

INDIANA ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®

143 W Market St, Ste 100, Indianapolis, IN 46204
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OVERVIEW

Despite conventional wisdom that the political party of the President historically performs poorly in midterm elections, the only “blue wave” to strike Indiana this fall was the steady stream of Colts fans marching past the Indiana REALTOR® Building on their way to nearby Lucas Oil Stadium on any given Sunday. With a few exceptions, 2018 was the “Year of the Incumbent” in Indiana, with the entire statewide ticket being re-elected, Republicans maintaining super majorities in both houses, and all incumbent U.S. House members breezing to victory. The hotly contested race for U.S. Senate, one of the closest watched races in the nation, saw challenger Mike Braun unseat Senator Joe Donnelly by a double-digit margin that surprised even the closest poll watchers. Here is a breakdown of races of interest across the state.

FEDERAL RACES

U.S. SENATE

Incumbent Senator Joe Donnelly (D) was defeated by challenger Mike Braun, a businessman from Jasper, Indiana. Braun, who won a hotly contested three-way primary in May over two incumbent Congressmen, Rep. Luke Messer and Rep. Todd Rokita, was able to unify his Republican base, with a little help from President Trump, who visited Indiana for three rallies in the final days of the campaign. Braun’s message that Donnelly was an establishment liberal won over Donnelly’s claim to be a moderate voice who would break party lines when it was good for Indiana. The National Association of REALTORS® PAC and Indiana RPAC Trustees had both supported Donnelly, due to the strength of his incumbency, his legislative voting record, seat on key committees, and early assessment of overall electability.

As with any competition, reasonable people may disagree, and even reasonable REALTORS® did on this hotly contested race in a highly charged political climate. However, Senator Donnelly was a long-time REALTOR® Champion in both the House and the Senate and his leadership will be missed.

U. S. HOUSE

All RPAC-supported candidates for U.S. House were successful.

- CD1 Pete Visclosky (D)
- CD 2 Jackie Walorski (R)
- CD 3 Jim Banks (R)
- CD 4 Jim Baird (R)
- CD 5 Greg Pence (R)
- CD 6 Susan Brooks (R)
- CD 7 Andre Carson (D)
- CD 8 Larry Bucshon (R)
- CD 9 Trey Hollingsworth (R)



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STATEWIDE TICKET

The entire statewide ticket of Republican incumbents won easy re-election, with none of the Democratic challengers garnering greater than 40% of the vote. Success at the statewide level continues to be elusive for Democrats, suggesting that the red roots run deep in Indiana and that voters believe the state is on the right track and are reluctant to change course. With the three below joining the ranks of Governor Eric Holcomb, Attorney General Curtis Hill and State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jennifer McCormick, it means all Indiana statewide offices continue to be held by Republicans. Secretary Lawson is a long-time friend to REALTORS® and received RPAC support from the Indiana RPAC Trustees.

- Secretary of State Connie Lawson (R)
- Treasurer Kelly Mitchell (R)
- Auditor Tera Klutz (R)

STATE LEGISLATIVE RACES

Nationwide, voters caught the blue wave and overturned Republican majorities or supermajorities in 6 states. However, much like Indiana races at the federal level, the state legislature seemed relatively unscathed by that national trend and Republicans were able to maintain their supermajorities in both the House and the Senate with only five incumbents falling short, as of the latest tallies. Leading into Election Day, it is fair to say that there were far more hotly contested races for the General Assembly than we have seen in recent years. It is apparent that some of the shifts that have been identified in other states (changing demographics and views in suburban districts, for example), were at play and although many challengers ran close, they were not ultimately successful in unseating incumbents on a large scale. Looking to 2020, we can expect to see that shift continue in certain parts of the state, resulting in competitive races that were once sure bets for incumbents.

INDIANA HOUSE

With nearly a dozen races in play leading up to November 6, House Speaker Brian Bosma not only fended off a challenge by a spirited opponent himself, but also protected his coveted supermajority with a net loss of only two seats. The incumbent House members who were defeated all hailed from districts that had been held by Democrats in the recent past and were commonly considered “swing districts”. They are likely to continue to be competitive in the future. Speaker Bosma has strong support among his caucus members and is expected to remain at the helm in the House. Republicans will control the House by a margin of 67-33. This margin allows the House to conduct official business even if the Democrats decide not to convene, thus limiting the minorities ability to halt passage of a bill by refusing to show up. Additionally, a recount may be conducted in the close race between incumbent Joe Taylor (D-South Bend) and challenger Troy Dillon (R), but Taylor is currently holding on.



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The following House incumbents were unsuccessful on Election Day. All three received RPAC support.

- HD 15 Representative Hal Slager (R-Schererville) was unseated by Chris Chyung (D-Dyer) 49.8%-50.2%
- HD 19 Representative Julie Olthoff (R-Crown Point) was unseated by Lisa Beck (D-Hebron) 49%-51%
- HD 26 Representative Sally Siegrist (R-West Lafayette) was defeated by Chris Campbell (D-Lafayette) 43.3%-56.7%

INDIANA SENATE

The Indiana Senate faced more highly competitive races than it has in recent years, with suburban seats becoming gradually more competitive, as stated above. That said, only one incumbent, Senator Mike Delph (R-Carmel), was unseated. More noteworthy than the election results, perhaps, is the fact that the Senate will conduct business this session under the new leadership of Senate Pro Tempore Rod Bray (R-Martinsville). Bray replaces long-time REALTOR® friend, Senator David Long, who retired this fall. He will take the helm of the Senate with a supermajority of 40-10.

- SD 29 Senator Mike Delph (R) was unseated by J.D. Ford (D-Indianapolis) by a margin of 46.6%-53.4%

