

November 9, 2011  
Michael R. Davis, IOM

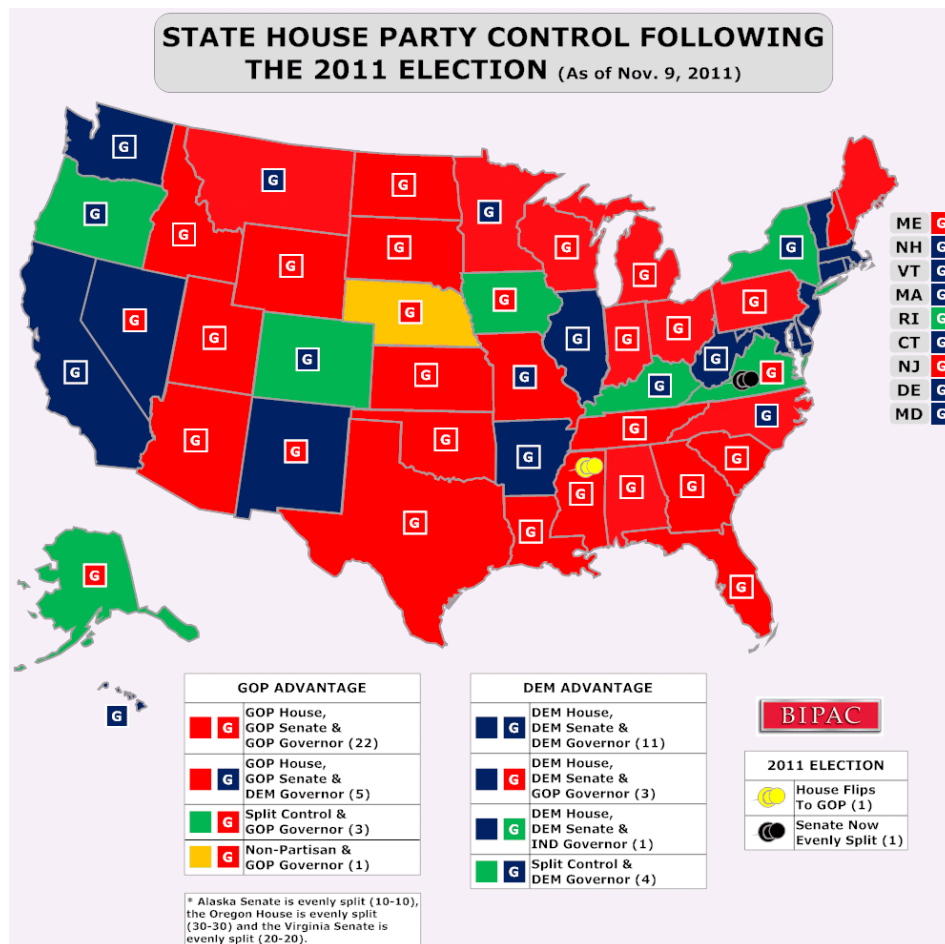
## 2011 Elections Don't Dramatically Alter the Landscape for 2012

Election nights are adrenaline packed nights. They are almost as good as Christmas morning and right up there with the start of the greatest race in the world, the Indianapolis 500. Even though there were few surprises on the biggest election day of 2011, the 'R' theme we identified earlier this year clearly continues – 'R' as in Reapportionment, Redistricting, Recalls, Referendums, Runoffs and for control of the Virginia Senate, Recounts.

Republicans will declare themselves the 2011 winners and best positioned with voters going into 2012 while Democrats will declare themselves victors and best positioned to hold the White House. Republicans will point to the gains made in the Virginia Senate and House of Delegates, the Mississippi House, the large victory margin on Issue 3 in Ohio that turns back "Obamacare", easy victories in two of the three Gubernatorial races and turning back some referendums/initiatives that would increase taxes. Democrats will counter with the strong performance on Issue 2 in Ohio that repeals a collective bargaining measure supported by Governor Kasich (R), an easy victory in the Kentucky Governor's race (along with five of the six statewide offices) and important wins in legislative races in Iowa and Michigan.

The Republican gains in Virginia and Mississippi are significant developments and put them closer to locking up Southern states as a large geographic voting block (see map at the end of this article). In looking at which party controls the Governor's office, Senate and House, Democrats now have control of only Arkansas and the North Carolina Governor's office.

