Explaining the 2018 Midterm Elections (With a Focus on Our Swing State)

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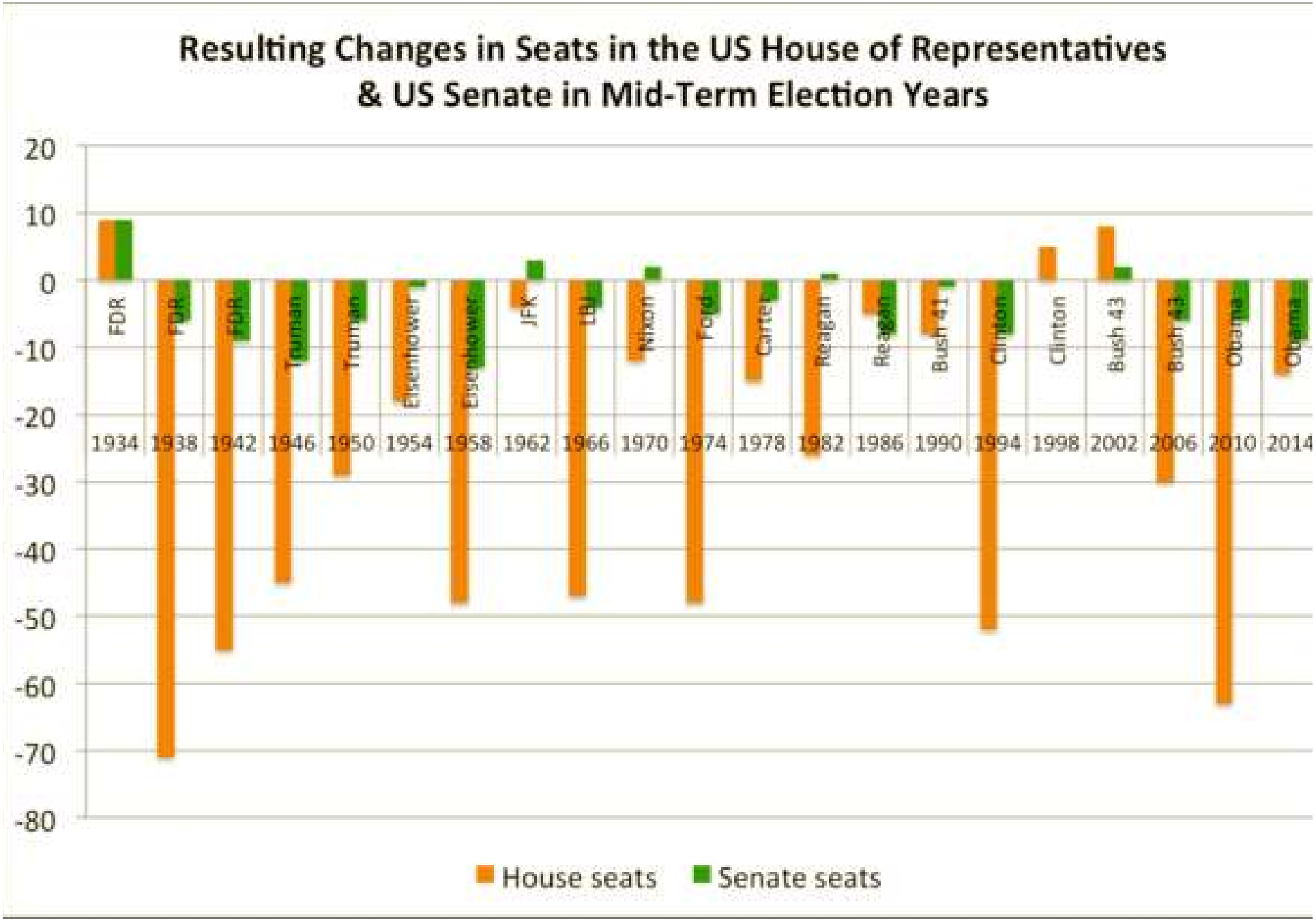
Univ. Wisconsin-Madison
November 13, 2018

Bascom Hill Society
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN FOUNDATION

Blue wave, or blue trickle?

- Midterm elections are almost always bad for the incumbent president's party.
- House: 39 midterm elections since 1862
  - President's party lost seats in 35 (92%): not in 1934, 1998, 2002
  - Average seat loss since 1906, when House size set at 435: 32 seats. Dems. will pick up 37 in 2018.
- Senate: results depend on which states are up, but similar pattern:
  - 26 midterm elections since 1914 (first year of popular vote for Senate); president's party lost Senate seats in 18 (70%)
  - Average change: just under 4 seats; Rs will gain 2 in 2018.
- Governorships: Democrats will pick up at least 7.


Resulting Changes in Seats in the US House of Representatives & US Senate in Mid-Term Election Years
20
10
0
-10
-20
-30
-40
-50
-60
-70
-80
1934
1938
1942
1946
1950
1954
1958
1962
1966
1970
1974
1978
1982
1986
1990
1994
1998
2002
2006
2010
2014
FDR
FDR
FDR
Truman
Truman
Eisenhower
Eisenhower
JFK
LBJ
Nixon
Ford
Carter
Reagan
Reagan
Bush 41
Clinton
Clinton
Bush 43
Bush 43
Obama
Obama
House seats
Senate seats

The revenge of the data nerds

- Big miss in 2016 (but only in the state polls, not the national popular vote).
- Right on the money for 2018
  - Nearly every forecaster said that the Democrats would win control of the House, Republicans would maintain control of the Senate, and Democrats would pick up 5-8 governorships. This is exactly what happened and predicted margins were very close.
  - Wisconsin polls were especially bad in 2016, but pollsters redeemed themselves in 2018.

Candidates

Tammy Baldwin (D)*
Bio | Campaign Site

Leah Vukmir (R)
Bio | Campaign Site

Nate Silver of 538 gave Baldwin a 98% chance of winning, with a 12.8% margin; Baldwin won by 10.8%

Polling Data

Poll	Date	Sample	MoE	Baldwin (D)	Vukmir (R)	Spread
RCP Average	**8/18 - 10/7**	--	--	**52.3**	**41.7**	**Baldwin +10.6**
Marquette	10/3 - 10/7	799 LV	3.9	53	43	Baldwin +10
NBC News/Marist	9/30 - 10/3	571 LV	4.8	54	40	Baldwin +14
Suffolk	8/18 - 8/24	500 LV	4.4	50	42	Baldwin +8

Candidates

Tony Evers (D)

