

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 1 of 95

- [1- Upcoming Events](#)
- [2- Frosty Clue](#)
- [3- 1440 News Headlines](#)
- [5- SD News Watch: 2024 South Dakota election results](#)
- [10- Region 1A VB Pairings](#)
- [11- Notice of Sale](#)
- [12- Dog License Ad](#)
- [13- SD SearchLight: Abortion-rights measure loses in South Dakota](#)
- [14- SD SearchLight: Partial South Dakota results show big deficit for grocery sales tax repeal](#)
- [14- SD SearchLight: Voters in at least five states restore reproductive rights](#)
- [17- SD SearchLight: At Harris' watch party in D.C., hope gives way to anxiety](#)
- [19- SD SearchLight: Partial results indicate voter retention of South Dakota Supreme Court justice](#)
- [19- SD SearchLight: Fiegen positioned to win reelection to South Dakota's Public Utilities Commission](#)
- [20- SD SearchLight: Voters poised to elect large class of new lawmakers to South Dakota Legislature](#)
- [21- SD SearchLight: Republicans take majority control of U.S. Senate after Ohio, West Virginia victories](#)
- [24- Weather Pages](#)
- [28- Daily Devotional](#)
- [29- Subscription Form](#)
- [30- Lottery Numbers](#)
- [31- Upcoming Groton Events](#)
- [32- News from the Associated Press](#)

## Wednesday, Nov. 6

Senior Menu: Ranch chicken breast, sweet potato, capri blend, peach crisp.  
School Breakfast: Cereal.  
School Lunch: Quesadilla, Santa Fe Corn.  
Emmanuel Lutheran: Sarah Circle, 5 p.m.; Confirmation with students and parents, 6 p.m.; League, 6:30 p.m.  
St. John's Lutheran: Confirmation, 3:45 p.m.  
United Methodist: Community Coffee Hour, 9:30 a.m.; Budget/financing meeting for 2025, 7 p.m.  
Groton Chamber meeting, noon, City Hall  
Youth Rally, 7 p.m., GHS Gym

**Groton Daily Independent**  
**PO Box 34, Groton SD 57445**  
**Paul's Cell/Text: 605-397-7460**



## News Alert: Trump will win second term, CNN projects, in historic comeback after losing four years ago

Donald Trump will be America's 47th president, CNN projected Wednesday, after mounting the most momentous comeback in political history that will hand him massive, disruptive power at home and will send shockwaves around the world.

## Thursday, Nov. 7

Senior Menu: Roast pork, mashed potatoes with gravy, three bean salad, fruit, whole wheat bread.  
School Breakfast: Pancake on a stick.  
School Lunch: Taco burgers, tater tos.  
Emmanuel Lutheran: Nigeria Circle, 2 p.m.  
Region 1A Volleyball in Groton. Groton Area plays the first match at 6 p.m.

## Friday, Nov. 8

Senior Menu: Beef and broccoli stir fry, rice, cauliflower, five cup salad, whole wheat bread.  
School Breakfast: Egg bake.  
School Lunch: Garlic cheese bread, locally grown roasted squash.

## FROSTY CLUE

I/My.....

6. Have lived in Denver



# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 3 of 95

# 1440

**Why 1440? The printing press was invented around the year 1440, spreading knowledge to the masses and changing the course of history. More facts: In every day, there are 1,440 minutes. We're here to make each one count.**

## Trump on Cusp of Win

Former President Donald Trump is on track to secure more than the 270 electoral votes needed to win the presidency and defeat Vice President Kamala Harris as of 4:15 am ET. After nearly two years of campaigning, featuring an assassination attempt and a sudden candidate swap, one of the most anticipated US presidential races finally nears an end.

Trump, who ran for a third time, has secured 267 electoral votes as of this morning, according to AP, including from three of seven battleground states—Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and Georgia. Harris secured 224 electoral votes.

Ballots are still being counted in four of the remaining swing states, though Trump held a four-point lead in Wisconsin (10 electoral votes), a four-point lead in Michigan (15), and a five-point lead in Nevada (6) as of this writing.

Over 134 million people cast their votes in the 2024 presidential election yesterday. Once the tallies are complete, state officials must certify the result. Deadlines vary with each state, as do windows for contesting outcomes. The Electoral College votes Dec. 17, with a joint session of Congress counting and formalizing the vote Jan. 6.

Once official, Trump will be the first commander in chief to serve nonconsecutive terms since President Grover Cleveland (D) in the late 19th century and the second in US history. During his first term in office from 2017 to 2021, Trump signed major tax cuts, appointed three Supreme Court justices and more than 200 federal judges, and brokered the Abraham Accords between Israel and the United Arab Emirates and Israel and Bahrain. Trump will also be both the oldest person sworn in as president at 78 years old and the first with a criminal conviction.

## Battle for Congress

Republicans have secured control of the US Senate after flipping at least two seats in West Virginia and Ohio, with the GOP now holding 51 of 100 seats in Congress' upper chamber. Seven seats are still being counted as of this writing.

Two-term West Virginia Gov. Jim Justice (R) defeated Mayor Glenn Elliott (D) for an open seat left by Democrat-turned-independent Sen. Joe Manchin, who opted not to seek reelection. In Ohio, businessman Bernie Moreno (R) beat incumbent Sen. Sherrod Brown (D), while in Montana, challenger and former Navy SEAL Tim Sheehy (R) appears to be ahead of incumbent Sen. Jon Tester (D).

In Pennsylvania, David McCormick (R) appears to be on track to beat incumbent Sen. Bob Casey (D), and in Michigan, former Rep. Mike Rogers (R) looks set to defeat Rep. Elissa Slotkin (D) for retiring Sen. Debbie Stabenow's (D) seat. In Wisconsin, incumbent Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D) appears likely to lose against challenger Eric Hovde (R).

In the US House, Republicans are on track to retain their majority. The current tally as of this writing is 195-176 in favor of Republicans, with 64 seats still being counted, per AP. Closely watched races that are too close to call include Virginia's 7th District, featuring newcomers and Army veterans Derrick Anderson (R) and Eugene Vindman (D), and Nebraska's 2nd District, where incumbent Rep. Don Bacon (R) and Sen. Tony Vargas (D) are in a 2022 rematch.

## States Races and Ballot Measures

Beyond federal elections, voters also weighed in on state races and nearly 150 ballot initiatives with potentially wide-ranging impacts. At the gubernatorial level—typically occurring during midterm elections—11

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 4 of 95

states' races were decided, bringing the total number of Republican-led states to 27 and Democratic-led states to 23.

The most competitive race took place in New Hampshire, where former Sen. Kelly Ayotte (R) beat former Mayor Joyce Craig (D) to replace Gov. Chris Sununu (R). In North Carolina, Atty. Gen. Josh Stein (D) defeated Lt. Gov. Mark Robinson (R), who faced a scandal, to succeed term-limited Gov. Roy Cooper (D).

Voters in 41 states took up a list of ballot measures, including those on abortion, changes to election rules, marijuana legalization, and minimum wages. Colorado, Maryland, Missouri, and New York are among states passing an amendment to expand access to abortion. Voters in Washington, DC, approved an amendment to implement ranked choice voting, while voters in Nebraska passed an amendment to legalize medical marijuana.

## Sports, Entertainment, & Culture

Netflix offices in Paris and Amsterdam raided as part of a preliminary investigation into alleged tax fraud and corruption.

"Emilia Pérez" and "The Substance" lead all nominees at the European Film Awards with four apiece.

Oregon, Ohio State, Georgia, and Miami top season's first College Football Playoff rankings; see complete Top 25.

Shaboozey's "A Bar Song (Tipsy)" tops Billboard's Hot 100 for 16th week, tying three other songs for the second-longest run in the chart's 66-year history.

## Science & Technology

Canadian officials arrest man suspected of hacking internet security company Snowflake and extorting 160 companies.

AI researchers conclude current large language models fail to reflect the real world, often fail on similar questions.

Study finds immune system molecule that helps regulate the body's internal clock, affecting fat storage and internal temperature.

## Business & Markets

US stock markets close higher in broad Election Day rally (S&P 500 +1.2%, Dow +1.0%, Nasdaq +1.4%). Palantir shares close up 23% after revealing higher-than-expected US government spending on its AI products.

Super Micro shares fall 16% in after-hours trading amid ongoing concerns over accounting practices.

Home Depot cofounder and former CEO Bernard "Bernie" Marcus dies at age 95; since its founding in the 1970s, Home Depot has become the world's largest home improvement chain.

Amazon secures Federal Aviation Administration approval for new delivery drone model, begins testing in Phoenix, Arizona.

OpenAI reveals investment in robotics startup Physical Intelligence, secures former Meta AR glasses lead to spearhead OpenAI robotics division.

## Politics & World Affairs

Russia suspected of plotting to put explosive devices on commercial planes to the US.

Ukrainian officials say they have engaged with North Korean soldiers on the battlefield in Russia's Kursk border region; Pentagon says at least 10,000 North Korean soldiers are in Russia.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu fires Defense Minister Yoav Gallant amid clashes over approach to war in Gaza and Lebanon, announces foreign minister Israel Katz as new defense minister.

Israeli airstrikes kill at least 20 people in Gaza, new evacuations ordered.

Iran says German-Iranian dual citizen died before his execution, reversing earlier statement he was executed last week; announcement comes amid plummeting Iran-Germany relations.



## 2024 South Dakota election results

Carson Walker

Nov 5, 2024

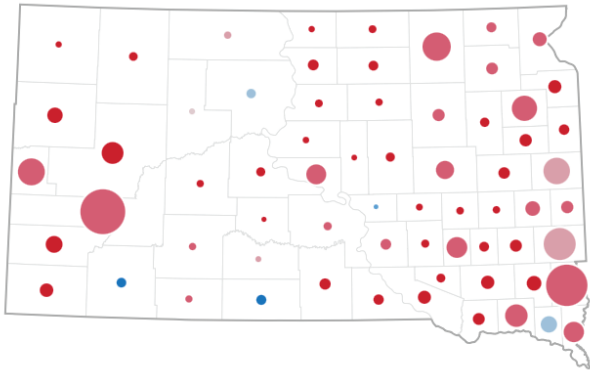
A roundup of statewide candidate races and ballot measures that will be updated as votes are counted. South Dakotans voted Tuesday for seven ballot measures, 105 state legislators, a couple of statewide offices and a U.S. president.

Here are real-time results on those statewide issues and offices from The Associated Press and the Institute for Nonprofit News. Look for investigative reporter Stu Whitney's top takeaways from the election on Wednesday..

### US President

Donald Trump defeated Democratic Vice President Kamala Harris and Libertarian Chase Oliver to take South Dakota's three electoral votes. Independent candidate Robert F. Kennedy Jr. withdrew and supported Trump but still appeared on the ballot.

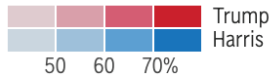
Select a county



BALLOTS COUNTED



VOTE SHARE



### 2024 S.D. GENERAL PRESIDENT

AP estimates  
78% of votes counted

Donald Trump wins. AP race call at 8 p.m. on Nov. 5, 2024.

CANDIDATE	VOTES	PCT.
Donald Trump GOP	218,777	65.3%
Kamala Harris DEM	108,813	32.5%
Robert Kennedy IND	5,616	1.7%
Chase Oliver LIB	2,098	0.6%

Updated Nov 6, 2024, 4:40 AM

Ballots Counted

Uncounted votes

County leader

# Broton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 6 of 95

## US House

Republican U.S. Rep. Dusty Johnson won a fourth, two-year term by defeating Democratic challenger Sheryl Johnson (no relation). The Pierre native previously served as chief of staff to former Gov. Dennis Daugaard and on the Public Utilities Commission and has his sights set on governor in 2026.

### U.S. House South Dakota

District 1 | ▼

#### DISTRICT 1 GENERAL

<sup>AP</sup> estimates  
78% of votes counted

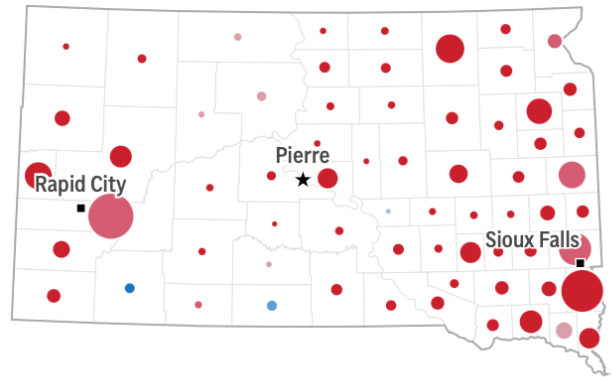
*Dusty Johnson wins. AP race call at 10:06 p.m. on Nov. 5, 2024.*

CANDIDATE	VOTES	PCT.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Dusty Johnson*</b> GOP	<b>242,969</b>	<b>73.7%</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Sheryl Johnson DEM	86,677	26.3%

\*Incumbent

Updated Nov 6, 2024, 4:40 AM

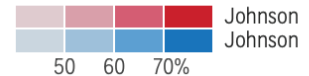
Select a county



BALLOTS COUNTED



VOTE SHARE



## SD Public Utilities Commission

Republic Kristie Fiegen was on her way to earning another six-year term on the Public Utilities Commission, which regulates electric, natural gas and telephone utilities, issues permits for energy projects, pipelines and other projects and handles other duties. Her challengers include Libertarian A. Gideon Oakes and Democrat Forrest Wilson. Fiegen was appointed in 2011 and re-elected in 2012 and 2018.

#### 2024 S.D. 6-YR GENERAL PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION

<sup>AP</sup> estimates  
77% of votes counted

CANDIDATE	VOTES	PCT.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <b>Kristie Fiegen*</b> GOP	<b>217,748</b>	<b>69.3%</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> Forrest Wilson DEM	80,210	25.5%
<input type="checkbox"/> A. Gideon Oakes LIB	16,169	5.2%

\*Incumbent

Updated Nov 6, 2024, 4:40 AM

# Broton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 7 of 95

## Amendment G: Abortion

If passed, Amendment G would enshrine the right to abortion in the South Dakota Constitution and supersede a 2005 state trigger law that took effect when Roe vs. Wade was overturned. Abortion is currently banned in the state.

### 2024 S.D. G - RIGHT TO ABORTION GENERAL BALLOT MEASURE

AP estimates  
78% of votes counted

No wins. AP race call at 1:49 a.m. on Nov. 6, 2024.

CANDIDATE	VOTES	PCT.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	201,857	60.5%
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	131,975	39.5%

Updated Nov 6, 2024, 4:43 AM

## Amendment H: Open primaries

Approval of Amendment H would establish "top-two" primaries for governor, Congress and state legislative and county races rather than having parties hold separate primary contests. All candidates would be on a single primary ballot for all voters. The top two vote-getters would advance to the general election.

### 2024 S.D. H - TOP-2 PRIMARY ELECTIONS GENERAL BALLOT MEASURE

AP estimates  
77% of votes counted

No wins. AP race call at 11:16 p.m. on Nov. 5, 2024.

CANDIDATE	VOTES	PCT.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	214,547	66.5%
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	108,085	33.5%

Updated Nov 6, 2024, 4:42 AM

## Amendment F: Medicaid work requirements

Amendment F would change the state constitution to allow the state to require able-bodied adults to work in order to receive Medicaid. That program helps with medical costs for people with limited income and resources. The federal government would still have to sign off on the change.

### 2024 S.D. F - IMPOSE WORK REQUIREMENTS FOR MEDICAID GENERAL BALLOT MEASURE

AP estimates  
80% of votes counted

CANDIDATE	VOTES	PCT.
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	190,004	56.2%
<input type="checkbox"/> No	148,074	43.8%

Updated Nov 6, 2024, 4:45 AM

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 8 of 95

## Amendment E: Gender neutral references

Constitutional Amendment E stems from lawmakers wanting to change outdated male-only references to the governor and other officials in the state constitution and statutes. For example, instead of referring to the governor as "he," those documents would use the title.

### 2024 S.D. E - GENDER NEUTRAL CONSTITUTIONAL LANGUAGE GENERAL BALLOT MEASURE

<sup>AP</sup> estimates  
80% of votes counted

CANDIDATE	VOTES	PCT.
No	199,536	58.8%
Yes	139,999	41.2%

Updated Nov 6, 2024, 4:45 AM

## Initiated Measure 28: Grocery/consumables tax repeal

The stated goal of Initiated Measure 28 is to eliminate the state's 4.2% sales tax on groceries while allowing municipalities to still collect up to 2%. Opponents said the measure could cause a budget crunch by preventing the state from collecting sales tax on "consumable" items such as tobacco, toothpaste and toilet paper.

### 2024 S.D. 28 - PROHIBIT TAXES ON FOOD AND GROCERY GENERAL BALLOT MEASURE

<sup>AP</sup> estimates  
80% of votes counted

No wins. AP race call at 11:29 p.m. on Nov. 5, 2024.

CANDIDATE	VOTES	PCT.
✓ No	237,138	70.3%
Yes	100,190	29.7%

Updated Nov 6, 2024, 4:45 AM

## Initiated Measure 29: Recreational marijuana

This is the third consecutive election that South Dakota voters are being asked whether to legalize recreational marijuana in the state for people 21 and older, which Initiated Measure 29 would do. Voters approved medicinal pot in 2020.

### 2024 S.D. 29 - LEGALIZE MARIJUANA GENERAL BALLOT MEASURE

<sup>AP</sup> estimates  
80% of votes counted

CANDIDATE	VOTES	PCT.
No	195,678	57.1%
Yes	146,971	42.9%

Updated Nov 6, 2024, 4:45 AM



# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 9 of 95

## Referred Law 21: Landowner bill of rights

Voters were asked to decide Referred Law 21 and whether to keep or kill a legislative package known as the "Landowner Bill of Rights" intended to protect both the ethanol industry and farmers. Opponents of the measure contend the measure would make it easier to bypass county regulators and take people's land.

