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### **Primary Results Establish November Contests**

Last night's primary elections produced both predictable and unpredictable results across Ohio, as Republican and Democratic voters went to the polls to select candidates from each party to be standard bearers for many contests in the November general election. The following is a summary of some highlighted results from last evening and also enclosed is a list of all Ohio races with the winners highlighted in each contest:

#### **GOVERNOR**

As expected, Republican (and current Ohio Attorney General) Mike DeWine and Democrat Richard Cordray easily won their respective primaries to become the major party candidates for November's Governor's race. DeWine and Cordray will be seeking to succeed Republican Governor John Kasich, who is term-limited. DeWine won a bitter primary against current Lt. Governor Mary Taylor while Cordray turned back a challenge from former Cleveland Mayor and US Congressman Dennis Kucinich and former Ohio Senate Democratic Leader Joe Schiavoni. The DeWine-Cordray race for Governor will be a rematch from 2010's Ohio Attorney General's contest; a race DeWine won.

#### **STATEWIDE OFFICES/ISSUES**

Other than the race for Governor, the only other contested primary for statewide office was for the Republican nomination for Treasurer. Current Ohio House member Robert Sprague of Findlay easily turned back a challenge from Sandra O'Brien and will face Democrat Rob Richardson in November.

State Issue 1, the bipartisan constitutional amendment to change the method in which legislative districts are drawn in Ohio, overwhelmingly was approved by voters, gathering almost a 75% approval rating across the state.

#### **US HOUSE/US SENATE**

The most closely watched contest in Ohio for a seat in the US House was in the 12<sup>th</sup> Congressional District, as this was a multi-person primary battle on both sides of the aisle to succeed retired

Congressman Pat Tiberi. Democratic and Republican voters in this district were asked to vote twice on candidates for each party who were running in this contest, once for a candidate from each party to stand for election in a "special election" in August (to fill the unexpired term of Tiberi) and once to be the party's nominee in November for election to a full term in Congress that will begin in 2019.

On the Republican side, 12 candidates were on the ballot in this race, as in the final few weeks, most of the focus was on current Ohio State Senator Troy Balderson and Delaware County-based Township Trustee Melanie Leneghan. Balderson had the backing of former Congressman Tiberi while Leneghan was strongly supported by Congressman Jim Jordan. At the end of the evening, Balderson won a very close race for both the unexpired Tiberi term and to be the Republican nominee to run in the November general election for a new full term.

On the Democratic side, much of the focus was on current Franklin County Recorder Danny O' Connor, who was strongly supported by local Democrats and was the endorsed Democratic candidate for the seat. O'Connor easily defeated six other Democratic challengers and will face Balderson both in the August special election and the November general election.

The other notable primary for an Ohio Congressional seat was on the Republican side in Ohio's 16<sup>th</sup> District. This seat is being vacated by current Congressman Jim Renacci, who was seeking the Republican nomination to challenge current Democratic US Senator Sherrod Brown in November. This Republican primary featured former Ohio State University and NFL football player Anthony Gonzales against current Ohio House member Christina Hagan. Gonzales was the endorsed Republican candidate and Hagan very closely aligned herself as a strong advocate of President Trump. In the end, Gonzales scored an easy victory and will face Democrat Susan Palmer in the November general election.

In the Republican US Senate primary, Jim Renacci was successful in his bid to win that opportunity to face Sherrod Brown in November, as he easily turned back the spirited challenges of both businessman Mike Gibbons and Melissa Ackison. Renacci had the endorsement of President Trump in this race and was clearly visible during the President's trip to Cleveland late last week. Gibbons appeared to provide the largest challenge to Renacci, as he was the endorsed candidate of the Franklin County (Columbus and surrounding area) Republican Party.