Interesting to note, since the inauguration of Barack Obama as President in 2009, there has now been a total of 24 state legislative chambers to move away from having a Democrat majority. Republicans have gained a clear majority in 21 of those states while 3 of those states have moved to an evenly split legislative chamber. This resetting of state legislative control across the country will certainly be an underlying and likely overlooked factor that contributes to the shaping of the political landscape in 2012.



The attitude voters have brought into the voting booth the last several elections went a long way in deciding most outcomes across the country. Victories were not decided based on partisan preferences, but based on pocketbook issues and a continued frustration with incumbents and their inability to improve a struggling economy.

Here is rundown on many of the top 2011 election results:

- VA – As alluded to at the top, control of the Virginia Senate will be determined by a recount in one State Senate district (District 17, where over \$2 million was spent). It appears that the majority has shifted from a 22-18 Democrat majority to a 20-20 tie that is broken by Republican Lt. Governor Bill Bolling. Once session begins in January, a major fight looms with congressional redistricting currently unresolved. The current map was drawn by Democrats and that huge advantage prevented Republicans from winning a clear majority. In the Virginia House of Delegates, Republicans gained either 6 or 7 seats to increase their majority that started at a 59 to 39 advantage (plus 2 seats held by Independents). Virginia Republicans now control the Governor’s Office, the State Senate (with a Republican Lt. Governor presiding) and the House of Delegates for only the second time in Virginia history. Without question, Virginia is on the short list to be the most targeted state in 2012. The state will be campaigned in heavily in the presidential contest and has a highly competitive open U.S. Senate seat.
- MS – Lt. Gov. Phil Bryant (R) claimed victory in Mississippi’s gubernatorial election, defeating Hattiesburg Mayor Johnny DuPree (D) 61% to 39%. Bryant was able to significantly outraise DuPree, \$4.3 million to \$1.2 million. DuPree made state history as the first black major party candidate for governor since Reconstruction while Bryant will replace Gov. Haley Barbour (R), who is limited by Mississippi election law to two terms. Going into the election,

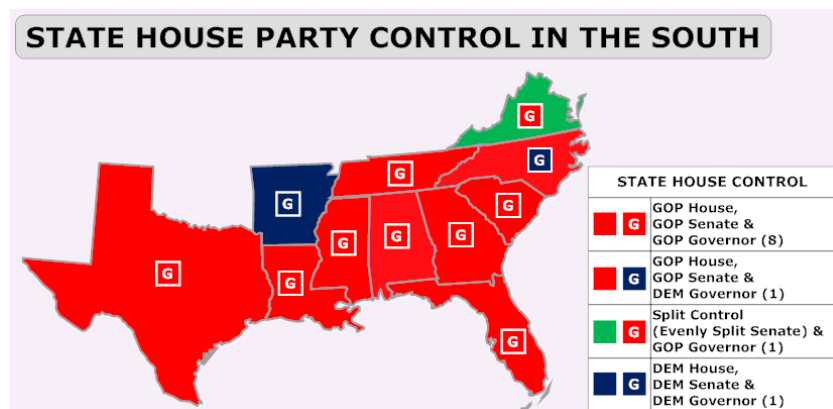
Republicans controlled the State Senate (27 R, 24 D, 1 vacancy) while the Democratic Party has controlled the State House of Representatives (68 D, 54 R) since Reconstruction. This election presented the first opportunity for the GOP to capture the House chamber in over a century. Mississippi's election took place under the state's 2000 Census maps since the legislature was unable to draw new legislative districts in time for the 2011 election. Redistricting will be revisited after the 2012 election. With two races undecided, Republicans will hold a majority in the Senate by at least a 28-22 margin. In one of the bigger stories of the night, The Mississippi State House of Representatives switched from Democrat to Republican control for the first time since Reconstruction. With reports still coming in, Republicans now have majority control with a total of 63 seats, leaving Democrats with 58. Republicans control both legislative chambers as well as the governorship. This victory means Republicans will completely control the redistricting process in 2012.

