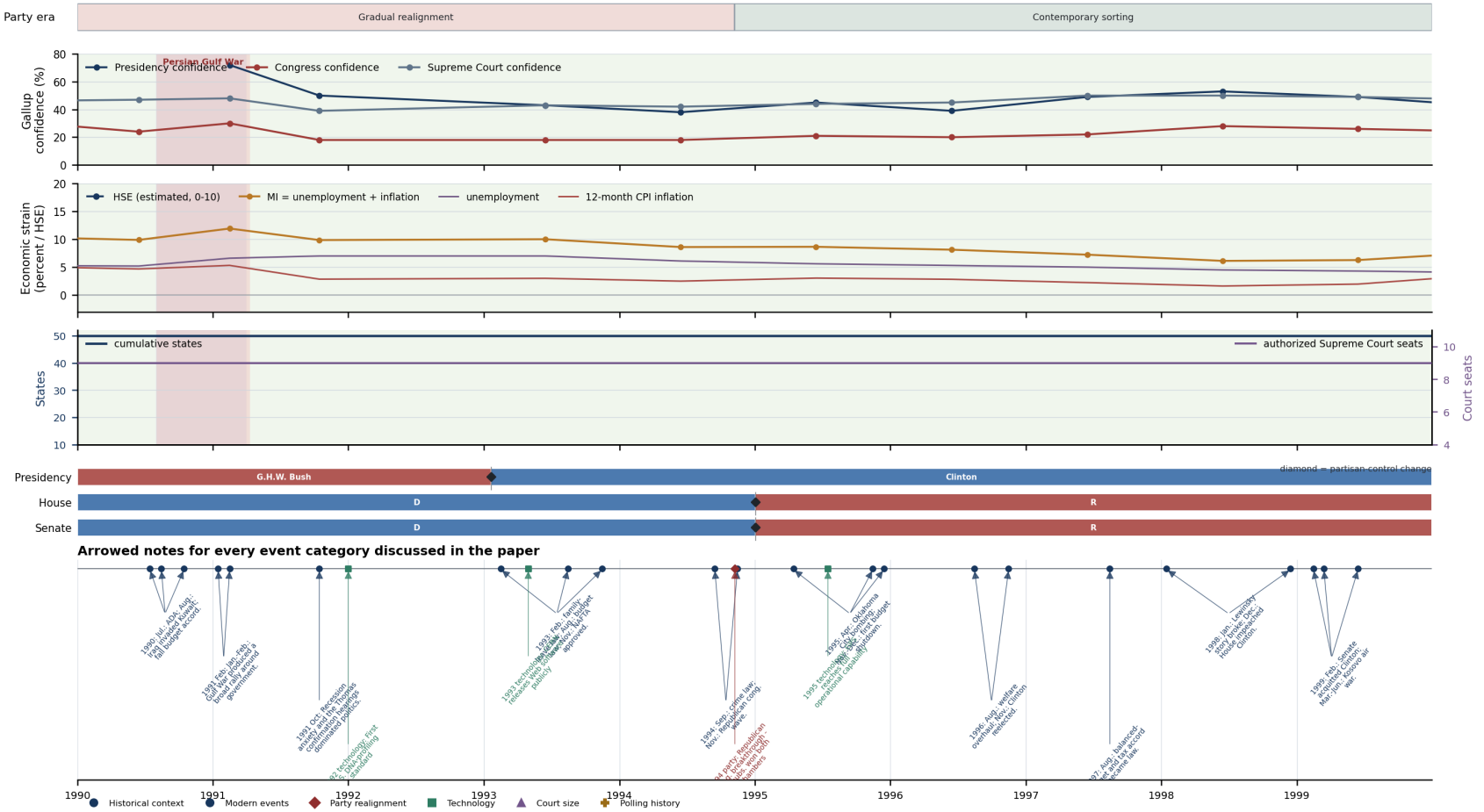
Master U.S. public-opinion and national-change timeline, 1990-1999 (9 of 12)

Aligned chronology only: annotation arrows and background overlaps do not establish causation.

NBER expansion · NBER contraction · selected major war period



Background cycles use NBER chronology where available (beginning in 1854); pale red marks selected wars. HSE is parenthesized and is not merged with measured MI.