**2024 S.D. 21 - ESTABLISH A LANDOWNER BILL OF RIGHTS GENERAL**  
BALLOT MEASURE

<sup>AP</sup> estimates  
78% of votes counted

CANDIDATE	VOTES	PCT.
No	197,566	60.2%
Yes	130,756	39.8%



Updated Nov 6, 2024, 4:45 AM

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 10 of 95



## Class A - Region 1

### #1 - Webster Armory

	<b>4 Webster Area</b>	<b>3</b>	FINAL
	<b>5 Britton-Hecla</b>	<b>0</b>	

25-16, 25-12, 25-19

### #2 - Aberdeen Catholic Schools

	<b>2 Aberdeen Ronc...</b>	<b>3</b>	FINAL
	<b>7 Redfield</b>	<b>0</b>	

25-20, 25-17, 25-23

### #3 - Aberdeen Catholic Schools

	<b>3 Sisseton</b>	14-12	11/5 7:30 PM CT
	<b>6 Milbank</b>	13-15	


### #4 - Groton Area High School

	<b>1 Groton Area</b>	18-6	11/7 6:00 PM CT
	<b>4 Webster Area</b>	13-11	

SODAK 16 QUALIFIER



### #5 - Groton Area High School

	<b>2 Aberdeen Ronc...</b>	15-8	11/7 7:30 PM CT
<b>#3 Milbank</b>			

SODAK 16 QUALIFIER

### Seed Points Averages (calculated Oct. 29)

#1 Groton Area 43.375 - #2 Aberdeen Roncalli 42.182 - #3 Sisseton 40.538 - #4 Webster Area 40.304 - #5 Britton-Hecla 40.000 - #6 Milbank 39.929 - #7 Redfield 38.160

## NOTICE OF SALE

November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 10:00 AM

State Nebraska Bank & Trust vs Brian Dolan & Kristen Dolan

(06CIV22-000424-01)

2012 Chevy Avalanche



An Execution of Judgement in the above referenced matter was received by the Brown County Sheriff's Office on January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024. The amount of the Judgment is \$33,157.48, \$260.50 Cost, \$373.39 Pre-Judgement interest, plus continuing costs, and interest, as provided by law. This amount does not include Sheriff's Office fees and costs related to this matter. The property to be sold pursuant to the Execution is: 2012 Chevy Avalanche, VIN 3GNTKFE79CG124632. Odometer Reading: 206,206.

**THIS PROPERTY WILL BE AUCTIONED AND SOLD TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER, WITH THE SALE BEING FINAL, SOLD AS IS WITH NO WARRANTIES EXPRESSED OR IMPLIED. CASH IS REQUIRED ON THE DAY OF SALE.**

The sale will be held at the Brown County Court House, 101 1<sup>st</sup> Ave SE, Aberdeen, SD 57401 on November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 10:00 AM.

DAVE LUNZMAN, SHERIFF OF BROWN COUNTY.

By: Nate Smith, Deputy, 605-626-7100 ext. 509.

## 2025 DOG LICENSES DUE BY 12/31/2024



LICENSE YOUR DOG.



**Licenses due by December 31, 2024**

**Fines start January 1, 2025**

**Spayed/Neutered dogs are \$5 per dog,  
otherwise \$10 per dog**

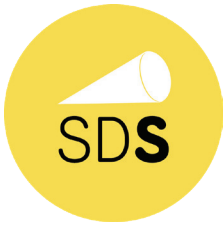
**Proof of rabies shot information is REQUIRED!!**

Email proof to [city.kellie@nvc.net](mailto:city.kellie@nvc.net)

fax to (605) 397-4498 or bring a copy to City Hall!!

Please contact City Hall as soon as possible if you no longer have a dog(s) that  
were previously licensed!

Questions call (605) 397-8422



## SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT

<https://southdakotasearchlight.com>

### **Abortion-rights measure loses in South Dakota**

**BY: SETH TUPPER, JOSHUA HAIAR, MAKENZIE HUBER AND JOHN HULT - NOVEMBER 6, 2024 2:03 AM**

An attempt to restore abortion rights in South Dakota went down to defeat Tuesday.

The Associated Press called the results at 1:49 a.m. Central time Wednesday. The tally at that time was 61% against Amendment G and 39% in favor, with 64% of statewide votes counted.

When the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the national right to an abortion in 2022, a trigger ban adopted by the South Dakota Legislature in 2005 immediately took effect. The ban has one exception for abortions necessary to "preserve the life of the pregnant female."

Amendment G would have prohibited first-trimester regulations on "a pregnant woman's abortion decision and its effectuation." In the second trimester, it would have allowed regulations "reasonably related to the physical health of the pregnant woman." In the third trimester, it would have allowed an abortion ban with a mandatory exception to "preserve the life or health of the pregnant woman."

This was the third time South Dakotans have voted on a statewide abortion ballot question. Voters rejected a ban passed by the Legislature in 2006 that had one exception to preserve the life of the pregnant woman. They also rejected a citizen-initiated abortion ban in 2008 that included additional exceptions for cases of rape and incest. Both of those measures were defeated by about 55% of voters.

During the campaign against this year's measure, some anti-abortion ads said the state's current laws may need to be changed, while saying Amendment G is too extreme.

Jon Hansen, co-chair of the anti-abortion Life Defense Fund and a state representative from Dell Rapids, said Tuesday night that those discussions will continue in the months and years to come.

"There's already lots of people talking about what the law should look like," Hansen said.

At the polls Tuesday, Colleen Maguire, 64, and her daughter Caitlyn Schwarz, 34, both of Sioux Falls, said they're Republicans but voted in support of the amendment, against the wishes of many in their party.

"We are women before we're Republican," Maguire said.

Donna Mitchell, an independent from Sioux Falls, also voted to pass the amendment.

"It's a step in the right direction," Mitchell said. "I hated when the Supreme Court overruled Roe v. Wade. As a woman, I want to be able to make decisions about my fertility."

Meanwhile, Kenya Mejia of Sioux Falls said she was concerned the amendment would make it too easy to get abortions late in the second trimester of pregnancy or later.

"There should be something, but I don't think this is the right amendment," Mejia said.

South Dakota was one of 10 states with an abortion-rights measure on its general election ballot Tuesday. The other states were Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Maryland, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada and New York.

## Partial South Dakota results show big deficit for grocery sales tax repeal

**BY: SETH TUPPER, JOHN HULT, MAKENZIE HUBER AND JOSHUA HAIAR - NOVEMBER 6, 2024 3:02 AM**

A proposal to remove South Dakota's state sales taxes on groceries was losing in unofficial election results. The tally was 71% against Initiated Measure 28 and 29% in favor at 3 a.m. Central time Wednesday, with 76% of statewide precincts fully reported.

The measure would apply to anything sold for human consumption. Supporters, who want tax relief for people with low incomes, said the measure's wording limits its impact to state sales taxes on groceries. Opponents alleged the measure is poorly worded and could impact a broader range of goods and services.

Those competing views led the Legislative Research Council to estimate that state revenue losses could range from \$134 million to \$646 million annually, depending on which interpretation of the measure's language prevailed.

Opponents of the measure also alleged it could imperil \$51 million worth of annual city sales taxes on human consumption items, citing a state law that says cities can only tax what the state taxes. Supporters said that law would be overridden by language in the measure allowing cities to continue taxing groceries.

At a polling place Tuesday, Nick Mammenga, a 22-year-old Sioux Falls Democrat, said removing the sales tax from human consumption goods seemed like the right choice. He described the tax as regressive.

"I don't want taxes to keep going up for food and low-income families having to spend more," he said.

Some voters who opposed the measure feared removing one tax would lead to higher taxes in other categories.

"The state still has to get its income somehow," said Parker Stewart, 38, a Sioux Falls Republican. "I don't want to see property taxes go up or an income tax."

Donna Mitchell, 63, is an independent from Sioux Falls. She worried her property taxes would rise in compensation for lower sales taxes.

"I voted a hard no on that one," she said. "For sure."

Jeremiah Swenson, a 45-year-old Sioux Falls independent, said he voted against IM 28 because the loss of revenue could create problems for the state.

"I see the value," he said, "but I think the loss would outweigh the benefit."

## Voters in at least five states restore reproductive rights

**BY: SOFIA RESNICK - NOVEMBER 6, 2024 3:23 AM**

In the first presidential election since the U.S. Supreme Court allowed state governments to determine if, when and why a woman can end a pregnancy, former President Donald Trump, who touted during the campaign he "was able to kill Roe v. Wade" appeared poised to be reelected early Wednesday. Simultaneously, at least five out of 10 states voted to restore or expand abortion rights, according to early election results.

National anti-abortion groups celebrated Trump's impending victory over Democratic Vice President Kamala Harris, who campaigned heavily on restoring reproductive rights. They also celebrated the defeat of Florida's and South Dakota's abortion-rights amendments, and foreshadowed a full assault on reproductive freedom throughout the country.

"Now the work begins to dismantle the pro-abortion policies of the Biden-Harris administration," said Susan B Anthony Pro-Life America President Marjorie Dannenfelser in a statement. "President Trump's first-term pro-life accomplishments are the baseline for his second term. In the long term, GOP pro-life resolve must be strengthened and centered on the unalienable right to life for unborn children that exists under the 14th Amendment."

Despite their losses, abortion-rights advocates said the ballot question victories signal widespread Ameri-

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 15 of 95

can support for abortion protections even in red states.

Most significantly, Missourians voted to overturn a total abortion ban. Voters also approved an abortion-rights amendment in Arizona, which will override the current 15-week ban. Voters agreed to expand reproductive-rights protections in Colorado, Maryland and New York. Ballot measure races in Montana and Nevada were too close to call as of early morning Wednesday.

"This is an especially historic win for Missouri," said Nancy Northup, president and CEO of the national legal advocacy group Center for Reproductive Rights. "In fact, the amendment goes even further, calling for 'a fundamental right to reproductive freedom, defined to include abortion and all matters relating to reproductive health care.' By saying yes to this powerful language, voters have demanded the return of the essential human rights and freedoms they lost after Roe was overturned."

But abortion-rights advocates suffered a major loss in Florida, which barely failed to clear a 60% supermajority threshold, more than any of the other state abortion initiatives. With 58% voting in favor to overturn a strict abortion ban and enshrine protections, Florida is the first state to fail to secure abortion rights since Roe v. Wade was overturned two years ago.

Abortion-rights organizers who spearheaded and funded Florida's Yes on 4 campaign said the result still shows majority approval for abortion rights among Floridians, and they vow to continue trying to restore abortion rights in the state that six months ago was an abortion-access haven for the Southeast region.

"We're incredibly proud to have stood with doctors, patients, and advocates impacted by this ban," said Yes on 4 Florida campaign manager Lauren Brenzel in a statement. "Their stories, along with the countless women who will continue to suffer under Florida's cruel and extreme abortion ban, remind us that our fight is far from over."

Attorney and anti-abortion activist Catherine Glenn Foster told States Newsroom she is celebrating the fact that Floridians blocked attempts to enshrine abortion in their state constitution. However, she acknowledged that state abortion bans have created real problems, including women dying of preventable pregnancy-related causes and being denied routine miscarriage care. She said states that ban abortion should increase social supports, something that largely hasn't happened since states started banning abortion, and should implement a robust training system around treating health emergencies.

"We need to have a real reckoning," said Foster, who has previously worked for major anti-abortion groups like Americans United for Life and Alliance Defending Freedom. "We've created an environment where doctors are scared. They don't know how to respond and how to treat, and that's a big problem. We have to address that before we pass anything else."

## Abortion ballot initiative results

Since Roe v. Wade was overturned in June 2022, seven states — California, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Montana, Ohio and Vermont — have approved reproductive-rights state constitutional amendments or rejected anti-abortion constitutional amendments. This year reproductive-rights coalitions put abortion on the ballot in 10 states. Arkansas had collected enough signatures to qualify for the ballot, but this summer the state Supreme Court ruled that Arkansans for Limited Government, the committee behind the initiative, did not submit the correct paperwork. The group opposing abortion, marijuana and education measures in the state was led by a top adviser to Republican Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders, Arkansas Advocate reported.

Arizona — Proposition 139, to enshrine abortion rights until fetal viability — APPROVED

YES: 63%

NO: 37%

In this swing state, abortion is currently legal until 15 weeks' gestation. Earlier this year, a few Republicans crossed party lines to repeal a Civil War-era near-total abortion ban the legislature had revived. This citizen-initiated amendment would also prevent any penalties for someone who helps a person get an abortion. And it would allow for exceptions later in pregnancy for the patient's life or physical or mental health.

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 16 of 95

Colorado — Initiative 79, to allow public insurance to cover abortions — APPROVED

YES: 62%

NO: 39%

The citizen-initiated amendment proposes to expand abortion access in a state that currently has no gestational limits but does have a 40-year-old public funding ban. The amendment also proposes to prevent government interference in pregnancy and allow public insurance to cover abortions.

Florida — Amendment 4, to enshrine abortion rights until viability — FAILED

YES: 57%

NO: 43%

This citizen-initiated amendment would have overturned a 6-week abortion ban that has impacted the Southeast. Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis' administration mounted fierce opposition against the abortion-rights campaign that involved a state-sponsored misinformation campaign. Florida was the only state in this election to require a 60% supermajority for ballot measures.

Maryland — Question 1, to protect reproductive autonomy — APPROVED

YES: 74%

NO: 26%

This legislatively-referred amendment would enshrine an individual's right to make "decisions to prevent, continue, or end" a pregnancy. Maryland has become a major abortion-access haven for the country; it is legal here until fetal viability and after for reasons related to the health of the fetus or pregnant person.

Missouri — Amendment 3, to enshrine abortion rights until fetal viability — APPROVED

YES: 52%

NO: 48%

This citizen-initiated amendment would overturn a near-total abortion ban that only has exceptions to prevent the death of the pregnant person. The ban's ambiguous language led at least one Missouri hospital system to stop providing emergency contraception to patients, a move that forced the state attorney general to announce that Plan B and contraception remain legal.

Montana — Constitutional Initiative 128, to enshrine abortion rights until fetal viability — RESULTS NOT FINAL

YES: 58%

NO: 42%

This citizen-initiated amendment would guarantee protections in a state where abortion is currently legal but where Republican lawmakers have attempted to pass restrictions since Roe fell in 2022. Preliminary results show supporters of the measure were leading opponents as of 11 p.m. local time.

Nebraska — Initiative 434, to ban abortion after the first trimester vs. Initiative 439, to enshrine the right to abortion until viability

Initiative 434 — APPROVED

FOR: 55%

AGAINST: 45%

Initiative 439

FOR: 49%

AGAINST: 51%

Nebraska was the only state to have two competing abortion-related initiatives on the ballot.

Nevada — Question 6, to enshrine abortion rights until fetal viability — RESULTS NOT FINAL

YES: 63%

NO: 37%

In this swing state abortion is currently legal up to 24 weeks of pregnancy, but this citizen-initiated measure would enshrine abortion rights into law. The measure will need to be approved by voters again in 2026 to become law.

New York — Proposal 1, to bar discrimination based on pregnancy status — APPROVED

YES: 62%



# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 17 of 95

NO: 39%

This legislatively-referred measure would guarantee abortion rights in a state where abortion is legal up to 24 weeks of pregnancy — later if a provider determines the procedure is necessary to save a patient's life or health, or if the fetus is nonviable.

South Dakota — Amendment G, to allow abortion through the end of the first trimester — FAILED

YES: 39%

NO: 61%

This citizen-initiated measure would have allowed regulation in the second trimester for maternal health reasons and allow lawmakers in the third trimester unless the procedure is necessary to save the life or health of a pregnant patient.

## Races where abortion took center stage

Minnesota Congressional District 3

Democrat Dr. Kelly Morrison: 59%

Republican Tad Jude: 41%

Minnesota State Sen. Kelly Morrison, DFL-Deephaven, won the Minnesota 3rd Congressional District race to replace Democratic U.S. Rep. Dean Phillips in a seat that before 2018 had for decades gone to Republicans, AP reported. Morrison is a practicing OB-GYN who supports abortion rights. Currently, the only OB-GYNs in Congress oppose abortion. Her Republican opponent, Tad Jude, has called every abortion a "tragedy" and supported the overturning of Roe v. Wade.

A special election in Minnesota will determine who takes over Morrison's state Senate seat, whose term ends in 2026.

Wisconsin Congressional District 8

Republican Tony Wied: 60%

Democrat Dr. Kristin Lyerly: 40%

Of the close races in the swing state of Wisconsin, the 8th Congressional District was the least likely to flip from Republican control. But Dr. Kristin Lyerly launched a fierce campaign emphasizing a commitment to restoring reproductive health access to Americans, something she is uniquely positioned to advocate for as a longtime OB-GYN and abortion provider. Lyerly is also one of the plaintiffs in a lawsuit that successfully blocked an 1849 Wisconsin feticide law that was temporarily enforced as a state abortion ban. Her campaign attracted national campaign cash and support. Her opponent, Republican Tony Wied, a former gas station owner, largely ran on his Trump endorsement.

Tennessee State House District 75

Republican Jeff Burkhart: 55 %

Democrat Allie Phillips: 45 %

Incumbent Republican Rep. Jeff Burkhart defeated former day care operator and political newcomer Allie Phillips, who largely campaigned on reproductive rights. The 29-year-old drew national attention after speaking out about being denied a necessary abortion in Tennessee, where abortion is banned, when her desired pregnancy became nonviable and dangerous at 19 weeks. She ultimately traveled out of state to obtain the abortion. Phillips joined a legal challenge to the state's strict abortion law. She pledged if elected to immediately push for a policy that would carve out exceptions for fetal anomalies to Tennessee's abortion ban, which she's named "Miley's Law" after the baby she and her husband lost.

## At Harris' watch party in D.C., hope gives way to anxiety

BY: ARIANA FIGUEROA - NOVEMBER 6, 2024 2:24 AM

WASHINGTON — The hope of potentially electing the first Black woman president that Liane Crosey felt on Election Day was nearly gone by early Wednesday morning as she left the watch party for Democratic nominee Vice President Kamala Harris at Howard University.

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 18 of 95

"I don't know what's happening, but it's very stressful right now," Crosey said. "Seeing the numbers coming in, I don't feel as hopeful."

As former President Donald Trump won Southern swing states North Carolina and Georgia, supporters who were excited earlier Tuesday began to leave in droves. President Joe Biden flipped Georgia in 2020, and Democrats were hoping to repeat the victory in this election.

The once-packed field at Howard emptied after Harris campaign Co-Chair Cedric Richmond, a former Louisiana congressman, informed the crowd that the vice president would not be making a much-anticipated appearance.

Instead, Richmond said that she would be addressing supporters later Wednesday. He tried to quell the dour mood that had settled over the watch party.

"We still have votes to count. We still have states that have not been called yet," Richmond said. "We will continue overnight to fight to make sure that every vote is counted, that every voice has spoken."

## Disappointment

Dayesha Sims said she was disappointed that Harris never appeared.

She was hoping to catch a glimpse of Harris, a Howard graduate, who would have been the first Black and South Asian woman of descent to be president. It's a historic first that her campaign has downplayed in her surprise sprint to the White House after Biden bowed out of the race this summer.

The 28-year-old said she's feeling "a little anxious" about the outcome of the presidential race.

"It's a close race," she said. "I'm really hoping that everyone sees what she stands for and what she can do for the country and that she will pull through."

Many attendees acknowledged that the presidential race was going to be close, but like Lalika Gerald, tried to keep anxieties at bay and focus on the potential historic nature of a Howard grad ascending to the presidency.

Gerald, 41, pointed at Founders Library, which overlooks the Yard, the field where the election watch party was held. She reminisced about the hours spent there studying TV production.

"It just shows that there is no end, you could go all the way to the top," she said. "I am honored to be in this space."

Gerald was one of thousands of Harris supporters gathered at the Yard. A Jumbotron had CNN on as the throng of supporters awaited election results, but as Trump continued to gain electoral votes, the cheers dampened and the crowd thinned.