Scott Walker (R)*

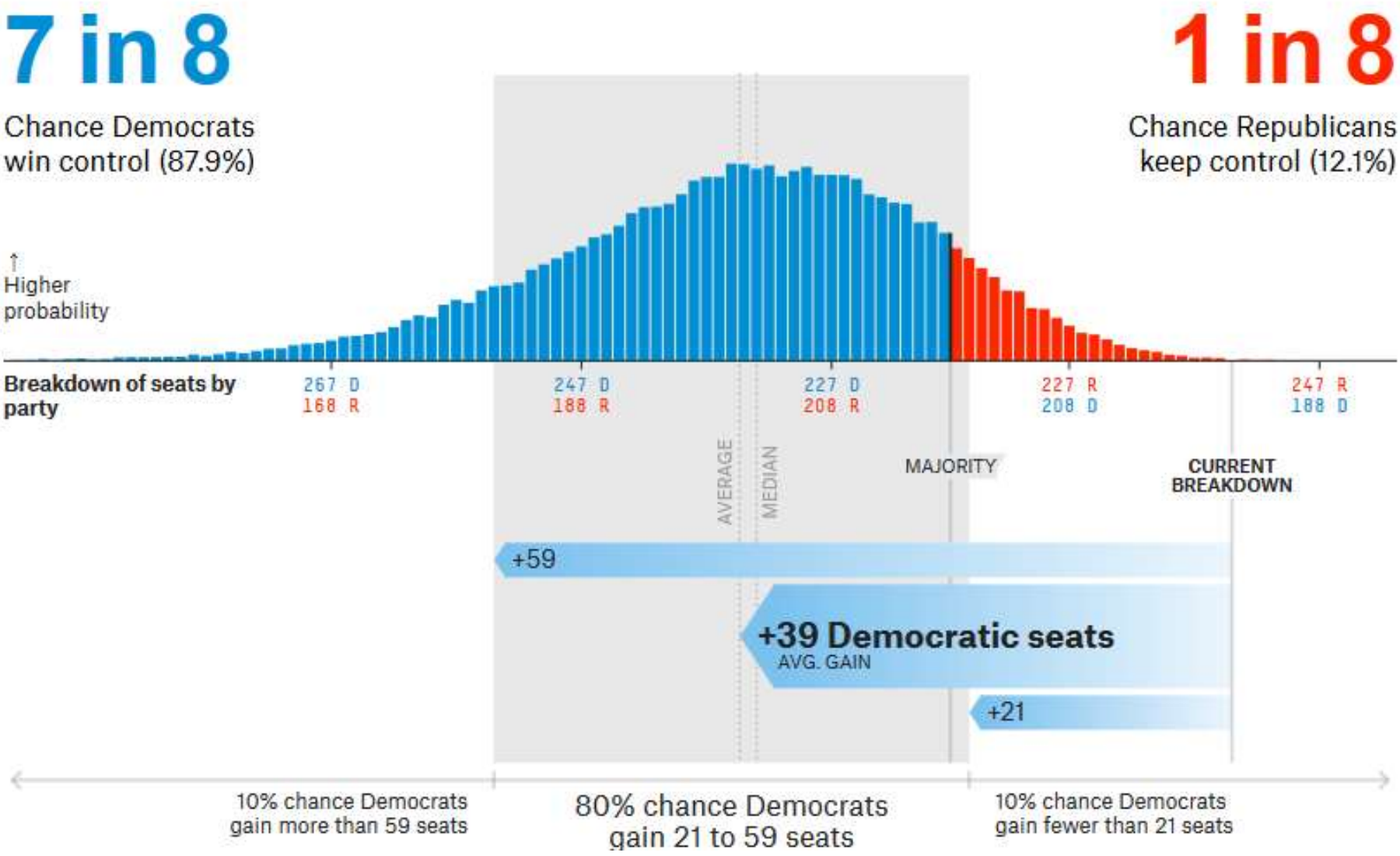
Nate Silver of 538 gave Evers a 60% chance of winning, with a 1.7% margin Evers won by 1.2%.

Polling Data

Poll	Date	Sample	MoE	Evers (D)	Walker (R)	Spread
RCP Average	**8/18 - 10/7**	--	--	**48.3**	**44.7**	**Evers +3.6**
Marquette*	10/3 - 10/7	799 LV	3.9	46	47	Walker +1
NBC News/Marist	9/30 - 10/3	571 LV	4.8	53	43	Evers +10
Marquette*	9/12 - 9/16	614 LV	4.4	49	44	Evers +5
Suffolk	8/18 - 8/24	500 LV	4.4	46	44	Evers +2

Forecasting the race for the House

Updated Nov. 6, 2018, at 11:06 AM



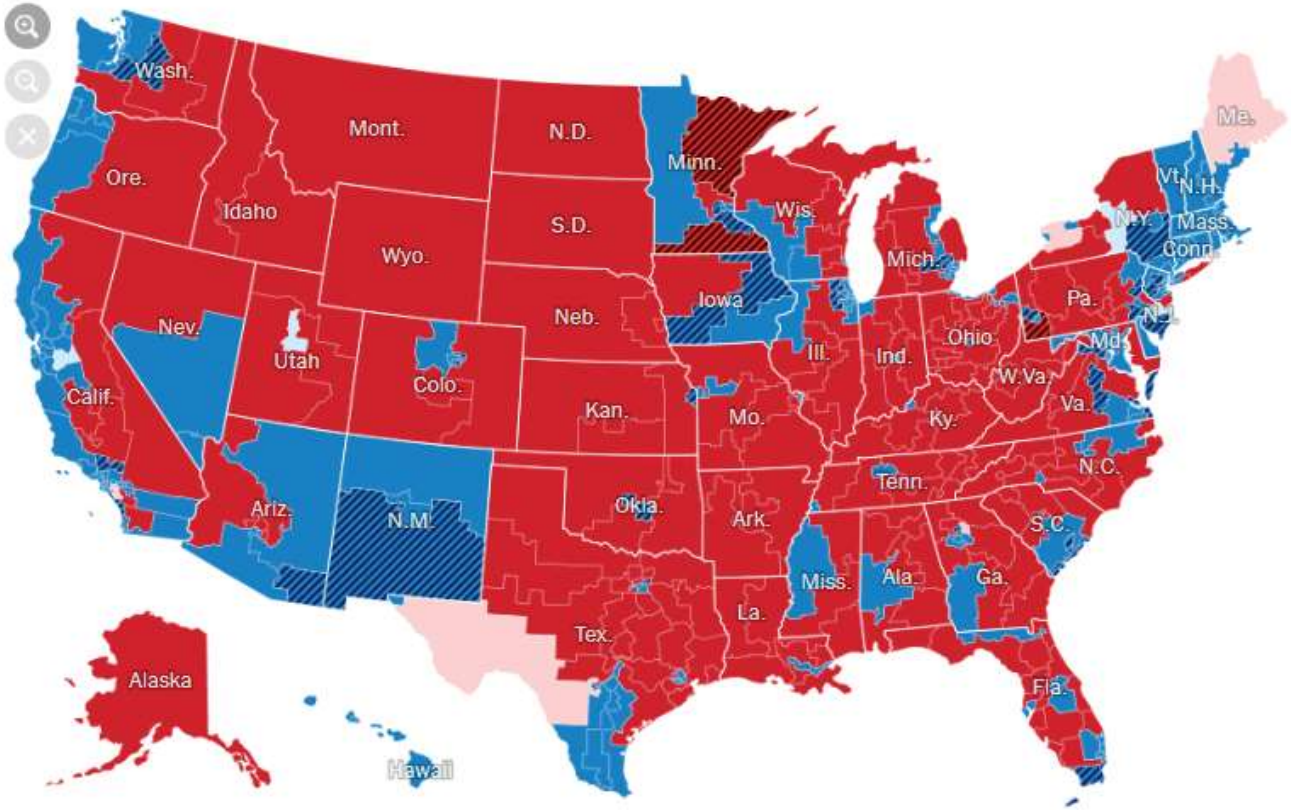
House Election Results: Democrats Take Control

227 Democrats — **10** undecided — **198** Republicans

Gained 32 seats
53,424,685 votes (51.5%)

218
FOR CONTROL

Lost 32 seats
48,440,157 votes (46.7%)