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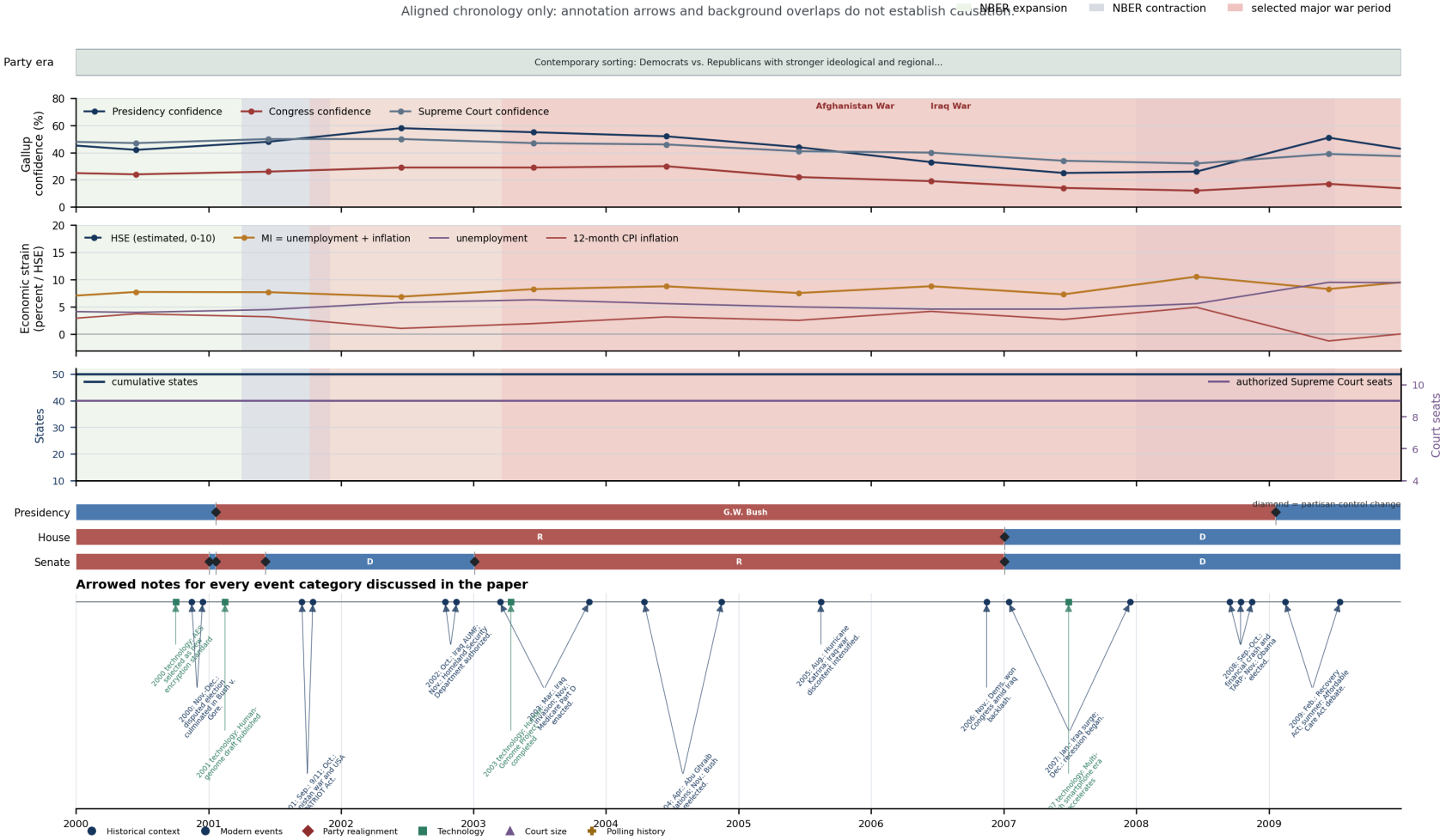
Master U.S. public-opinion and national-change timeline, 2000-2009 (10 of 12)

Aligned chronology only: annotation arrows and background overlaps do not establish causation.



Background cycles use NBER chronology where available (beginning in 1854); pale red marks selected wars. HSE is parenthesized and is not merged with measured MI.

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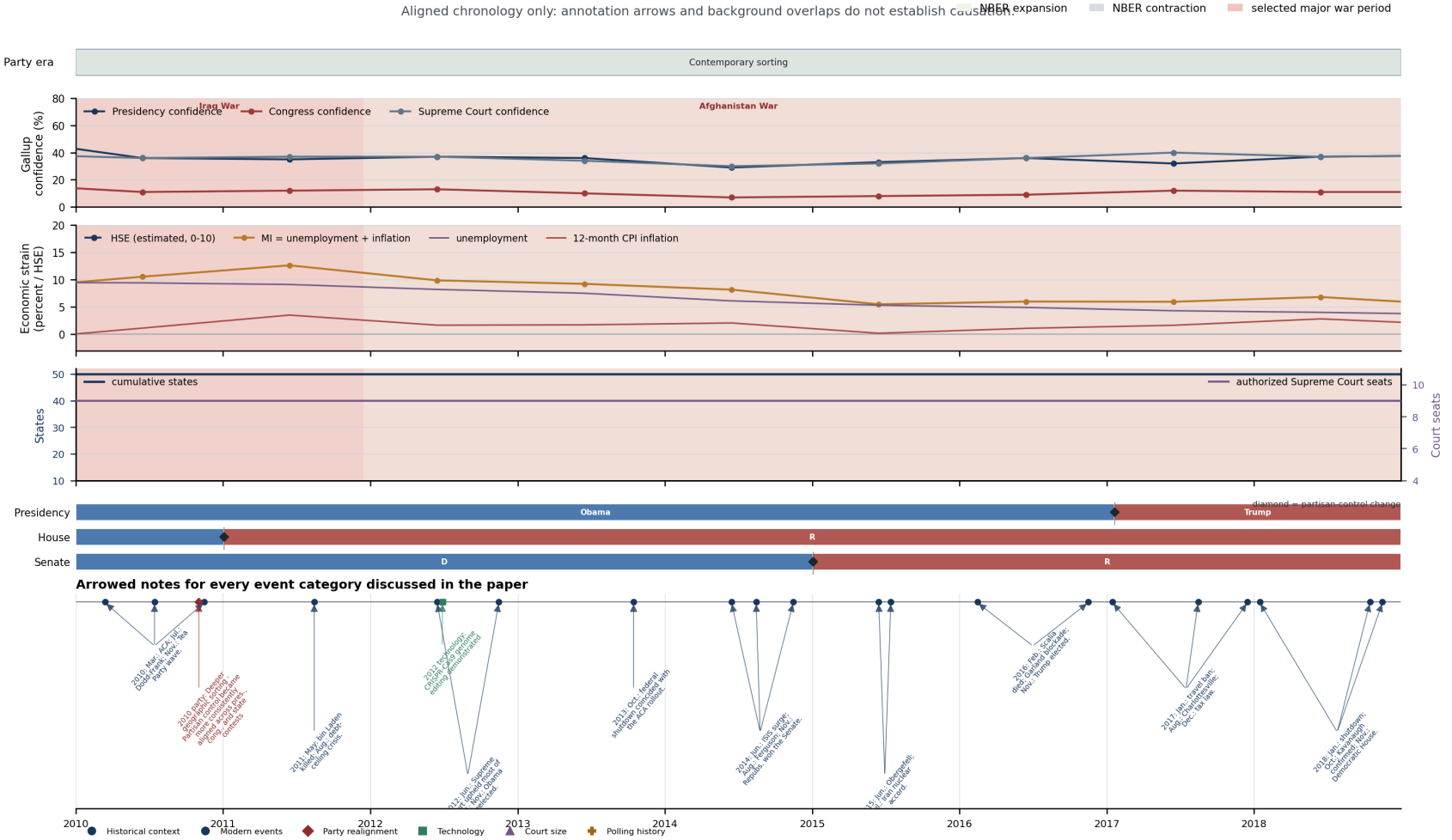
Master U.S. public-opinion and national-change timeline, 2010-2018 (11 of 12)

Aligned chronology only: annotation arrows and background overlaps do not establish causation.