By about 2 a.m. Eastern Wednesday, Trump had racked up 247 Electoral College votes overall nationally compared to Harris' 214, according to The Associated Press projections. To win, a candidate must clear 270 Electoral College votes.

## Big moment for Howard

The university prepared for the vice president's arrival, deploying workers to pressure wash the sidewalk to temporarily mask the smells that come with college students and a bustling city nightlife. It was a big moment for the historically Black university, as it could have marked the first time a Howard alum would become commander-in-chief.

Harris graduated from Howard University with a bachelor's degree in 1986. While at the university, she was a member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., the first Black sorority, established in 1908 at Howard.

Harris' sorority and the other Black Greek-letter organizations that make up the 'Divine Nine' quickly rallied behind her, and undertook a major voter turnout mobilization campaign.

Gerald, a member of Sigma Gamma Rho, a Black sorority, said that her sorority has "been very instrumental in making sure that our citizens, our community members, come out and vote."

"We're not asking for who you are voting for, but we just encourage that we all participate in our civic duty of voting," she said.

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 19 of 95

## Joyful mood early

While supporters were waiting for some of the first polls to close, a handful of attendees took to the field to do stepping — a high-energy dance that has roots in African folk dance that is performed by many Black sororities and fraternities.

The D.J.s hyped up the crowd and put on the “Wobble.” It attracted hundreds from the stands — including Howard University President Ben Vinson — to head to the field to dance.

The energy at the Yard was nothing like Shontae Harrell has felt before.

The 41-year-old had just visited her university for homecoming a couple of weeks earlier, but said it didn’t feel this “electric.”

She said she hadn’t “settled into my feelings yet,” but that she’s proud to be an alumna.

“I am a little nervous,” she said around 8 p.m., adding that she hadn’t yet tuned into any election results.

Japera Krigger, 29, said she’s not surprised a Howard graduate could be president.

“Howard produces some of the most brilliant minds in this country so it was only a matter of time before we produced a president,” she said.

Krigger graduated from Howard, where she studied communications, in 2019. She said that when she thinks of Harris, she is reminded of the young Black girls she mentors.

“If they want to be president, they won’t have the pressure of being the first,” she said, adding that even if Harris breaks that glass ceiling, “we feel like there will always be that ceiling.”

“We have to continue to break that,” she said.

## Partial results indicate voter retention of South Dakota Supreme Court justice

**BY: SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT STAFF - NOVEMBER 6, 2024 1:50 AM**

South Dakota Supreme Court Justice Scott Myren appeared to be in position to retain his job, according to unofficial election results early Wednesday morning.

With 70% of the state’s precincts fully reported as of 1:45 a.m., Myren had 80% support.

The high court’s justices face a nonpolitical retention election three years after their appointment by the governor, and then every eight years after that. Republican Gov. Kristi Noem appointed Myren in 2021.

Myren grew up on his family farm in rural Campbell County and graduated from Mobridge High School. He earned a bachelor’s degree from the University of South Dakota and a law degree from Rutgers University.

He practiced law in Denver before returning to South Dakota to work as a staff attorney for the South Dakota Supreme Court. He served as an administrative law judge for the Office of Administrative Hearings and as a magistrate judge for the Sixth Judicial Circuit.

In 2003, he was appointed as a circuit judge for the 5th Judicial Circuit by Gov. Mike Rounds. He was reelected to that position by the voters in 2006 and 2014.

## Fiegen positioned to win reelection to South Dakota’s Public Utilities Commission

**BY: SOUTH DAKOTA SEARCHLIGHT STAFF - NOVEMBER 6, 2024 1:37 AM**

Republican Kristie Fiegen was positioned to win reelection to her seat on the South Dakota Public Utilities Commission in unofficial election results.

She led with 71% of the votes at 1:30 a.m. Central time Wednesday with 70% of statewide precincts fully reporting. Democrat Forrest Wilson had 24%, and Libertarian Gideon Oakes had 5%.

Oakes told South Dakota Searchlight he had conceded. Wilson did not return messages, and Fiegen gave a victory speech Tuesday night in Sioux Falls.

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 20 of 95

Republican former Gov. Dennis Daugaard appointed Fiegen to fill a commission vacancy in 2011. She was elected to a full term in November 2012 and reelected in 2018. She's the commission's chairperson.

The state's three public utilities commissioners oversee the regulation of private utility companies that provide essential services, including telecommunications, electricity and natural gas. They are assisted by a staff of analysts and lawyers.

The job of a commissioner is to ensure private utilities provide reliable services at fair rates. Commissioners also consider permits for major utility projects, such as power plants, transmission lines and pipelines.

## Voters poised to elect large class of new lawmakers to South Dakota Legislature

**Minnehaha and Pennington results among those lacking as count continued past midnight**

**BY: JOHN HULT - NOVEMBER 6, 2024 1:23 AM**

South Dakota voters appeared on the verge Tuesday of sending dozens of new faces to Pierre.

Results were still trickling in well past midnight Central time in South Dakota's urban enclaves, including Minnehaha and Pennington counties, but the number of new lawmakers was notable even without a final tally. As of 12:15 a.m. Central time on Wednesday, preliminary results from the South Dakota Secretary of State's Office showed at least 44 prospective new lawmakers in position to take seats in the 105-member Legislature.

If those results hold, a dozen of those new senators and representatives will return to Pierre after a hiatus from previous legislative service.

Those include Sioux Falls Democrat Jamie Smith, who took on Gov. Kristi Noem in the 2022 governor's race, and Republican Spencer Gosch of Glenham, who was speaker of the House from 2021 to 2022. Smith was leading late Tuesday in his District 15 Senate race — although with a large portion of the results still unreported — and Gosch was assured a House seat in District 23, where he was one of two candidates for two seats.

The other 32 prospective new lawmakers would serve their first terms. Many of them emerged victorious in their primary races and ran unopposed on Election Day.

Fourteen incumbents lost their spot in Pierre during the June primary, with 11 falling in part as a result of their support for a bill dubbed the "landowner bill of rights."

That bill aimed to maintain a path forward for a controversial carbon capture pipeline while offering protections for landowners and cash for counties, but opponents characterized it as a giveaway to Summit Carbon Solutions, the Iowa company proposing the pipeline.

The "landowner bill of rights" was referred to voters by opponents. Voters were rejecting Referred Law 21 in early, unofficial returns Tuesday night.

Those unofficial and partial results indicated there could be 29 new members of the House of Representatives and 15 new senators for 2025, or 41% of the House and 43% of the Senate.

Republicans are expected to maintain a large majority in the Legislature, having locked up near majorities before any votes were cast, due to Democrats not fielding a full slate of candidates in many districts.

## Republicans take majority control of U.S. Senate after Ohio, West Virginia victories

**South Dakota's Thune, in running for leader, pledges to work for 'safer and more secure country'**

**BY: JENNIFER SHUTT, SHAUNEEN MIRANDA AND PAIGE GROSS - NOVEMBER 6, 2024  
12:20 AM**

WASHINGTON — Republicans flipped control of the U.S. Senate after picking up seats in Ohio and West Virginia according to projections by The Associated Press, though there were too many uncalled House races early Wednesday to predict which party will hold that chamber when the new Congress begins in January.

Montana's Senate seat, currently held by Democratic Sen. Jon Tester, also appeared to be slipping toward Republicans, likely increasing their majority in the upper chamber for the next two years.

Arizona, Michigan, Nevada, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin's highly competitive Senate races had yet to be called, potentially bolstering a GOP majority even further.

Senate Republican Whip John Thune of South Dakota, who is vying to become the chamber's next GOP leader against Texas Sen. John Cornyn and Florida Sen. Rick Scott, released a written statement applauding voters' decision.

"Tonight, with Republicans reclaiming majority control of the U.S. Senate, we can begin to turn the page on this expensive and reckless chapter of American history," Thune wrote. "As we wait for additional results, I am optimistic that President Trump will be successful, our majority will grow stronger, and we can continue our work together to create a safer and more secure country for every American."

Cornyn said in his own written statement that he was "confident our new conservative majority can restore our institution to the essential role it serves in our constitutional republic."

"We will restore the important role of Senate committees and reestablish the regular appropriations process," Cornyn wrote. "We will improve communication, increase transparency, and tap into the wealth of talent in the conference to include everyone's expertise and opinions. And we will return power back to the members; there will be no more backroom deals or forced votes on bills without adequate time for review, debate, and amendment."

Newly elected Republican senators, AP projections said, include Bernie Moreno in Ohio, who flipped that state's seat; U.S. Rep. Jim Banks, who won his first Senate campaign in deeply red Indiana; John Curtis, who secured victory in Utah; and West Virginia Gov. Jim Justice, who flipped the seat currently held by Joe Manchin III as predicted.

New Democratic senators include Angela Alsobrooks of Maryland, New Jersey U.S. Rep. Andy Kim, Delaware U.S. Rep. Lisa Blunt Rochester and California U.S. Rep. Adam Schiff, all of whom defeated GOP challengers in solidly blue states.

### How it could play out

There were two possible scenarios for the 119th Congress, slated to begin on Jan. 3, 2025, following the AP's call for Senate control.

Democrats flip the House and Republicans regain the Senate, maintaining a divided Congress with the opposite party in control of each chamber.

Republicans keep their majority in the House and regain control of the Senate for unified GOP control.

Each option brings with it significant implications for the next president's legislative agenda, their ability to quickly set up a Cabinet via Senate confirmations and whether they'd be able to move judicial nominations through the upper chamber, including possible Supreme Court nominees.

A divided Congress would require the next president to negotiate bipartisan deals on must-pass legislation and make concessions with the opposing party to move any major policy changes through Congress.

Unified control of Congress for Republicans could mean more movement on legislation, though whether

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 22 of 95

those bills become law will rest on who occupies the Oval Office.

## Senate confirmations ahead

The Associated Press, the news organization that States Newsroom looks to for race calls based on decades of experience, had announced 27 Senate races as of 12:30 a.m. Eastern on Wednesday.

Republican senators in Florida, Mississippi, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Tennessee, Texas and Wyoming easily won reelection in those GOP strongholds.

Democratic senators from Connecticut, Hawaii, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Mexico, New York, Rhode Island, Virginia and Washington were all reelected, as was independent Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, who typically votes with Democrats.

Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee Chair Sen. Gary Peters, D-Mich., congratulated Alsobrooks on her win and making history as the first Black woman Maryland elected to the Senate.

"Angela is no stranger to breaking barriers — and in the Senate Angela will bring the same drive and values she's practiced throughout her life to ensure all Marylanders' freedoms are protected and every family in her state can thrive," Peters said in the written statement.

New Jersey's Kim will become the Senate's first Korean-American lawmaker in the country's history.

National Republican Senatorial Committee Chair Steve Daines congratulated the reelected and incoming senators, including Justice, who flipped the West Virginia seat red.

"Jim served the people of West Virginia well as their governor, lowering taxes and creating opportunity in all parts of the state," Daines said in a written statement. "I know he will continue to do the same in the Senate, and we are looking forward to having Big Jim and Baby Dog in D.C."

Senate control is slightly more important for the next president than having their party in charge of the House, since the upper chamber is tasked with vetting and confirming Cabinet secretaries, several key executive branch appointments, judicial nominees and Supreme Court justices.

Unlike the House, where lawmakers face reelection or retirement every two years, senators are elected to six-year terms, meaning about one-third of the chamber is on the ballot during a given election year.

This year, 34 Senate seats were up for reelection, 23 of which were held by Democrats, while 11 are Republican controlled.

## House toss-up race calls

The AP had called 331 of the 435 House races as of 12:30 a.m. Eastern Wednesday, but many of the toss-up races were still too close to determine the winner.

Republican and Democratic incumbents were overwhelmingly holding onto their districts, while several new members were elected to open seats. Some of those lawmakers-elect were on track to make history.

Sarah McBride, for example, was poised to become the country's first openly transgender person elected to Congress, according to the AP.

McBride secured her Democratic bid in Delaware's 1st Congressional District against GOP challenger John Whalen.

The Human Rights Campaign celebrated McBride's victory.

The LGBTQ+ advocacy group's president Kelley Robinson called McBride a "devoted public servant, a bulldog for her constituents, and someone who represents the interests of everyone she serves," in a written statement.

"This historic victory reflects not only increasing acceptance of transgender people in our society, ushered in by the courage of visible leaders like Sarah, but also her dogged work in demonstrating that she is an effective lawmaker who will deliver real results," Robinson added.

Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., won his reelection, potentially setting him up to remain his party's leader should the GOP keep its majority. Democratic Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries, who would become speaker if his party regained the House, had also safely won reelection in his New York district.

The nonpartisan Sabato's Crystal Ball at the University of Virginia Center for Politics wrote in analysis

# Groton Daily Independent

**Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 23 of 95**

released Monday on the fight for congressional control that "the battle for the House has been a Toss-up for essentially the whole cycle" and that its experts generally expected "the presidential and House winner was likelier than not to be the same."

A total of 218 seats are needed to control the House, though that is the bare minimum in a chamber where members regularly miss votes, take extended leaves of absence for illness or injury and sometimes resign mid-session.

Republican leaders struggled to pass partisan bills during the last two years with a razor-thin majority, currently split at 220-212, and Democratic leadership would likely do so as well should they become the majority.

At-risk House lawmakers had yet to experience any major upsets, but eyes were on several swing districts, including Arizona's 1st and 6th Congressional Districts and Pennsylvania's 10th Congressional District.

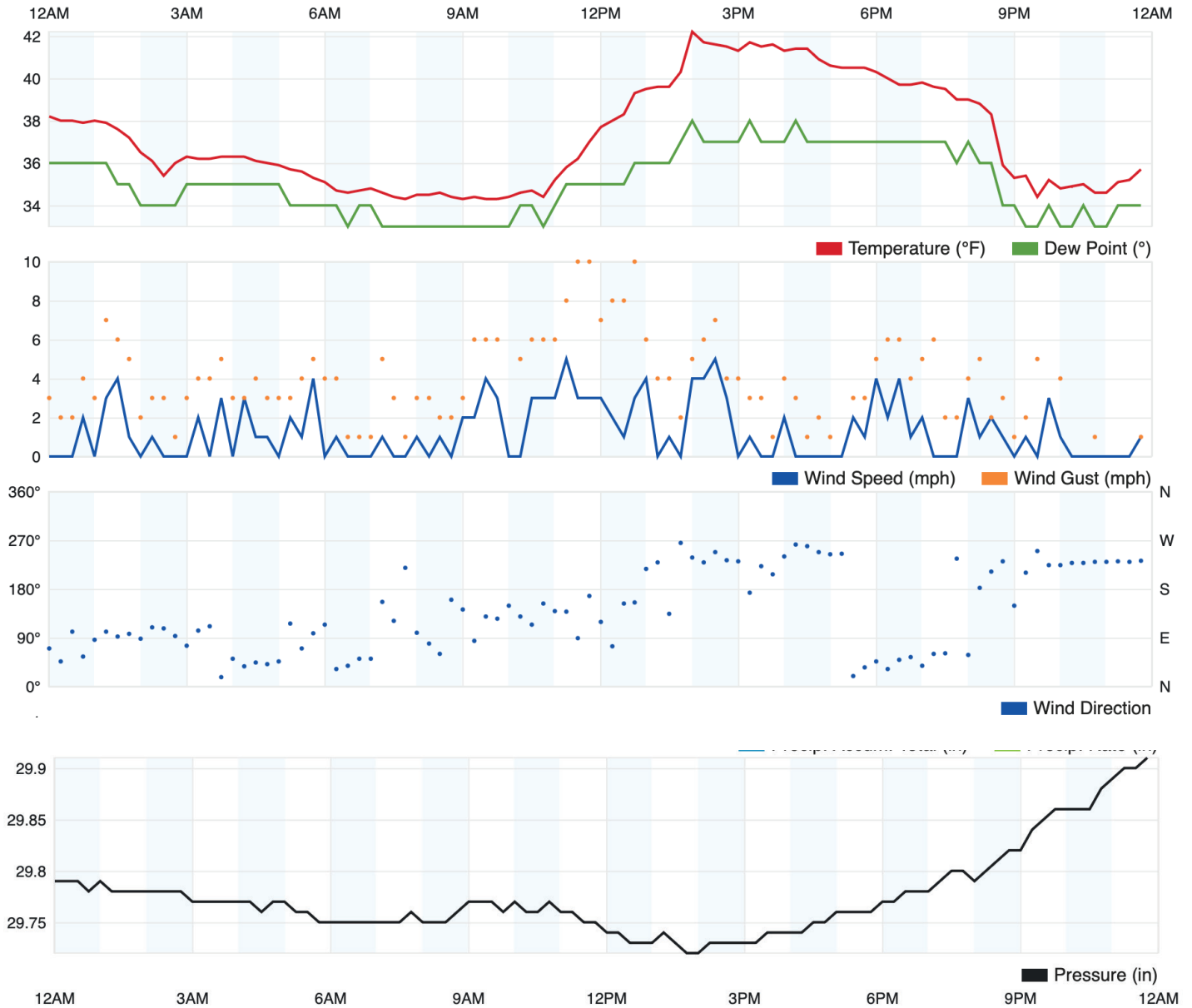
Other races to watch include Iowa's 1st Congressional District, a seat targeted by the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee to flip, which was labeled "lean Democratic," by Sabato's on Monday.

It was the same for Nebraska's 2nd Congressional District, a rematch that could "lean Democrat."

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 24 of 95

## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs





# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 25 of 95

Today



High: 47 °F

Areas  
Freezing Fog  
and Areas Fog  
then Partly  
Sunny

Tonight



Low: 27 °F

Mostly Cloudy

Thursday



High: 49 °F

Sunny

Thursday  
Night



Low: 24 °F

Clear

Friday



High: 54 °F

Sunny

## Wednesday

Highs: 44-51°

Winds: N 5-15 mph



## Wed. Night

Overnight Lows:

24-32°

## Thursday

Highs: 45-50°

Winds: SW 10-15 mph



National Weather Service  
Aberdeen, SD

Overall forecast looks to be dry for the next couple of days with highs ranging in the 40s to the lower 50s. Next chance of rain looks to be this weekend (20-45%).