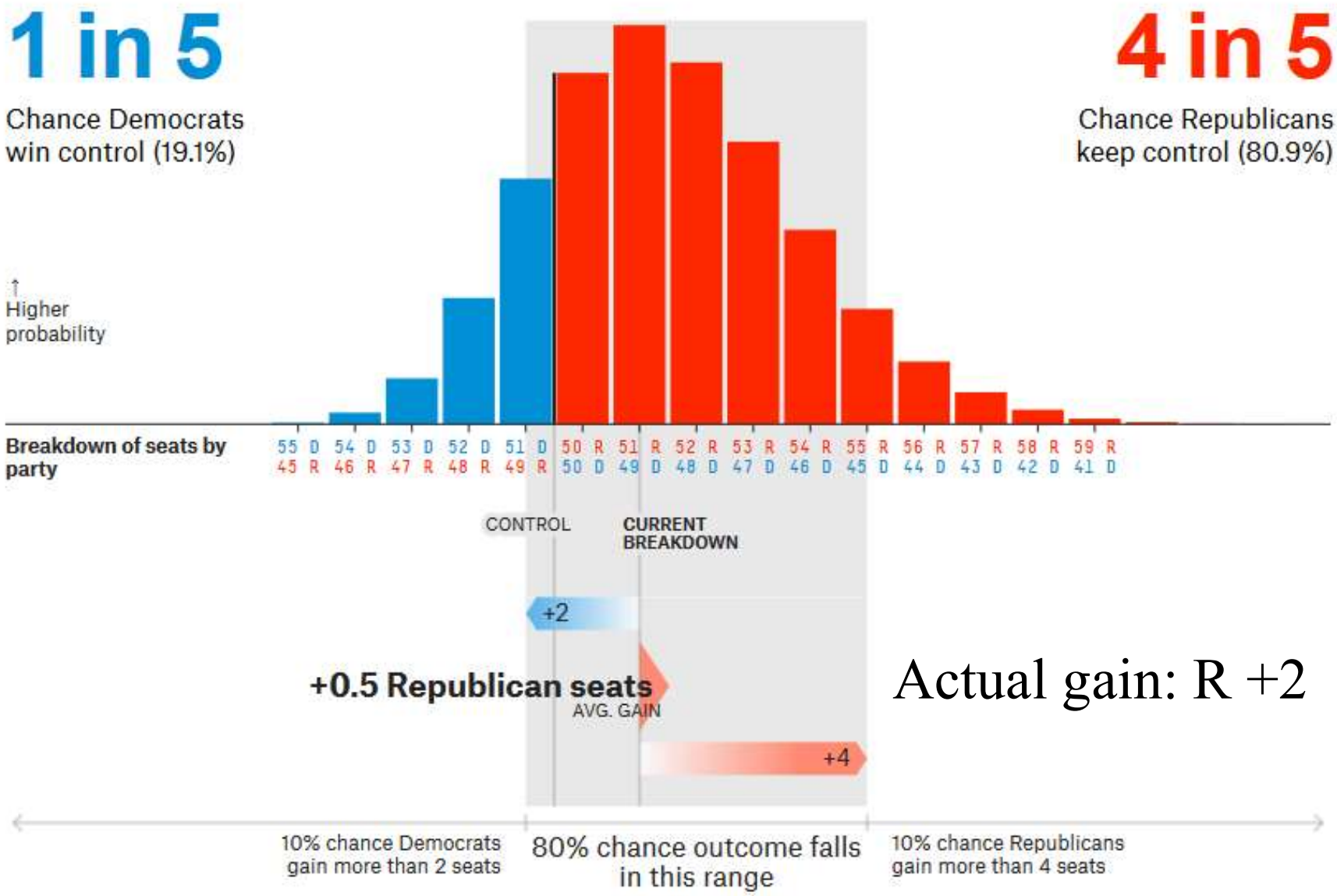
Key Races 80 Total

Dem. favored		Tossup		Rep. favored	
DISTRICT	MARGIN	DISTRICT	MARGIN	DISTRICT	MARGIN
Ariz. 2	✓	Calif. 25	✓	N.Y. 11	✓
Calif. 49	✓	Calif. 48	✓	S.C. 1	✓
Colo. 6	✓	Fla. 26	✓	Minn. 8	✓
Fla. 27	✓	Ga. 6	✓	Pa. 14	✓
Iowa 1	✓	Iowa 3	✓	Alaska	✓
Ill. 6	✓	Ill. 14	✓	Calif. 50	✓
Kan. 3	✓	Mich. 8	✓	Fla. 6	✓
Mich. 11	✓	N.J. 7	✓	Fla. 16	✓
Minn. 2	✓	N.M. 2	✓	Fla. 18	✓
Minn. 3	✓	N.Y. 19	✓	Fla. 25	✓
N.J. 2	✓	Tex. 7	✓	Iowa 4	✓
N.J. 11	✓	Tex. 32	✓	Ill. 12	✓
Pa. 6	✓	Va. 2	✓	Ill. 13	✓
Pa. 7	✓	Va. 7	✓	Mich. 6	✓
Pa. 17	✓	Calif. 10	D+1.8	Mo. 2	✓
Va. 10	✓	N.J. 3	D+1.1	Mont.	✓
Wash. 8	✓	N.Y. 22	D+0.6	N.C. 2	✓
Ariz. 1	✓	Utah 4	D+2.4	Neb. 2	✓
Nev. 3	✓	Minn. 1	✓	N.Y. 24	✓
Nev. 4	✓	Fla. 15	✓	Ohio 1	✓
		Kan. 2	✓	Pa. 16	✓
		Ky. 6	✓	Tex. 22	✓

Likely outcome: Dems. gain 37 seats

Forecasting the race for the Senate

Updated Nov. 6, 2018, at 11:06 AM



Actual gain: R +2

Senate Election Results: Republicans Keep Majority

47 Democrats*

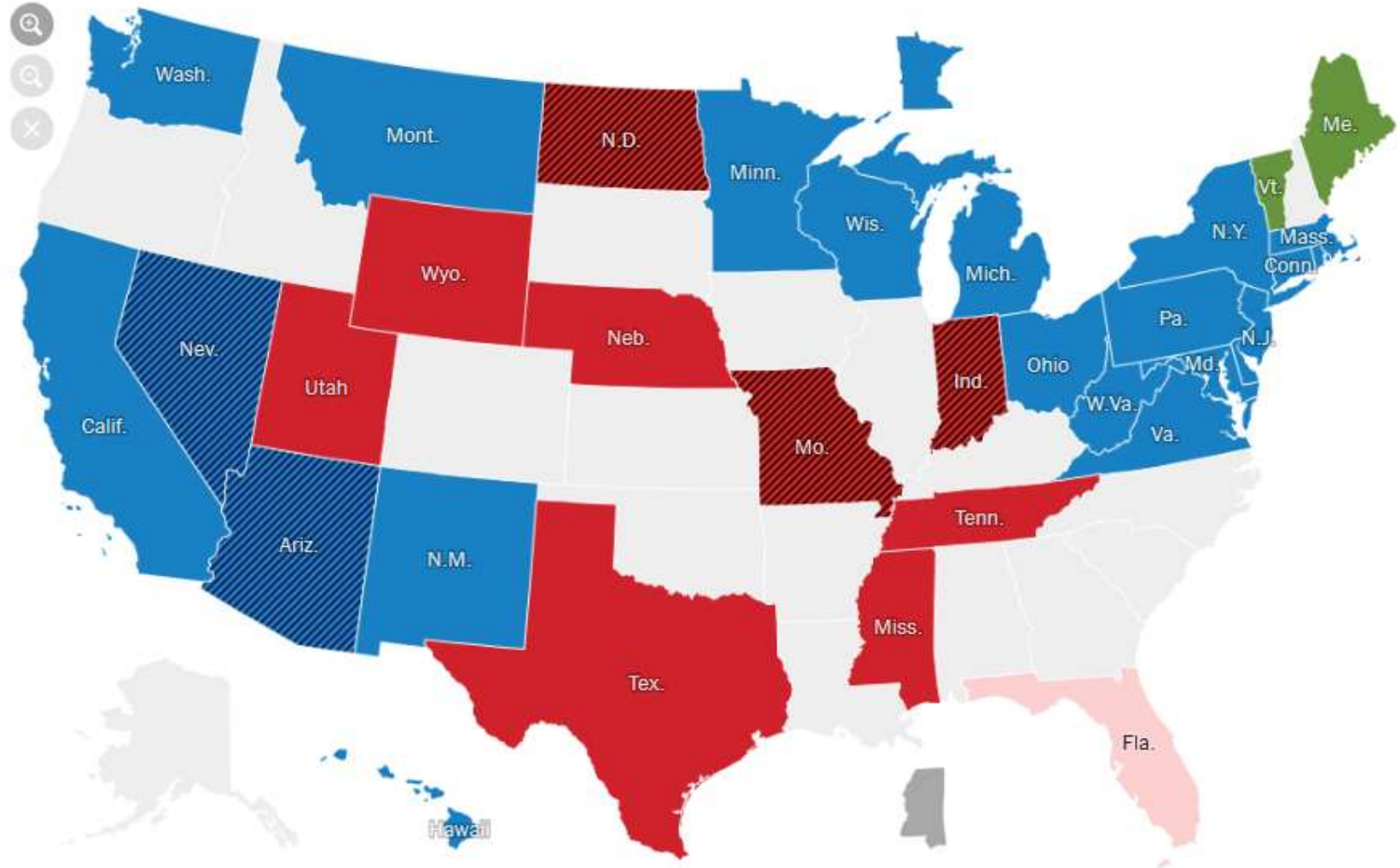
2 undecided

51 Republicans

23 Democrats not up for election
Lost 1 seat
48,293,889 votes (57.5%)

50

42 Republicans not up for election
Gained 1 seat
34,313,064 votes (40.9%)



Dem. Lead Win Flip | Rep. Lead Win Flip | Other Lead Win Flip | Runoff | No election

