

# 2020 General Election Report – Part 1

*Here are a few of the top headlines from an exciting night in Ohio politics*

## **And The Winner Is...TBD?**

It ain't over 'til it's over. And folks, it ain't over. While Election Day has concluded, the vote counting is going to take a little bit of time. As of writing this shortly after President Trump gave remarks around 2:30AM, some outstanding uncalled states (Georgia, North Carolina, Michigan, Wisconsin, Pennsylvania & Nevada) have announced they are breaking for the night and will resume counting ballots tomorrow. Neither former Vice President Joe Biden nor President Donald Trump have secured a 270 electoral vote minimum for victory on Election Night. But while President Trump handily won Ohio, mimicking his 8% margin win from 2016 – even with some lingering absentee ballots potentially outstanding – other states' results are delayed due to different processes or a shortage of election workers, leaving us in a limbo on who won this presidential election. The outstanding states have announced counting will resume in some counties around 9AM to 11AM Wednesday. Democrats will hold onto a majority in the U.S. House of Representatives, but a shift in the U.S. Senate is also TBD depending on results from uncalled states.

## **No Surprises from the Ohio Congressional Delegation**

All 16 incumbent U.S. Representatives from Ohio secured re-election. Cincinnati area Rep. Steve Chabot (R) from OH-1 was the most vulnerable but ended up handily holding onto the seat. The big question now is whose seat we will lose if the redistricting process next year results in one less U.S. House seat as projected based on census estimates. The follow-up question is how that redistricting process, which has new rules voted in by Ohioans by referendum several years ago, plays out. Will it go according to plan with bipartisan buy-in? Or will recent hyper-partisanship result in more frequent redistricting? The Ohio legislature takes the first stab at a new map later next year after the state budget is passed.

## **Ohio Supreme Court Majority Shrinks**

As you all know, the Ohio Chamber of Commerce PAC top priority this election was to support our endorsed incumbent Ohio Supreme Court Justices Sharon Kennedy and Judi French. Both Justices are part of a 5-2 majority on the court with a judicial philosophy the business community finds favorable. Kennedy was able to comfortably beat her opponent, Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Judge John

O'Donnell by about 10%. However, French was unable to keep up with former Secretary of State Jennifer Brunner, who pulled ahead by about 10%, putting the court at a 4-3 split in judicial philosophy when these next terms begin early next year. The major story here is the business community is on red alert for 2022. Three seats are up, all held by Justices that make up the rest of that favorable majority. Ohio Supreme Court terms are six years. If just one of these three seats flips in 2022, and the court potentially gains an activist majority, businesses may feel the ramifications well into the rest of this decade.

## **Ohio House and Senate See Expansion of GOP Supermajorities**

With the Statehouse drama of former Speaker Larry Householder's arrest and removal from the Speakership this past summer, it turns out that either voters were not phased by that drama or Ohio Democrats failed to capitalize on the scandal. Or maybe ultimately the down-ballot races were drowned out by the presidential race. But whatever the case, Ohio House GOP picked up a net +3 seats expanding the supermajority to 64/99. Incumbent Republican Rep. Dave Greenspan was unable to hold onto his HD 16 seat losing to Lakewood Councilwoman Monique Smith. But Republicans were able to pick up HD 96 and HD 99 in Southeastern and Northeastern Ohio, respectively, with Ron Ferguson and Sara Fowler picking up seats being vacated by term-limited Democrat Reps. Jack Cera and John Patterson. Republicans also fielded a successful challengers to Democrat Rep. Gil Blair in HD 63 out of Trumbull County in Mike Loychik and to Democrat Rep. Randi Clites in Gail Pavliga. Notably, urban county Republican Reps. Laura Lanese and Tom Brinkman were able to hold on in Franklin and Hamilton Counties.

Pending Sen. Stephanie Kunze, who was a top target for Democrats to challenge in SD 16, holding onto a razor thin lead of about 200 votes, Senate Republicans will expand their supermajority to 25/33 seats after Republican Sandra O'Brien defeated Incumbent Sen. Sean O'Brien in SD 32 in the Northeastern corner of the state.

## **OCCPAC Endorsed Candidates go 49/49 in General Assembly Races**

Ohio Chamber of Commerce PAC (OCCPAC) endorsed General Assembly candidates were successful in all 49 races.

*The following is a breakdown of each race with an OCCPAC endorsement for the General Assembly. These results are based on the unofficial results posted by County Boards of Elections immediately after the November 3 General Election, some eligible absentee mailed-in ballots may still be counted through November 13.*

### **Race-by-Race: Ohio Senate OCCPAC Endorsements**

**SD 02 - R** – Sen. Theresa Gavarone secured her first election to the Ohio Senate after being appointed to the seat from the House in 2019. Gavarone defeated challenger Democrat Joel O'Dorisio 62%-38%.

**SD 04 – R** – Rep. George Lang successfully joined the Senate convincingly beating Democrat Kathy Wyenandt for this open seat 61%-39%.

**SD 06 – R** – Rep. Niraj Antani successfully joined the Senate beating Democrat former Air Force pilot Mark Fogel 53% - 47%.

**SD 08 – R** – Sen. Bill Blessing secured his first election to the Ohio Senate over challenger Democrat Daniel Brown 60% - 40% after being appointed to the seat from the House in 2019.

