Democrats consolidate control of US Congress, statehouses

Patrick Martin
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In the wake of a landslide, nationwide repudiation of the Trump administration in the November 3 midterm election, the Democratic Party has taken complete control of Congress and the majority of US states. The political shift is the largest electoral victory for the Democrats since the 1974 Watergate election, which followed the forced resignation of Republican President Richard Nixon.

Under the reactionary, corporate-controlled two-party system, popular hatred of the incumbent president and his policies is channeled into support for the Democrats, whose policies are not fundamentally different and whose class allegiance to the financial oligarchy and the military-intelligence apparatus is unshakeable.

In the House of Representatives, while there were several dozen seats still not called by the Associated Press, the Democrats were projected to hold a majority of 259-176, a staggering 83-seat margin. This would be the largest Democratic majority since 1990. The Republican Party has not held such numbers in the House since 1928.

The Democratic margin in the national total vote in House contests was estimated at 13 points, the biggest for either party in half a century. This result exceeded the nine-point Democratic margin in the generic ballot found by pre-election opinion polling.

Democrats flipped a huge number of seats in key battleground states: at least six in North Carolina, four in Pennsylvania, three each in Ohio, Michigan, Iowa, Texas and Colorado. Republican gerrymandering was largely unsuccessful, as all four Florida Democratic incumbents redrawn into supposedly Republican-majority districts won reelection anyway, as did black Democrat Shomari Figures in Alabama, and several Democrats redistricted in Texas.

With two Senate seats still undecided, the Democrats had captured seven Republican seats, going from a 53-47 Republican majority to a 54-44 Democratic majority. The two outstanding seats, both held by Republican incumbents, were not likely to be decided for several weeks, but Democrats hold narrow leads in both, making a 56-44 Democratic majority possible. The Democrats have not held 56 Senate seats since 2010, while the Republicans have not held 56 Senate seats in nearly a century.

In the Mississippi Senate race, Democratic challenger Scott Colom expanded his lead over incumbent Republican Cindy Hyde-Smith from 65 votes to more than 1,000 Wednesday, with thousands of provisional ballots still to be counted.

In Alaska, Democrat Mary Peltola held a 600-vote lead over incumbent Republican Senator Dan S. Sullivan, but neither candidate had more than 50 percent of the vote in the four-way contest, triggering the state’s ranked choice voting system in which the lower-ranking candidates will be eliminated and their votes redistributed according to voters’ preferences, if any. This process will not even begin until the last mail-in ballots are counted, and is unlikely to be concluded until the end of the month.

While the Democratic majorities in the House and Senate are large by the standards of the past three decades, the Republican collapse in control of statehouses may be even more significant. Democrats now hold 28 state governorships, compared to 20 for the Republicans, with Kansas and Alaska still not yet determined.

In terms of population, the Democrats control 13 of the 15 largest states, all but Florida and Tennessee. The population of the states with Democratic governors will exceed 256 million when the new governors take office

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in January. The population of the states held by Republican governors is only 84.5 million, less than a third of the Democratic total. Kansas and Alaska, both small in population, will not change that balance.

If the 2028 presidential contest were to follow the map of the state governorships, the Democratic candidate would collect nearly 400 out of 538 electoral votes. Hence the declaration by Florida's Republican governor, Ron DeSantis, that the outcome of the 2026 midterms was "close to an extinction-level event" for the Republican Party in many parts of the country.

Exit polls identified the key issues in the minds of voters as the economy, Trump's corruption and assault on the constitutional democratic order, and US policy in the Middle East, including both the war in Iran and the genocide in Gaza. Between 80 and 90 percent rated the economy as poor, with two-thirds saying Trump's policies were directly responsible.

On the war in Iran, about 60 percent said the attack on Iran was the wrong decision, while 74 percent told NBC that the war was a crucial or major factor in their vote. Of these, more than 60 percent voted Democratic.

Trump's approval rating among voters was only 38 percent, with more than 50 percent strongly disapproving. Some 43 percent said they cast their vote to express opposition to Trump, while only 16 percent said they were seeking to support him. Sixty percent said that Trump prioritized his and his family's personal interests over the public interest.

Trump had told supporters at dozens of events in 20 states to "pretend I'm on the ballot." But Republican candidates were defeated in virtually all these states, with Trump's appearances providing a cement coffin rather than a boost.

The fascist president's highest-profile interventions went down in flames: the anti-Muslim incitement in Michigan; the backing of corrupt state attorney general Ken Paxton in Texas; the embrace of the Ramaswamy campaign in Ohio; and the promotion of Darline Graham in South Carolina.

The rejection of Trump and the Republicans was broad-based, coming from every section of the population, whether classified by age, race or geography. Small cities and rural areas swung against Trump by more than 15 points, as did young working-class white men. Hispanic voters rebelled against Trump's racist anti-immigrant policies, with swings of more than 50 percent in some counties along the Rio Grande. Trump lost every age group, with young voters leading the opposition.

In Michigan, perhaps the epicenter of the campaign over the final weeks, Democrat Abdul El-Sayed won the Senate seat by 7 percentage points and Democrat Jocelyn Benson won the governorship by more than 10 points. Every one of the state's 83 counties shifted toward the Democrats compared to 2024, with El-Sayed and Benson both outdoing Kamala Harris's percentages in Detroit, Ann Arbor, Lansing, Flint, Grand Rapids and Kalamazoo.

Two subgroups among the Democratic House candidates, those affiliated with the Democratic Socialists of America, and those coming from the military-intelligence apparatus, each gained substantially, but the national-security Democrats far outweigh the supposed socialists, whose program is substantially less radical than the policies of the Kennedy-Johnson administrations in the 1960s.

The number of DSA-affiliated members rose from two to eight, with Darializa Avila Chevalier and Claire Valdez (New York), Chris Rabb (Pennsylvania), Donavan McKinney (Michigan), Melat Kiros (Colorado) and Angela Gonzales-Torres (California) joining Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Rashida Tlaib. Three other Democrats in the House are former members of the DSA: Summer Lee (Pennsylvania), Greg Casar (Texas) and newly elected William Lawrence (Michigan).

The "CIA Democrats" more than doubled their numbers, with all 10 incumbents winning reelection, joined by at least 11 new House members: Cait Conley of New York, Rebecca Bennett of New Jersey, Elaine Luria in Virginia, Kristina Knickerbocker in Ohio, Frederick Wellman in Missouri, Zach Dembo in Kentucky, Richard Ojeda in North Carolina, Nancy Lacore in South Carolina, Eileen Laubacher and Jessica Killin in Colorado, and JoAnna Mendoza in Arizona. Another half dozen are trailing slightly with votes still uncounted.

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