Background cycles use NBER chronology where available (beginning in 1854); pale red marks selected wars. HSE is parenthesized and is not merged with measured MI.

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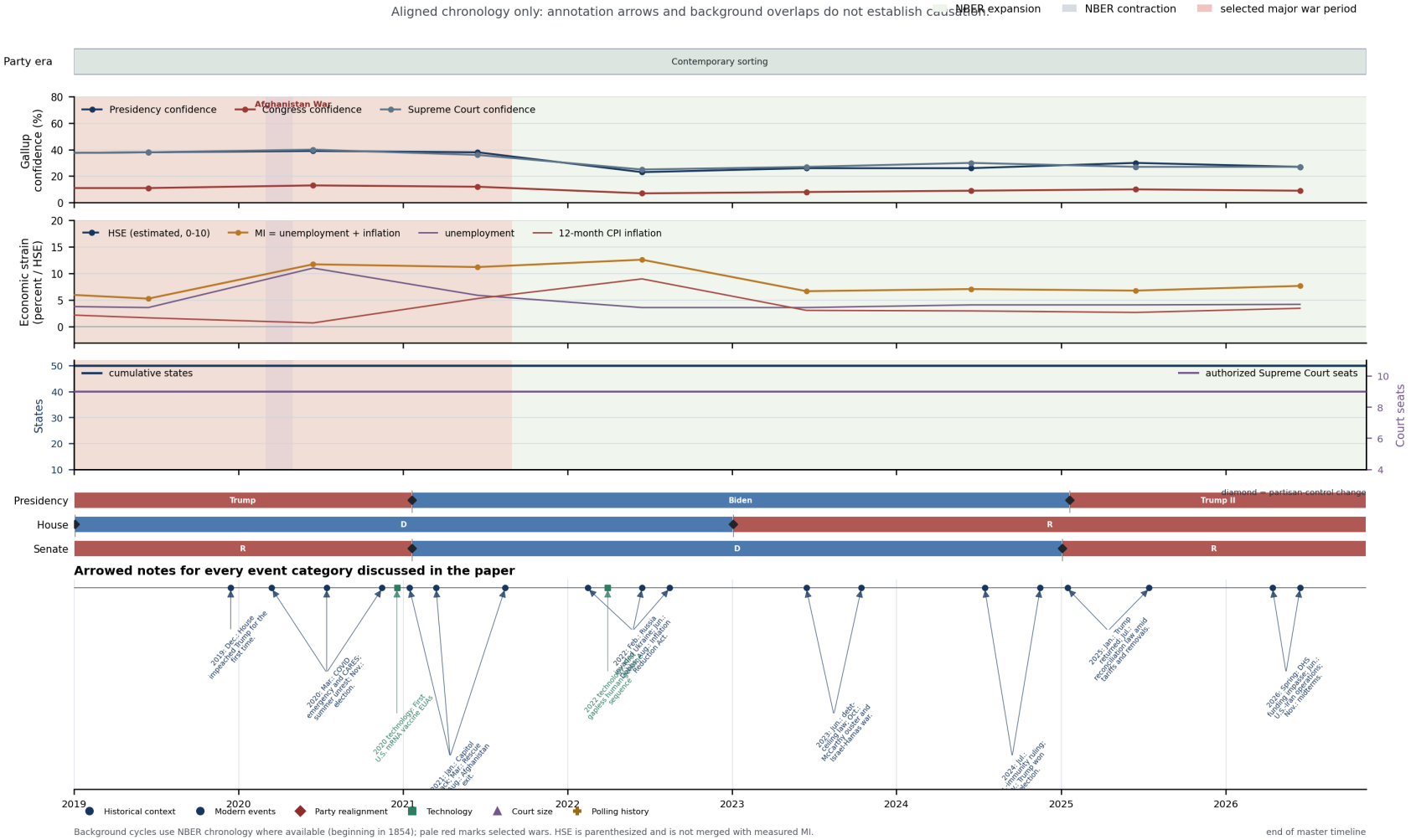
Master U.S. public-opinion and national-change timeline, 2019-2026 (12 of 12)

Aligned chronology only: annotation arrows and background overlaps do not establish causation.



Background cycles use NBER chronology where available (beginning in 1854); pale red marks selected wars. HSE is parenthesized and is not merged with measured MI.

end of master timeline

Raw data tables

A dash means unavailable in the matched source. Parentheses identify reconstructed estimates rather than measured MI. U = unemployment rate; Inf. = 12-month CPI inflation; Rec. = NBER recession indicator at the anchor month.