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 26 of 95

## Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 42 °F at 1:57 PM

Low Temp: 34 °F at 8:55 AM

Wind: 10 mph at 11:25 AM

Precip: : 0.00

Day length: 9 hours, 55 minutes

## Today's Info

Record High: 79 in 1904

Record Low: -8 in 1991

Average High: 47

Average Low: 24

Average Precip in Nov.: 0.20

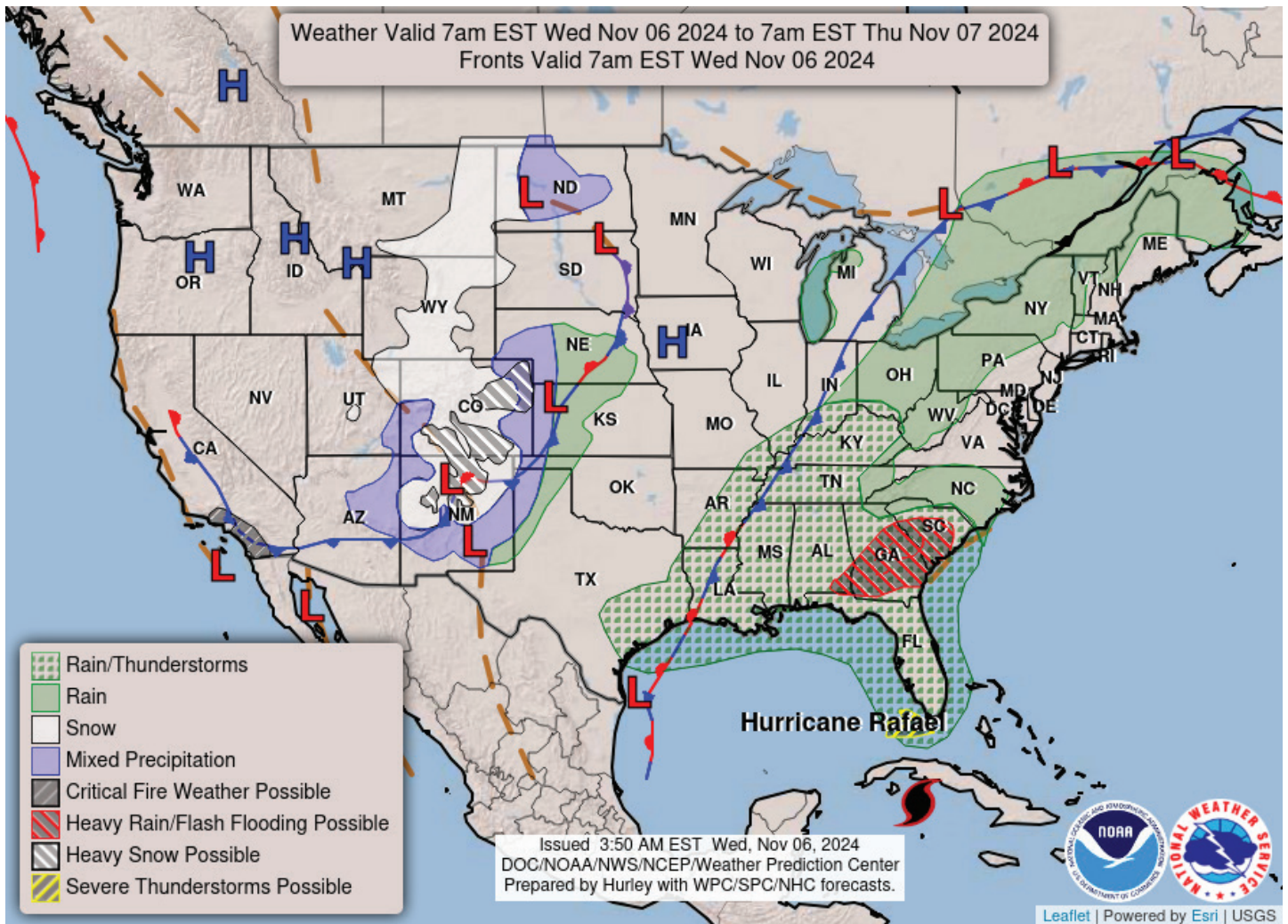
Precip to date in Oct.: 0.59

Average Precip to date: 20.67

Precip Year to Date: 20.47

Sunset Tonight: 5:13:49 pm

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:19:41 am



# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 27 of 95

## Today in Weather History

November 6th, 1959: A strong cold front that brought near blizzard conditions and freezing temperatures on the 5th continued to bring record or near-record lows during the morning hours on this day. Some low temperatures include; -13 in Murdo; -12 in Eureka; -11 in Britton; -10 in Castlewood; -9 near McIntosh and Redfield; -8 in Andover; -7 in Clear Lake and Kennebec; -6 degrees in Aberdeen; -5 in Watertown; and -4 in Pierre.

November 6th, 2008: An area of low pressure moving across South Dakota and into Minnesota brought widespread rain, freezing rain, and snow to central, north-central, and northeast South Dakota. Much of the freezing fell across central and north-central South Dakota west of the Missouri River. As the freezing rain changed over to snow and the winds increased, the ice and snow buildup on the power lines and poles caused hundreds of power poles to break across Jones, Stanley, Dewey, and Corson counties. East of the Missouri River, the colder air and stronger winds moved in, changing the rain over to snow. High winds of 30 to 45 mph with gusts near 60 mph brought widespread blizzard conditions to all areas.

Ice buildup ranged from a tenth to an inch for counties west of the Missouri River. Snowfall amounts across the entire area ranged from 2 to 8 inches, with a 15-inch amount recorded in southwest Corson County. Other snowfall amounts include 3 inches in Eagle Butte, Blunt, Kennebec, Mission Ridge, and Onida; 4 inches in Pollock, Gettysburg, and Bowdle; 5 inches south of Harrold, Iona, and near McIntosh; 6 inches in Mobridge; 7 inches in Murdo; 8 inches in McLaughlin, and 15 inches southwest of Keldron.

All 4,600 customers of the Moreau-Grand Electric Company lost power due to the storm. The last time this occurred was during the winter of 1967-68. The monetary loss to this cooperative and other electric cooperatives for Jones, Stanley, Corson, and Dewey counties was hundreds of thousands of dollars. Over 100 line workers worked countless hours with crews coming as far away as Nebraska and Iowa to assist in the power recovery. Over 1,000 customers were without power for an extended period.

The blizzard resulted in numerous school, business, and road closures along with flight cancellations. Interstate 90 was shut down from Mitchell, South Dakota, to the Wyoming border from Thursday the 6th until Friday evening of the 7th. In the early afternoon hours of Friday, the 7th, slippery roads, high winds, and low visibilities contributed to the rollover of a passenger van carrying seven students. The passenger van rolled several times, causing severe injuries to three of the students. The Governor declared a state of emergency on the 7th, and President Bush declared South Dakota a disaster area.

1951 - Snow fell from the Texas panhandle to the Lower Great Lakes, leaving record totals of 12.5 inches at Saint Louis MO, and 14.1 inches at Springfield MO. Other heavier snowfall totals included 20 inches at Nevada MO, 13.5 inches at Sedan KS, 13 inches at Decatur IL, and 10 inches at Alva OK. In the Saint Louis area, up to 20 inches was reported in Washington County. (5th- 6th) (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1961: Santa Ana winds in southern California downed trees, utility lines and blew 10 to 50 percent of the avocado crop from trees. Dust from the winds lowered the visibility, which led to a 16 car pileup, injuring 23 people. In addition, the winds brought the lowest relative humidity of record to Burbank, 3 percent, and contributed to disastrous fires in the hills of the Los Angeles area.

1987 - High winds in the northeastern U.S., turning a recent warm spell into a distant memory, gusted to 63 mph at Rhode Island. Squalls resulting from the high winds produced five inches of snow at Marquette MI and seven inches at Rome NY. A storm in the southwestern U.S. brought heavy snow to some of the higher elevations of Arizona, Colorado and Utah. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

2005: The deadliest tornado to strike Indiana since April 3rd, 1974, occurred around 2 am. A single F3 tornado inflicted 24 fatalities, 238 injuries, and nearly 90 million dollars in damage with a path length of 41 miles. This storm moved in a northeasterly direction from just north of Smith Mills, Kentucky, to Gentryville, Indiana, and crossed the Ohio River three times. Most of the damage occurred as the tornado passed southeast of the city of Evansville, Indiana.

2016: An EF2 tornado hit Cesano, Rome, Italy, along its 25-mile path. Two people were killed.



## ASKING, SEEKING AND KNOCKING

A little girl was climbing into bed when her mother asked, "Ann, did you remember to say your prayers?"

"Well," she replied, "I got on my knees and started to say them as I do every night. And then all of a sudden I thought, 'I'll bet that God gets tired of hearing me pray about the same old things every night.' So, I decided that I would just lay here in bed and tell Him the story of 'The Three Bears.'"

Persistence in prayer and pursuing God's plan and purpose for our lives is very important. It's equally important, however, to understand how He answers our prayers and when He will answer our prayers. We must never allow ourselves to think that God will not accept our prayers or that He will ever forget our prayers. Prayers and praying are a serious and significant part of the life of the Christian. However, we must always remember that He will answer our prayers at the right time, in the right way, in a way that is in our best interests.

We need to remember that He responds to our requests with His wisdom and His never-ending and always compassionate love. When the answer does not come when we expect it, we must hold fast to the fact that "His grace is sufficient" now and into eternity. The answer will come when we need it most and will fulfill His plan for our well-being. When we give up, give in, and quit praying, God knows we are not sincere and that our request was "a passing fancy."

Prayer: Lord, give us a faith that does not falter, a trust that will not tire and persistence that will prevail. May our hope in Your faithfulness and our best interests prevail. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on seeking, and you will find. Keep on knocking, and the door will be opened to you. Matthew 7:7

*We all need the encouragement, comfort, and peace that comes through God's grace. Our daily devotionals, known as Seeds of Hope, have been a means through which thousands of people have experienced this grace. Each devotional comes from God's Word and we pray this good "seed" finds good soil in your heart. Our aim is that the Seeds of Hope will be a great source of daily encouragement to you and that God will use them to draw you near to Him*

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 29 of 95

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# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 30 of 95



## WINNING NUMBERS

### MEGA MILLIONS

WINNING NUMBERS:  
11.05.24

2 24 25 52 58 9

MegaPlier: 2x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$334,000,000**

NEXT 2 Days 17 Hrs 45  
DRAW: Mins 45 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LOTTO AMERICA

WINNING NUMBERS:  
11.04.24

3 9 12 16 52 3

All Star Bonus: 3x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$13,830,000**

NEXT 17 Hrs 44  
DRAW: Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### LUCKY FOR LIFE

WINNING NUMBERS:  
11.05.24

1 9 14 38 45 12

TOP PRIZE:  
**\$7,000/week**

NEXT 17 Hrs 15 Mins  
DRAW: 44 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### DAKOTA CASH

WINNING NUMBERS:  
11.02.24

9 14 22 31 32

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$86,000**

NEXT 17 Hrs 15 Mins  
DRAW: 44 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

DOUBLE PLAY

WINNING NUMBERS:  
11.04.24

8 14 16 34 51 14

TOP PRIZE:  
**\$10,000,000**

NEXT 17 Hrs 44 Mins  
DRAW: 44 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

### POWERBALL

WINNING NUMBERS:  
11.04.24

6 18 33 48 53 21

Power Play: 10x

NEXT ESTIMATED JACKPOT:  
**\$75,000,000**

NEXT 17 Hrs 44 Mins  
DRAW: 45 Secs

[PREVIOUS RESULTS](#)

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 31 of 95

## Upcoming Groton Events

07/04/2024 Firecracker Couples Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course  
07/09/2024 FREE SNAP Application Assistance 1-6pm at the Community Center  
07/14/2024 Lion's Club Summer Fest/Car Show at the City Park 9am-4pm  
07/17/2024 Legion Auxiliary #39 Salad Buffet & Dessert Bar at the Groton Legion 11am-1pm  
07/17/2024 Pro Am Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course  
07/25/2024 Dairy Queen Miracle Treat Day  
07/25/2024 Summer Downtown Sip & Shop 5-8pm  
07/25/2024 Treasures Amidst The Trials 6pm at Emmanuel Lutheran Church  
07/26/2024 Ferney Open Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 9am Start  
07/27/2024 1st Annual Celebration in the Park 1-9:30pm  
08/05/2024 School Supply Drive 4-7pm at the Community Center  
**Cancelled:** Wine on 9 at Olive Grove Golf Course 6pm  
08/08/2024 Family Fun Fest 5:30-7:30pm  
08/9-11/2024 Jr. Legion State Baseball Tournament  
08/12/2024 Vitalant Blood Drive at the Community Center 1:15-7pm  
09/07/2024 Lion's Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm  
09/07-08/2024 Groton Airport Fly-In/Drive-In, Groton Municipal Airport  
09/08/2024 Sunflower Couples Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course 10am  
10/05/2024 Pumpkin Fest at the City Park 10am-3pm  
10/11/2024 Lake Region Marching Band Festival 10am  
10/31/2024 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm  
10/31/2024 United Methodist Church Trunk or Treat 5:30-7pm  
11/16/2024 Groton American Legion "Turkey Raffle" 6:30-11:30pm  
11/28/2024 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm  
12/01/2024 Groton Snow Queen Contest, 4:30 p.m.  
12/07/2024 Olive Grove 8th Annual Holiday Party with Live & Silent Auctions 6pm-close  
12/14/2024 Santa Day at Professional Management Services, downtown Groton  
04/12/2025 Lion's Club Easter Egg Hunt at the City Park 10am Sharp  
05/03/2025 Lion's Club Spring Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm  
05/26/2025 Memorial Day Services Groton Union Cemetery with lunch at Legion Post #39, 12pm  
07/04/2025 Firecracker Couples Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course  
07/09/2025 Legion Auxiliary Salad Luncheon  
07/13/2025 Lion's Club Summer Fest/Car Show at the City Park 9am-4pm  
09/06/2025 Lion's Club Fall Citywide Rummage Sale 8am-3pm  
09/20/2025 NSU Gypsy Day  
10/31/2025 Downtown Trick or Treat 4-6pm  
11/27/2025 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center 11:30am-1pm

## News from the **AP** Associated Press

### **South Dakota has rejected an abortion rights measure but a vote on marijuana is too early to call**

By JOHN HANNA Associated Press

Voters in South Dakota have rejected a proposal to add protections for abortion rights to the state constitution, preserving a near-total ban there.

The abortion measure was in a crowded field of ballot initiatives for Tuesday's general election that also included a proposal to legalize marijuana for recreational use. The vote on marijuana was still too early to call Wednesday. But voters rejected a measure to remove the state sales tax from food and a plan for a single, all-candidate primary election with the top two finishers for each office advancing.

Here is a look at the biggest ballot initiatives.

**Voters stay the course on abortion**

The abortion vote in South Dakota followed the rejection in Florida of a proposed change in its state constitution to protect abortion rights — the first time abortion opponents have won a statewide vote since the U.S. Supreme Court's Dobbs decision overturning Roe vs. Wade in June 2022.

The South Dakota measure would have barred restrictions on terminating a pregnancy during its first 12 weeks.

From the 13th through the 26th week of pregnancy, state regulations would have had to be "reasonably related" to the patient's physical health. Even after the 26th week, the state would have had to permit abortions to preserve a patient's life or health.

The ban in place since the Dobbs decision makes it a felony to perform an abortion except to save the life of the patient.

**Supporters of recreational marijuana try again**

South Dakota voters were considering a pro-marijuana ballot initiative for the fifth time in eight years. That includes three proposals to legalize recreational use over the past four years.

The vote was still too early to call Wednesday.

The latest measure would legalize recreational marijuana for those 21 and older, and up to 2 ounces in a form other than concentrated cannabis or cannabis products. The measure also would allow the cultivation of plants, with restrictions.

Going into the election, 24 other states had legalized recreational use.

South Dakota voters approved a law in 2020 legalizing the medical use of marijuana, four years after rejecting the idea.

Separately in 2020, voters approved an amendment to the South Dakota Constitution to legalize recreational use, but the state Supreme Court nullified it. Voters rejected another proposal in 2022.

**A proposal to give grocery buyers a break fails**

Flush with cash, South Dakota last year dropped its sales tax from 4.5% to 4.2%, but voters rejected a proposal to eliminate the tax from food altogether.

The Legislature's research staff estimated the state would lose about \$124 million in annual revenues or 5% of its general tax revenues of \$2.4 billion.

But critics of the measure suggested it was written so poorly that it could go further than intended, applying even to tobacco products. They argued that the loss of revenue would push the state to make up for it by enacting an income tax, and it drew opposition from a coalition of business and other interest groups.

Supporters said they were trying to give people a break on food costs. The measure would have prohibited a state tax on "anything sold for human consumption," except alcoholic beverages and prepared food, such as restaurant meals.

**Parties' opposition helps sink 'jungle' primary plan**

Voters rejected a proposal to adopt what is sometimes known as a jungle primary after the leaders of



both major parties criticized it. Those critics argued that the smaller Libertarian and No Labels parties would be unlikely to ever appear on the general election ballot.

In South Dakota, Democrats allowed voters with no political affiliation to participate in their June primary, but Republicans did not. The election initiative would have amended the state constitution to end partisan primaries by having all candidates for an office run at once, with the top two advancing.

Supporters of the change argue it would make elections better reflect voters' wishes and ensure that 155,000 voters with no party affiliation can vote for their favored candidates in a primary.

In a state where the GOP holds nearly 90% of the Legislature's seats, it's likely that in many places all of the general election candidates would have been Republicans. Meanwhile, a broader electorate could have helped more moderate GOP candidates at the expense of more conservative ones favored by party leaders.

## North Dakota voters defeat ballot measure to largely axe property tax

By JACK DURA Associated Press

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — North Dakota voters on Tuesday rejected a ballot measure to outlaw most local property taxes, which critics said would have led to dramatic cuts in state services.

The general election ballot also included four other proposals, including one calling for the legalization of recreational marijuana and another that sought to make it more difficult to amend the state constitution.

The measure to end local property taxes based on assessed value would have forced the state to provide an estimated \$3.15 billion in replacement revenue to local governments during each two-year budget, according to a legislative panel. The state now forecasts about \$5 billion in general tax revenues in the current two-year budget.

Supporters of the proposed cut said rising property taxes were increasingly frustrating to voters and that the taxation system was hard to understand. Opponents said the measure would force legislators to make huge cuts to state services.

Marijuana was also on the ballot, as North Dakota voters were deciding whether to legalize recreational possession and use of the drug. The outcome of the proposal was still too early to call Wednesday morning. North Dakota is one of a handful of states, including Florida and South Dakota, where recreational marijuana measures were going before voters. Two dozen states have legalized recreational marijuana, the most recent being Ohio in 2023.

North Dakota voters rejected past measures in 2018 and 2022. The state's Senate defeated two House-passed bills for legalization and taxation in 2021.

The measure would legalize recreational marijuana for people 21 and older to use at their homes and, if permitted, on others' private property. The measure also outlines numerous production and processing regulations, prohibited uses — such as in public or in vehicles — and would allow home cultivation of plants.

It includes maximum purchase and possession amounts of 1 ounce of dried leaves or flowers, 4 grams of a cannabinoid concentrate, 1,500 milligrams of total THC in the form of a cannabis product and 300 milligrams of an edible product. Up to seven marijuana manufacturing operations would be allowed along with 18 dispensaries.

Supporters say the measure would allow law enforcement to focus limited resources on more important issues, such as fentanyl. Opponents say marijuana has harmful physiological and societal effects.

Voters also rejected adding requirements for citizen-initiated constitutional measures. Such initiatives have been a smoldering issue in the Legislature for years over the perception that the state constitution is too easy to amend.

