# STRATEGIC HEALTH CARE

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY TO CLIENTS**

Physicians and Nurses in Congress and the November 2026 Elections

October 11, 2026

## Executive Findings

The 119th Congress currently includes 20 medical doctors—four in the Senate and 16 in the House—and four House members with nursing backgrounds. Rep. Mariannette Miller-Meeks is included in both groups because she previously worked as an Army nurse and later became an ophthalmologist. These figures distinguish physicians (MD/DO) from dentists, optometrists, pharmacists and other health professionals.

The 2026 election cycle has produced a broad field of clinician-candidates, but a campaign announcement or primary candidacy should not be confused with qualification for the November 3 ballot. The physician-candidate names below are a research roster with verification flags; by contrast, a published nursing-professional survey identifies 18 general-election candidates, including four incumbents. Candidate lists and races remain subject to corrections by state election authorities.

Of particular interest: Michigan Democratic U.S. Senate nominee Abdul El-Sayed is a physician and former public-health director; Kansas Sen. Roger Marshall, an obstetrician-gynecologist, is seeking another term; Louisiana Sen. Bill Cassidy remains in office but lost his 2026 Republican primary and should not be counted as a November nominee. Oklahoma's Senate general-election ballot includes two nurses: Democrat N'Kiyla Jasmine Thomas and independent Ron Meinhardt.

## I. Physician Members of the 119th Congress

Senate — four physician members (all Republican):

| Member | State | Specialty |
|---|---|---|
| John Barrasso (R) | WY | Orthopedic surgery |
| Bill Cassidy (R) | LA | Gastroenterology/hepatology |
| Roger Marshall (R) | KS | Obstetrics/gynecology |
| Rand Paul (R) | KY | Ophthalmology |

House — 16 physician members:

| Member | State | Specialty/background |
|---|---|---|
| Ami Bera (D) | CA | Internal medicine |
| Herb Conaway (D) | NJ | Internal medicine |
| Scott DesJarlais (R) | TN | General/family medicine |
| Maxine Dexter (D) | OR | Pulmonary/critical care |
| Neal Dunn (R) | FL | Urology |
| Andy Harris (R) | MD | Anesthesiology |
| Ronny Jackson (R) | TX | Emergency medicine |
| John Joyce (R) | PA | Dermatology |
| Mike Kennedy (R) | UT | Family medicine |
| Rich McCormick (R) | GA | Emergency medicine |
| Mariannette Miller-Meeks (R) | IA | Ophthalmology; former Army nurse |
| Kelly Morrison (D) | MN | Obstetrics/gynecology |
| Greg Murphy (R) | NC | Urology |
| Bob Onder (R) | MO | Allergy/immunology |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Raul Ruiz (D) | CA | Emergency medicine |
| Kim Schrier (D) | WA | Pediatrics |

## II. Members With Nursing Backgrounds

| Member | Party/state | Background |
|---|---|---|
| Sheri Biggs | R–SC | Family and psychiatric nurse practitioner; DNP |
| Jen Kiggans | R–VA | Registered nurse; geriatric nurse practitioner |
| Lauren Underwood | D–IL | Registered nurse; MSN, MPH |
| Mariannette Miller-Meeks | R–IA | Former Army nurse; subsequently earned MD |

None of these four serves in the Senate. Nursing experience is not interchangeable with current licensure or nursing practice; the table describes professional background.

## III. Physician Candidates in the 2026 Election Cycle

Senate: Abdul El-Sayed (D–MI) won the Democratic nomination and faces Mike Rogers in November; Roger Marshall (R–KS) is the incumbent physician standing for reelection. Annie Andrews (D–SC), a pediatrician, has also been reported as a Senate candidate. Bill Cassidy (R–LA) and John Fleming (R–LA) ran during the Republican nomination contest, but Cassidy lost the primary. Each candidate's final ballot status should be checked in official state records where not separately verified.

House: The following physicians appeared in 2026 candidate reporting. This is NOT a certified list of November nominees; some ran in primaries against one another.

| Name | Party / race | Medical background |
|---|---|---|
| Amish Shah | D / AZ-01 | Emergency medicine |
| Richard Pan | D / CA-06 | Pediatrics |
| Jasmeet Bains | D / CA-22 | Family medicine |
| Darren McAuley | R / FL-15 | Flight surgeon |
| John Cowan | R / GA-11 | Neurosurgery |
| Ralph Alvarado | R / KY-06 | Physician |
| Matt Klein | D / MN-02 | Physician |
| Tina Shah | D / NJ-07 | Physician |
| Adam Hamawy | D / NJ-12 | Surgery |
| Brad Cohen | D / NJ-12 | Physician |
| Ala Stanford | D / PA-03 | Pediatric surgery |

Verified examples: Abdul El-Sayed won the Michigan Senate Democratic primary in August; Amish Shah and Richard Pan advanced in their respective House contests according to election reporting. Individual certifications for the other listed House candidates require checking after their primaries.