#### **OHIO HOUSE/OHIO SENATE**

Most of the drama of the evening played out in primaries in the Ohio House of Representatives where a hotly-contested race for Speaker is playing out in the background. Rep. Ryan Smith, who has the support and control of the Ohio House Republican Organization Committee (OHROC) and Larry Householder, a former Speaker who aims to return to power.

The chamber is currently controlled by the GOP with 66 seats – a high water mark for the Republicans. Political infighting between Smith and Householder has thrown this year's primary into disarray as each camp runs and supports candidates in seats that are open due to term limits. By our count there were at least 28 open or contested GOP seats, compared to 21 open or contested Democratic seats in the House.



Here are some of the results from contested GOP seats:

6<sup>th</sup> District: *Jim Trakas* beat Michael Canty in the 6<sup>th</sup> district (currently held by term limited Rep. Marlene Anielski) by almost 10 percentage points. Canty was the OHROC-supported candidate, while Trakas, a former state representative, is reportedly aligned with Householder.

House 19<sup>th</sup>: *Tim Barhorst*, seen as supportive of Householder, bested Dave Ferguson the OHROC endorsed candidate pulling 53% of the vote in this solid Republican seat now held by Anne Gonzales who hopes to move to an open Senate seat.

House 37<sup>th</sup>: *Mike Rasor* beat out two fellow Republicans (Craig Shubert and Dexter Vaugh) and will take on Democrat Casey Weinstein this November in a seat that has been in the GOP column for years.

House 43<sup>rd</sup>: *J. Todd Smith* beat out fellow Republican Kenneth Henning in a Republican-leaning seat now held by Rep. Kristina Roegner, who has her own designs on winning a vacant Senate seat.

House 50<sup>th</sup>: *Reggie Stoltzfus* beat out fellow Republican Josh Hagan, brother of the current officeholder Rep. Christina Hagan who ran for an open Congressional seat by a roughly 60-40 margin. As noted above Christina Hagan was defeated by Anthony Gonzales.

House 51<sup>st</sup>: Political newcomer *Sara Carruthers*, an heir to one of the founders of Procter and Gamble, dispatched current Rep. Wes Retherford. Retherford, who got in hot water after being found passed out in his vehicle in a fast food drive thru with a loaded handgun, also faced a primary challenge by former state Representative Greg Jolivet. Retherford is the only sitting incumbent in the House who was defeated in a primary.

61<sup>st</sup>: In a seat now held by Rep. Ron Young, who is hoping to make the leap from the House to the Senate, *Jamie Callender* beat out John Pelcnik who was supported by OHROC. Callender is also a former term-limited member of the House who decided to run for another two-year term. Callender is widely considered a Householder supporter.

64<sup>th</sup>: Former Rep. Randy Law was attempting to make a comeback after sitting out to reset his term limits clock and eyed a seat held by Democrat Michael O'Brien. Law lost to eventual winner *Martha Yoder* who will now take on O'Brien in the general election.

67<sup>th</sup>: Current state Senator *Kris Jordan*, who decided against a run for U.S. Congress, is running instead in the November general election for a seat in the Ohio House. Jordan, after passing on a chance to run for Congress, still managed to best OHROC backed candidate Denise Martin.

72<sup>nd</sup>: Rep. *Larry Householder* easily fended off a primary challenge by fellow Republican Kevin Black with Householder pulling 64% of the votes in this largely rural region.

78<sup>th</sup>: Rep. *Ron Hood* turned back opposition by two other GOP candidates in this solid Republican district ultimately pulling 74% of the vote.

80<sup>th</sup>: In one of the more interesting upsets of the evening, OHROC supported candidate John "Bud" O'Brien was bested by fellow Republican businesswoman *Jena Powell* who won by pulling almost 50% of the vote in this rural west Ohio district. Powell is a political newcomer who has never held elected office.

81<sup>st</sup>: Rep. *Jim Hoops*, a former member of the House who was recently appointed to a vacant seat, was able to prevail over a fellow Republican pulling 65% of the vote.