Key States 13 Total

Dem. favored

STATE	LEADER	MARGIN
Minn. †	Smith	✓
W.Va.	Manchin	✓

Tossup

STATE	LEADER	MARGIN
Ariz.	Sinema	✓
Nev.	Rosen	✓
Mont.	Tester	✓
N.J.	Menendez	✓
Ind.	Braun	✓
Mo.	Hawley	✓
Tenn.	Blackburn	✓
Tex.	Cruz	✓
Fla.	Scott	R+0.2

Rep. favored

STATE	LEADER	MARGIN
N.D.	Cramer	✓
Miss. †	Runoff	

† Special election

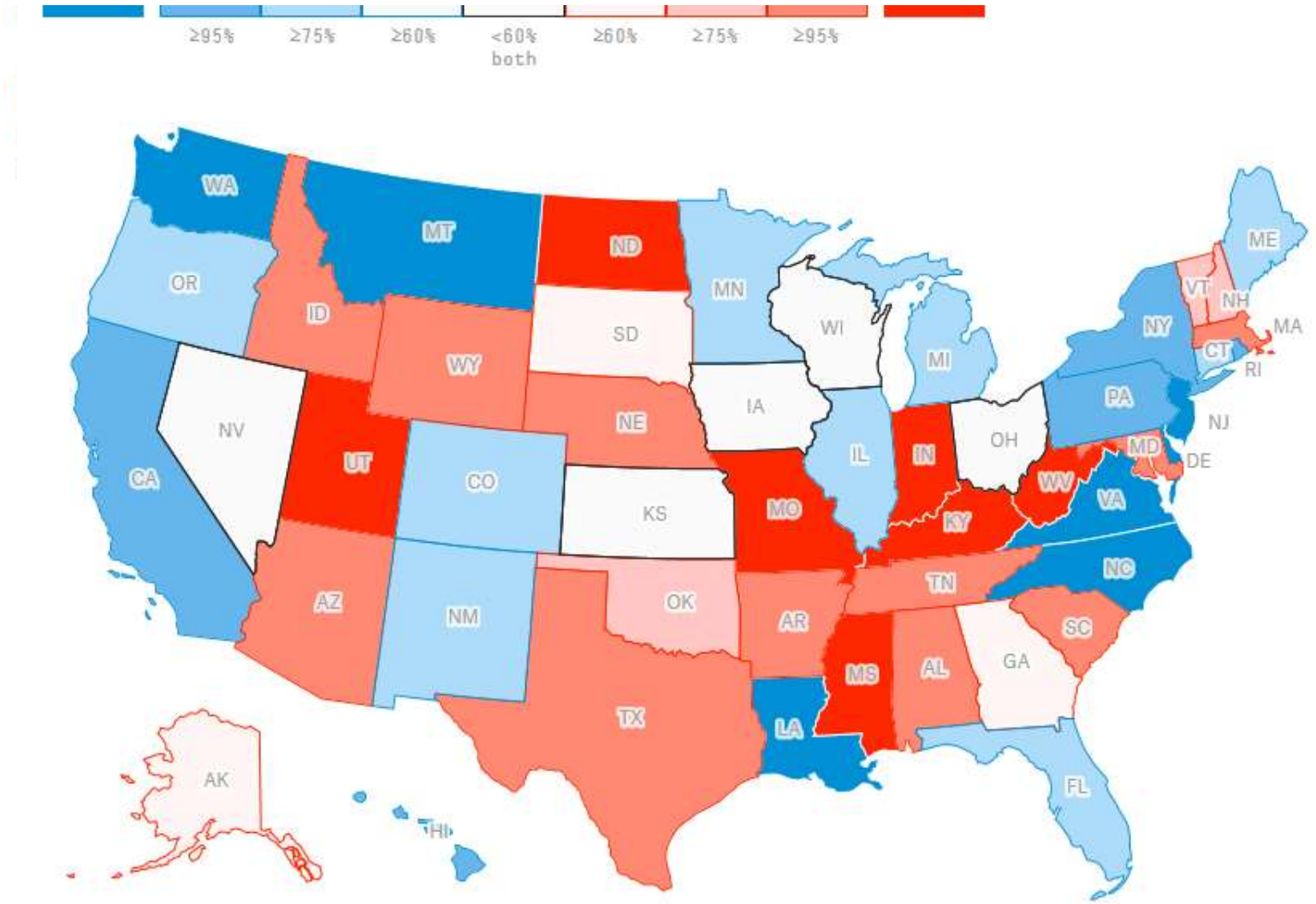
Forecasting the races for governor

24.0

Average number of states forecasted to be governed by Democrats

26.0

Average number of states forecasted to be governed by Republicans



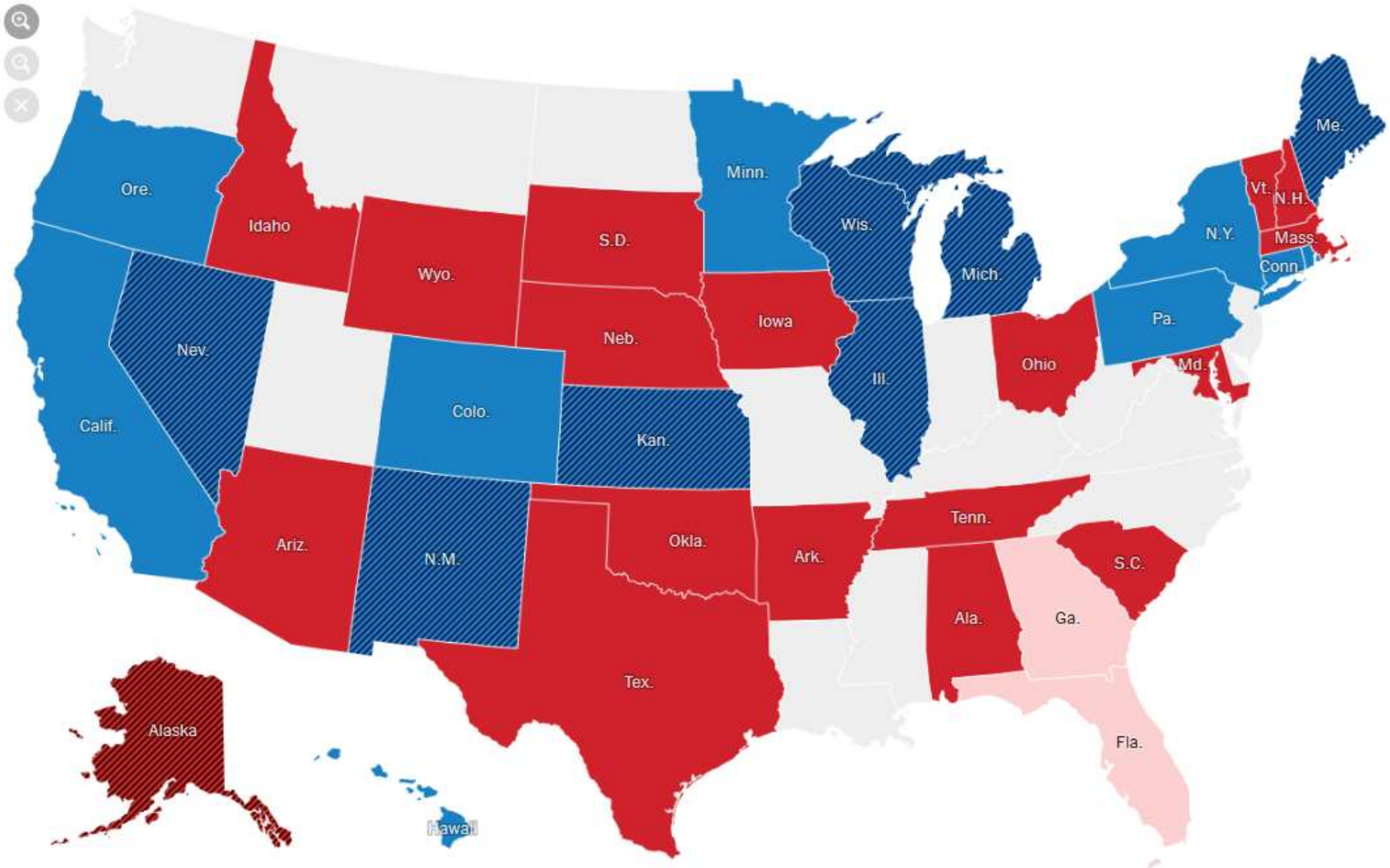
Governor Election Results: Democrats Retake Several States

