

JAC's 2021 Year-End Report

We turned the page on 2020 and entered 2021 with the hope that President Joe Biden would put our country back on track and repair the damage caused by his predecessor. We were ready for the healing to begin.

JAC began 2021 with back-to-back wins for its candidates Jon Ossoff and Rev. Raphael Warnock in Georgia. They won their special elections in January to give the Democrats the majority in the U.S. Senate, with V.P. Kamala Harris casting the 51st vote.

We again had success in August, when Rep. Shontel Brown (D-OH) won her primary and then went on to win the special election to fill the seat of former Rep. Martha Fudge. Fudge was appointed by President Biden to serve as Secretary of Housing & Urban Development. Brown ran against a candidate whose position on Israel was in opposition to JAC's.

But the fractious campaign season and the hate and discourse encouraged by Trump continued and eventually led to an event that no one will forget — the January 6th attack on the Capitol. Congress is still investigating this event in the hopes of preventing a similar event from happening in the future and seeing those responsible brought to justice.



JAC members delivered support to Rep. Mikie Sherrill (D-NJ)

This year continued to be challenging for JAC as we tried to emerge from the pandemic. We hosted our first in-person outdoor event in Glencoe, IL with Rep. Lucy McBath (D-GA). It was great to see many JAC friends at a safe distance. JAC members also delivered support at other outdoor events, including Rep. Josh Gottheimer (D-NJ).

We held more than 35 Zoom meetings throughout the year featuring leading members of Congress and policy experts to help JAC members gain a better understanding of the issues impacting our country. Zoom has enabled more JAC members across the country to participate in our exciting programs and meetings.

Our Power of Women fundraising event was held in memory of JAC-founder Linda Rae Sher. Our guest speaker, Tiffany Haddish, gave us some much-needed laughter and inspiration. Funds from that event will help our candidates, many of whom are facing difficult races due to redistricting.



JAC's NextGen Leaders with Rep. Lucy McBath (D-GA)

JAC launched its NextGen group. These young women will be JAC's leaders of tomorrow. Through their efforts we have organized an Advocacy and Fundraising Committee and a Research Committee. *If you or someone you know are interested in participating, email info@JACPAC.org.*



Tiffany Haddish headlined our Power of Women virtual event

Our candidates began preparing for what promises to be a very challenging midterm election. Many will not know what their district will look like for months to come because their state's Congressional maps have yet to be finalized, and some states face litigation over their maps.

The 2022 election is shaping up to be another critical election for the future of our nation. We need your support so we can keep and expand our majority in the House. If Rep. Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) becomes Speaker of the House, we will lose all the gains we have made. We can't afford to go back.

Thank you for all of your support this year. Stay involved with JAC and encourage your friends and family to join you. We can't do this without you. There is so much at stake.

Happy New Year.



U.S.-Israel Relationship

After four elections in two years, Israel finally has a new government with PM Naftali Bennett ending Benjamin Netanyahu's 15-year reign. The Bennett government has already distanced itself from Netanyahu by legalizing undocumented Palestinian spouses of Israelis, participating in talks on Iran with the U.S., and joining the African Union with an observer status.

For 11 days in May, Israel exercised its right to self defense after thousands of missiles were fired from Gaza. The Iron Dome was credited with saving Israeli lives. With Hamas' encouragement, Arab Israelis throughout Israel carried out what have been described as "pogroms" against Israeli Jews and their property.

U.S. Ambassador to Israel Tom Nides arrived earlier this month. His roots and connection to the state run deep. [Click here to view his first video from Jerusalem.](#)

The United Nations continued its biased approach to Israel despite Israel's growing ties in the Arab world. The General Assembly adopted six resolutions that singled out or condemned Israel, and approved a resolution disavowing Jewish ties to the Temple Mount.

One year after the Abraham Accords, the Arab World increasingly seeks to align itself with Israel and build partnerships to counter Iran's influence. Bennett and his ministers held historic meetings with Jordanian, Emirati, Egyptian, Bahraini, and Lebanese officials to improve economic, security, and cultural ties. Even the Palestinian Authority has held meetings with Israeli officials for the first time in years.