The measure referred by the Legislature would have limited constitutional initiatives to a single subject, mandated that only eligible voters may circulate and sign initiative petitions, raised the number of required signatures for submitting petitions, and required that such measures pass both the primary and general elections.

Republican state Sen. Janne Myrdal, who introduced the measure, said the state constitution is “standing naked on Main Street in North Dakota, and anyone ... from California or New York can throw a dart and play the game for \$1 million to change the law in North Dakota.”

Myrdal, an anti-abortion leader in the Legislature, had denied that the measure was an effort to head off an abortion rights initiative. States around the country — including North Dakota’s neighbors Montana and South Dakota — have seen the introduction of such measures after the fall of *Roe v. Wade*.

North Dakota lawmakers have groused in recent years about the origins and funding of ballot initiatives that added crime victim rights, ethics mandates and term limits to the state constitution. Opponents said the new proposed restrictions step on citizen democracy.

Two other measures also were on the ballot. Voters approved a constitutional amendment from the Legislature to change outdated terms related to disabilities in the state constitution. A measure proposing administrative changes for the state’s \$11 billion in oil tax savings was too early to call.

## North Dakota’s lone congressman, Republican Kelly Armstrong, to be state’s next governor

By JACK DURA Associated Press

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Republican U.S. Rep. Kelly Armstrong won election as North Dakota’s next governor on Tuesday, continuing the GOP’s three-decade grip on the highest job in the conservative state.

The state’s lone U.S. congressman beat Democratic state Sen. Merrill Piepkorn and independent candidate Michael Coachman for the post. Armstrong, a 48-year-old attorney, is in his third term in the House. He now has become the first member of Congress in 52 years to be elected the state’s governor.

Campaigning since late January has been fun, “but now the real work starts,” Armstrong told The Associated Press by phone. He said addressing property tax frustrations and restoring trust in institutions and government will be top of his mind as he takes office.

Armstrong will be sworn in on Dec. 15, weeks before the biennial Legislature convenes with an expected Republican supermajority in Bismarck. He will succeed outgoing GOP Gov. Doug Burgum, who did not seek a third term. Burgum was a finalist to be former President Donald Trump’s vice-presidential running mate.

Armstrong said that as governor he wants to address the state’s economic future, workforce challenges and agriculture and energy issues. He cited his state and federal government knowledge and oil and agriculture background as qualifications for the job.

Armstrong defeated Lt. Gov. Tammy Miller in a Republican primary in June. The state’s Republican primary winner is usually an overwhelming favorite in the general election, given the state’s large Republican majority. Republicans have held the governor’s office since 1992.

A Democrat last won a statewide election in North Dakota in 2012 when Heidi Heitkamp scored a U.S. Senate victory.

Armstrong served for six years in the state Senate until 2018, when he won the first of three elections — most recently against former Miss America 2018 Cara Mund — to North Dakota’s only U.S. House seat.

He also had earlier stints as a state senator and state GOP chairman. He owns investments in the oil and gas industries, including in a company owned by his family. As governor, he would serve on the three-member state Industrial Commission, which regulates an array of energy operations.

In Congress, Armstrong backed former President Donald Trump against two impeachment forays, voted for federal protections for same-sex and interracial married couples, and was one of former House Republican Leader Kevin McCarthy’s proposed members to serve on a panel intended to investigate the Jan. 6 Capitol insurrection. McCarthy later declined to appoint the panel.

Armstrong didn’t support efforts to overturn the 2020 presidential election.

Armstrong has previously said he plans to resign his House seat a few weeks early to assume office as governor in December. Such a step would narrow the Republicans’ already slim House majority in the waning session of Congress.

Armstrong said he also would look ahead as governor to working with many of the same lawmakers at

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 35 of 95

the state Capitol with whom he had served with for years. Republicans control the legislature although they have been divided by recent intraparty disagreements.

The incoming governor said his approach with lawmakers will be to meet and work with them "and make sure that we're not having petty disagreements about important issues."

Piepkorn, 75, has served in the state Senate since 2016, in a dwindling Democratic caucus that holds just four of the chamber's 47 seats. He represents a district in Fargo, the state's largest city. Piepkorn is the president of a company that produces TV, film and radio projects, as well as live events. His Senate term expires this year.

Coachman is a U.S. Air Force veteran and frequent candidate for office.

Burgum a two-term governor, announced he would not seek a third term. over a month after he ended his bid for the GOP presidential nomination. A wealthy software entrepreneur, Burgum also was a finalist to be Trump's vice presidential running mate before Trump ultimately settled on U.S. Sen. JD Vance of Ohio.

The state's revenues and reserves are in healthy shape. North Dakota had a 2.3% unemployment rate in September, behind only South Dakota and Vermont, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

But the new governor and legislators could face some thorny issues when the biennial Legislature convenes.

Voters on Tuesday rejected a measure to do away with the current property tax in North Dakota; lawmakers expect to address the simmering issue of property taxes in their upcoming session. And legislators could respond to a judge's decision to strike down the state's abortion ban. Workforce issues loom large, including a yearslong labor shortage and pressing child care needs.

North Dakota's next governor will be the first to take office under new term limits voters approved in 2022. Governors cannot be elected more than twice, though Burgum could have run again.

Republicans are expected to retain supermajority control of the Legislature, where subjects such as gender identity, book bans, tax cuts, workforce needs and electronic pull tabs were high-profile issues in 2023.

## Republican Kevin Cramer wins 2nd term in US Senate representing North Dakota

By JACK DURA Associated Press

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — U.S. Sen. Kevin Cramer of North Dakota won a second term on Tuesday, turning back a challenge from a Democrat making her second attempt to gain a Senate seat.

The veteran Republican politician beat Democrat Katrina Christiansen, an assistant professor of engineering at the University of Jamestown. Cramer, a former congressman, first won the seat in 2018, defeating Democrat Heidi Heitkamp's reelection bid.

In his campaign, Cramer touted his longtime support for former President Donald Trump and his work during the Trump administration on deregulation, border security, energy and agriculture issues. The 63-year-old Cramer is known for his approachable yet blunt manner.

"I just know I'm blessed to represent the most patriotic, virtuous people in the country and carry their message for them in Washington," Cramer told The Associated Press by phone.

Christiansen was making her second bid for a Senate seat after running unsuccessfully against Republican Sen. John Hoeven in 2022.

A former U.S. House member and public utilities regulator, Cramer, 63, originally captured his seat from Heitkamp in 2018 in one of the most closely watched Senate races that year.

In challenging Cramer, Christiansen had cast herself as a problem solver and highlighted her rural and impoverished upbringing amid the nation's farm crisis. The 42-year-old Democrat has a doctorate in agricultural engineering and had worked as an engineer at an ethanol plant before taking a position as an assistant engineering professor at the University of Jamestown.

Cramer is known for an approachable but blunt manner. He has been a player for decades in state GOP politics, including as a young state party chairman in the early 1990s when Republicans began turning the tables on North Dakota's then-dominant Democrats.

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 36 of 95

Christiansen had argued that since heading to Washington, Cramer had lost touch with North Dakota issues. She raised those claims in one television ad featuring rancher Frank Tomac, who supported Trump and said, "When they go to Washington like Kevin Cramer, folks back home suffer."

Cramer served in the U.S. House from 2013 to 2019, and on the state's Public Service Commission from 2003 to 2012. He also has served as state tourism director and economic development and finance director under then-Gov. Ed Schafer.

Cramer has been campaigning while his son Ian Cramer faces charges in connection with a December 2023 vehicle pursuit and crash that killed a sheriff's deputy, Paul Martin, in Mercer County northwest of the state capital of Bismarck. Ian Cramer pleaded guilty to all the charges, including a homicide offense, in September and has yet to be sentenced.

## Tuesday's Scores

The Associated Press

PREP VOLLEYBALL=

Brandon Valley def. Mitchell, 26-28, 25-12, 25-23, 25-17

Brookings def. Yankton, 26-24, 25-14, 25-21

Douglas def. Sturgis Brown High School, 25-15, 14-25, 25-23, 25-12

Harrisburg def. Watertown, 25-9, 27-25, 25-15

Rapid City Stevens def. Spearfish, 25-21, 25-17, 21-25, 25-21

Sioux Falls Jefferson def. T F Riggs High School, 25-14, 25-15, 25-12

Sioux Falls O'Gorman def. Huron, 25-18, 25-16, 24-26, 25-23

Sioux Falls Roosevelt def. Aberdeen Central High School, 25-20, 25-17, 23-25, 25-13

SDHSAA Playoffs=

Class A=

Region 1=

Quarterfinal=

Aberdeen Roncalli def. Redfield, 25-20, 25-17, 25-23

Milbank def. Sisseton, 25-14, 25-18, 15-25, 25-11

Webster def. Britton-Hecla

Region 2=

Quarterfinal=

Clark-Willow Lake def. Elkton-Lake Benton, 25-12, 25-19, 23-25, 25-22

Great Plains Lutheran def. Deuel, 25-11, 25-13, 25-10

Sioux Valley def. Florence-Henry, 25-12, 25-9, 25-12

Region 3=

Quarterfinal=

Baltic def. Flandreau, 25-8, 25-14, 25-10

Garretson def. Tri-Valley, 25-15, 25-18, 25-17

Semifinal=

West Central def. Madison, 23-25, 25-22, 25-21, 25-23

Region 4=

Quarterfinal=

Elk Point-Jefferson def. Vermillion, 25-4, 25-15, 25-8

Lennox def. Canton, 18-25, 25-21, 25-21, 25-19

Sioux Falls Christian def. Beresford, 25-5, 25-17, 0-0

Region 5=

Quarterfinal=

Bon Homme def. Parker, 13-25, 19-25, 25-21, 27-25, 19-17

Wagner def. McCook Central-Montrose, 25-21, 25-22, 25-23

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 37 of 95

Region 6=

Quarterfinal=

Mobridge-Pollock def. Crow Creek Tribal School, 25-11, 25-11, 25-7

Platte-Geddes def. Cheyenne-Eagle Butte, 25-21, 25-16, 25-15

Stanley County def. Chamberlain, 25-22, 25-16, 25-20

Region 7=

Quarterfinal=

Lakota Tech def. St. Francis Indian, 25-10, 25-7, 25-8

Todd County def. Mahpiya Lúta Red Cloud, 26-24, 16-25, 25-16, 16-25, 15-10

Region 8=

Quarterfinal=

Custer def. Belle Fourche, 25-14, 25-11, 25-21

Rapid City Christian def. Hot Springs, 25-21, 12-25, 25-15, 16-25, 15-5

St Thomas More def. Lead-Deadwood, 25-15, 25-17, 25-6

Class B=

Region 1=

Quarterfinal=

Aberdeen Christian def. Wilmot, 25-19, 25-17, 25-22

Hitchcock-Tulare def. Tiospa Zina, 25-14, 25-1, 25-9

Northwestern def. Langford, 25-14, 25-12, 25-8

Warner def. Waverly-South Shore, 25-3, 25-5, 25-13

Region 2=

Quarterfinal=

Castlewood def. Iroquois-Lake Preston, 25-13, 25-7, 25-7

DeSmet def. Wessington Springs, 25-12, 25-14, 25-22

Deubrook def. Estelline-Hendricks, 25-20, 25-22, 25-21

Wolsey-Wessington def. Arlington, 25-19, 25-20, 25-17

Region 3=

Quarterfinal=

Bridgewater-Emery def. Dell Rapids St Mary, 25-15, 25-22, 25-22

Chester def. Canistota, 25-16, 25-6, 25-11

Colman-Egan def. Sanborn Central-Woonsocket, 25-16, 25-17, 25-16

Sioux Falls Lutheran def. Ethan, 27-25, 22-25, 25-21, 18-25, 15-13

Region 4=

Quarterfinal=

Freeman def. Menno, 25-23, 22-25, 20-25, 25-15, 15-12

Gayville-Volin High School def. Alcester-Hudson, 25-19, 25-16, 25-10

Parkston def. Irene-Wakonda, 25-18, 25-15, 25-16

Tripp-Delmont-Armour def. Centerville, 25-20, 21-25, 25-23, 22-25, 18-16

Region 5=

Quarterfinal=

Avon def. Andes Central/Dakota Christian, 20-25, 25-20, 25-15, 25-17

Burke def. Kimball-White Lake, 25-12, 25-19, 25-8

Corsica/Stickney def. Lyman, 25-15, 25-23, 13-25, 25-20

Gregory def. Lower Brule, 25-12, 25-11, 25-5

Region 6=

Quarterfinal=

Faulkton def. North Central, 25-23, 25-17, 22-25, 25-14

Herreid-Selby def. Tiospaye Topa, 25-7, 25-16, 25-11

Ipswich def. Sully Buttes, 25-9, 21-25, 25-18, 25-11

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 38 of 95

Potter County def. Highmore-Harrold, 25-20, 25-16, 25-18

Region 7=

Quarterfinal=

Bennett County def. Philip, 25-22, 25-14, 25-21

Edgemont def. White River, 25-14, 25-16, 25-5

Jones County def. Wall, 25-17, 25-21, 25-17

Kadoka def. Crazy Horse, 25-2, 25-3, 25-1

Region 8=

Quarterfinal=

Faith def. McLaughlin, 25-6, 25-6, 25-5

Harding County def. McIntosh High School, 25-9, 25-8, 25-20

Lemmon High School def. Dupree, 25-12, 25-15, 25-18

Timber Lake def. Newell, 26-24, 25-9, 23-25, 25-20

Some high school volleyball scores provided by Scorestream.com, <https://scorestream.com/>

## Stocks, bond yields and bitcoin surge as Trump closes in on US election victory

By ZIMO ZHONG and ELAINE KURTENBACH Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — Share prices, bond yields and bitcoin surged Wednesday as the Republican party gained control of the Senate and former President Donald Trump closed in on the 270 electoral votes needed to return him to the White House.

The full results of Tuesday's election may not be known for days as officials count all the votes, but investors already were repositioning in anticipation of sweeping gains by the Republicans, who took control of the Senate for the first time in four years. The results of the House elections were not yet finalized.

Trump won the battleground state of Georgia, a Republican stronghold that had voted for Democrats in 2020. A win in North Carolina helped Trump narrow Vice President Kamala Harris' pathways to victory. Clinching Pennsylvania took him within 3 electoral votes of the 270 needed to become the next president.

The expectation is that a victory by Trump will lead to faster economic growth and more market-friendly policies.

Ahead of U.S. markets opening Wednesday, the future for the S&P 500 gained 1.23% and the future for the Dow Jones Industrial Average was up 1.02%. The Nasdaq composite future was 1.43% higher.

The price of bitcoin jumped nearly 8% to a record \$75,345.00, as investors bet on a victory for Trump, who has pledged support for cryptocurrencies. It later fell back to \$74,520.00.

Bond yields also surged, with the yield on the 10-year Treasury climbing to 4.4% from 4.28% on Tuesday.

"The markets are scrambling to figure out what happens next, but for the time being, the market is pricing in a higher growth and higher inflation outlook," Peter Esho of Esho Capital said in a commentary.

In early European trading, Germany's DAX climbed 1.3% to 19,503.40, while the CAC 40 in Paris advanced 1.9% to 7,550.36. Britain's FTSE 100 was up 1.4% at 8,285.06.

Markets worldwide have been fixated on what the election will mean for U.S. economic, monetary and trade policy, as well as geopolitics. A split in Congress between political parties would complicate policy-making, and a White House headed by Trump could have far reaching ramifications given his support for sharp increases in tariffs, especially on imports from China.

The dollar surged against both the Mexican peso and the Chinese yuan, two key trading partners expected to be significantly affected by tariff increases. It was also up against the yen and the euro.

The broad U.S. stock market has historically tended to rise regardless of which party wins the White House, even if each party's policies can help and hurt different industries' profits.

Since 1945, the S&P 500 has risen in 73% of the years where a Democrat was president and 70% of the years when a Republican was the nation's chief executive, according to Sam Stovall, chief investment

strategist at CFRA.

The S&P 500 has risen nearly 70% since the 2020 election brought President Joe Biden into office. It rallied to records as the U.S. economy bounced back from the COVID-19 pandemic and managed to avoid a recession despite a jump in inflation.

The economy was a key issue for inflation-weary U.S. voters who chose Trump this time around, though mainstream economists have said Trump's policy proposals would make inflation worse.

Trump has also vowed to sharply raise tariffs on imports from China and other countries, darkening the outlook for Chinese exporters at a time when Beijing has relied heavily on ramping up manufacturing to try to revive its slowing economy.

"Positive outcomes for Harris are expected to boost Asian assets, while Trump gains may exert downward pressure," Anderson Alves of ActivTrades said in a commentary.

Chinese markets have been among the most active in the region this week as leaders hold a meeting of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, the country's legislature.

The gathering is expected to deliver more moves to help spur faster economic growth and resolve mounting levels of local government debt. On Tuesday, upbeat comments by Premier Li Qiang about the potential for both fiscal and monetary policies helped lift share benchmarks in Hong Kong and Shanghai by more than 2%. Li also expressed confidence that China will attain its growth target of about 5% this year.

In Asian share trading Wednesday, Japan's Nikkei 225 index gained 2.6% to 39,480.67, while the Kospi in Seoul shed 0.9% to 2,553.90.

Australia's S&P/ASX 200 rose 0.8% to 8,199.50.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng index fell 2.2% to 20,538.38, ending a three-day rally, as investors sought safe-haven assets amid the uncertainties surrounding the U.S. election. The Hang Seng Tech Index slipped 2.5%, while the Shanghai Composite index edged 0.1% lower, to 3,383.81.

In other dealings early Wednesday, U.S. benchmark crude oil lost 90 cents to \$71.09 per barrel. Brent crude, the international standard, gave up \$1.00 cents to \$74.53 per barrel.

## Iran's currency falls to an all-time low as Trump is on the verge of clinching the US presidency

By AMIR VAHDAT and NASSER KARIMI Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Iran's currency fell on Wednesday to an all-time low as former President Donald Trump was on the verge of clinching the U.S. presidency again, signaling new challenges ahead for Tehran as it remains locked in the wars raging in the Middle East.

The rial traded at 703,000 rials to the dollar, traders in Tehran said. The rate could still change throughout the day. Iran's Central Bank could flood the market with more hard currencies as an attempt to improve the rate, as it has done in the past.

The slide comes as the rial already faces considerable woes over its sharp slide in value — and as the mood on the streets of Tehran among some darkened.

"One-hundred percent he will intensify the sanctions," said Amir Aghaeian, a 22-year-old student. "Things that are not in our favor will be worse. Our economy and social situation will surely get worse."

He added: "I feel the country is going to blow up."

In 2015, at the time of Iran's nuclear deal with world powers, the rial was at 32,000 to \$1. On July 30, the day that Iran's reformist President Masoud Pezeshkian was sworn in and started his term, the rate was 584,000 to \$1.

Trump unilaterally withdrew America from the accord in 2018, sparking years of tensions between the countries that persist today.

Iran's economy has struggled for years under crippling international sanctions over its rapidly advancing nuclear program, which now enriches uranium at near weapons-grade levels.