23
Democrats

7 Democrats not up for election
Gained 7 seats
42,519,474 votes (49.5%)

25
Republicans

7 Republicans not up for election
Lost 6 seats
41,420,950 votes (48.2%)



Explaining the results

- Huge Democratic advantage in fundraising: Ds in the House raised $923 million compared to $612 million for the Rs (60.1% of the total) and the average Ds outspent Rs in the general election $1.7 million to $1.4 million. In the Senate, Ds outspent Rs in the general election $13.4 million to $8 million (and raised 58% of the total money).
- Impact on turnout – Dems were able to compete in a much broader range of districts. Turnout nationwide was 49.2%. Grassroots long game for Democrats (Texas and GA 6).

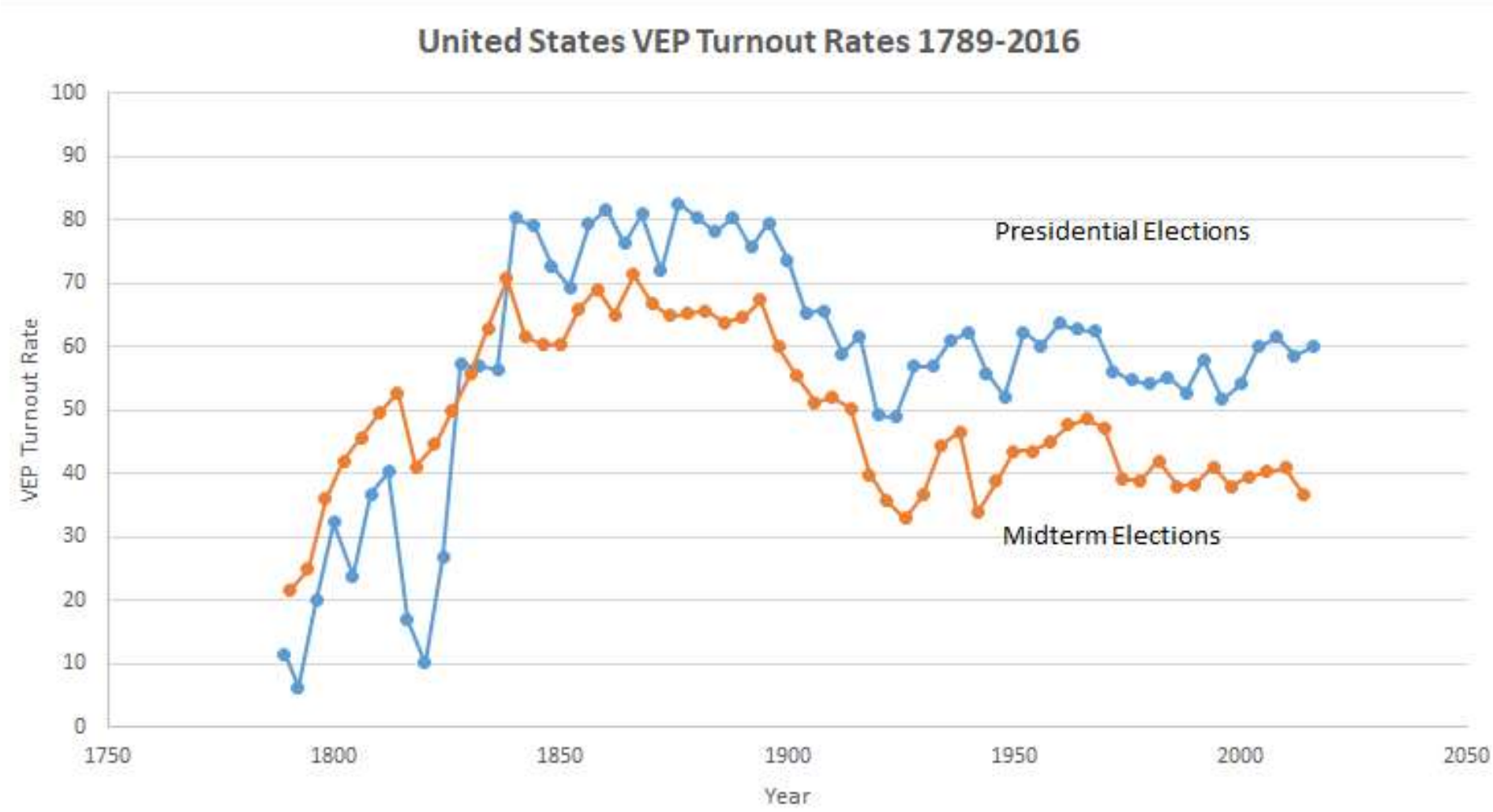
Democrats' fundraising advantage is widespread

	NUMBER OF CANDIDATES ON NOV. HOUSE BALLOTS RAISING ...					
	AT LEAST $500K BY 20 DAYS BEFORE THE ELECTION		AT LEAST $1M BY 20 DAYS BEFORE THE ELECTION		AT LEAST $2M BY 20 DAYS BEFORE THE ELECTION	
YEAR	DEM.	GOP	DEM.	GOP	DEM.	GOP
1998	93	128	22	37	3	4
2000	123	153	48	61	4	9
2002	108	151	38	37	8	6
2004	134	178	48	66	8	10
2006	156	172	62	65	13	13
2008	190	168	84	60	18	10
2010	200	220	95	87	20	15
2012	170	227	80	105	18	2
2014	153	197	65	76	23	9
2016	212	249	142	171	80	64
2018*	232	179	144	84	73	17