## IV. Nurses Identified as November 2026 Congressional Candidates

The American Society of Registered Nurses published the following 18-person roster—16 House candidates and two Senate candidates, including incumbents. This source provides a national snapshot, although district-level ballot listings should be verified through secretaries of state.

| Office / state | Candidate (party) | Nursing qualification |
|---|---|---|
| Senate / OK | Ron Meinhardt (I) | BSN, RN |
| Senate / OK | N'Kiyla Jasmine Thomas (D) | LPN |
| House / AL | Amanda Pusczek (D) | ADN, BSN |
| House / AZ | Elizabeth Lee (D) | RN |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| House / CA | Genevieve Angel (R) | RN |
| House / GA | Pamela DeLancy (D) | RN |
| House / IL | Jennifer Todd (D) | BSN, RN |
| House / IL | Lauren Underwood (D), incumbent | RN, MSN, MPH |
| House / IA | Mariannette Miller-Meeks (R), incumbent | Former Army nurse; MD |
| House / LA | Lisa Ballay (L) | LPN |
| House / NV | Jon Kamerath (IAP) | LPN |
| House / ND | Helene Neville (I) | LPN |
| House / OH | Kristina Knickerbocker (D) | RN, MSN |
| House / PA | Nancy Mannion (D) | RN, DNP |
| House / SC | Sheri Biggs (R), incumbent | DNP, FNP |
| House / TX | Steven Shook (D) | RN, MSN |
| House / VA | Jen Kiggans (R), incumbent | AGNP |
| House / WI | Mitchell Berman (D) | RN |

The Oklahoma state election listing independently confirms Thomas and Meinhardt on the November Senate ballot. A separate nursing-candidate review uses a different candidate universe and specifically cautions readers to confirm ballot status; the 18-person list should therefore be treated as the ASRN publication's roster rather than an exhaustive independently audited compilation.

## V. Additional Health-Profession Members

Other members with clinical professions include Sen. John Boozman (R–AR), optometrist; Reps. Brian Babin (R–TX), Paul Gosar (R–AZ), Mike Simpson (R–ID), and Jeff Van Drew (R–NJ), dentists; and Reps. Buddy Carter (R–GA) and Diana Harshbarger (R–TN), pharmacists. These professions are excluded from the physician and nursing counts.

## VI. Federal Policy Significance for Hospitals and Health Systems

The clinician membership is relevant to Medicare payment and site-neutral policy, Medicaid financing, rural hospital access, 340B, workforce training, nursing education, and physician reimbursement. Clinical experience may influence legislators' issue familiarity, but professional credential alone does not establish a member's legislative position or voting record.

For 2027 advocacy planning, SHC should map incumbents and newly elected clinicians against Senate Finance and HELP; House Energy and Commerce and Ways and Means; and the relevant House and Senate Appropriations subcommittees. Following election certification and committee organization, update the roster with district, party, committee assignment and relevant Medicare/Medicaid legislative priorities.

## Sources and Verification Notes


Health Professionals Serving in the 119th Congress (HHS guide, April 2026): https://www.asecho.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/05/HHS-Guide-to-the-119th-Congress_Second-Session_Updated-4.29.26.pdf

Congressional Research Service, Membership of the 119th Congress: https://www.congress.gov/crs_external_products/R/PDF/R48535/R48535.3.pdf

American Society of Registered Nurses, These 18 Nurses Are Running for Congress: https://www.asrn.org/journal-advanced-practice-nursing/3573-these-18-nurses-are-running-for-congress.html

Oklahoma State Election Board, November 2026 ballot listing: https://hosting.okelections.gov/electionlist.html

Roll Call, Abdul El-Sayed wins Michigan primary, August 5, 2026: https://rollcall.com/2026/08/05/el-sayed-and-stevens-locked-in-close-senate-primary-in-michigan/

The Green Papers, Louisiana Senate 2026 primary outcome: https://www.thegreenpapers.com/G26/LA

RegisteredNursing.org, Nurse candidates overview, September 2026: https://www.registerednursing.org/articles/nurses-in-politics-2026-09-23/

Prepared for informational and strategic planning purposes. Candidate descriptions are as of October 11, 2026; official state election authorities control certified ballot records.