Measured institutional confidence and economic data, 1973-2026

Poll	P	C	S	U	Inf.	MI	Rec.	War period
1973	–	42	45	4.9	6.0	10.9	No	Vietnam War
1975	52	40	49	8.8	9.2	18.0	No	—
1977	–	40	45	7.2	6.7	13.9	No	—
1979	–	34	45	5.7	11.1	16.8	No	—
1981	–	29	46	7.5	9.7	17.2	No	—
1983	–	28	42	10.1	2.5	12.6	No	—
1984	–	29	51	7.2	4.3	11.5	No	—
1985	–	39	56	7.4	3.7	11.1	No	—
1986	–	41	54	7.2	1.8	9.0	No	—
1987	–	–	52	6.2	3.7	9.9	No	—
1988	–	35	56	5.4	4.0	9.4	No	—
1989	–	32	46	5.3	5.2	10.5	No	—
1990	–	24	47	5.2	4.7	9.9	No	—
1991 Feb	72	30	48	6.6	5.3	11.9	Yes	Persian Gulf War
1991 Oct	50	18	39	7.0	2.8	9.8	No	—
1993	43	18	43	7.0	3.0	10.0	No	—
1994	38	18	42	6.1	2.5	8.6	No	—
1995	45	21	44	5.6	3.0	8.6	No	—
1996	39	20	45	5.3	2.8	8.1	No	—
1997	49	22	50	5.0	2.2	7.2	No	—
1998	53	28	50	4.5	1.6	6.1	No	—
1999	49	26	49	4.3	2.0	6.3	No	—
2000	42	24	47	4.0	3.7	7.7	No	—
2001	48	26	50	4.5	3.2	7.7	Yes	—
2002	58	29	50	5.8	1.1	6.9	No	Afghanistan War
2003	55	29	47	6.3	1.9	8.2	No	Afghanistan War; Iraq War
2004	52	30	46	5.6	3.2	8.8	No	Afghanistan War; Iraq War
2005	44	22	41	5.0	2.5	7.5	No	Afghanistan War; Iraq War
2006	33	19	40	4.6	4.2	8.8	No	Afghanistan War; Iraq War
2007	25	14	34	4.6	2.7	7.3	No	Afghanistan War; Iraq War
2008	26	12	32	5.6	4.9	10.5	Yes	Afghanistan War; Iraq War
2009	51	17	39	9.5	-1.2	8.3	Yes	Afghanistan War; Iraq War
2010	36	11	36	9.4	1.1	10.5	No	Afghanistan War; Iraq War
2011	35	12	37	9.1	3.5	12.6	No	Afghanistan War; Iraq War
2012	37	13	37	8.2	1.7	9.9	No	Afghanistan War
2013	36	10	34	7.5	1.7	9.2	No	Afghanistan War
2014	29	7	30	6.1	2.1	8.2	No	Afghanistan War
2015	33	8	32	5.3	0.2	5.5	No	Afghanistan War
2016	36	9	36	4.9	1.1	6.0	No	Afghanistan War
2017	32	12	40	4.3	1.6	5.9	No	Afghanistan War
2018	37	11	37	4.0	2.8	6.8	No	Afghanistan War
2019	38	11	38	3.6	1.7	5.3	No	Afghanistan War
2020	39	13	40	11.0	0.7	11.7	No	Afghanistan War
2021	38	12	36	5.9	5.3	11.2	No	Afghanistan War
2022	23	7	25	3.6	9.0	12.6	No	—
2023	26	8	27	3.6	3.1	6.7	No	—
2024	26	9	30	4.1	3.0	7.1	No	—
2025	30	10	27	4.1	2.7	6.8	No	—
2026	27	9	27	4.2	3.5	7.7	No	—

Historical Economic Strain reconstruction, election years 1789-1972

Year	President elected	HSE	Conf.	Evidence summary
1789	George Washington	(3.0)	Low	Post-Revolution debt and fiscal stabilization; commercial recovery
1792	George Washington	(4.0)	Low	Brief Panic of 1792 amid credit and securities speculation
1796	John Adams	(3.0)	Low	Trade growth with Atlantic-war and shipping volatility
1800	Thomas Jefferson	(4.0)	Low	Quasi-War costs and external-trade uncertainty
1804	Thomas Jefferson	(2.5)	Low	Commercial expansion and western land growth
1808	James Madison	(7.0)	Low	Embargo sharply reduced overseas trade and port activity
1812	James Madison	(6.5)	Low	War finance, trade interruption, and commodity-price pressure
1816	James Monroe	(5.5)	Low	Postwar inflation and demobilization adjustment
1820	James Monroe	(8.5)	Low	Panic of 1819, bank failures, deflation, and prolonged distress
1824	John Quincy Adams	(4.0)	Low	Recovery with persistent regional credit and farm distress
1828	Andrew Jackson	(3.0)	Low	Expansion in transport, land, and commerce
1832	Andrew Jackson	(3.0)	Low	Expansion, with financial uncertainty from the Bank War
1836	Martin Van Buren	(4.5)	Low	Speculative credit boom and land-price instability before the panic
1840	William Henry Harrison	(9.0)	Low	Depression and bank failures after the Panic of 1837
1844	James K. Polk	(3.0)	Low	Broad recovery and comparatively low volatility

Year	President elected	HSE	Conf.	Evidence summary
1848	Zachary Taylor	(5.0)	Low	Short contraction and Mexican War demobilization adjustment
1852	Franklin Pierce	(2.5)	Low	Railroad, migration, and commercial expansion
1856	James Buchanan	(3.0)	Low	Late expansion before the Panic of 1857
1860	Abraham Lincoln	(5.5)	Moderate	Recession and acute secession-related financial uncertainty
1864	Abraham Lincoln	(8.0)	Moderate	Civil War inflation, shortages, casualties, and regional destruction
1868	Ulysses S. Grant	(6.0)	Moderate	Postwar contraction, deflation, and Reconstruction disruption
1872	Ulysses S. Grant	(3.5)	Moderate	Railroad and credit boom immediately before the Panic of 1873
1876	Rutherford B. Hayes	(9.0)	Moderate	Long 1873-1879 contraction, bankruptcies, and unemployment
1880	James A. Garfield	(3.5)	Moderate	Recovery and renewed industrial expansion
1884	Grover Cleveland	(7.0)	Moderate	1882-1885 contraction and financial stress
1888	Benjamin Harrison	(3.0)	Moderate	Industrial expansion and relatively mild price pressure
1892	Grover Cleveland	(5.0)	Moderate	Recent contraction, farm distress, and mounting financial fragility
1896	William McKinley	(9.0)	Moderate	Depression after the Panic of 1893 and severe labor distress
1900	William McKinley	(3.5)	Moderate	Recovery, gold-standard confidence, and industrial expansion
1904	Theodore Roosevelt	(5.0)	Moderate	1902-1904 recession amid longer-run growth
1908	William Howard Taft	(8.0)	Moderate	Panic of 1907 and sharp 1907-1908 recession
1912	Woodrow Wilson	(6.0)	Moderate	1910-1912 contraction and uneven industrial conditions
1916	Woodrow Wilson	(4.5)	Moderate	Wartime export boom accompanied by accelerating prices
1920	Warren G. Harding	(9.0)	High	High inflation followed by the severe 1920-1921 recession
1924	Calvin Coolidge	(4.0)	High	Strong recovery after a brief 1923-1924 contraction
1928	Herbert Hoover	(3.0)	High	Low unemployment and boom conditions with financial fragility
1932	Franklin D. Roosevelt	(10.0)	High	Great Depression: mass unemployment, bank failures, deflation
1936	Franklin D. Roosevelt	(7.5)	High	Substantial recovery, but unemployment remained extremely high
1940	Franklin D. Roosevelt	(6.0)	High	Unemployment still elevated as defense mobilization accelerated
1944	Franklin D. Roosevelt	(5.0)	High	Full employment offset by wartime rationing, controls, and shortages
1948	Harry S. Truman	(7.0)	High	Postwar inflation, labor conflict, and a recession beginning late in year
1952	Dwight D. Eisenhower	(4.5)	High	Korean mobilization; low unemployment with residual price pressure
1956	Dwight D. Eisenhower	(3.0)	High	Expansion, low inflation, and low unemployment
1960	John F. Kennedy	(6.0)	High	1960-1961 recession and rising unemployment
1964	Lyndon B. Johnson	(2.5)	High	Strong expansion, falling unemployment, and subdued inflation
1968	Richard Nixon	(5.0)	High	Vietnam-era inflation despite low unemployment and strong output
1972	Richard Nixon	(4.5)	High	Strong growth but persistent inflation and wage-price controls