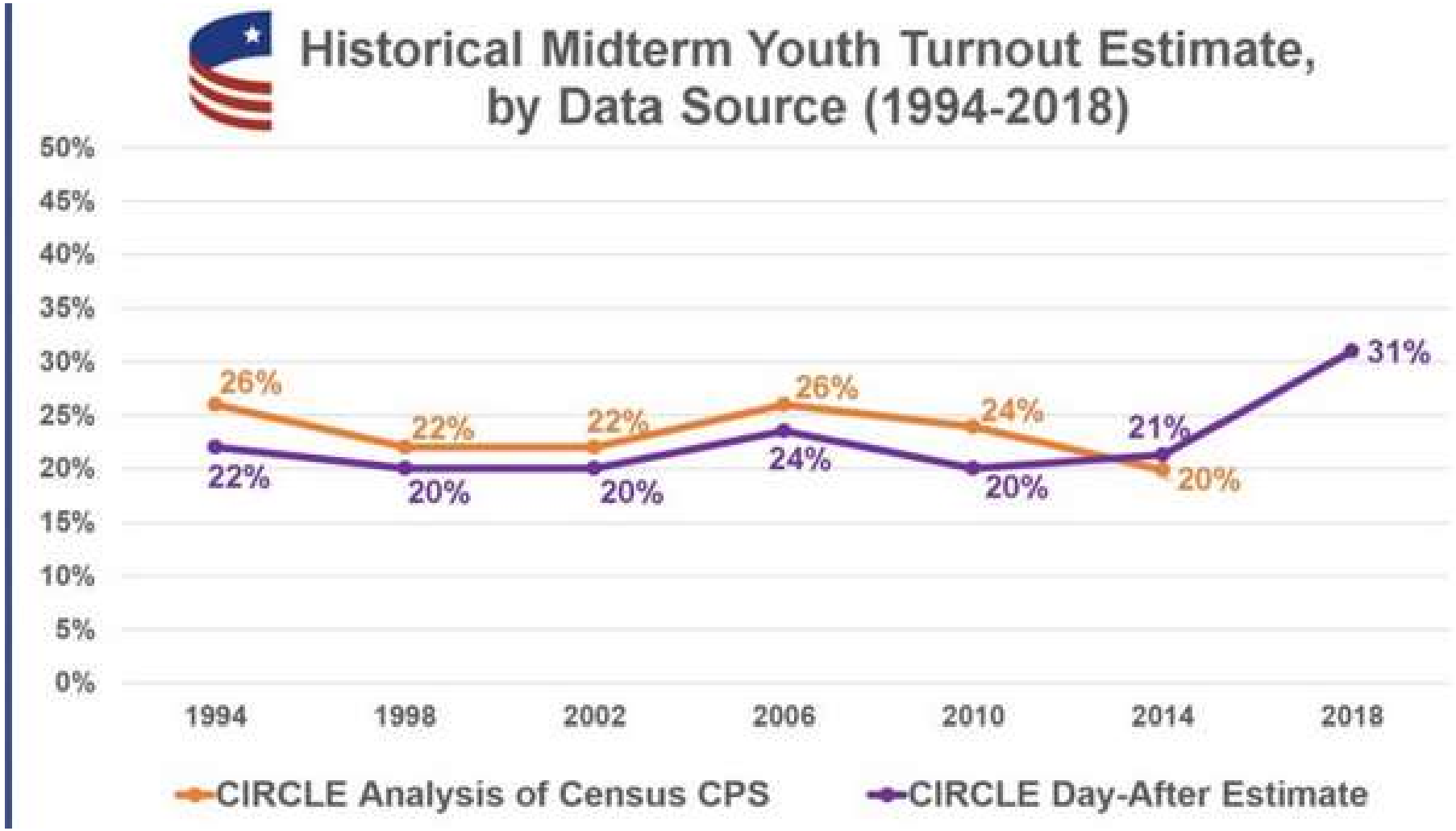
*2018 totals are extrapolated based on fundraising through Sept. 30.

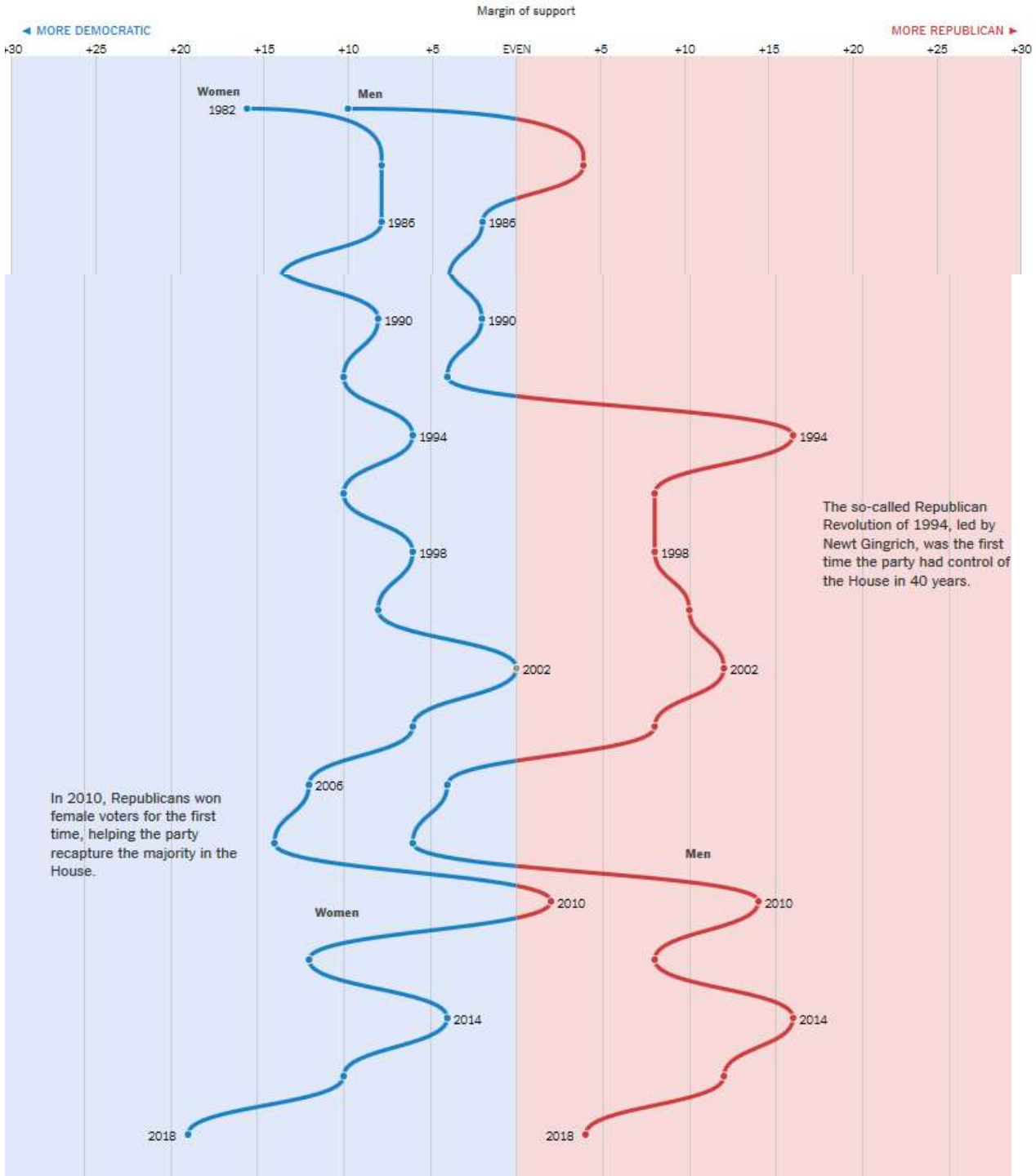
All figures are adjusted for inflation.

