US midterm election: A massive repudiation of Trump and the Republicans

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The 2026 midterm elections are an overwhelming repudiation of Donald Trump and the policies of his government by the American people. The Republican Party was swept out of power in the House of Representatives in a landslide and lost control of the Senate as well.

The Republicans lost Senate seats in North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, Ohio, Kansas, Maine and Iowa as of this writing, while not capturing any seats previously held by Democrats. The incoming Senate could have a Democratic majority as high as 55-45, depending on the outcome of the race in Alaska.

The anti-Trump wave also brought down entrenched Republican governors like Greg Abbott in Texas and billionaire gubernatorial candidates Vivek Ramaswamy in Ohio and Rick Jackson in Georgia.

The Democratic victories were by such wide margins that they were called very early by the Associated Press and the television networks, and faced no significant challenge from the Republican candidates. Nor was the Trump administration able to intimidate voters from going to the polls—on the contrary, turnout appears to have been the largest ever for a non-presidential election.

In Texas, the largest state under Republican rule, three-term incumbent Abbott called Democrat Gina Hinojosa to concede at 10:00 p.m. local time, as he trailed her by more than a million votes. Hinojosa will be the first Hispanic governor of Texas, while Democrat Xavier Becerra will be the first Hispanic governor of California—a rebuke to Trump's racist demonization of immigrants, particularly those from Mexico.

James Talarico became the first Democrat to win a Senate seat from Texas in nearly four decades, routing Texas state Attorney General Ken Paxton, hand-picked by Trump, by one million votes. Dr. Annie Andrews, a pediatrician, won the South Carolina Senate seat held by Darline Graham, sister of the longtime Republican Senator Lindsey Graham, who was also handpicked by Trump. And in Kansas, Adam Hamilton became the first Democrat elected to the US Senate since 1932.

The shift in the House of Representatives was equally striking. Democrats captured Republican-held seats in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Wisconsin, Missouri, Nebraska and Colorado, with results from the West Coast still being counted.

Some state delegations were entirely transformed: Colorado went from 4-4 to Democrats ahead in all eight districts. In North Carolina, a Republican gerrymander aimed at creating an 11-3 split in the delegation has resulted so far in five Democratic wins and a 5-4 Democratic lead in the remaining contests, which would be a gain of seven seats in a single state. In Florida, all four Democratic districts redrawn to favor Republicans were won by the Democrats anyway. There was a similar outcome to the Republican gerrymander in Texas.

The election exploded the fiction of "red" and "blue" states that has dominated corporate media coverage of American politics for two decades. Iowa, Kansas, Ohio and Texas, supposedly bastions of the Republican Party, elected both Democratic governors and Democratic senators.

The exit polls show how sweeping the repudiation was. Thirty-nine percent of voters cited the economy as the most important issue, and 32 percent cited threats to democracy. Only 3 percent cited "crime," a sign that support for the law-and-order demagogy of the fascist right has collapsed.

The vote was also a verdict on the war against Iran.

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On the eve of the election, the United States bombed Qeshm Island, and the Gulf states were told to prepare for an operation immediately after the vote. Yet in NBC's exit poll, 62 percent of voters said the war was the wrong decision, and 74 percent called it a major factor in their vote.

Voters viewed both capitalist parties negatively, a sign of the continuing radicalization of workers and young people. Sixty-nine percent said the US economic system "favors the wealthy," and 57 percent expect life for the next generation to be worse than it is today.

This was the first national election since federal immigration agents murdered the protesters Alex Pretti and Renée Good in Minnesota, and since the murders of immigrant workers in Texas, Maine and many other states. In it the American people dealt a powerful blow to the anti-immigrant frenzy of the Trump White House. Exit polls showed a huge swing against Trump and the Republicans among Latino voters, young working-class men and college students.

In Michigan, Trump's racist, Islamophobic campaign against Democrat Abdul El-Sayed backfired, even with the last-minute stab in the back from Representative Haley Stevens, who had lost the Democratic Senate nomination to El-Sayed. Kamala Harris lost Michigan in 2024 in large part because she was identified with the Gaza genocide. El-Sayed rose to political prominence by criticizing the Israeli genocide in Gaza and the war against Iran, although he later retreated on both.

The election results were not only a repudiation of Trump but a shock to the Democratic Party and to the financial oligarchy as a whole, which underwrites and controls both parties. For two years, the Democrats prostrated themselves before Trump and presented him as an all-powerful colossus, with themselves as all but helpless to stop him.

The vote revealed something entirely different: a population far to the left of the Democratic Party and determined to strike a blow against the administration.

The Democratic Party is the initial, electoral beneficiary of this anti-Trump movement. But every action of the Democrats will be aimed at curbing this movement and diverting it back within the framework of "normal" capitalist politics.

While the working class is moving to the left, the Democratic Party is moving to the right. The new House majority will have far more ex-soldiers and ex-spies than members who claim to favor "democratic socialism."

In a lecture Monday night at the University of California, Berkeley, WSWS Editorial Board Chairman David North stated: "Whatever the outcome of tomorrow's vote, policy will be determined in the final analysis by the crisis of the capitalist economy, by the disposition of a technology that is transforming the conditions of labor for the entire human race, by the drive of American imperialism to war and by the response of the international working class."

None of these processes will be altered by a change in the composition of Congress. The contradiction between the aims of those who voted and the policies of the party they voted for cannot be resolved within the two-party system. It will be fought out in the class struggle.

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