Antisemitism & BDS

As the pandemic went into its second year, antisemitism continued to spike. Right-wing protesters spread hateful ideologies opposing lock-downs, mask mandates, and vaccine "passports."

Politicians at all levels encouraged false comparisons of COVID protocols to the Holocaust. Sen. Ted Cruz (R-TX) condoned a Nazi salute at a school board meeting. Meanwhile, many on the left blamed American Jews for the Israeli government's actions in May against Hamas in Gaza.

Our students also faced increased anti-Israel sentiment and antisemitism on campuses, according to the ADL.

JAC members and friends made sure this issue was prominent in Congress. JAC's Advocacy Committee called Congress and led a social media campaign to combat Republican smears against respected Holocaust historian and Biden appointee for the U.S. Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism, Deborah Lipstadt. The Senate has still not confirmed her.



Deborah Lipstadt speaking with JAC members

Internationally, the Biden administration joined with the German government to promote and improve Holocaust education. Sen. Jacky Rosen (D-NV) relaunched the International Council of Jewish Parliamentarians to unite legislators and government officials across the globe to combat antisemitism.



JAC members advocating for reproductive rights at the 2021 Women's March

Reproductive Rights

It was a bleak year for abortion rights, despite President Biden's swift action to protect reproductive choices. Within his first 100 days, he rolled back several harmful policies and regulations. Most notably, Biden rescinded the domestic gag-rule which targeted Title X family planning with regulations limiting access to reproductive health care services.



Kathryn Kolbert, who argued 'Casey' before the Supreme Court, spoke to JAC about reproductive rights.

This did not stop the advancing assault on abortion which had little opposition from the conservative courts. Texas led the way with a new law that allows individuals to sue anyone who "aids or abets" an abortion. The DOJ has sued, and SCOTUS allowed the law to stay but permitted abortion providers to counter with their own lawsuits.

More than 20 states have "trigger laws," which will immediately ban or severely restrict abortion if Roe is overturned. Hundreds of new abortion limitations were enacted across the country, the most ever. Next year the Court will rule on a Mississippi abortion case which could mean the end of legalized abortion in this country.

Democratic lawmakers took significant strides, attempting to codify the right of anyone to have access to an abortion. The House passed the Women's Health Protection Act and convinced the FDA to lift restrictions on abortion pills, which will be available anywhere via mail order.

Separation of Religion & State

With a new president and House, further protections were afforded to the LGBTQ+ community after being discriminated against by the past administration based on religious ideology. The DOJ restored healthcare protections, enforced anti-discrimination housing policies for LGBTQ+ people, and extended Title IX protections to transgender students. The House passed the Equality Act, to add gender identity and sexuality to the groups protected under the Civil Rights Act.

The Supreme Court has shown reluctance to protect the LGBTQ+ community. The Court ruled that religious social services can deny LGBTQ+ couples from fostering children on the basis of "religious freedom."

The high Court is also looking at other cases which could have a major impact on the separation of religion and state. These cases include: whether federally funded Christian Colleges can discriminate against LGBTQ+ students; whether states have to provide vouchers for religious private schools; and whether death row inmates can have faith leaders with them in their final moments.

Religious conservatives continue to drive anti-choice legislation and now voter suppression, further endangering Separation.



Rep. Jamie Raskin (D-MD) joined us via Zoom to discuss the Jan 6th investigation.

Climate Change

With the hottest summer ever recorded, the climate continued to be a focus in the U.S. An unprecedented number of weather disasters occurred including Hurricane Ida, California wildfires, and the Texas blizzard, shattering disaster and cost records. Faced with 139 Republican members of Congress who are climate deniers, Biden put environment at the top of his legislative agenda. Congress passed the infrastructure bill, making the largest investment ever in clean energy, jobs, and decarbonization.

At the United Nations Climate Change Conference, President Biden encouraged global action by doubling U.S. foreign aid for sustainable development, ensuring that all countries are headed toward a clean future. Domestically, Biden prevented future gas and oil drilling on federal lands, stopped construction of the Keystone XL pipeline, and promised that the U.S. would reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050.



Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV) joined us on Zoom and discussed climate change.



Rep. Angie Craig (D-MN) joined us on Zoom to discuss legislative and election issues.



Rep. Josh Gottheimer (D-NJ) joined JAC members for an outdoor meeting in Illinois.

Gun Violence Prevention

2021 was the deadliest year on record for gun violence. There have been 28 school shootings thus far. December marks the 9th anniversary of the mass shooting at Sandy Hook. Meanwhile, however, no meaningful legislation has reached President Biden's desk. He has signed more Executive Actions aimed at gun violence than any other president. But it is not enough.

The House has made gun violence prevention a priority by passing expanded background checks, the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act, and closing loopholes in gun sales. These bills remain stalled in the Senate, as does the confirmation of a director of the ATF, a critical agency when it comes to stopping gun violence.

In the courts, the Supreme Court heard a major Second Amendment challenge for the first time in more than a decade. In Florida, a judge upheld a ban on gun sales for those under 21 years old.

In a blow to the NRA, a federal judge dismissed the group's bankruptcy case allowing them to face a New York state lawsuit that alleges financial abuses and aims to put it out of business.



Sen. Maggie Hassan (D-NH) joined JAC on Zoom to discuss current events and legislation.

Elections 2022

This year saw several JAC-friends announce their retirement from the House & Senate. They include: Sen. Patrick Leahy (D-VT) and Reps. Jackie Speier (D-CA), Ann Kirkpatrick (D-AZ), and Cheri Bustos (D-IL).

As soon as 2021 began, JAC started actively supporting candidates. To date we are in 42 races. We are committed to helping even more in 2022. For a list of our top races, [click here](#).

Democrats hold a slim majority in the House, yet they were able to pass meaningful legislation like the American Rescue Plan Act. Unfortunately a divided Senate and the filibuster mean that Republicans continue to be able to block major legislation to expand voter protections, restore voting rights, and other critical bills.

Redistricting and voter suppression are the biggest political threats facing our democracy. They will change the face of representation in our country for generations to come. The GOP is using both. To date, there have been 360 Republican-sponsored bills across the country aimed to stop up to three million people – mostly Democrats – from accessing the ballot box.

Trump's allies are flooding local election posts in key battleground states. This raises concerns that election officials who blocked Trump's efforts to overturn the 2020 election won't be there the next time around.

With redistricting by state legislators, independent commissions, governors, and courts are drawing new boundaries for Congressional districts based on the 2020 census numbers. Even in states where voters opted for nonpartisan redistricting, Republicans control a majority of district drawing and are blatantly taking advantage of the Supreme Court's gutting of the Voting Rights Act to chose who will vote for them.

The GOP is already threatening what they will do if they are in charge of the House. Instead of legislating, they will tie up the House with investigations for partisan political issues and in defense of actions taken by GOP members in support of former President Trump, further damaging our democracy.

"No government agency will want to receive a letter from us," said Rep. James Comer (R-KY), who is now the top Republican on the House Oversight and Reform Committee, and is in position to become its next chairman if the GOP takes the majority.

Trump may be out of office, but he is not gone. He has endorsed many candidates from Members of Congress to governors and Secretaries of State. At the same time, he is urging his loyalists to go after his critics, such as Rep. Liz Cheney (R-WY). Many Trump-backed candidates for 2022 are already sowing doubt in the integrity of the elections if they don't win.

The 2020 election prevented a second term of Trump and his attacks on our country. It also returned control - no matter how slim - to the Democrats. As we look toward the 2022 midterms, we need to commit ourselves to the same energy and determination it took to defeat Trump. The 2022 election will be for the soul of our democracy and the consequences for our country if we lose the House and Senate will be devastating.



Joint Action Committee for Political Affairs (JACPAC) is a pro-Israel PAC with a domestic agenda. We support a strong U.S.-Israel relationship and advocate for reproductive health, the separation of religion and state, and incorporate other issues of importance to the Jewish community, including gun violence prevention and climate change. In addition to providing financial support for U.S. Senate and House campaigns, JACPAC educates our membership with outreach events designed to inform and activate their participation in the political process.