Presidency control spans used in the master timeline

President	Term displayed	Contemporaneous party label	Party-family change
Washington	Apr. 30, 1789 - Mar. 4, 1797	No formal party (Federalist-aligned administration)	Initial
Adams	Mar. 4, 1797 - Mar. 4, 1801	Federalist	No
Jefferson	Mar. 4, 1801 - Mar. 4, 1809	Democratic-Republican	Yes
Madison	Mar. 4, 1809 - Mar. 4, 1817	Democratic-Republican	No
Monroe	Mar. 4, 1817 - Mar. 4, 1825	Democratic-Republican	No
J.Q. Adams	Mar. 4, 1825 - Mar. 4, 1829	Democratic-Republican / National Republican	No
Jackson	Mar. 4, 1829 - Mar. 4, 1837	Democratic	Yes
Buren	Mar. 4, 1837 - Mar. 4, 1841	Democratic	No
W.H. Harrison	Mar. 4, 1841 - Apr. 4, 1841	Whig	Yes
Tyler	Apr. 4, 1841 - Mar. 4, 1845	Whig, then unaffiliated	No
Polk	Mar. 4, 1845 - Mar. 4, 1849	Democratic	Yes
Taylor	Mar. 4, 1849 - Jul. 9, 1850	Whig	Yes
Fillmore	Jul. 9, 1850 - Mar. 4, 1853	Whig	No
Pierce	Mar. 4, 1853 - Mar. 4, 1857	Democratic	Yes
Buchanan	Mar. 4, 1857 - Mar. 4, 1861	Democratic	No
Lincoln	Mar. 4, 1861 - Apr. 15, 1865	Republican / National Union	Yes
Johnson	Apr. 15, 1865 - Mar. 4, 1869	National Union / Democratic	Yes
Grant	Mar. 4, 1869 - Mar. 4, 1877	Republican	Yes
Hayes	Mar. 4, 1877 - Mar. 4, 1881	Republican	No
Garfield	Mar. 4, 1881 - Sep. 19, 1881	Republican	No
Arthur	Sep. 19, 1881 - Mar. 4, 1885	Republican	No
Cleveland	Mar. 4, 1885 - Mar. 4, 1889	Democratic	Yes
Harrison	Mar. 4, 1889 - Mar. 4, 1893	Republican	Yes
Cleveland	Mar. 4, 1893 - Mar. 4, 1897	Democratic	Yes
McKinley	Mar. 4, 1897 - Sep. 14, 1901	Republican	Yes
T. Roosevelt	Sep. 14, 1901 - Mar. 4, 1909	Republican	No
Taft	Mar. 4, 1909 - Mar. 4, 1913	Republican	No
Wilson	Mar. 4, 1913 - Mar. 4, 1921	Democratic	Yes
Harding	Mar. 4, 1921 - Aug. 2, 1923	Republican	Yes
Coolidge	Aug. 2, 1923 - Mar. 4, 1929	Republican	No
Hoover	Mar. 4, 1929 - Mar. 4, 1933	Republican	No
F.D. Roosevelt	Mar. 4, 1933 - Apr. 12, 1945	Democratic	Yes
Truman	Apr. 12, 1945 - Jan. 20, 1953	Democratic	No
Eisenhower	Jan. 20, 1953 - Jan. 20, 1961	Republican	Yes
Kennedy	Jan. 20, 1961 - Nov. 22, 1963	Democratic	Yes
Johnson	Nov. 22, 1963 - Jan. 20, 1969	Democratic	No
Nixon	Jan. 20, 1969 - Aug. 9, 1974	Republican	Yes
Ford	Aug. 9, 1974 - Jan. 20, 1977	Republican	No
Carter	Jan. 20, 1977 - Jan. 20, 1981	Democratic	Yes
Reagan	Jan. 20, 1981 - Jan. 20, 1989	Republican	Yes
G.H.W. Bush	Jan. 20, 1989 - Jan. 20, 1993	Republican	No
Clinton	Jan. 20, 1993 - Jan. 20, 2001	Democratic	Yes
G.W. Bush	Jan. 20, 2001 - Jan. 20, 2009	Republican	Yes

President	Term displayed	Contemporaneous party label	Party-family change
Obama	Jan. 20, 2009 - Jan. 20, 2017	Democratic	Yes
Trump	Jan. 20, 2017 - Jan. 20, 2021	Republican	Yes
Biden	Jan. 20, 2021 - Jan. 20, 2025	Democratic	Yes
Trump II	Jan. 20, 2025 - Nov. 9, 2026	Republican	Yes

NBER monthly contraction spans used for background shading

Pale-green expansion backgrounds are the intervals between these USREC contraction spans. The end column is the first following month coded as expansion.