83<sup>rd</sup>: With Rep. Robert Sprague running for state Treasurer this seat was open with two GOP candidates vying for the chance to run for this heavily-GOP leaning seat. Jon Cross beat Cheryl Buckland and will move on the November general election.

84<sup>th</sup>: Rep. Keith Faber, who also served as Senate President, ran for Auditor of State leaving his House seat open. His nephew Travis Faber ran for the open seat but the Faber name wasn't enough to secure a victory. Susan Manchester prevailed in this solidly Republican district.

87<sup>th</sup>: Riordan McClain, appointed to a seat previously held by his father Jeff, faced a three-way contest to retain his seat. According to unofficial results he won the primary by only 60 votes over former state Rep. Steve Reinhardt. This margin should automatically trigger a recount.

90<sup>th</sup>: The departure of term limited Rep. Terry Johnson opened this seat to four-way GOP primary with Brian Baldrige winning the contest.

91<sup>st</sup>: a seat that until recently was held by former House Speaker Cliff Rosenberger (R-Clarksville) who resigned over a potential FBI inquiry into out of state travel was won by Republican Shane Wilkin. Beth Ellis, who was hand-picked by Rosenberger, was passed over for the seat.

98<sup>th</sup>: The departure of Rep. Al Landis due to term limits opened this seat up to a 5-way primary contest. In the end, the results of this race are inconclusive as the two top candidates Brett Hillyer and Shane Gunnoe were separated by only 8 votes according to unofficial election results. This contest will certainly go to a recount before a final winner is declared.

**Ohio Senate:** the drama factor was much lower in the Ohio Senate where majority Republicans, who now control 24 of 33 seats, had a much easier go of it. They had fewer districts held by incumbents to protect and minority Democrats had to spend precious resources in several contested primaries featuring term limited House members who had nowhere else to land.

1<sup>st</sup> District: *Rob McColley* was recently appointed to a vacant seat and although he may have appeared vulnerable McColley ran up an impressive 61.5% of the vote in this large, rural and quite conservative district against two other GOP candidates.

7<sup>th</sup> District: Sen. Steve Wilson also prevailed in his race against fellow Republican Brad Lamoreaux who attempted to run to the right of Sen. Wilson. Still Wilson won by a margin of 57% to 43%.

9<sup>th</sup> District: This Cincinnati area seat featured a run by former Democratic state Rep. Dale Mallory against incumbent Sen. Cecil Thomas. Thomas pulled off an impressive win against an opponent whose name has been on the ballot before running up 74% of the vote.

11<sup>th</sup> District: Another Democratic seat this match up featured two term-limited House members who squared off in this Toledo-area district. Theresa Fedor beat Mike Ashford by a 56-44% margin.

13<sup>th</sup> District: Nathan Manning posted an impressive win against fellow Republican Ryan Sawyer rolling up nearly 75% of the vote. He is vying to replace his mother term-limited Sen. Gayle Manning, who has designs on her son's House seat.

15<sup>th</sup> District: in another match up featuring two Democrats state Rep. Hearcel Craig easily beat Jodi Howell by almost 70% of the vote.

19<sup>th</sup> District: term limited Rep. Andrew Brenner easily swatted down fellow Republican Joel Spitzer with almost 68% of the vote in this heavily Republican seat in Delaware County.

21<sup>st</sup> District: Incumbent Sen. Sandra Williams easily dispatched three other Democrats, including two well-known former members (former State Sen. Jeff Johnson and Rep. Bill Patmon) rolling up an impressive 60% of the vote total.

23<sup>rd</sup> District: in this solid Democratic seat two popular House members faced off with Nickie Antonio pulling an upset over former Cleveland City Councilmember Martin Sweeney. Antonio took 54% of the vote.

25<sup>th</sup> District: This contest featured Minority Leader Kenny Yuko against term-limited Rep. John Barnes. Yuko won by a margin of 59-41%.