Pezeshkian, elected after a helicopter crash killed hard-line President Ebrahim Raisi in May, came to power on a promise to reach a deal to ease Western sanctions.

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 40 of 95

However, Iran's government has for weeks been trying to downplay the effect on Tehran of whoever won Tuesday's election in the United States. That stance continued on Wednesday with a brief comment from Fatemeh Mohajerani, a spokeswoman for Pezeshkian's administration.

"The election of the U.S. president doesn't have anything specifically to do with us," she said. "The major policies of America and the Islamic Republic are fixed, and they won't heavily change by people replacing others. We have already made necessary preparations in advance."

But tensions remain high between the nations, 45 years after the 1979 U.S. Embassy takeover and 444-day hostage crisis that followed.

Iran remains locked in the Mideast wars roiling the region, with its allies battered — militant groups and fighters of its self-described "Axis of Resistance," including the militant Palestinian Hamas, Lebanon's Hezbollah and Yemen's Houthi rebels.

Israel is pressing its war in the Gaza Strip targeting Hamas and its invasion of Lebanon amid devastating attacks against Hezbollah. At the same time, Iran still appears to be assessing damage from Israel's strikes on the Islamic Republic on Oct. 26 in response to two Iranian ballistic missile attacks.

Iran has threatened to retaliate against Israel — where U.S. troops now man a missile defense battery. Mahmoud Parvari, a 71-year-old taxi driver in Tehran, did not mince his words when discussing Trump. "I feel like I'm seeing the devil," he said. "He looks like Satan, his eyes are like Satan and his behavior is like a mad man."

But another taxi driver, who only gave his last name as Hosseini, offered a more pragmatic view. "If it helps my country I would definitely" make a deal with Trump, he said. "It doesn't matter if it's Trump or anyone else. After all he is a human being."

## The Latest: Trump inches towards a victory, GOP reclaims Senate majority

By The Associated Press undefined

Republican Donald Trump has won Pennsylvania, Georgia and North Carolina, capturing three of the seven heavily contested battlegrounds and coming within a few electoral votes of winning the presidency. Republicans reclaimed control of the Senate, picking up seats in West Virginia and Ohio. Top House races are focused in New York and California, where Democrats are trying to claw back some of the 10 or so seats where Republicans have made surprising gains in recent years.

Follow the AP's Election 2024 coverage at: <https://apnews.com/hub/election-2024>.

Here's the latest:

Race to control the House intensifies with Michigan flip

Republicans have flipped a House seat that was previously held by Democrats, giving them a valuable pickup in a frenzied race for House control.

At this point, practically every seat matters when it comes to building a House majority. In Michigan's 7th district, Republican Tom Barrett picked up a seat that Democratic Rep. Elissa Slotkin vacated to run for U.S. Senate. Barrett, a former state senator, defeated another former state lawmaker, Democrat Curtis Hertel.

On the campaign trail, Barrett didn't back away from his record of supporting abortion restrictions in the statehouse, but he also described abortion access as a settled issue in Michigan.

Zelenskyy says he appreciates Trump's 'peace through strength' mentality

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy says he appreciates Trump's commitment to "peace through strength" as the Republican presidential nominee closes in on the electoral votes needed to win the White House.

"I recall our great meeting with President Trump back in September, when we discussed in detail the Ukraine-U.S. strategic partnership, the Victory Plan, and ways to put an end to Russian aggression against Ukraine," said Zelenskyy on X. Zelenskyy said that Ukraine is interested "in developing mutually beneficial political and economic cooperation that will benefit both of our nations."



# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 41 of 95

"We look forward to an era of a strong United States of America under President Trump's decisive leadership," said Zelenskyy.

"I appreciate President Trump's commitment to the 'peace through strength' approach in global affairs. This is exactly the principle that can practically bring just peace in Ukraine closer. I am hopeful that we will put it into action together," he said.

European Commission president says she's looking forward to working with Trump

The European Union's top official says she's looking forward to working with Trump again as the former president is on the cusp of victory in the U.S. presidential race.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said that the E.U. and U.S. "are more than just allies. We are bound by a true partnership between our people, uniting 800 million citizens."

"Let us work together on a transatlantic partnership that continues to deliver for our citizens. Millions of jobs and billions in trade and investment on each side of the Atlantic depend on the dynamism and stability of our economic relationship," she said in a statement.

The tariffs that Trump slapped on steel and aluminum exports during his last term roiled the bloc's economy.

NATO leader looks forward to working with Trump

NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte says he looks forward to working with Trump "to advance peace through strength" as the former president closes in on the 270 electoral votes needed to win the White House.

"We face a growing number of challenges globally, from a more aggressive Russia, to terrorism, to strategic competition with China, as well the increasing alignment of China, Russia, North Korea and Iran," Rutte said.

"Working together through NATO helps to deter aggression, protect our collective security and support our economies," he added.

Rutte also praised Trump for his work during his first term to persuade U.S. allies in NATO to ramp up defense spending.

He noted that around two-thirds of the 32 NATO allies are due to meet the organization's main defense spending target this year.

World leaders offer their congratulations to Trump

The AP's current count has Trump three electoral votes shy of winning the White House, though he is leading in key battleground states.

"Congratulations on history's greatest comeback!" wrote Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on X. "Your historic return to the White House offers a new beginning for America and a powerful recommitment to the great alliance between Israel and America."

French President Emmanuel Macron posted on X: "Ready to work together as we were able to do during four years. With your convictions and mine. In respect and ambition. For more peace and prosperity."

Trump, a longtime source of division, calls on country to unite in election night speech

Trump, someone whose political career has been defined by division and acrimony, told the audience at his election night party early on Wednesday that it was "time to unite" as a country.

"It's time to put the divisions of the past four years behind us," Trump said. "It's time to unite."

"We have to put our country first for at least a period of time," he added. "We have to fix it."

Trump speaks at election party flanked by family, friends and top political supporters

Most of the important people in Trump's personal and political life have joined him on stage in West Palm Beach, Florida.

Former first lady Melania Trump stood near her husband and was joined by Barron, the former president's youngest son. Trump's older children, Don Jr., Eric, Ivanka and Tiffany, all joined their father on stage, too.

Trump's top political minds, including top campaign advisers Susie Wiles and Chris LaCivita, joined Trump on stage. And his political allies were on stage, too, including House Speaker Mike Johnson.

Trump also celebrated a few celebrities in the audience and on stage. Dana White, the CEO of UFC, was on stage with Trump, and the former president called golfer Bryson DeChambeau on stage. Trump also

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 42 of 95

shouted out Elon Musk, the billionaire owner of X, who has become one of his most high-profile supporters. "We have a new star. A star is born: Elon," Trump said.

Trump hails GOP's congressional wins

Donald Trump made sure to recognize GOP wins in down ballot races in his speech in the early morning Wednesday.

"The number of victories in the senate was absolutely incredible," Trump said.

Republicans have so far won 51 seats, giving them a majority. But Montana, Wisconsin, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Nevada have not been called, and it's possible Republicans could pick up more seats.

Trump also said he expected Republicans to hold the House and complimented House Speaker Mike Johnson. The House, however, is still up for grabs.

There are over 70 House races across the country that have not been called, and neither party has a convincing edge in the tally of House races.

Trump vows in his election night speech to fight 'for your family and your future'

He promised that he would "not rest until we have delivered the strong safe and prosperous America."

"Every single day," Trump said, "I will be fighting for you with every breath in my body."

Donald Trump has taken the stage

The AP's current count has him at 267 of the 270 electoral votes he needs to win the White House. He is leading in key races left to be called, including Michigan and Wisconsin.

Pennsylvania puts Trump three electoral votes short of the presidential threshold

Trump's victory in Pennsylvania has put him three electoral votes short of winning the presidency. He could win the White House by capturing Alaska or any remaining swing state.

Hugs, calls and celebration at Trump's watch party

Trump supporters gathered at his election night watch party were hugging one another, making calls, jumping up and down, and throwing their MAGA hats in the air every chance they got to celebrate as results continued to trickle in.

Guests are still arriving at the convention center in West Palm Beach.

Democrats flip another House seat in New York

The pickups for House Democrats have mostly come from New York so far as the party flipped its second seat in the state.

Democrat Josh Riley defeated Republican Rep. Mark Molinaro in a district that spans across the center of the state. Democrats earlier flipped a seat held by Rep. Brandon Williams.

While a House majority is still up for grabs, the victories will buoy Democrats' hopes, especially in House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries' home state.

Nevada polls close nearly 3 hours later

Polls closed in Nevada nearly three hours late after voters waited in long lines to cast ballots, the state's top election official said, and initial election results began to be posted just before 10 p.m. PST.

Polls had been scheduled to close at 7 p.m., but state law allows anyone in line at that time to cast a ballot.

Secretary of State Cisco Aguilar acknowledged Nevada's position as an electoral battleground and promised to keep updating results as the counties receive "and cure" additional ballots.

Mailed ballots are accepted and counted until Saturday, and thousands of voters whose ballots were set aside to allow for signature verification, or "curing," have until 5 p.m. Nov. 12 to validate their vote with election officials.

Aguilar, a Democrat, called Nevada's elections "safe, secure and transparent" and said he was proud of reports of high voter turnout.

Robert F. Kennedy Jr. joins Trump watch party

The former presidential candidate has arrived at the Palm Beach Convention Center, entering and walking briskly as he made his way near the stage among crowds of supporters.

Trump has said he will play a role when it comes to health policy but has not specified what that would

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 43 of 95

be. Kennedy, who launched his own presidential bid as an independent before dropping out of the race and endorsing Trump, joined him at several rallies in the last stretch of the campaign.

Republicans celebrate early turnout among Black and Hispanic voters

As the election stretched into the early hours of Wednesday, Republicans — seeing a map trending positively for their party — began to point to a shift in demographic support among key voting groups who often lean Democrat.

Preliminary AP VoteCast data suggested a shift among Black and Latino voters, who appeared slightly less likely to support Harris than they were to back Biden four years ago. About 8 in 10 Black voters backed Harris, down from the roughly 9 in 10 who backed Biden. More than half of Hispanic voters supported Harris, but that was down slightly from the roughly 6 in 10 who backed Biden in 2020. Trump's support among those groups appeared to rise slightly compared to 2020.

Republican Sen. Marco Rubio told AP at Trump's election watch party in West Palm Beach, Florida, that he's excited for the exit polling in states like Pennsylvania and Georgia, where Republicans are already seeing overperformance compared to this time in the election in 2020.

"I'm just really excited not just because I think it's going to be a victory but about how we won," the Florida lawmaker said.

There are serious 2016 echoes in Harris' 2024 election night

Forgive Democrats if they are having a bit of *déjà vu*.

There are noticeable similarities between then-Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton's election night in 2016 and the one that Harris had planned for tonight at Howard University.

Neither Clinton nor Harris, appeared at their election night party, despite both heading into Election Day believing they were about to defeat Donald Trump.

Both sent top aides to inform the demoralized audience that the woman would not speak. And there were noticeable similarities between what each man said.

"We still have votes to count. We still have states that have not been called yet. We will continue overnight to fight to make sure that every vote is counted," Cedric Richmond, Harris' campaign co-chair, told the audience Tuesday. "So you won't hear from the vice president tonight, but you will hear from her tomorrow."

"We're still counting votes," John Podesta, Clinton's campaign chairman, said in 2016. "And every vote should count. Several states are too close to call. So we're not going to have anything more to say tonight."

Even the mood of the events — and the trajectory they took over the course of the night — was similar. The vibe at Clinton's event at Javits Center started jubilantly, with people dancing, smiling and eager to make history — the campaign had even planned to launch reflective confetti in the air when Clinton won to resemble a glass ceiling shattering. The same was true for Harris, with the event resembling a dance party on the campus of the Democrat's alma mater.

By the time Podesta and Richmond had taken the stage, the party had stopped, people had left, and those who remained looked forlorn.

Harris' path to the White House is growing less forgiving

Harris still has a path to the White House through the Northern battleground states, but the map is getting less forgiving.

Harris' campaign has long said her surest way to 270 electoral votes was through Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, states Trump won in 2016 and Biden captured narrowly in 2020.

Harris cannot lose Pennsylvania and reach 270 electoral votes. However, she can lose pieces of the blue wall — so named for its longtime reputation as a Democratic firewall — and still reach 270.

If she loses Michigan, she can make it up by winning Arizona and Nevada. She can lose Wisconsin and make up for it with Arizona.

But the map has surely shrunk for Harris, who cannot lose more than one in the three-state northern arc.

Trump campaign comments on Harris' watch party mood

A Trump campaign spokesperson is weighing in as the mood has shifted over at Harris' watch party.

"Sounds like the joy has left the building," posted Karoline Leavitt, a campaign spokeswoman on X.

The Harris campaign turned off its projected CNN broadcasts at its election night watch party at Howard

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 44 of 95

University as midnight approached. And some Harris supporters began leaving the event.

Harris' Howard party cuts CNN, resumes music as tough race calls roll in

As midnight approached on the East Coast, the Harris campaign turned off its projected broadcasts of CNN at its election night watch party at Howard University. Instead, various high-energy remixes blared from speakers alongside floodlights flickering in tempo to hype the crowd.

The cheers in the crowd had become less frequent as more results came in from battleground states showing a tight race or victories for Trump.

Some attendees began leaving the event though the vast majority of rallygoers remained. It is unclear if Harris will make an appearance at her alma mater.

Melania Trump shows image of her son Barron voting

"Voted for the first time - for his dad," she shared on X.

Barron Trump turned 18 years old in March and began his freshman year at New York University this fall.

Republicans secure Senate control

The GOP has won control of the Senate as Sen. Deb Fischer secures reelection in Nebraska.

With at least 51 Senate seats secured, Republicans will retake control of the chamber for the first time in four years. It gives the party a major power center in Washington and important power in confirming the next president's Cabinet, as well as any Supreme Court justice if there is a vacancy.

With a handful of battleground races yet to be decided, Republicans still have an opportunity to grow their majority.

GOP senators have already been looking at ways to extend tax cuts that were passed during Donald Trump's first term, as well as sending funding towards toughened border security measures.

However, the extent of Republicans' power in Washington will also be determined by the results of the presidential and House races.

Rashida Tlaib wins reelection in Michigan House race

Rep. Rashida Tlaib, D-Mich., the only Palestinian American in Congress, has won a fourth term in the House.

Tlaib represents a district with a large Arab-American population. She has been highly critical of Israel in its war against Hamas, describing its actions in Gaza as genocide.

But her comments have also evoked outrage from many of her colleagues. The Republican-led House voted last year to censure her for her statements regarding the war.

Tlaib said her criticism was directed toward Israel's government and its leadership under Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and vowed she "will not be silenced."

Sen. Ted Cruz calls victory in Texas a mandate for tougher border measures

Republican Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas says he considers his reelection victory over Democratic U.S. Rep. Colin Allred a mandate for stronger enforcement along the U.S.-Mexico border.

During a victory speech in front of supporters in his hometown of Houston, Cruz praised strong support from Hispanic voters. He singled out South Texas, where Cruz was performing much better in large border counties than he did during a narrow victory in 2018 over Beto O'Rourke.

"Tonight we are witnessing incredible results, especially with Hispanics across the state of Texas," Cruz told the crowd. "And we are seeing tonight generational change in South Texas. The results tonight, this decisive victory should shake the Democratic establishment to its core."

Last poll closures

Polls will close at midnight EST in Alaska and Hawaii.

Ohio sends its first Latino to U.S. Senate

Bernie Moreno will be the first Latino that Ohio has sent to the U.S. Senate, thanks to his victory over Democratic Sen. Sherrod Brown.

Moreno was born in Bogota, Colombia. He moved with his family to the United States at age 5 and became an American citizen when he was 18.

He built his fortune as a luxury car dealer and blockchain entrepreneur and will come to the Senate as

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 45 of 95

one of its wealthiest members.

Daughter fills in late mother's congressional seat

The daughter of late Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee won a special election Tuesday night to finish her mother's congressional term.

Erica Lee Carter defeated two Republican challengers in the race for the Houston-area district where her mother served for almost 30 years.

Jackson Lee died in July at age 74 after a battle with pancreatic cancer. Her funeral was filled with high profile mourners, including Vice President Harris who gave Jackson Lee's eulogy just days after declaring her candidacy for president.

Republicans gain steam towards Senate control

The GOP's victory in the Ohio Senate race puts them on track to gain a Senate majority as long as they keep their seats in Texas and Nebraska.

In Ohio, Republican Bernie Moreno defeated three-term Sen. Sherrod Brown.

The long-serving Ohio Democrat had tried to appeal to working-class voters and make access to abortion a top priority, but Moreno, a Cleveland businessman, cast Brown as too liberal for the conservative state, tying the long-serving Ohio Democrat to President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris.

As long as Republican Sens. Ted Cruz of Texas and Deb Fischer of Nebraska secure reelection, the GOP will have the Senate in hand.

Trump's North Carolina win gives him options toward 270 threshold

By winning North Carolina, Trump maintains options to reach the 270 electoral vote threshold.

Trump can reach the magic number by carrying Georgia and Pennsylvania or by carrying Georgia, Michigan and Wisconsin. He also can win by carrying Wisconsin and Arizona, as well as other combinations involving Nevada.

But that would require him to crack the blue wall of northern states Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

Trump blitzed North Carolina in the final days of the campaign, stopping in four cities over four days and finishing his North Carolina campaign in Raleigh on Monday.

Harris' Howard night energy turns from festive to fretting as race calls roll in

The mood at Harris' election night party at Howard University shifted from electric to anxious as race calls began rolling in. The musical performances and triumphant speeches on display earlier in the evening have been replaced by occasional DJ mixes and broadcast race calls.

Anxious faces and hushed talk spread through the crowd as the night stretched on and the tightness of the race became apparent.

The still-packed crowd periodically went quiet as attendees watched returns come in on a giant projection of CNN. Rallygoers cheered and waved American flags as solidly blue states like Harris' native California were called in her favor.

## Middle East latest: Rescue workers pull 30 bodies from apartments in Lebanon after Israeli strike

By The Associated Press undefined

Lebanon's Civil Defense service says they have pulled 30 bodies from the rubble of an apartment building that Israel struck the night before. Search efforts were ongoing Wednesday, and it was unclear how many survivors or bodies were still trapped under the rubble.

The airstrike Tuesday night came without warning. There was no statement from the Israeli military on the strike, and it was not immediately clear what the intended target was.

On Tuesday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu dismissed Defense Minister Yoav Gallant in a surprise announcement that sparked protests across the country. Gallant's replacement is Foreign Minister Israel Katz, a longtime Netanyahu loyalist and veteran Cabinet minister.

While Netanyahu has called for continued military pressure on Hamas, Gallant said military force cre-

ated the necessary conditions for at least a temporary diplomatic deal that could bring home hostages held by the militant group.

The Israel-Hamas war began after Palestinian militants stormed into Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, killing some 1,200 people — mostly civilians — and abducting 250 others. Israel's military response in Gaza has killed more than 43,000 people, Palestinian health officials say. They do not distinguish between civilians and combatants, but say more than half of those killed were women and children.