- KY – Incumbent Governor Steve Beshear (D) cruised to an easy and dominate victory over State Senate President David Williams (R) by capturing 55.7% of the vote to 35.3% for Williams. Beshear is rewarded with a second term and speculation is already mounting of a challenge to Senator Mitch McConnell (R) in 2014.
- LA – Incumbent Bobby Jindal (R) easily won reelection with 66% of the vote in an open primary on October 22 and by topping 50%, Jindal avoids a runoff election. Jindal won every parish due to high popularity ratings and because he was significantly better funded than his opponents. Following runoff elections, Republicans will continue to be in the majority in both the House and the Senate. The run-off for Louisiana's legislative races (4 in the Senate and 20 in the House) that did not have a candidate achieve 50% will be held on November 19.
- NJ – Democrats claimed victory by increasing its majority in the State General Assembly (House) by one seat to a 48-32 spread over Republicans and will continue to hold the same 24-16 spread in the Senate.
- OR – In the special election to replace David Wu (D), the January 31, 2012 matchup is now set following the primary election. Both Suzanne Bonamici (D) and Rob Cornilles (R) outtraised and easily won their respective primaries. Bonamici won with nearly 66% in her primary while Cornilles, who lost to Wu in 2010, garnered just over 72% while defeating four opponents.
- IA – Going into the election, Democrats controlled the State Senate by a narrow 26-24 margin and a special election in State Senate district 18 could have left the chamber tied. Democrat Liz Mathis, a well-known former TV anchor, continued the Democrat majority by winning 56% to Republican Cindy Golding's 44%. Reports showed that nearly \$1 million was raised by the two candidates, which was about twice as much as the previous record for the most money raised in a Senate contest.
- AZ – State Senator Russell Pearce (R), the author of the much discussed immigration bill, was recalled. Jerry Lewis (R) defeated Pearce by a 53.3% to 45.3% outcome.
- MI – By 232 votes, Rep. Paul Scott (R) has narrowly been recalled. Scott is the chairman of the House Education Committee and was targeted by the Michigan Teachers Association for supporting cuts to education funding. The last successful recall of a state legislator in Michigan was 1983.
- SF – In this space last week, I highlighted what just might have been the [best TV ad of the campaign season](#). The candidate in the ad was Ed Lee and it appears he has won a legit full four-year term to be the San Francisco Mayor.
- IN – Indianapolis Mayor Greg Ballard (R), who won in a major surprise in 2007, won reelection in a tough contest while the Democrats won a majority of seats in the City-County Council. Statewide, Republicans flipped a 68-48 Democrat majority in mayor's offices to a 61-54 Republican majority with 2 races undecided.

It appears that in 12 of the 13 special elections for state legislative office in GA, IA, MS, MO, TN, TX and WI that the incumbent party won. In a Missouri House contest, an Independent candidate has won a seat held by Democrats.

In addition to the above contests involving candidates, there were several business related initiatives and referendums

- CO – On November 1, voters rejected the “Sales and Income Tax Increase Initiative” (Proposition 103) by a 64% to 36% margin. The initiative would have raised sales and income taxes to fund education. In Denver, a mandatory city paid sick leave measure (Initiative 300) that would have greatly expanded sick time for employees was soundly defeated by almost a two to one margin. The message from voters was clear, no tax increases.
- ME – Voters rejected, by a 60% to 40%, the elimination of same day registration passed by the Republican controlled legislature. The outcome reinstates same day registration.
- MS – The Mississippi Voter Identification Amendment (Initiative 27) passed by a 62% to 38% vote. This measure requires voters to present a government issued photo id at the polls in order to vote.
- OH – A split decision on two big ballot measures that handed one defeat to Gov. Kasich (R) and the other to President Obama (D). The bigger issue was Issue 2 which would repeal a measure passed by the Ohio Legislature that would limit collective bargaining rights for public sector employees. In campaign finance reports filed with the state, labor unions raised nearly \$31 million to the nearly \$8 million raised by the pro-reform side. Fueled in part by this large cash advantage and motivated labor unions, the measure was defeated (thus removing the collective bargaining reforms from being law) by a 61% to 39% margin. On Issue 3, a measure to exempt Ohio residents from national health care mandates such as the one pushed by President Obama, voters by a 66% to 34% margin supported being exempt from national health care mandates.
- TX – By a narrow 51.5% to 48.5% margin, Texas Proposition 2 passed. Proposition 2 (Texas Water Development Bonds Amendment) grants the Texas Water Development Board the ability to issue additional bonds provided that the outstanding total of all bonds does not exceed \$6 billion. This issue had difficulty gaining voter attention and understanding, but was a critical water issue to help address population growth and recent drought issues.



Up next on the election calendar over the next couple of months, and continuing with the ‘R’ election theme, will be a high profile Recount (VA Senate), Runoff elections (GA, LA and TX), Redistricting fights (too many to mention here), Recall elections (WI) and a major Redistricting Referendum fight (OH).

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