SOURCE: FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION

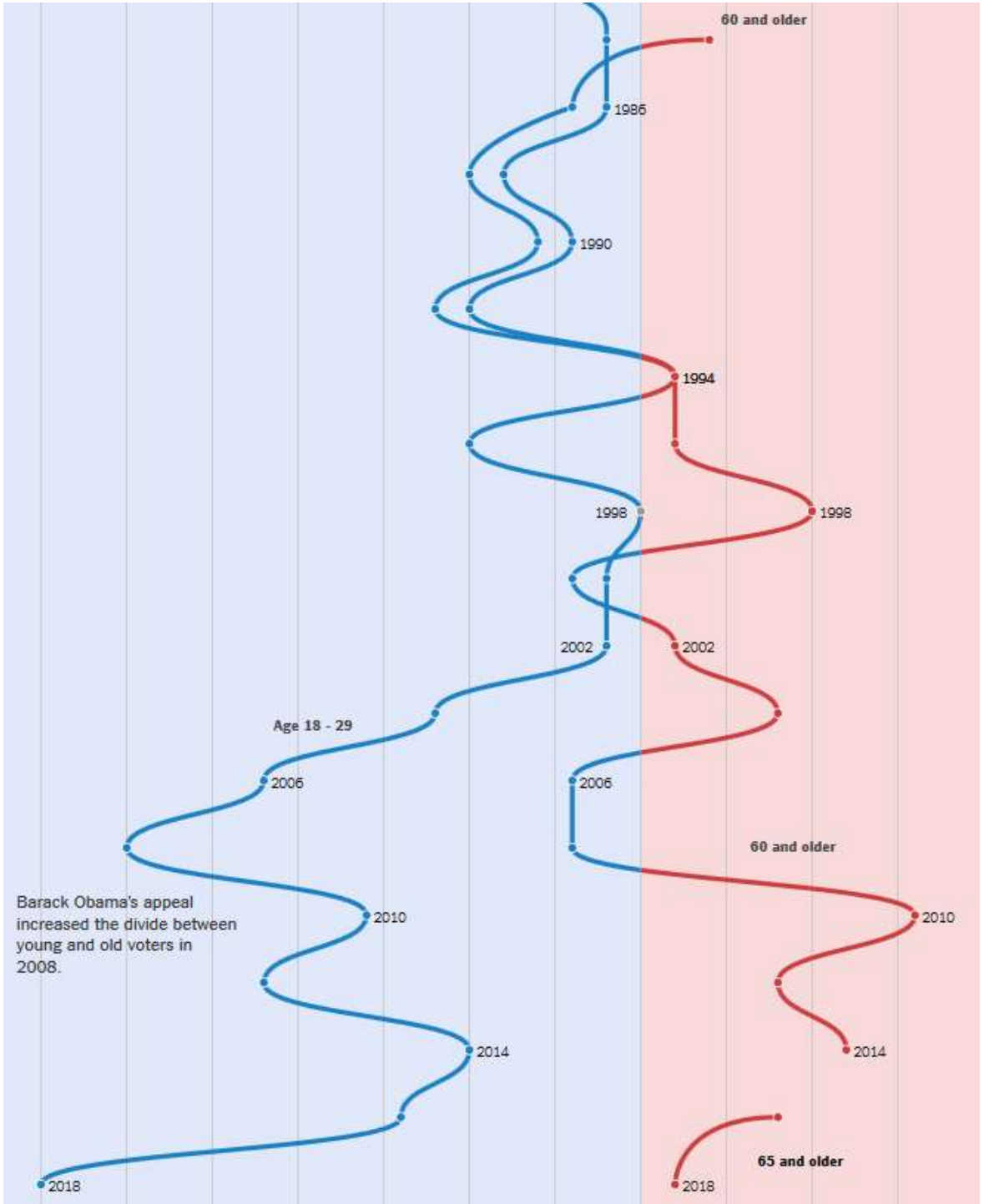


Voter turnout in 2018 was 49.2% (will be a bit higher once all the votes are counted). Youth vote way up.


Historical Midterm Youth Turnout Estimate, by Data Source (1994-2018)
50%
45%
40%
35%
30%
25%
20%
15%
10%
5%
0%
1994
1998
2002
2006
2010
2014
2018
26%
22%
22%
26%
24%
20%
22%
20%
20%
24%
20%
21%
31%
CIRCLE Analysis of Census CPS
CIRCLE Day-After Estimate



Gender gap, 1982-2018



18-29 year-old vote vs. the 60 and older vote, 1982-2018.
18-29 year-olds voted D 67-32.

Other interesting outcomes, issues

- Year of the Woman, v 2.0.
  - Record numbers of women ran for the House, Senate, and governorships. More than 100 women will be serving in the House for the first time (up from 84), including more than 30 first-term members. Nine women won governorships and 14 won Senate races, bringing their total to 24 in the Senate (up 1). In exit polls, almost 80% of voters said it was very or somewhat important to see more women elected.
- Maine 2 and ranked-choice, instant runoff voting.
- Bad ballot design in Broward County, Florida.

U.S. House District 2 ›

Candidate	Party	Votes	Pct.
Bruce Poliquin*	Republican	131,466	**46.2%**
Jared Golden	Democrat	129,556	**45.5**
Tiffany Bond	Independent	16,500	**5.8**
William Hoar	Independent	6,933	**2.4**

284,455 votes, 95% reporting (399 of 418 precincts)

* Incumbent

Official General Election Ballot
November 6, 2018
Broward County, Florida

Boleta Oficial De La Elección General
6 De Noviembre Del 2018
Condado de Broward, Florida

Ofisyèl Jeneral El
6 Novanm
Konte Browar

Ballot Instructions:

- To vote, fill in the oval ● completely next to your choice. Use only the marking device provided or a black pen.
- If you make a mistake, ask for a new ballot. Do not cross out or your vote may not count.
- To vote for a write-in candidate, fill in the oval ● and print the name clearly on the blank line provided for the write-in candidate.

Instrucciones Para La Boleta:

- Para votar, llene completamente el ovalo ● junto a su selección. Use sólo un lápiz de punta negra o una pluma de tinta negra para marcar la boleta.
- Si se equivoca, pida una nueva boleta. Si borra algo o hace marcas, es posible que su voto no se cuente.
- Para Votar por un candidato cuyo nombre no está impreso en la boleta, llene el óvalo ● y escriba el nombre del candidato en la línea en blanco provista para un candidato agregado.

Enfòmasyon Sou Bilten Vòt:

- Pou vote, byen kolore tout andan oval ● ki akote respons ou chwazi a. Sèlman sèvi ak yon plim nwa oubyen ak yon kreyon pou ekri sou bilten vòt la.
- Si w fè yon erè, mande yo ba w yon nouvo bilten vò. Si w efase oubyen fè novuo mak, l ap posib pou vòt ou pa valab ankò.
- Pou vote pou yon kandida ki pa gen non l enprime sou bilten vòt la, kolore ti oval la ● epi ekri non kandida a sou liy vid la rezève pou ekri non yon kandida.

United States Senator
Senador De Los Estados Unidos
Senatè Etazini
(Vote for One/Vote por Uno/Vote pou Youn)

- ○ Rick Scott — REP
- ● Bill Nelson — DEM
- ○ Write-in/Escribir/A lekri: _____

Representative in Congress
District 22
Representante En El Congreso
Distrito 22
Reprezantan Nan Kongrè
Distri 22
(Vote for One/Vote por Uno/Vote pou Youn)

- ○ Nicolas Kimaz — REP
- ● Ted Deutch — DEM

Governor and Lieutenant Governor
Gobernador y Teniente Gobernador
Gouvènè Ak Lyetnan Gouvènè
(Vote for One/Vote por Uno/Vote pou Youn)

- ○ Ron DeSantis / Jeanette Nuñez — REP
- ● Andrew Gillum / Chris King — DEM
- ○ Darcy G. Richardson / Nancy Argenziano — REF
- ○ Kyle "KC" Gibson / Ellen Wilds — NPA
- ○ Ryan Christopher Foley / John Tutton Jr — NPA
- ○ Bruce Stanley / Ryan Howard McJury — NPA
- ○ Write-in/Escribir/A lekri: _____

Attorney General
Fiscal General
Pwokirè Jeneral
(Vote for One/Vote por Uno/Vote pou Youn)

- ○ Ashley Moody — REP
- ● Sean Shaw — DEM
- ○ Jeffrey Marc Siskind — NPA

Chief Financial Officer
Controlador Estatal
Chèf Ofisye Finans
(Vote for One/Vote por Uno/Vote pou Youn)

- ○ Jimmy Patronis — REP
- ● Jeremy Ring — DEM
- ○ Write-in/Escribir/A lekri: _____

Commissioner of Agriculture
Comisionado De Agricultura
Komisyonè Agrikilti
(Vote for One/Vote por Uno/Vote pou Youn)

- ○ Matt Caldwell — REP
- ● Nicole "Nikki" Fried — DEM

Justice of the Supreme Court

Magistrado en el Tribunal Supremo

Jistis Nan Lakou Siprèm

Shall Justice Alan Lawson of the Supreme Court be retained in office?

