

# Local Majority and the Florida Elections of 2018

## Overview

In the 2018 midterm election, 22 of the Florida State Senate's 40 seats were up for election, as were all 120 seats in the Florida State House of Representatives. The Florida State House remains a majority Republican body, though the balance of power has shifted left by a few seats, almost all of which were assisted by Local Majority. On election night, six House seats were flipped from red to blue; Republicans saw their majority slip from 79-41 to 73-47. In the Florida State Senate, one seat flipped from red to blue; Republicans remained in the majority: 23-17. The candidate (Janet Cruz) who beat her Republican incumbent received assistance from Local Majority.

Local Majority focuses on state legislatures. But in other Florida election news, the hotly contested US Senate seat has been decided for Republican Rick Scott, and the Republican candidate also won for Governor (DeSantis). A piece of good news for opponents of voter suppression is that Florida voters opted to re-enfranchise ex-felons who have served their sentence, restoring the vote to over 1.4 million Floridians through Amendment 4 to Florida's constitution.

## How Local Majority Assisted Democratic Candidates in the Florida State Legislature

We wrote custom research reports about issues important to Florida. These papers covered the environment, voter suppression, education, Medicaid expansion, opioid addiction, affordable housing, gun violence, transportation, infrastructure and algae pollution. We created a report on the legislative record of Republicans in the Florida State House and Senate. These research reports were sent to 18 Democratic candidates. For 7 candidates, Local Majority also provided a customized report of the Republican opponent's record.

We also wrote scores of postcards and conducted phone banks on behalf of some Democratic candidates. We sent a team to canvas in Florida the days before (and of) the election.

As part of Local Majority's nationwide "Multiply Your Vote" campaign featuring *Veep* star Julia Louis-Dreyfus in public service announcements and all over social media urging people to volunteer and vote, we hired graffiti artist Atomiko to create a wall mural in Miami based on our trademarked slogan "Get Off Your Donkey and Vote." (Photo attached at the end of this report). We were pleased to see *Pod Save America* tweet a photo of the wall during a pre-election trip to Miami.

## The Candidates

The Florida State House and Senate candidates we selected to help were from those districts which Hillary Clinton won and where the Democratic candidate who ran for State House or Senate in 2016 lost by a small margin. For these candidates, we conducted research relevant to their districts and reached out to them to offer our support. We enjoyed an ongoing, productive working relationship with many of those candidates, including Janet Cruz, Cindy Polo, Anna Eskamani, Adam Hattersley, Amanda Murphy and Kayser Enneking. Additional Democratic candidates who heard of our organization and reached out for help also received our assistance. We focused our work on the

issues which they requested and coordinated our outreach efforts with the campaign to low propensity voters with postcards and phone banking.

We began our work in Florida by assisting Margaret Good in her special election race for Florida State House District 72, and our first 2 Florida issue papers were written at her request, regarding sea level rise and solar energy. Good won the special election and retained her seat in the general election.

## The Results

In Florida's State House, Democrats who won and flipped their districts from red to blue in the 2018 contest are listed below. Local Majority provided direct assistance to all but one of these candidates:

- Joy Goff-Marcil (District 30)- received Local Majority assistance
- Geraldine Thompson (District 44)
- Anna Eskamani (District 47)- received Local Majority assistance
- Adam Hattersley (District 59)- received Local Majority assistance
- Fentrice Driskell (District 63)- received Local Majority assistance
- Jennifer Webb (District 69)- received Local Majority assistance
- Cindy Polo (District 103)- received Local Majority assistance

Democrat Jeffrey Solomon's race in House District 115 was too close to call for days following the election, and was finally called for his opponent, who beat him by approximately 500 votes. Dr. Solomon also received Local Majority's assistance. Florida State House candidates who received Local Majority's assistance but who did not win were: Tracye Polson (District 15), Nicole Haagenson (54), Emma Collum (93) and Javier Estevez (105).

The Florida State Senate had one red to blue flip on election night, which was in District 18. In a very hard fought and close election, the recount gave Democrat Janet Cruz the victory over Republican incumbent Dana Young. Local Majority provided support for Cruz, including research reports, phone banking and an extensive postcard-writing campaign. Florida State Senate candidates who received Local Majority's assistance but who did not win were: Kayser Enneking (District 8), Amanda Murphy (District 16), Bob Doyel (District 22), Lindsay Cross (District 24) and David Perez (District 36).

## Our Reports

Most of our reports are available on our website.