Since the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah erupted in 2023, at least 3,000 people have been killed and some 13,500 wounded in Lebanon, the Health Ministry reported. A report by Lebanon's crisis response unit said 361,300 Syrians and over 177,800 Lebanese crossed into Syria between Sept. 23 and Nov. 1.

Here's the latest:

30 bodies are pulled from the rubble of a Lebanon apartment building struck by Israel

BEIRUT — Lebanon's Civil Defense service said Wednesday they have pulled 30 bodies and remains out of the rubble of an apartment building in the town of Barja that Israel struck the night before. Search efforts were ongoing.

The airstrike Tuesday hit an area that had not been regularly targeted by Israeli military operations. It came without warning. There was no statement from the Israeli military on the strike, and it was not immediately clear what the intended target was.

Civil defense official Mostafa Danaj said it was unclear how many survivors or bodies were still trapped under the rubble.

"We hope that there isn't anyone else, but the neighbors have said that there are still people (missing)," he said.

Israeli forces and the Hezbollah militant group have been clashing for more than a year, since Hezbollah started firing rockets across the border on Oct. 8, 2023 — a day after the deadly Hamas-led incursion into southern Israel sparked the war in Gaza. The war on the Lebanese front has substantially escalated since mid-September, with Israel launching a massive aerial bombardment of much of Lebanon and a ground invasion.

More than 3,000 people have been killed by Israeli strikes in Lebanon, the vast majority of them since Sept. 23. Israel has said it targets Hezbollah militants and weapons caches, but hundreds of civilians have also been killed.

## Abortion rights advocates win in 6 states and clear way to overturn Missouri ban but lose in 3

By GEOFF MULVIHILL and CHRISTINE FERNANDO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Voters in Missouri cleared the way to undo one of the nation's most restrictive abortion bans in one of five victories for abortion rights advocates, while Florida, Nebraska and South Dakota defeated similar constitutional amendments, leaving bans in place.

Abortion rights amendments also passed in Arizona, Colorado and Maryland. Nevada voters also approved an amendment, but they'll need to pass it again in 2026 for it to take effect. Another that bans discrimination on the basis of "pregnancy outcomes" prevailed in New York. A measure that allows more abortion restrictions and enshrines the state's current 12-week ban was adopted in Nebraska and a competing one to ensure abortion rights failed. Results were still pending in Montana.

The Missouri and Florida results represent firsts in the abortion landscape, which underwent a seismic shift in 2022 when the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*, a ruling that ended a nationwide right to abortion and cleared the way for bans to take effect in most Republican-controlled states.

Missouri is positioned to be the first state where a vote will undo a ban that's already in place. Currently, abortion is barred at all stages of pregnancy with an exception only when a medical emergency puts the woman's life at risk. Under the amendment, lawmakers would be able to restrict abortions past the point of a fetus' viability — usually considered after 21 weeks, although there's no exact defined time frame.

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 47 of 95

But the ban, and other restrictive laws, are not automatically repealed. Advocates now have to ask courts to overturn laws to square with the new amendment.

"Today, Missourians made history and sent a clear message: decisions around pregnancy, including abortion, birth control, and miscarriage care are personal and private and should be left up to patients and their families, not politicians," Rachel Sweet, campaign manager of Missourians for Constitutional Freedom, said in a statement.

Roughly half of Missouri's voters said abortion should be legal in all or most cases, according to AP VoteCast, a survey of more than 2,200 of the state's voters. But only about 1 in 10 said abortion should be illegal in all cases; nearly 4 in 10 said abortion should be illegal in most cases.

Bans remain in place in three states after votes

Florida became the first state since Roe was overturned where abortion opponents prevailed on a ballot measure. Most voters supported the Florida measure, but it fell short of the required 60% to pass constitutional amendments in the state. Most states require a simple majority.

The result was a political win for Gov. Ron DeSantis, a Republican with a national profile, who had steered state GOP funds to the cause. His administration has weighed in, too, with a campaign against the measure, investigators questioning people who signed petitions to add it to the ballot and threats to TV stations that aired one commercial supporting it.

Marjorie Dannenfelser, president of the national anti-abortion group SBA Pro-Life America, said in a statement that the result is "a momentous victory for life in Florida and for our entire country," praising DeSantis for leading the charge against the measure.

The defeat makes permanent a shift in the Southern abortion landscape that began when the state's six-week ban took effect in May. That removed Florida as a destination for abortion for many women from nearby states with deeper bans and also led to far more women from the state traveling to obtain abortion. The nearest states with looser restrictions are North Carolina and Virginia — hundreds of miles away.

"The reality is because of Florida's constitution a minority of Florida voters have decided Amendment 4 will not be adopted," said Lauren Brenzel, campaign director for the Yes on 4 Campaign said while wiping away tears. "The reality is a majority of Floridians just voted to end Florida's abortion ban."

In South Dakota, another state with a ban on abortion throughout pregnancy with some exceptions, the defeat of an abortion measure was more decisive. It would have allowed some regulations related to the health of the woman after 12 weeks. Because of that wrinkle, most national abortion-rights groups did not support it.

Other states guaranteed abortion rights

Arizona's amendment will mean replacing the current law that bans abortion after the first 15 weeks of pregnancy. The new measure ensures abortion access until viability. A ballot measure there gained momentum after a state Supreme Court ruling in April found that the state could enforce a strict abortion ban adopted in 1864. Some GOP lawmakers joined with Democrats to repeal the law before it could be enforced.

In Maryland, the abortion rights amendment is a legal change that won't make an immediate difference to abortion access in a state that already allows it.

The Colorado measure exceeded the 55% of support required to pass. Besides enshrining access, it also undoes an earlier amendment that barred using state and local government funding for abortion, opening the possibility of state Medicaid and government employee insurance plans covering care.

A New York equal rights law that abortion rights group say will bolster abortion rights also passed. It doesn't contain the word "abortion" but rather bans discrimination on the basis of "pregnancy outcomes, and reproductive healthcare and autonomy." Sasha Ahuja, campaign director of New Yorkers for Equal Rights, called the result "a monumental victory for all New Yorkers" and a vote against opponents who she says used misleading parental rights and anti-trans messages to thwart the measure.

The results end a win streak for abortion-rights advocates

Until Tuesday, abortion rights advocates had prevailed on all seven measures that have appeared on statewide ballots since the fall of Roe.

The abortion rights campaigns have a big fundraising advantage this year. Their opponents' efforts are focused on portraying the amendments as too extreme rather than abortion as immoral.

Currently, 13 states are enforcing bans at all stages of pregnancy, with some exceptions. Four more bar abortion in most cases after about six weeks of pregnancy — before women often realize they're pregnant. Despite the bans, the number of monthly abortions in the U.S. has risen slightly, because of the growing use of abortion pills and organized efforts to help women travel for abortion. Still, advocates say the bans have reduced access, especially for lower-income and minority residents of the states with bans.

The issue is resonating with voters. About one-fourth said abortion policy was the single most important factor for their vote, according to AP VoteCast, a sweeping survey of more than 110,000 voters nationwide. Close to half said it was an important factor, but not the most important. Just over 1 in 10 said it was a minor factor.

The outcomes of ballot initiatives that sought to overturn strict abortion bans in Florida and Missouri were very important to a majority of voters in the states. More than half of Florida voters identified the result of the amendment as very important, while roughly 6 in 10 of Missouri's voters said the same, the survey found.

A measure to maintain access was also on the ballot in Montana and the race has not yet been called.

## **Marijuana legalization fails in Florida as numerous states approve citizen voting amendments**

By DAVID A. LIEB Associated Press

A costly campaign to legalize recreational marijuana in Florida failed Tuesday and California voters took a step toward tough crime laws as voters in dozens of states weighed more than 140 measures appearing on the ballot alongside races for president and top state offices.

Florida was one of several states deciding high-profile marijuana measures and was among 10 states considering amendments related to abortion or reproductive rights. Voters in several states gave resounding approval to amendments specifically barring noncitizens from voting, and Arizona approved a measure authorizing local police to enforce immigration laws.

Other state measures affected wages, taxes and education, including school choice measures defeated in Kentucky and Nebraska.

Many of the ballot measures were initiated by citizen petitions that sidestep state legislatures, though others were placed before voters by lawmakers.

### **Marijuana legalization**

The Florida marijuana amendment fell short of the 60% supermajority needed to approve constitutional amendments. It would have allowed recreational sales of marijuana to people over 21 from existing medical marijuana dispensaries, with the potential for the Legislature to license additional retailers.

The campaign was funded predominantly by Florida's largest medical marijuana operator, Trulieve, which had provided almost \$145 million of the \$153 million campaign through the end of October. The measure was opposed by the Florida Republican Party and Gov. Ron DeSantis, who said it would reduce the quality of life by leaving a marijuana stench in the air.

Measures to legalize recreational marijuana also were trailing in North Dakota and South Dakota. The election marks the third vote on the issue in both states.

In Nebraska, voters approved a pair of measures to legalize medical marijuana and regulate the industry.

Heading into the election, 24 states and the District of Columbia — representing 53% of the nation's population — already had legalized marijuana for adults. A total of 38 states and the District of Columbia had laws allowing the medical use of marijuana. Possessing or selling marijuana remains a crime under federal law, punishable by prison time and fines.

In Massachusetts, voters were weighing a ballot measure that would legalize the possession and supervised use of natural psychedelics, including psilocybin mushrooms. It would be the third state to do so, following Oregon and Colorado.



# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 49 of 95

## Citizen voting

Constitutional amendments declaring that only citizens can vote won approval in all eight states where they went before voters — Idaho, Iowa, Kentucky, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina and Wisconsin. All the measures were referred to the ballot by Republican-led legislatures.

A 1996 U.S. law prohibits noncitizens from voting in federal elections, and many states already have similar laws. But Republicans have emphasized the potential of noncitizens voting after an influx of immigrants at the U.S.-Mexican border. Though noncitizen voting historically has been rare, voter roll reviews before the election flagged potential noncitizens registered in several states.

Some municipalities in California, Maryland, Vermont and Washington, D.C., allow noncitizens to vote in certain local elections.

## Immigration

Arizona voters approved a measure making it a state crime to enter from a foreign country except through official ports of entry. The measure authorizes state and local law enforcement officers to arrest violators and state judges to order their deportations. It also makes it a state crime for someone already in the U.S. illegally to apply for public benefits using false documents.

Within the past year, Republican lawmakers in Texas, Iowa and Oklahoma also have passed immigration laws. In each case, federal courts have halted the states' efforts to enforce them. The Arizona measure won't take effect immediately, because it stipulates that violators can't be prosecuted until a similar law in Texas or another state has been in effect for 60 consecutive days.

## Crime

Voters in California took a step toward tougher crime laws, a decade after relaxing them. A measure approved Tuesday makes shoplifting a felony for repeat offenders again and increasing penalties for some drug charges, including those involving the synthetic opioid fentanyl. It also gives judges the authority to order people with multiple drug charges to get treatment.

The measure partly rolls back a law passed by voters in 2014 that downgraded several nonviolent crimes to misdemeanors, including theft under \$950 in value and some drug offenses.

## Climate

Voters in Washington state upheld a climate-change law seeking to slash carbon pollution. Tuesday's vote defeated an attempt to repeal a 2021 state law that caps carbon emissions and requires major polluters to pay for the right to do so by buying "allowances." Washington was the second state to launch such a program, after California.

## School choice

Voters sided against school choice in both Kentucky and Nebraska. Kentucky voters defeated an amendment to the state Constitution that would have allowed lawmakers to use state funds for private schools. In Nebraska, voters repealed a new state law that funds private school tuition with state dollars.

## Sports betting

In Colorado, where sports betting launched in 2020, voters approved a measure allowing the state to keep more than the original \$29 million limit on sports betting tax revenue.

Missouri voters, meanwhile, are deciding whether to become the latest to legalize sports betting. A total of 38 states and Washington, D.C., already allow sports betting, which has expanded rapidly since the U.S. Supreme Court cleared the way for it in 2018.

## Redistricting

In Ohio, voters defeated an initiative that would have created a 15-member citizens commission to handle redistricting for U.S. House and state legislative seats and required the share of districts favoring each political party to reflect the proportion of votes won in previous statewide elections.

Ohio's districts were created after the 2020 census by a Republican-led commission of elected state officials and were repeatedly deemed by courts to be unconstitutionally gerrymandered to favor Republicans.

Supporters of the defeated constitutional amendment asserted that it would "ban partisan gerrymandering." But the ballot title presented to voters — approved by a Republican-led board — stated it would have done the opposite via a commission "required to gerrymander" districts to favor political parties.

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 50 of 95

## Taxes

North Dakota voters defeated a proposal that would have eliminated most property taxes. A legislative panel estimated it could have cost the state over \$3 billion biennially — about half the amount of the state's two-year general fund budget passed last year.

In Oregon, voters defeated a measure that would have raised the minimum tax on large corporations to fund a tax rebate for residents.

South Dakota voters defeated a proposed repeal of the state's sales tax on groceries.

In Colorado, voters are weighing a proposal that would make it the second state after California to impose a sales tax on firearms and ammunition, with revenue going primarily to crime victims' services. The federal government already taxes sales of guns and ammunition.

## Voting methods

Connecticut voters passed a measure authorizing no-excuse absentee voting, joining most states that already allow it.

Ranked choice voting received mixed results from voters. A measure allowing ranked choice voting passed in Washington, D.C. But in Oregon, voters defeated a measure that would have required ranked choice voting in both primaries and general elections. And Missouri approved a measure banning ranked choice voting.

Ranked choice voting is currently used in Alaska and Maine. But Alaska voters also are considering whether to repeal provisions of a 2020 initiative that instituted open primaries and ranked choice general elections.

Voters in Idaho and Nevada defeated proposals to use open primaries featuring candidates from all parties, with a certain number advancing to a general election using ranked choice voting. A similar measure was being considered in Colorado.

In South Dakota, voters defeated a measure to create open primary elections in which candidates of all parties appear on the same ballot, with a certain number advancing to the general election. A similar measure is on the Montana ballot.

Arizona voters also defeated a measure that would have required open primaries with candidates of all parties on the same ballot.

## Minimum wage

Missouri voters approved a measure to gradually raise the minimum wages to \$15 an hour while also requiring paid sick leave. A similar measure is on the ballot in Alaska. A California measure would incrementally raise the minimum wage for all employers to \$18 an hour.

Voters in Arizona rejected a measure that would have let tipped workers be paid 25% less than the minimum wage, so long as tips pushed their total pay beyond the minimum wage threshold. In Massachusetts, voters defeated a measure that would have gradually raised the minimum wage for tipped employees until it matches the rate for other employees.

Nebraska voters approved a measure to require many employers to provide sick leave, but it would not change wages.

## Trump on verge of clinching presidency after win in Pennsylvania

By ZEKE MILLER, MICHELLE L. PRICE and WILL WEISSERT Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Donald Trump was on the verge of clinching the presidency Wednesday after winning Pennsylvania, putting him just three electoral votes shy of defeating Kamala Harris to secure his return to the White House.

Trump has 267 of the 270 electoral votes needed to win the Oval Office. A win in Alaska or any of the outstanding battleground states — Michigan, Wisconsin, Arizona or Nevada — would send the Republican former president back to the Oval Office.

Trump is leading in Michigan and Wisconsin, where his two clearest paths to victory rely on Harris not winning enough of the outstanding votes in Wayne and Milwaukee counties. The Associated Press is waiting on the next updates from both locations to determine whether Harris has any path to overtake Trump in either state.

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 51 of 95

Pennsylvania, a part of the once-reliable Democratic stronghold known as the “blue wall” with Michigan and Wisconsin, was carried by Trump when he first won the White House in 2016 and then flipped back to Democrats in 2020. Trump also flipped Georgia, which had voted for Democrats four years ago, and retained the closely contested state of North Carolina.

Trump’s gains sharply curtailed Harris’ path to victory.

Addressing his supporters early Wednesday from his campaign’s watch party in Florida, Trump said, “Every citizen, I will fight for you, for your family and your future.”

Trump added he was going to make people “very happy” and “very proud” of their vote.

“We have a country that needs help, and it needs help very badly,” Trump said. “We’re going to fix our borders. We’re going to fix everything about our country.”

Trump would be the first former president to return to power since Grover Cleveland regained the White House in the 1892 election. He also stands to be the first person convicted of a felony to be elected president and, at 78, would be the oldest person elected to the office. His vice presidential nominee, 40-year-old Ohio Sen. JD Vance, would become the highest-ranking member of the millennial generation in the U.S. government.

Trump survived one assassination attempt by millimeters at a July rally. Secret Service agents foiled a second attempt in September.

If he is elected, there would be far fewer checks on Trump in the White House as he planned to swiftly enact a sweeping agenda that would transform nearly every aspect of American government. His onetime-GOP critics in Congress have largely been defeated or retired. Federal courts are now filled with judges he appointed. The U.S. Supreme Court, which includes three Trump-appointed justices, issued a ruling earlier this year affording presidents broad immunity from prosecution.

Harris, 60, would be the first woman, Black woman and person of South Asian descent to serve as president. She also would be the first sitting vice president to win the White House in 36 years.

The crowd at Harris’ watch party at her alma mater, Howard University in Washington, began to file out after midnight after a top Harris ally sent supporters home, with no plans for the Democratic vice president to speak.

“We will continue overnight to fight to make sure that every vote is counted. That every voice has spoken,” Cedric Richmond, co-chair of the Harris campaign said. “So you won’t hear from the vice president tonight, but you will hear from her tomorrow. She will be back here tomorrow.”

Trump also won Florida, a one-time battleground that has shifted heavily to Republicans in recent elections. He also notched early wins in reliably Republican states such as Texas, South Carolina and Indiana. Harris won Virginia, a state Trump visited in the final days of the campaign, and took Democratic strongholds like New York, New Mexico and California.

The Trump campaign bet that it would cut into Democrats’ traditional strength with Black and Latino voters, with the former president going on male-centric podcasts and making explicit racial appeals to both groups. Nationally, Black and Latino voters appeared slightly less likely to support Harris than they were to back Joe Biden four years ago, and Trump’s support among those voters appeared to rise slightly compared to 2020, according to AP VoteCast.

The fate of democracy appeared to be a primary driver for Harris’ supporters, a sign that the Democratic nominee’s persistent messaging in her campaign’s closing days accusing Trump of being a fascist may have broken through, according to the expansive survey of more than 110,000 voters nationwide. It also found a country mired in negativity and desperate for change. Trump’s supporters were largely focused on immigration and inflation — two issues that the former Republican president has been hammering since the start of his campaign.

In another positive sign for the GOP, the party took control of the Senate, with Trump-backed Bernie Moreno flipping a seat in Ohio held by Democrat Sherrod Brown since 2007. They picked up another when Republican Jim Justice won a West Virginia seat that opened up with Sen. Joe Manchin’s retirement.

