Buchanan tapped as Ways and Means vice chairman

House Ways and Means Committee Chairman Jason Smith, R-Mo., announced January 26 that he has named Rep. Vern Buchanan of Florida to serve as vice chair of the taxwriting panel. Buchanan, who was the most senior Republican on Ways and Means coming into the 118th Congress, lost a three-way race for leadership of the committee (along with Rep. Adrian Smith of Nebraska) earlier this month.

"Vern brings an invaluable level of knowledge and expertise to the vice chairmanship of the Ways and Means Committee," Smith said in a news release. "His experience serving as the lead Republican on nearly all of our subcommittees, as well as his background as a business owner and entrepreneur will help ensure the committee speaks to the needs of America's small businesses and job creators."

Democratic committee roster set

House Democrats, meanwhile, finalized their Ways and Means Committee membership list for the new Congress, with the three least-senior members from the previous Congress losing their seats on the taxwriting panel.

As was expected after Republicans won the House majority in last November's midterm elections—and with the balance between the parties exactly mirroring that from the last Congress—the number of Democratic seats on the committee fell to from 25 to 18. As a result, Reps. Jimmy Gomez of California, Steven Horsford of Nevada, and Stacey Plaskett of the US Virgin Islands were removed from the panel and four vacancies that opened up at the end of the 117th Congress went unfilled. (Rep. Brendan Boyle of Pennsylvania is on leave from Ways and Means this year to serve as the ranking member of the House Budget Committee, and committee members Ron Kind of Wisconsin, Tom Suozzi of New York, and Stephanie Murphy of Florida all left Congress at the end of the last session.)

Another notable change for Ways and Means Democrats in the new Congress is the designation of Rep. Judy Chu of California as the panel's vice ranking member.

Republicans set their roster on January 11, announcing 10 new members to fill GOP slots that were added to the taxwriting panel to reflect the party's shift to majority status in the House and to fill vacancies created by taxwriters who are no longer in Congress.
URL: https://waysandmeans.house.gov/chairman-smith-welcomes-new-republican-members-of-the-house-ways-and-means-committee-for-the-118th-congress/

A list of all the members of the panel for the 118th Congress is available from Deloitte Tax LLP.
URL: https://dhub.blob.core.windows.net/dhub/Newsletters/Tax/2023/TNV/230127_2_suppA.pdf

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Subcommittee leadership posts

Also this week, Chairman Smith and ranking member Richard Neal, D-Mass., announced the names of taxwriting subcommittee leaders from their respective parties. These include:

- **Tax (formerly Select Revenue Measures):** Rep. Mike Kelly, R-Pa., chairman; Mike Thompson, D-Calif., ranking member;
- **Health:** Rep. Vern Buchanan, R-Fla., chairman; Rep. Lloyd Doggett, D-Texas, ranking member;
- **Trade:** Rep. Adrian Smith, R-Neb., chairman; Rep. Earl Blumenauer, D-Ore, ranking member;
- **Social Security:** Rep. Drew Ferguson, R-Ga., chairman; Rep. John Larson, D-Conn., ranking member;
- **Work and Welfare (formerly Worker and Family Support):** Rep. Darrin LaHood, R-Ill., chairman; Rep. Danny Davis, D-Ill., ranking member; and
- **Oversight:** Rep. David Schweikert, R-Ariz., chairman; Rep. Bill Pascrell, D-N.J., ranking member.

GOP members assigned to the Tax Subcommittee are Reps. Schweikert, Arrington, and Ferguson, as well as Kevin Hern of Oklahoma, Ron Estes of Kansas, Lloyd Smucker of Pennsylvania, David Kustoff of Tennessee, Beth Van Duyne of Texas, Randy Feenstra of Iowa, and Nicole Malliotakis of New York.

Democratic Tax Subcommittee members include Reps. Lloyd Doggett of Texas, John Larson of Connecticut, Linda Sanchez of California, Suzan DelBene of Washington, Gwen Moore of Wisconsin, Don Beyer of Virginia, and Brad Schneider of Illinois.

In addition, although it is a separate panel, the Budget Committee will be chaired by Ways and Means member Jodey Arrington of Texas. (The panel's senior Republican last Congress was Jason Smith.)

Finance Committee roster still in flux

As of press time, the organizing resolution for the Senate, which is typically passed by unanimous consent, appears likely to delayed until the week of January 30, so the Finance Committee has not yet been officially constituted. However, an announcement of Democratic committee assignments from Senate Majority Leader Charles Schumer of New York this week confirmed that Sen. Ron Wyden will continue to chair the taxwriting panel and that the all 13 of the rank-and-file Democrats who served on Finance in the 117th Congress are returning for the new session, which leaves the total party headcount on the committee at 14 (unchanged from the previous Congress).
URL: https://www.democrats.senate.gov/newsroom/press-releases/majority-leader-schumer-announces-senate-democratic-committee-memberships-for-the-118th-congress

The Republican leadership is still working out committee assignments for some of its new senators, but an announcement is expected early in the week of January 30.

Although party ratios for Senate committees have not been announced officially, it is expected that the Finance Committee roster, once final, will reflect the expanded Democratic majority on the Senate floor.

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Democrats and Republicans each held 14 Finance Committee seats in the 117th Congress, reflecting the 50-50 party split on the chamber floor. (Democrats held the majority with the tiebreaking vote of Vice President Harris in her role as president of the Senate.) In the new Congress, Democrats control 51 seats (including 3 Independents who caucus with the party) compared to 49 for Republicans.

With the Democratic headcount on the Finance Committee remaining at 14, it appears as though Republicans will need to trim their membership list on the panel and thus may not be able to fill one or more of the vacancies on their side of the aisle created by the recent retirements of Sens. Richard Burr of North Carolina, Rob Portman of Ohio, and Patrick Toomey of Pennsylvania, and the resignation earlier this month of Sen. Ben Sasse of Nebraska.

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Tax Policy Group
Deloitte Tax LLP

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