Republicans' Legislative Record:

<https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/FL-Legislative-Record-2018-Oppo.pdf>

Affordable Housing:

<https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Florida.Housing.09232018.pdf>

Talking Points:

<https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/FL.AffordableHousingTalkingPoints.09232018.pdf>

## Education-

Teacher Pay:

[https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/FL.Education.TeacherPay.SD8\\_.08072018.pdf](https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/FL.Education.TeacherPay.SD8_.08072018.pdf)

Teacher Pay Talking Points:

[https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/FL.Education\\_Talking-Points.28Jan2018.3.pdf](https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/FL.Education_Talking-Points.28Jan2018.3.pdf)

Attacks on Public Education:

<https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/FL.Education.update.06122018.pdf>

Attacks on Public Education Talking Points:

[https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/FL.Education\\_Talking-Points.28Jan2018.3.pdf](https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/FL.Education_Talking-Points.28Jan2018.3.pdf)

## The Environment-

Blue-Green Algae:

[https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/FL.bluegreenalgae.SC\\_.08092018.pdf](https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/FL.bluegreenalgae.SC_.08092018.pdf)

Sea Level Rise:

[https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/FL.SeaLevelRise.2018.0123.kp\\_.final\\_.pdf](https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/FL.SeaLevelRise.2018.0123.kp_.final_.pdf)

Sea Level Rise Talking Points:

[https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/FL.Sea-Level-Talking-Points.20180204.FB\\_.KP\\_.1040p.pdf](https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/FL.Sea-Level-Talking-Points.20180204.FB_.KP_.1040p.pdf)

Renewable Energy:

[https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/FL.RenewableEnergy.01182018.LK\\_.v4.pdf](https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/FL.RenewableEnergy.01182018.LK_.v4.pdf)

## Medicaid-

Current Medicaid Program:

[https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Florida\\_Current\\_Medicaid\\_Program.011318.scdf\\_.pdf](https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Florida_Current_Medicaid_Program.011318.scdf_.pdf)

Florida compared to other States:

[https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Florida\\_Medicaid\\_Comparison.011218.scdf\\_.pdf](https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Florida_Medicaid_Comparison.011218.scdf_.pdf)

Medicaid and the Opioid Crisis:

[https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Florida\\_Medicaid\\_Opioids.012818.3.scdf\\_.pdf](https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Florida_Medicaid_Opioids.012818.3.scdf_.pdf)

Should Florida Expand Medicaid?

[https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Should\\_Florida\\_Expand\\_Medicaid.091218.scdf\\_.pdf](https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Should_Florida_Expand_Medicaid.091218.scdf_.pdf)

Medicaid Expansion Talking Points:

[https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/FL.Medicaid.Expansion\\_Talking\\_Points.01122018.DFSC\\_.pdf](https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/FL.Medicaid.Expansion_Talking_Points.01122018.DFSC_.pdf)

## Gun safety-

[https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/FL\\_GunSafety\\_PreventMassShootings.022818.jqfb\\_.1.pdf](https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/FL_GunSafety_PreventMassShootings.022818.jqfb_.1.pdf)

## Voter Suppression-

<https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/FL.VoterSuppression.HY08092018.pdf>

**Transportation (I-4 and High Speed Rail):**

[https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Fl.Interstate4Corridor.sc\\_.05142018.pdf](https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Fl.Interstate4Corridor.sc_.05142018.pdf)

Talking Points:

[https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Fl.TalkingPoints.Interstate4.05162018v2.sc\\_.pdf](https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Fl.TalkingPoints.Interstate4.05162018v2.sc_.pdf)

**Infrastructure:**

[https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/FL\\_Infrastructure\\_2018.10.19.jbjp\\_.v.3.Final\\_.pdf](https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/FL_Infrastructure_2018.10.19.jbjp_.v.3.Final_.pdf)

## Candidate Comments

**Cindy Polo:** *“THE ONE EMAIL I AM REPLYING TO IS YOU!!!! Thank you to you and all the amazing women and volunteers that helped us get this 1st victory. Tell them all that I hold them in my heart and forever will.”*

**Fentrice Driskell:** *“Thank you so much! We truly appreciate all your efforts. Your research has been very helpful. We are working very hard to flip this seat from red to blue.”*

**Jeff Solomon (David Martin, campaign manager):** *“Again, your research helped a great deal. We wrote two Op-Ed’s in a local weekly and put out a few press releases and your research made that easier. Thanks again and keep up the excellent work. Two more years and we go again...ok a few more weeks and we go again, not us, but the loyal opposition.”*

**Kayser Enneking:** *“I cannot thank you enough for your help. Really what we accomplished would not have happen[ed] without your help. I am a bit heart broken too. Not for me but for Florida and our country. I feel this is another small cut in the fabric of our community and it hurts.”*

**Janet Cruz:** After her election victory- *“My Calif Wonder Women [referring to California-based Local Majority] made it happen!”*; After receiving a particular issue paper- *“This work is spectacular. Thank you.”*

## How Local Majority helped Vote Riders

Local Majority raised over \$10,000 for Vote Riders, a non-profit organization whose mission is to help voters obtain the necessary ID in order to vote. This work was particularly important in Florida because of the high number of Hispanic voters and because of the influx of Puerto Ricans. Local Majority’s funds helped Vote Riders hire a coordinator in Florida to liaise with local organizations and churches to ensure that their members obtained the proper voter ID. It also provided legal help as well as funding for voters who needed to procure birth certificates or had other documentation problems. It helped to overcome any hurdles to voting, such as transportation, vote by mail requirements and time off from work to vote.

**Miami Mural**

