



November 7, 2012

Unlike two short years ago when the Republican party had historic wins in the US House and Senate during the mid-term elections, Election Day 2012 was a good one for Democrats. With Florida still too close to call, President Obama has 303 Electoral College votes, significantly more than the 270 he needed to win another four-year term in office.

In the Senate, not only will Democrats retain control of the Senate, they picked up a net gain of two additional seats with two seats still undecided. Democrats picked up seats in Massachusetts where Elizabeth Warren (D) defeated incumbent Scott Brown (R), Indiana where Rep. Joe Donnelly (D) picked up the Senate seat that Senator Richard Lugar (R) had held before losing the primary and in Maine where Angus King, who ran as an Independent but is expected to caucus with the Democrats, won the open seat currently held by retiring Senator Olympia Snowe (R).

Republicans have picked up the Senate seat in Nebraska where Deb Fischer (R) won the seat of retiring Senator Ben Nelson (D). Senate races in Montana and North Dakota are still too close to call. Senator Brown (R-MA) is the only Senate incumbent to lose at this point.

In the House, Republicans will continue to be in the majority, but they had small net loss of seats. In one surprising upset, Rep. Chip Cravaack (R), who defeated House T&I Committee Chairman Jim Oberstar (D) in 2010, lost his reelection bid.

There were a number of pro-infrastructure ballot initiatives around the country with one of the largest in Los Angeles with Measure J, a 30-year extension of the current dedicated sales tax. A 2/3 margin of victory was required and unfortunately the measure failed with 64.7% of the vote.

At the state level, there were only 11 states that held gubernatorial elections, an unusually small number for an even-year election. The only race so far to result in a change of party is in North Carolina where Pat McCrory (R) won the race to replace retiring Governor Bev Perdue (D). The Washington state governorship, currently held by retiring Christine Gregoire (D), is still too close to call.

On the local level, in Hawaii, Kirk Caldwell has won the Honolulu mayor's race by a decisive vote. This was a major come from behind victory over former Governor Ben Cayetano, a fellow Democrat. The race turned into a referendum on the future of the Honolulu rail project. Caldwell's win should ensure this important project will move forward.