Elections Affect Legislation

For a bill to be signed into federal law, it has to pass in both chambers of Congress (the US House and the US Senate) and then be signed by the President.

On so many policies, including those related to abortion, the Republican and Democrat parties are at opposite ends of the spectrum.

Therefore, to get any laws enacted in either direction regarding abortion, the same party needs to control the House, the Senate and the White House at the same time. And that doesn't happen very often, as the list below shows.

(Moreover, when we say "control," that often means that in the Senate, there needs to be not only a majority, but 60 votes. Otherwise a bill cannot get past the objections of the minority party.)

The list below shows not only when the same party controlled the Congress and the White House, but what pro-life and pro-abortion bills became federal law as a result.

One of the key reasons that progress is slow is divided government. Elections can change that.

PARTY CONTROL OF THE EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE BRANCHES SINCE ROE v. WADE (1973)

Sources:

U.S. Senate - https://www.senate.gov/history/partydiv.htm
U.S. House – http://history.house.gov/Institution/Party-Divisions/Party-Divisions/

* Caucused with Republicans
# Caucused with Democrats NOTES:

The numbers listed below reflect the partisan divide in the Senate and House at the beginning of each session of Congress.
Congressional sessions start on January 3rd of odd-numbered years and run until January 2nd two years later.

Years	President	U.S. Senate	U.S. House
1973-1975	Republican	56 Democrats 42 Republicans 1 Conservative * 1 Independent #	243 Democrats 192 Republicans
1975-1977	Republican	60 Democrats 37 Republicans 1 Conservative * 1 Independent # 1 Vacancy due to contested election results	291 Democrats 144 Republicans
1977-1979	Democrat	61 Democrats 38 Republicans 1 Independent #	292 Democrats 143 Republicans

1979-1981	Democrat	58 Democrats 41 Republicans 1 Independent #	278 Democrats 157 Republicans
1981-1983	Republican	53 Republicans 46 Democrats 1 Independent #	243 Democrats 192 Republicans
1983-1985	Republican	55 Republicans 45 Democrats	269 Democrats 166 Republicans
1985-1987	Republican	53 Republicans 47 Democrats	254 Democrats 181 Republicans
1987-1989	Republican	55 Democrats 45 Republicans	258 Democrats 177 Republicans
1989-1991	Republican	55 Democrats 45 Republicans	260 Democrats 175 Republicans
1991-1993	Republican	56 Democrats 44 Republicans	267 Democrats 167 Republicans 1 Independent #
1993-1995	Democrat	57 Democrats 43 Republicans	258 Democrats 176 Republicans 1 Independent #

1994 Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Law passed by Democrat Congress and signed by Democrat President Bill Clinton, making it a federal crime to peacefully blockade an abortion facility or to intimidate someone from entering.

1995-1997	Democrat	52 Republicans 48 Democrats	230 Republicans 204 Democrats 1 Independent #
1997-1999	Democrat	55 Republicans 45 Democrats	227 Republicans 207 Democrats 1 Independent #
1999-2001	Democrat	55 Republicans 45 Democrats	223 Republicans 211 Democrats 1 Independent #

2001-2003	Republican	50 Democrats 49 Republicans 1 Independent #	220 Republicans 213 Democrats 2 Independents #
2003-2005	Republican	51 Republicans 48 Democrats 1 Independent #	229 Republicans 205 Democrats 1 Independent #

2003 – Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act

(Republican House; Republican Senate; twice vetoed by Democratic President, but signed into law by Republican President) – Congress first passed this bill in 1995 and then in 1997 and it was vetoed both times by Democrat President Bill Clinton. Congress passed it again in 2003 and Republican President George W. Bush signed the measure into law.

2004 – Unborn Victims of Violence Act

Passed by Congress in 2004 and signed into law by President George W. Bush, the Unborn Victims of Violence Act amended the federal criminal code to include an unborn child at any stage of development as a separate victim when injured or killed as the consequence of an attack on his or her mother.

2005-2007	Republican	55 Republicans 44 Democrats 1 Independent #	233 Republicans 201 Democrats 1 Independent #
2007-2009	Republican	49 Democrats 49 Republicans 2 Independents #	233 Democrats 202 Republicans
2009-2011	Democrat	57 Democrats 41 Republicans 2 Independents #	257 Democrats 178 Republicans
2011-2013	Democrat	51 Democrats 47 Republicans 2 Independents #	242 Republicans 193 Democrats
2013-2015	Democrat	53 Democrats 45 Republicans 2 Independents #	234 Republicans 201 Democrats
2015-2017	Democrat	54 Republicans 44 Democrats 2 Independents #	247 Republicans 188 Democrats
2017-2019	Republican	52 Republicans 46 Democrats 2 Independents #	241 Republicans 194 Democrats