

Local Majority and the Minnesota Elections of 2018

Overview

Democrats took control of the Minnesota House for the first time in four years. The Republicans went into the contest with a 77-57 majority. To flip the state House to Democratic control, eleven seats needed to flip. Eighteen seats in the House flipped, thanks to the election of Democratic candidates from the suburbs of Minneapolis and St. Paul – the area targeted by Local Majority. As in other parts of the country, Democrats picked up seats in educated, mostly suburban districts.

Although Local Majority is focused on flipping state houses blue, the elections were generally good for the Democratic Party (which is known in Minnesota as the Democrat-Farmer-Labor Party.) The next governor of Minnesota will be Democrat Tim Walz. The next Attorney General will also be a Democrat. Both Democratic Senators – Amy Klobuchar and Tina Smith -- were re-elected. (Because Tina Smith was appointed to Al Franken's seat after his resignation, a special election was required for the remainder of his term.) The Minnesota delegation to the current U.S. Congress consists of 5 Democrats and 3 Republicans. The race in MN-01 is currently too close call, but should the Democrat win, there will be a net Democratic pickup of one seat.

How Local Majority Assisted Democratic Candidates

We wrote custom research reports about issues important to Minnesota and the region around Minneapolis-St. Paul. These papers covered the environment, education funding, transportation, Republican financial tricks and ALEC, which is a national organization aiming to privatize government services and block progressive initiatives. We created a report on the legislative record of Republicans in the House. These research reports were sent to 35 Democratic candidates.

For five candidates, Local Majority provided a customized version of the legislative record of the Republican incumbent, as well as a "district primer" that is an overview of the district.

We also shot personal videos and wrote scores of postcards on their behalf.

The Candidates

The five candidates we initially focussed on were selected because Hillary Clinton won within the state house district and because the Democrat who ran for state house in 2016 lost by a small margin. For these candidates, the customized opposition research reports included additional information about their Republican opponents. The other 30 Democrats received the general legislative report.

The Results

All five of our original candidates were elected on November 6. Of the other 30 candidates who received our research reports, 10 were elected. Two of those were incumbents who barely won in 2016, but succeeded in adding nine points to their margins. In total, 12 of the candidates we assisted flipped seats. One especially significant defeat was that of the committee chair, Republican Sarah Anderson (44A), who had been a barrier to progressive legislation for a decade.

The wins in our targeted districts are shown in the table below.

| District | Democrat Who Won | Percent of Vote |
|----------|------------------|-----------------|
| 42A | Kelly Moller | 57.52 |
| 44A | Ginny Klevorn | 53.85 |
| 49A | Heather Edelson | 58.13 |
| 52B | Ruth Richardson | 53.74 |
| 54A | Anne Claflin | 50.98 |

The wins in other districts receiving our research are shown in the table below.

| District | Democrat Who Won | Percent of Vote |
|----------|--|-----------------|
| 5A | John Persell. Won by 8 votes | 50.00 |
| 14B | Dan Wollgamott. The Republican dropped out after sexual abuse accusations. | 58.07 |
| 25B | Duane Sauke, the incumbent | 60.10 |
| 33B | Kelly Morrison | 50.53 |
| 44B | Patty Acomb | 62.74 |
| 48A | Laurie Pryor, the incumbent | 59.39 |
| 53A | Tou Xiong. This open seat was held previously by a Democrat. | 61.13 |
| 55A | Brad Tabke | 51.53 |
| 56B | Alice Mann | 52.64 |
| 57B | John Huot | 51.90 |

Candidates who received Local Majority's research but who did not win were:

Brent Lindstrom (1B), Michael Northbird (2A), Pat Medure (5B), Brittney Johnson (8A), Dale Menk (10A), Aric Putnam (14A), Karla Scapanski (15B), Lyle Koenen (17A), Anita Flowe (17B), Lori Ann Clark (21A), Jim Grabowska (23B), Joe Heegard (24A), Yvette Marthaler (24B), Terry Gjersvik (27A), Thomas Trehus (28B), Amir Malik (37B), Ann Mozey (39A), Steve Sandell (53B), Tina Folch (54B) and Maggie Williams (58A).

Our Reports

Most of our reports are available on our website.

Republican Legislative Record:

https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/MN.general.Opposition-Research_JR_2018.0828-1.pdf

Education Funding:

https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/MN.education_funding.20181001.SS_PC.JR_Final.pdf

Transportation: Minnesota's Roads to Ruin Report

https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/MN.Transportation-Infrastructure_Roads.20180326.Final_.pdf

Talking Points:

https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/talking-points.MN_Transportation-Infrastructure_Roads.20180530.pdf

Republican Financial Shenanigans: Minnesota's Pickpockets

https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/MNFiscalMismanagement20180903.FB_.pdf

Environment: Strategic Metals Mining

https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/MN.mining_mini_paper.20180528.NS_.pdf

Environment: The 3M Settlement Controversy

https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/MN.Issue_3MPFC-settlement.NS_.05302018.pdf

The American Legislative Exchange Council's Work in Minnesota, "Minnesota, Sold to the Highest Bidder"

https://localmajority.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/MN.privatization_ALEC.20180406.pdf

Candidate Comments

Ginny Klevorn: *Together, we have done great work for the wonderful State of Minnesota. We have removed a major roadblock to progressive change. Thank you for your research, videos, and your support. No candidate runs alone, and you really helped carry me on to victory.*

Ruth Richardson: *Thank you for your support! It's been incredibly surreal. Thank you for all you do!*

Patty Acomb: *"I can't thank you and Local Majority enough for your support during this election! To put your faith in someone half-way across the country was incredible and I will always be grateful for that!"*

Heather Edelson: *"Thank you for all your help! We did it!"*

Heather's campaign manager, Thuy Anh Fox: *"I thought it could go either way with a swing of 500 votes. Of all the seats that flipped from red to blue, 1) we were the first race called for the night, and 2) we had the largest margin!"*

Thank you for your help with the video. Everyone has commented on how positive our campaign was and the video certainly represented that."