Fourth District Court of Appeal

Tribunal De Apelaciones Del Cuarto Distrito

Katriyèm Distrik Lakou Dapèl

Shall Judge Burton C. Conner of the Fourth District Court of Appeal be retained in office?

¿Deberá retenerse en su cargo al Juez Burton C. Conner del Tribunal del Cuarto Distrito de Apelaciones?

Èske se pou jis Burton C. Conner nan katriyèm distrik lakou dapèl rete nan pòs li a?

- ○ Yes/Si/Wi
- ● No/No/Non

Rick Scott Appointee

Shall Judge Jeffrey T. Kuntz of the Fourth District Court of Appeal be retained in office?

¿Deberá retenerse en su cargo al Juez Jeffrey T. Kuntz del Tribunal del Cuarto Distrito de Apelaciones?

Èske se pou jis Jeffrey T. Kuntz nan katriyèm distrik lakou dapèl rete nan pòs li a?

- ○ Yes/Si/Wi
- ● No/No/Non

Rick Scott Appointee

Shall Judge Carole Y. Taylor of the Fourth District Court of Appeal be retained in office?

¿Deberá retenerse en su cargo al Juez Carole Y. Taylor del Tribunal del Cuarto Distrito de Apelaciones?

Èske se pou jis Carole Y. Taylor nan katriyèm distrik lakou dapèl rete nan pòs li a?

- ● Yes/Si/Wi
- ○ No/No/Non

Originally Broward County Court Judge 1991

Circuit Judge, 17th Judicial Circuit, Group 38
Juez De Circuito, Circuito 17Mo, Grupo 38
Jij Itineran nan 17èm Sikui Gwoup 38
(Vote for One/Vote por Uno/Vote pou Youn)

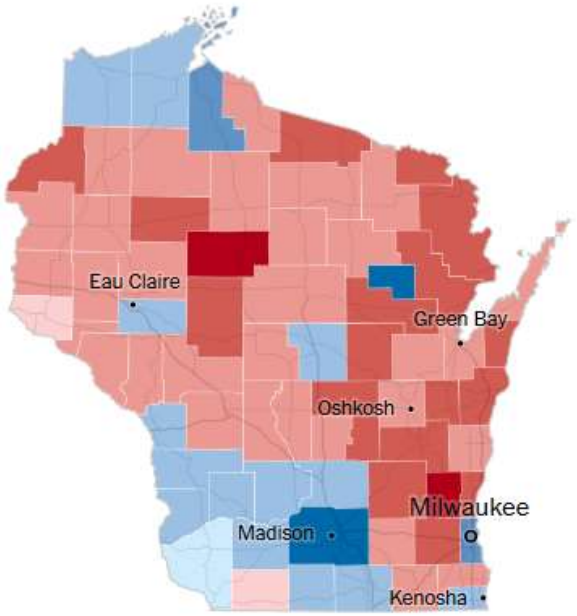
- ○ Jason Allen-Rosner
- ● Stefanie Camille Moon

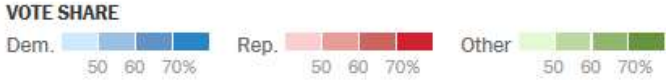
Wisconsin results

- As noted earlier, results for the top races were as expected. However, some drama on election night with the late vote from Milwaukee.
- Power of the 2011 partisan gerrymander was evident: Rs picked up one seat in the Senate, Ds one in the Assembly, despite sweeping every state-wide race.
- Turnout was key, esp. in Dane and Milwaukee.
- Exit polls: young voters, independents, health care were key to Evers' win.

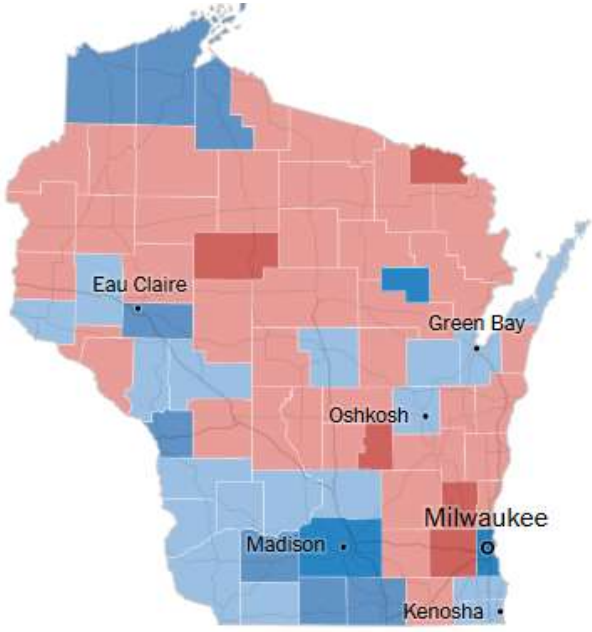
Candidate	Party	Votes	Pct.
✔ Tony Evers	Democrat	1,324,648	**49.6%**
Scott Walker*	Republican	1,293,799	**48.4**
Phil Anderson	Libertarian	20,320	**0.8**
▼ Others		32,580	**1.2**

2,671,347 votes, 100% reporting (3,676 of 3,676 precincts)





Candidate	Party	Votes	Pct.
✔ Tammy Baldwin*	Democrat	1,471,904	**55.4%**
Leah Vukmir	Republican	1,183,061	**44.6**



2018	Evers / % total	Walker / % total	difference	Evers %*
Milwaukee	262,101 / 19.8%	124,051 / 9.6%	138,050	
Dane	220,008 / 16.6%	69,198 / 5.4%	150,810	71.4%
WOW counties	109,210 / 8.3%	229,708 /17.8%	-120,498	32.2%

2014	Burke / % total	Walker / % total	difference	Burke %
Milwaukee	231,316 / 20.6%	132,706 / 10.5%	98,610	
Dane	175,937 / 15.7%	73,676 / 5.8%	102,261	64.1%
WOW counties	83,703 / 7.4%	230,240 /18.3%	-146,537	26.6%

*The last column is the % of the MKE and Dane vote for Evers and Burke.

WOW = Waukesha, Ozaukee, and Washington Counties

Age

	Evers	Walker	No Answer
18-24 **8%**	60%	40%	N/A
25-29 **5%**	61%	34%	5%
30-39 **13%**	55%	43%	2%
40-49 **16%**	54%	44%	2%
50-64 **32%**	46%	53%	1%
65 and older **25%**	44%	55%	1%

Most important issue facing the country

	Evers	Walker	No Answer
Health care **46%**	73%	26%	1%
Immigration **20%**	29%	70%	1%
Economy **23%**	31%	69%	N/A
Gun policy **7%**	N/A	N/A	N/A

Party ID

	Evers	Walker	No Answer
Democrats **34%**	92%	8%	N/A
Republicans **34%**	5%	95%	N/A
Independents **32%**	52%	45%	3%

What happens now?

- Evers will have limited ability to shape policy, given Republican majorities in the legislature.
  - Will the Rs. eliminate some of the governor's powers, such as appointing members of the UW Board of Regents?
  - Areas for possible bipartisan work: infrastructure and opioid crisis. Possible but less likely: expansion of Medicaid under the ACA.
  - One big impact Evers can have is on the next round of redistricting.

With divided government in WI and DC, will we have:

Or this?

Tony Evers