Contraction starts	Following expansion starts	Contraction starts	Following expansion starts
Dec. 1854	Jan. 1855	Jun. 1923	Aug. 1924
Jul. 1857	Jan. 1859	Nov. 1926	Dec. 1927
Nov. 1860	Jul. 1861	Sep. 1929	Apr. 1933
May. 1865	Jan. 1868	Jun. 1937	Jul. 1938
Jul. 1869	Jan. 1871	Mar. 1945	Nov. 1945
Nov. 1873	Apr. 1879	Dec. 1948	Nov. 1949
Apr. 1882	Jun. 1885	Aug. 1953	Jun. 1954
Apr. 1887	May. 1888	Sep. 1957	May. 1958
Aug. 1890	Jun. 1891	May. 1960	Mar. 1961
Feb. 1893	Jul. 1894	Jan. 1970	Dec. 1970
Jan. 1896	Jul. 1897	Dec. 1973	Apr. 1975
Jul. 1899	Jan. 1901	Feb. 1980	Aug. 1980
Oct. 1902	Sep. 1904	Aug. 1981	Dec. 1982
Jun. 1907	Jul. 1908	Aug. 1990	Apr. 1991
Feb. 1910	Feb. 1912	Apr. 2001	Dec. 2001
Feb. 1913	Jan. 1915	Jan. 2008	Jul. 2009
Sep. 1918	Apr. 1919	Mar. 2020	May. 2020
Feb. 1920	Aug. 1921		

Congressional-control and Supreme Court size changes

Effective	Institution	New status	Tangible change
Mar. 4, 1789	House	Pro-Administration	First House organized
Mar. 4, 1789	Senate	Pro-Administration	First Senate organized
Sep. 24, 1789	Supreme Court	6 authorized seats	Judiciary Act created one chief justice and five associates
Mar. 4, 1793	House	Anti-Administration	Opposition gained House plurality
Mar. 4, 1795	Senate	Federalist	Federalist party organization
Mar. 4, 1797	House	Federalist	Federalists gained the House
Feb. 13, 1801	Supreme Court	5 authorized seats	Target reduced to five upon next vacancy; no vacancy occurred before repeal
Mar. 4, 1801	House	Democratic-Republican	Jeffersonian majority
Dec. 7, 1801	Senate	Democratic-Republican	Jeffersonians gained working majority
Mar. 8, 1802	Supreme Court	6 authorized seats	Repeal restored six authorized seats
Feb. 24, 1807	Supreme Court	7 authorized seats	Seventh circuit and one additional justice authorized
Mar. 4, 1823	Senate	Jackson/Crawford coalition	Old party system fragmented
Mar. 4, 1825	House	Adams coalition	Adams supporters gained the House
Mar. 4, 1825	Senate	Jacksonian	Jacksonians held majority
Mar. 4, 1827	House	Jacksonian	Jacksonians gained the House
Mar. 4, 1833	Senate	Anti-Jacksonian	Anti-Jacksonians gained the Senate
Mar. 3, 1837	Supreme Court	9 authorized seats	Two circuits and two additional justices authorized
Mar. 4, 1837	Senate	Democratic	Democrats gained the Senate
Mar. 4, 1841	House	Whig	Whigs gained the House
Mar. 4, 1841	Senate	Whig	Whigs gained the Senate
Mar. 4, 1843	House	Democratic	Democrats regained the House
Mar. 4, 1845	Senate	Democratic	Democrats regained the Senate
Mar. 4, 1847	House	Whig	Whigs regained the House
Mar. 4, 1849	House	Democratic	Democrats organized the House
Mar. 4, 1855	House	Opposition coalition	Anti-Democratic coalition organized
Mar. 4, 1857	House	Democratic	Democrats regained the House
Mar. 4, 1859	House	Republican	Republicans gained the House
Mar. 4, 1861	Senate	Republican	Republicans gained the Senate
Mar. 3, 1863	Supreme Court	10 authorized seats	Tenth circuit and tenth justice authorized
Jul. 23, 1866	Supreme Court	7 authorized seats	Target reduced by attrition; Court fell only to eight
Apr. 10, 1869	Supreme Court	9 authorized seats	Circuit Judges Act fixed the authorized Court at nine
Mar. 4, 1875	House	Democratic	First post-Civil War Democratic House
Mar. 4, 1879	Senate	Democratic	Democrats gained the Senate
Mar. 4, 1881	House	Republican	Republicans gained the House
Mar. 4, 1881	Senate	Republican	Republicans regained the Senate
Mar. 4, 1883	House	Democratic	Democrats gained the House
Mar. 4, 1889	House	Republican	Republicans gained the House
Mar. 4, 1891	House	Democratic	Democrats gained the House
Mar. 4, 1893	Senate	Democratic	Democrats gained the Senate
Mar. 4, 1895	House	Republican	Republicans gained the House
Mar. 4, 1895	Senate	Republican	Republicans regained the Senate
Mar. 4, 1911	House	Democratic	Democrats gained the House
Mar. 4, 1913	Senate	Democratic	Democrats gained the Senate
Mar. 4, 1919	House	Republican	Republicans gained the House

