

The House Freedom Caucus Is Losing Another Member

The conservative House Freedom Caucus will be losing U.S. Rep. Raul Labrador (R-Idaho) in January of 2019.

“Idaho needs a proven conservative leader who will stand against the special interests and politicians that have picked the winners and losers in our state Capitol for too long,” he said in a statement to the media announcing he will run for Governor of Idaho in 2018. “Idaho needs a strong leader who will make government fair for everyone. Idaho needs a governor who will provide a new vision, a new approach and new leadership.”

The announcement was not unexpected. Labrador considered a gubernatorial run in 2014, but passed on the opportunity. He won re-election in November by more than 120,000 votes, so it's very unlikely his seat will not remain in Republican hands—who that eventual Republican might be, however, is the new hot topic in Idaho.

Labrador was an outspoken critic of the original version of the American Health Care Act and remained a “no” vote until he got concessions that allow states to opt out of Obamacare's pre-existing conditions mandate. He came under fire last week for comments he made about that provision of the health care bill that recently passed out of the House of Representatives, for which he has since apologized.

With Rep. Jason Chaffetz (R-Utah) leaving, perhaps before the current Congress ends, Labrador's departure will likely leave the House Freedom Caucus with fewer than 30 members in 2019. {eoa}