**SD 10 – R** – Sen. Bob Hackett won re-election 65% - 35% over challenger Charles Ballard.

**SD 12 – R** – Sen. Matt Huffman won re-election 79% - 21% over challenger Ken Poling.

**SD 14 – R** – Sen. Terry Johnson secured his first election to the Ohio Senate 73% - 27% over Ryan Ottney after being appointed to the seat in 2019.

**SD 16 – R** – Sen. Stephanie Kunze came out barely on top on election night for re-election – just under 300 votes over Democrat challenger Crystal Lett. Provisional ballots and eligible outstanding absentee ballots are yet to be counted and we will see if Kunze can hold onto this win.

**SD 18 – R** – Lake County Commissioner Jerry Cirino won election to the Senate 60% - 40% over former congressional candidate Betsy Rader. The seat was an open seat being vacated by term-limited Sen. John Eklund.

**SD 20 – R** – Sen. Tim Schaffer won election to the Senate over opponent Christian Johnson 69% - 31% after being appointed to the seat in 2019.

**SD 22 – R** – Rep. Mark Romanchuk secured election to the Senate 69% - 31% over Ryan Hunger. This is an open seat being vacated by term-limited Senate President Larry Obhof.

**SD 24 – R** – Sen. Matt Dolan secured re-election 54% - 46% over challenger Tom Jackson.

**SD 26 – R** – Rep. Bill Reineke handily won election to the Senate 71% - 29%. The seat is being vacated by term-limited Sen. Dave Burke.

**SD 30 – R** – Sen. Frank Hoagland secured a 67% - 33% re-election victory over challenger Michael Fletcher.

#### **Race-by-Race: Ohio House OCCPAC Endorsements**

**HD 01 – R** – Rep. Scott Wiggam secured re-election with 70% of the vote.

**HD 04 – R** – Speaker Bob Cupp secured an uncontested re-election.

**HD 05 – R** – Rep. Tim Ginter secured re-election with 74% of the vote.

**HD 23 – R** – Rep. Laura Lanese secured re-election with 56% of the vote. Lanese's district was a top target for Democrats to flip in Southwestern Franklin County.

**HD 30 – R** – Rep. Bill Seitz secured re-election with 72% of the vote.

**HD 38 – R** – Rep. Bill Roemer secured re-election with 61% of the vote.

**HD 40 – R** – Rep. Phil Plummer secured re-election with 65% of the vote.

**HD 43 – R** – Preble County Commissioner Rodney Creech won a hotly contested open seat race held by Rep. J. Todd Smith who is vacating the seat with 54% of the vote.

**HD 47 – R** – Rep. Derek Merrin secured re-election with 58% of the vote.

**HD 50 – R** – Rep. Reggie Stoltzfus secured re-election with 68% of the vote.

**HD 51 – R** – Rep. Sara Carruthers secured an uncontested re-election.

**HD 52 – R** – Jennifer Gross was elected to the seat currently held by Senator-elect George Lang with 63% of the vote.

**HD 53 – R** – Thomas Hall was elected to the seat currently held by Rep. Candice Keller who is vacating the seat after an unsuccessful Senate run. Hall won with 68% of the vote.

**HD 55 – R** – Rep. Gayle Manning secured re-election with 56% of the vote.

**HD 61 – R** – Rep. Jamie Callender secured re-election with 61% of the vote.

**HD 62 – R** – Rep. Scott Lipps secured re-election with 74% of the vote.

**HD 66 – R** – Adam Bird was elected to the House uncontested. Bird, a former school superintendent, will take over the seat being vacated by term-limited Rep. Doug Green.

**HD 67 – R** – Rep. Kris Jordan secured re-election with 56% of the vote.

**HD 68 – R** – Rep. Rick Carfagna secured re-election with 68% of the vote.

**HD 70 – R** – Rep. Darrell Kick secured re-election with 71% of the vote.

**HD 71 – R** – Rep. Mark Fraizer secured election to the House with 63% of the vote. Fraizer was appointed to the seat in 2019.

**HD 76 – R** – Rep. Diane Grendell secured election to the House with 62% of the vote. Fraizer was appointed to the seat in 2019.

**HD 77 – R** – Rep. Jeff LaRe secured election to the House with 60% of the vote. Fraizer was appointed to the seat in 2019.

**HD 78 – R** – Pickaway County Commissioner Brian Stewart won election to the House with 73% of the vote. The seat is being vacated by term-limited Rep. Ron Hood.

**HD 79 – R** – Rep. Kyle Koehler secured re-election with 63% of the vote.

**HD 80 – R** – Rep. Jena Powell secured re-election with 76% of the vote.

**HD 81 – R** – Rep. Jim Hoops secured an uncontested re-election.

**HD 82 – R** – Rep. Craig Riedel secured an uncontested re-election.

**HD 83 – R** – Rep. Jon Cross secured an uncontested re-election.

**HD 84 – R** – Rep. Susan Manchester secured re-election with 85% of the vote.

**HD 86 – R** – Rep. Tracy Richardson secured re-election with 70% of the vote.

**HD 87 – R** – Rep. Riordan McClain secured re-election with 76% of the vote.

**HD 93 – R** – Rep. Jason Stephens secured an uncontested re-election.

**HD 96 – R** – Ron Ferguson won election to the House with 66% of the vote. Ferguson will assume this seat, which is being vacated by term-limited Democrat Rep. Jack Cera.

**HD 97 – R** – Rep. Adam Holmes secured re-election with 70% of the vote.