Effective	Institution	New status	Tangible change
Mar. 4, 1919	Senate	Republican	Republicans gained the Senate
Mar. 4, 1931	House	Democratic	Special-election changes let Democrats organize
Mar. 4, 1933	Senate	Democratic	Democrats gained the Senate
Jan. 3, 1947	House	Republican	Republicans gained the House
Jan. 3, 1947	Senate	Republican	Republicans gained the Senate
Jan. 3, 1949	House	Democratic	Democrats regained the House
Jan. 3, 1949	Senate	Democratic	Democrats regained the Senate
Jan. 3, 1953	House	Republican	Republicans gained the House
Jan. 3, 1953	Senate	Republican	Republicans gained the Senate
Jan. 3, 1955	House	Democratic	Democrats regained the House
Jan. 3, 1955	Senate	Democratic	Democrats organized with independents
Jan. 3, 1981	Senate	Republican	Republicans gained the Senate
Jan. 3, 1987	Senate	Democratic	Democrats gained the Senate
Jan. 3, 1995	House	Republican	Republicans gained the House
Jan. 3, 1995	Senate	Republican	Republicans gained the Senate
Jan. 3, 2001	Senate	Democratic	50-50 chamber; Vice President Gore broke tie
Jan. 20, 2001	Senate	Republican	Vice President Cheney changed tie control
Jun. 6, 2001	Senate	Democratic	Jim Jeffords became independent and caucused Democratic
Jan. 3, 2003	Senate	Republican	Republicans gained the Senate
Jan. 3, 2007	House	Democratic	Democrats gained the House
Jan. 3, 2007	Senate	Democratic	Democrats organized with independents
Jan. 3, 2011	House	Republican	Republicans gained the House
Jan. 3, 2015	Senate	Republican	Republicans gained the Senate
Jan. 3, 2019	House	Democratic	Democrats gained the House
Jan. 20, 2021	Senate	Democratic	50-50 chamber; Vice President Harris broke tie
Jan. 3, 2023	House	Republican	Republicans gained the House
Jan. 3, 2025	Senate	Republican	Republicans gained the Senate

Selected major war periods and technology milestones

Dataset	Date(s)	Item
War	Jun. 18, 1812—Feb. 17, 1815	War of 1812
War	May. 13, 1846—Feb. 2, 1848	Mexican-American War
War	Apr. 12, 1861—May. 13, 1865	Civil War
War	Apr. 21, 1898—Aug. 13, 1898	Spanish-American War
War	Apr. 6, 1917—Nov. 11, 1918	World War I (U.S.)
War	Dec. 8, 1941—Sep. 2, 1945	World War II (U.S.)
War	Jun. 25, 1950—Jul. 27, 1953	Korean War
War	Aug. 7, 1964—May. 7, 1975	Vietnam War
War	Aug. 2, 1990—Apr. 11, 1991	Persian Gulf War
War	Oct. 7, 2001—Aug. 30, 2021	Afghanistan War
War	Mar. 19, 2003—Dec. 15, 2011	Iraq War
Technology	Dec. 1, 1973	NAVSTAR GPS program begins
Technology	Jan. 15, 1977	DES becomes federal encryption standard
Technology	Mar. 16, 1980	Network television closed captioning begins
Technology	Mar. 12, 1989	World Wide Web proposed at CERN
Technology	Jan. 1, 1992	First U.S. DNA-profiling standard
Technology	Apr. 30, 1993	CERN releases Web software publicly
Technology	Jul. 17, 1995	GPS reaches full operational capability
Technology	Oct. 2, 2000	AES selected as new encryption standard
Technology	Feb. 15, 2001	Human-genome draft published
Technology	Apr. 14, 2003	Human Genome Project completed
Technology	Jun. 29, 2007	Multi-touch smartphone era accelerates
Technology	Jun. 28, 2012	CRISPR-Cas9 genome editing demonstrated
Technology	Dec. 18, 2020	First U.S. mRNA vaccine EUAs
Technology	Mar. 31, 2022	First gapless human-genome sequence
Polling history	Jan. 1, 1850	c. 1850s: newspaper straw polls spread
Polling history	Jan. 1, 1935	Gallup and Roper modern sample polling begins
Polling history	Nov. 3, 1936	Literary Digest failure exposes volunteer-sample bias
Polling history	Jan. 1, 1945	Continuous Gallup presidential-approval record begins
Polling history	Jun. 15, 1973	Matched Gallup institutional-confidence series begins

Political-party eras and realignment milestones

Date/era	Label	Parties or tangible change
1789-1795	Faction formation	Pro-/Anti-Administration; Federalist and Jeffersonian organizations emerging
1795-1824	First party era	Federalists vs. Democratic-Republicans
1824-1828	Fragmentation	Adams, Jackson, Crawford, and Clay factions from the old Democratic-Republicans
1828-1854	Second party era	Democrats vs. National Republicans, then Whigs; Anti-Masonic and Liberty/Free Soil parties
1854-1860	Sectional transition	Democrats, new Republicans, American/Know Nothing, and Constitutional Union forces
1860-1896	Civil War/industrial era	Republicans vs. Democrats; Greenback, Populist, and other movements
1896-1932	Industrial-progressive era	Republicans and Democrats; Progressive, Socialist, and Farmer-Labor challenges
1932-1968	New Deal coalition era	Democratic New Deal coalition vs. Republicans; strong regional factions in both
1968-1994	Gradual realignment	Civil-rights and regional sorting; split-ticket voting and divided government common
1994-2026	Contemporary sorting	Democrats vs. Republicans with stronger ideological and regional alignment
1791	Parties form	Hamiltonian Federalists and Jeffersonian Democratic-Republicans coalesced around federal power, finance, and foreign policy.

Date/era	Label	Parties or tangible change
1800	Election of 1800	Democratic-Republicans displaced Federalists nationally; Federalists then declined.
1828	Jacksonian reorganization	The Democratic Party formed around Jackson; opponents consolidated first as National Republicans and then Whigs.
1854	Whig collapse / Republican rise	Slavery expansion fractured old coalitions; the new Republican Party combined anti-slavery Whigs, Free Soilers, and others.
1860	Civil War alignment	Republicans became the principal northern party; Democrats retained a powerful national and southern base.
1896	Industrial realignment	McKinley's victory strengthened a Republican-leaning national order while Democrats absorbed Populist themes.
1932	New Deal realignment	The Depression built a broad Democratic coalition; Black voters began a long shift toward Democrats.
1948	Civil-rights fracture	Truman-era civil-rights commitments prompted a States' Rights Democratic bolt, revealing the Democratic coalition's sectional split.
1964	Civil Rights Act era	A bipartisan civil-rights coalition prevailed over a southern Democratic bloc; Republican conservative and Democratic liberal wings gained definition.
1965	Voting Rights Act	Enfranchisement transformed southern politics; Black voters consolidated within the Democratic coalition over time.
1968	Long regional sorting	Southern white presidential voting moved increasingly Republican, while party change in Congress and state offices unfolded over decades.
1994	Republican congressional breakthrough	Republicans won both chambers; the House shift reflected, in part, replacement of southern White Democrats by Republicans.
2010	Deeper geographic sorting	Partisan control became more consistently aligned across presidential, congressional, and state contests.

State-admission data

1. Delaware — Dec. 7, 1787
2. Pennsylvania — Dec. 12, 1787
3. New Jersey — Dec. 18, 1787
4. Georgia — Jan. 2, 1788
5. Connecticut — Jan. 9, 1788
6. Massachusetts — Feb. 6, 1788
7. Maryland — Apr. 28, 1788
8. South Carolina — May. 23, 1788
9. New Hampshire — Jun. 21, 1788
10. Virginia — Jun. 25, 1788
11. New York — Jul. 26, 1788
12. North Carolina — Nov. 21, 1789
13. Rhode Island — May. 29, 1790
14. Vermont — Mar. 4, 1791
15. Kentucky — Jun. 1, 1792
16. Tennessee — Jun. 1, 1796
17. Ohio — Mar. 1, 1803
18. Louisiana — Apr. 30, 1812
19. Indiana — Dec. 11, 1816
20. Mississippi — Dec. 10, 1817
21. Illinois — Dec. 3, 1818
22. Alabama — Dec. 14, 1819
23. Maine — Mar. 15, 1820
24. Missouri — Aug. 10, 1821
25. Arkansas — Jun. 15, 1836
26. Michigan — Jan. 26, 1837
27. Florida — Mar. 3, 1845
28. Texas — Dec. 29, 1845
29. Iowa — Dec. 28, 1846
30. Wisconsin — May. 29, 1848
31. California — Sep. 9, 1850
32. Minnesota — May. 11, 1858
33. Oregon — Feb. 14, 1859
34. Kansas — Jan. 29, 1861
35. West Virginia — Jun. 20, 1863
36. Nevada — Oct. 31, 1864
37. Nebraska — Mar. 1, 1867
38. Colorado — Aug. 1, 1876
39. North Dakota — Nov. 2, 1889
40. South Dakota — Nov. 2, 1889
41. Montana — Nov. 8, 1889
42. Washington — Nov. 11, 1889
43. Idaho — Jul. 3, 1890
44. Wyoming — Jul. 10, 1890
45. Utah — Jan. 4, 1896
46. Oklahoma — Nov. 16, 1907
47. New Mexico — Jan. 6, 1912
48. Arizona — Feb. 14, 1912
49. Alaska — Jan. 3, 1959
50. Hawaii — Aug. 21, 1959

Methodology, limitations, and sources

Measured series

Institutional confidence. P, C, and S reproduce Gallup's percentage reporting a "great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence in the presidency, Congress, and Supreme Court. The series is not job approval. Year-only labels use June as the alignment month; Gallup's February and October 1991 readings retain their named months.

Economic data. Unemployment is BLS series UNRATE. Inflation is the 12-month percentage change in BLS CPIAUCSL. MI equals unemployment plus that inflation rate. NBER recession shading uses FRED series USREC. No interpolation fills missing confidence values.

Historical reconstruction rubric

HSE is a deliberately subjective 0–10 ordinal estimate for presidential-election years before the matched confidence series: 0–2 means unusually low strain; 3–4 modest or mixed strain; 5–6 meaningful downturn, inflation, or disruption; 7–8 severe recession, panic, or wartime pressure; 9–10 depression-scale or national economic emergency. It synthesizes four dimensions: labor/output distress, price instability, financial-system disruption, and war/trade dislocation. Parentheses always distinguish HSE from measured MI.

Confidence is **Low** before the NBER's more systematic nineteenth-century chronologies, **Moderate** where historical production and business-cycle reconstructions strengthen the record, and **High** for the modern statistical era. HSE is useful for comparison of broad conditions, not decimal precision, regression, or causal inference. It is not back-cast unemployment and must never be merged arithmetically with MI.

Institutional, party, and event coding

Congressional markers record a change in the organizing majority, not every special-election fluctuation. Early faction names are retained; coalition and vice-presidential tie cases are explained in the raw table. Supreme Court values are statutory authorized seats; the 1801 reduction never took effect before repeal, and the 1866 target of seven was not reached before the 1869 law fixed nine.

The party timeline rejects a one-date "party switch." It codes successive coalition changes: first-party formation; Jacksonian/Whig reorganization; slavery-driven collapse of the Whigs and rise of Republicans; the Civil War order; 1896 industrial realignment; the New Deal coalition and Black voters' gradual movement toward Democrats; the 1948 and 1964–1965 civil-rights fractures; the long Southern white shift toward Republicans; and late-twentieth-century ideological sorting. Civil-rights legislation itself was passed by cross-party coalitions, while southern Democratic opposition remained powerful; this is one reason a simple label swap is historically inaccurate.

Master timeline. The twelve landscape windows form one synchronized graph; only the horizontal date window changes. Pale green marks months coded by USREC as NBER expansion, gray marks contraction, and pale red independently marks a selected major war. The presidency ribbon is divided by administration; House and Senate ribbons change when the organizing majority changes. Black diamonds identify a change in the broad contemporaneous party family, not an assertion that early factions were equivalent to modern parties. Each event note receives an arrow for every explicit month named in its text; year-only notes use their displayed anchor date. The arrows encode timing and alignment only, never an estimated causal effect.

War periods are selected major wars, not a complete inventory of deployments. Technology milestones are illustrative and cross-sectoral rather than exhaustive. All event overlays are chronological context, not proof of causation.

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