Those casting Election Day ballots mostly encountered a smooth process, with isolated reports of hic-

cups that regularly happen, including long lines, technical issues and ballot printing errors. Federal election security officials said there were minor disruptions throughout the day but there was no evidence of any impact to the election system. Officials determined that bomb threats that were reported in multiple states were all not credible and did not impact the ability of voters to cast their ballots.

Voters nationwide also were deciding thousands of other races that will decide everything from control of Congress to state ballot measures on abortion access in response to the Supreme Court's vote in 2022 to overturn *Roe v. Wade*.

In Florida, a ballot measure that would have protected abortion rights in the state constitution failed after not meeting the 60% threshold to pass, marking the first time a measure protecting abortion rights failed since *Roe* was overturned. Earlier Tuesday, Trump refused to say how he voted on the measure and snapped at a reporter, saying, "You should stop talking about that."

In reliably Democratic New York, Colorado, Nevada and Maryland, voters approved ballot measures aimed at protecting abortion rights in their state constitutions.

## **Bomb threats in swing states disrupt a mostly smooth Election Day**

By CHRISTINA A. CASSIDY and ALI SWENSON Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A series of bomb threats across multiple battleground states and baseless claims of wrongdoing by former President Donald Trump disrupted an otherwise smooth Election Day that capped a tumultuous presidential campaign.

The bomb threats in parts of Arizona, Georgia and Pennsylvania on Tuesday turned out to be hoaxes, but they forced some polling places to evacuate and extend hours, and delayed the counting of some ballots.

The threats were reported throughout the day at polling locations in three metro Atlanta counties, all with large numbers of Democratic voters, and into the evening at Pennsylvania polling places and election offices where ballots were being counted. Bomb threats also were reported in Arizona, Michigan and Wisconsin, according to state election officials.

Pennsylvania Gov. Josh Shapiro said in an evening news conference that the hoaxes posed no danger to the public — or to the election.

"Every legal, eligible vote will be counted and counted accurately, and the will of the people in the commonwealth of Pennsylvania will be respected," said Shapiro, a Democrat.

Neither Shapiro nor Pennsylvania State Police gave details about who might be behind the hoaxes.

In Georgia's Fulton County, which includes Atlanta, 32 of 177 polling places received bomb threats and five were briefly evacuated. The polling locations were able to reopen after the threats.

"That just shows you the resilience of our system and our people. We're battle-tested," said Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger, a Republican.

The FBI said many hoax bomb threats in several states appeared to originate from Russian email domains, though federal cybersecurity officials cautioned that the culprits were not necessarily Russian.

The dramatic and troubling end to Election Day came after a highly successful early voting period, when at least half of all votes expected in the presidential election had been cast. By Tuesday, more than 84 million Americans had already voted.

Overall, the final day of voting was characterized by the same kind of routine hiccups and frustrations seen in other elections: a polling worker forgetting to bring a key; ballot printing mistakes; ballot counting machines not working.

The vast majority of problems were "largely expected, routine and planned-for events," said Cait Conley, senior adviser to the director of the U.S. Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency.

Turnout on Tuesday was robust in many states. In Nevada, one of two western presidential battlegrounds, long lines were reported in Reno and Las Vegas. After polls closed, there was still a three-hour wait at a polling location at the University of Nevada, Reno, according to local election officials.

Despite no evidence of widespread voting problems, Trump made unsubstantiated claims related to Philadelphia and Detroit, and raised questions about election operations in Milwaukee, the biggest cities

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 53 of 95

in three states crucial for deciding the presidency.

Local officials quickly knocked down the claims Trump made on his social media platform, saying there were no indications of any problems that would affect accurately tallying the vote.

The absence of any significant problems had not stopped Trump, the Republican nominee, or the Republican National Committee, from making numerous claims of fraud or election interference during the early voting period, a possible prelude to challenges after Election Day.

In Georgia, a federal judge rejected as "frivolous" a last-minute effort by Republicans to challenge Atlanta-area election offices' collection of mail ballots last weekend — after early voting had ended. U.S. District Judge R. Stan Baker, a Trump appointee, said the GOP argument "does not withstand even the most basic level of statutory review and reading comprehension."

Trump on Tuesday suggested he wouldn't challenge the results of the election — as long as it's fair.

"If it's a fair election, I'd be the first one to acknowledge" the results, Trump said, though what meets that definition wasn't clear.

Trump's Democratic opponent, Vice President Kamala Harris, had urged voters not to fall for Trump's tactic of casting doubt on elections.

The former president began making unsubstantiated claims about voting, ballot counting and law enforcement as Election Day voting neared its end.

He said on his social media platform that there was "talk about massive cheating in Philadelphia" and said law enforcement was on the way. He did not provide details, and there was no immediate indication of what he was referring to. His spokespeople did not respond to requests for comment about what he meant.

Philadelphia District Attorney Larry Krasner issued a statement rejecting Trump's claims as baseless.

"There is no factual basis whatsoever within law enforcement to support this wild allegation," Krasner said. "If Donald J. Trump has any facts to support his wild allegations, we want them now."

Federal election security officials and Shapiro also said they had seen nothing to support Trump's claims. Officer Miguel Torres of the Philadelphia Police Department said he was unaware of any special law enforcement mobilization or "any kind of incident" that would require it.

One of three Philadelphia election board members, Seth Bluestein, a Republican, said on social media that Trump's comment "is yet another example of disinformation." During an evening news conference, he emphasized the security of the city's vote: "There is no evidence whatsoever of massive cheating," he said.

Police in Detroit were equally puzzled by another Trump post that said, "Philadelphia and Detroit! Heavy Law Enforcement is there!" Detroit police said there were no reported issues inside or outside of Huntington Place, the massive convention room where election workers counted ballots.

Evening traffic outside the center was light with no protesters in sight. Barricades were up outside the room and escalators to and from the area were shut off. Police also reported no major problems in the city's more than 400 voting precincts.

"The former president said there was a strong law enforcement presence in Philadelphia and Detroit. That was not true," Michigan Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson said during an evening news conference.

In Milwaukee, election officials said they were recounting more than 30,000 mail ballots "out of an abundance of caution" after it was discovered that doors on the back of ballot scanners were not properly sealed. The effort, which drew the attention of Trump and the RNC, was expected to delay the count there.

Republican Sen. Ron Johnson went to the Milwaukee central count location with the chairman of the Wisconsin Republican Party to observe the effort. Less than two months before Election Day, the Milwaukee election office had drawn praise from Republicans who oversee elections in the state and who had expressed confidence that it was ready.

Arizona, a hotly contested swing state, saw multiple Election Day challenges. Bomb threats targeted polling locations in Cochise, Navajo and Yavapai counties, delaying some results, and frustrated Native American voters stood in hours-long lines in Apache County. A judge ordered some polling places there to remain open two extra hours because of malfunctioning equipment and a lack of printed ballots.

Throughout the day, members of the Navajo Nation reported being turned away by poll workers after waiting for hours. Over 43,000 registered voters live on the Apache County portion of the Navajo Nation, according to court documents in the lawsuit seeking the extension of voting.

Zane James said he waited out in the cold with about 50 other voters for about 2 1/2 hours before they could cast their ballots because of a problem with the site's single printer.

"It was just a mess, it was terrible," he said.

At a polling site in Chinle, on the Navajo Nation, Amanda Woody said she didn't know how long it would take before she would be able to cast her ballot.

"There is a line, but I'm willing to wait," she said. "Every vote counts."

## **A week after Spain's floods, families hope that the missing are alive with 89 unaccounted for**

By HERNÁN MUÑOZ and JOSEPH WILSON Associated Press

SEDAVI, Spain (AP) — Francisco Murgui went out to try to salvage his motorbike when the water started to rise.

He never came back.

One week after catastrophic flooding devastated eastern Spain, María Murgui still holds out hope that her missing father is alive.

"He was like many people in town who went out to get their car or motorbike to safety," the 27-year-old told The Associated Press. "The flash flood caught him outside, and he had to cling to a tree in order to escape drowning. He called us to tell us he was fine, that we shouldn't worry."

But when María set out into the streets of Sedaví to try to rescue him from the water washing away everything in its path, he was nowhere to be found.

"He held up until 1 in the morning," she said. "By 2, I went outside with a neighbor and a rope to try to locate him. But we couldn't find him. And since then, we haven't heard anything about him."

Spanish authorities issued their first tally of the missing on Tuesday when a Valencia court said that 89 people are confirmed to be unaccounted for.

The number only corresponds to the eastern Valencia region, where 211 of the 217 confirmed deaths took place when entire communities were swamped by tsunami-like floods on Oct. 29-30. Most people were caught off guard by the deluge. Regional authorities have been heavily criticized for having issued alerts to mobile phones some two hours after the disaster had started.

The Superior Court of Valencia said that the figure was based on those cases whereby families had provided information and biological samples of their unlocated loved ones. It added that there could easily be more missing people whose families have not officially reported to authorities.

The court said that 133 of the dead had been identified using fingerprints or DNA samples. Another 62 bodies remained unidentified.

Spanish state broadcaster RTVE has shown a steady stream of appeals by people searching for family members.

María Murgui herself has posted a missing person's message on social media with a photo of her father, a 57-year-old retiree.

"This is like riding a rollercoaster. Sometimes I feel very bad and sometimes I feel better. I try to stay positive," she said. "This truly is madness. We don't know what else to do. Neither does anybody else in town."

Central government passes relief package

Meanwhile, the gargantuan recovery efforts in Sedaví and dozens of other communities slowly moved forward.

The central government on Tuesday approved a 10.6-billion-euro (\$11.6-billion) relief package for 78 communities where at least one person has died from the floods. Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez compared it to the measures taken during the COVID-19 pandemic.

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 55 of 95

The package includes direct payments of 20,000 euros to 60,000 euros (\$21,800-65,000) to owners of damaged homes, and financial aid for businesses and municipal governments.

"We have a lot of work left to do, and we know it," Sánchez said.

Sánchez said he will ask the European Union to help pay for the relief, saying "it is time for the European Union to help."

Many people are still without basic goods amid scenes of devastation

The floods have left behind post-apocalyptic scenes.

In town after town, streets are still covered with thick brown mud and mounds of ruined belongings, clumps of rotting vegetation and wrecked vehicles. A stench arises from the muck.

In many places, people still face shortages of basic goods, and lines form at impromptu emergency kitchens and stands handing out food. Water is running again but authorities say it is not fit for drinking.

The ground floors of thousands of homes have been ruined. It is feared that inside some of the vehicles that were washed away or trapped in underground garages there could be bodies waiting to be recovered.

Thousands of soldiers are working with firefighters and police reinforcements in the immense emergency response. Officers and troops are searching in destroyed homes, and in the countless cars strewn across highways and streets or lodged in the mud in canals and gorges.

Authorities are worried about other health problems in the aftermath of the deadliest natural disaster in Spain's recent history. They have urged people to get tetanus shots, to treat any wounds to prevent infections and to clean the mud from their skin. Many people wear face masks.

Thousands of volunteers are helping out, but frustration over the crisis management boiled over on Sunday when a crowd in hard-hit Paiporta hurled mud and other objects at Spain's royals, Sánchez and regional officials. It was their first visit to the epicenter of the flood damage.

## The Latest: Trump wins North Carolina and GOP reclaims Senate majority

By The Associated Press undefined

Republican Donald Trump won North Carolina, capturing one of the seven heavily contested battlegrounds while votes in six other swing states are still being counted. Republicans reclaimed control of the Senate, picking up seats in West Virginia and Ohio. Top House races are focused in New York and California, where Democrats are trying to claw back some of the 10 or so seats where Republicans have made surprising gains in recent years.

Follow the AP's Election 2024 coverage at: <https://apnews.com/hub/election-2024>.

Here's the latest:

Trump is en route to his watch party from Mar-a-Lago

He's expected to speak tonight to his gathered supporters.

In Ohio, Moreno pledges to win over those who didn't vote for him

Incumbent U.S. Sen. Sherrod Brown said his loss to Republican Cleveland businessman Bernie Moreno in Ohio "is a disappointment, but it is not a failure."

The three-term Democrat gave his concession speech in Columbus.

"It will never be wrong to fight for organized labor, it will never be wrong to fight for the freedom of women to make their healthcare decisions, it surely will never be wrong to fight for civil rights and human rights," he said.

In Cleveland, Moreno praised former President Donald Trump and pledged to help advance his agenda in Washington. He said he would work to win over those who didn't vote for him.

"We talked about wanting a red wave. I think what we have tonight is a red, white and blue wave," he said.

Harris' Howard party cuts CNN, resumes music as tough race calls roll in

As midnight approached on the East Coast, the Harris campaign turned off its projected broadcasts of CNN at its election night watch party at Howard University. Instead, various high-energy remixes blared

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 56 of 95

from speakers alongside floodlights flickering in tempo to hype the crowd.

The cheers in the crowd had become less frequent as more results came in from battleground states showing a tight race or victories for Trump.

Some attendees began leaving the event though the vast majority of rallygoers remained. It is unclear if Harris will make an appearance at her alma mater.

Melania Trump shows image of her son Barron voting

"Voted for the first time - for his dad," she shared on X.

Barron Trump turned 18 years old in March and began his freshman year at New York University this fall.

Republicans secure Senate control

The GOP has won control of the Senate as Sen. Deb Fischer secures reelection in Nebraska.

With at least 51 Senate seats secured, Republicans will retake control of the chamber for the first time in four years. It gives the party a major power center in Washington and important power in confirming the next president's Cabinet, as well as any Supreme Court justice if there is a vacancy.

With a handful of battleground races yet to be decided, Republicans still have an opportunity to grow their majority.

GOP senators have already been looking at ways to extend tax cuts that were passed during Donald Trump's first term, as well as sending funding towards toughened border security measures.

However, the extent of Republicans' power in Washington will also be determined by the results of the presidential and House races.

Rashida Tlaib wins reelection in Michigan House race

Rep. Rashida Tlaib, D-Mich., the only Palestinian American in Congress, has won a fourth term in the House.

Tlaib represents a district with a large Arab-American population. She has been highly critical of Israel in its war against Hamas, describing its actions in Gaza as genocide.

But her comments have also evoked outrage from many of her colleagues. The Republican-led House voted last year to censure her for her statements regarding the war.

Tlaib said her criticism was directed toward Israel's government and its leadership under Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and vowed she "will not be silenced."

Sen. Ted Cruz calls victory in Texas a mandate for tougher border measures

Republican Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas says he considers his reelection victory over Democratic U.S. Rep. Colin Allred a mandate for stronger enforcement along the U.S.-Mexico border.

During a victory speech in front of supporters in his hometown of Houston, Cruz praised strong support from Hispanic voters. He singled out South Texas, where Cruz was performing much better in large border counties than he did during a narrow victory in 2018 over Beto O'Rourke.

"Tonight we are witnessing incredible results, especially with Hispanics across the state of Texas," Cruz told the crowd. "And we are seeing tonight generational change in South Texas. The results tonight, this decisive victory should shake the Democratic establishment to its core."

Last poll closures

Polls will close at midnight EST in Alaska and Hawaii.

Ohio sends its first Latino to U.S. Senate

Bernie Moreno will be the first Latino that Ohio has sent to the U.S. Senate, thanks to his victory over Democratic Sen. Sherrod Brown.

Moreno was born in Bogota, Colombia. He moved with his family to the United States at age 5 and became an American citizen when he was 18.

He built his fortune as a luxury car dealer and blockchain entrepreneur and will come to the Senate as one of its wealthiest members.

Daughter fills in late mother's congressional seat

The daughter of late Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee won a special election Tuesday night to finish her mother's congressional term.



# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 57 of 95

Erica Lee Carter defeated two Republican challengers in the race for the Houston-area district where her mother served for almost 30 years.

Jackson Lee died in July at age 74 after a battle with pancreatic cancer. Her funeral was filled with high profile mourners, including Vice President Harris who gave Jackson Lee's eulogy just days after declaring her candidacy for president.

Republicans gain steam towards Senate control

The GOP's victory in the Ohio Senate race puts them on track to gain a Senate majority as long as they keep their seats in Texas and Nebraska.

In Ohio, Republican Bernie Moreno defeated three-term Sen. Sherrod Brown.

The long-serving Ohio Democrat had tried to appeal to working-class voters and make access to abortion a top priority, but Moreno, a Cleveland businessman, cast Brown as too liberal for the conservative state, tying the long-serving Ohio Democrat to President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris.

As long as Republican Sens. Ted Cruz of Texas and Deb Fischer of Nebraska secure reelection, the GOP will have the Senate in hand.

Trump's North Carolina win gives him options toward 270 threshold

By winning North Carolina, Trump maintains options to reach the 270 electoral vote threshold.

Trump can reach the magic number by carrying Georgia and Pennsylvania or by carrying Georgia, Michigan and Wisconsin. He also can win by carrying Wisconsin and Arizona, as well as other combinations involving Nevada.

But that would require him to crack the blue wall of northern states Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

Trump blitzed North Carolina in the final days of the campaign, stopping in four cities over four days and finishing his North Carolina campaign in Raleigh on Monday.

Harris' Howard night energy turns from festive to fretting as race calls roll in

The mood at Harris' election night party at Howard University shifted from electric to anxious as race calls began rolling in. The musical performances and triumphant speeches on display earlier in the evening have been replaced by occasional DJ mixes and broadcast race calls.

Anxious faces and hushed talk spread through the crowd as the night stretched on and the tightness of the race became apparent.

The still-packed crowd periodically went quiet as attendees watched returns come in on a giant projection of CNN. Rallygoers cheered and waved American flags as solidly blue states like Harris' native California were called in her favor.

Harris campaign chair stresses patience to nervous Democrats, staff watching vote totals

Harris' campaign chair stressed patience and resolve in a message to all campaign staff obtained by The Associated Press, arguing that the "closeness of the race is exactly what we prepared for" and predicting the race won't "come into focus until the early morning hours."

The message from campaign chair Jen O'Malley Dillon was meant for an audience beyond campaign staff, too, as nervous Democrats nationwide watch the race between Harris and Trump narrow to a handful of key battleground states.

"As we have known all along, this is a razor thin race," wrote O'Malley Dillon, citing turnout in Philadelphia and early vote totals in suburban Bucks County, Pennsylvania; outstanding votes in Detroit; and uncounted vote in Dane and Milwaukee counties in Wisconsin, two Democratic strongholds.

While the longtime Democratic operative noted forthcoming counting in Nevada and Arizona, the memo highlighted how central the so-called "blue wall" states of Wisconsin, Michigan and Pennsylvania are to Harris' path to victory.

"We've been saying for weeks that this race might not be called tonight," she wrote, adding later, "This is what we've been built for, so let's finish up what we have in front of us tonight, get some sleep, and get ready to close out strong tomorrow."

Trump loses Colorado after railing against Aurora

Trump turned the Colorado suburb of Aurora into part of his message against illegal immigration. In the end, he failed to capture the Mountain State, which has become increasingly Democratic in recent years.

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 58 of 95

Trump likened Aurora to a "war zone" overrun by a Venezuelan gang that had taken over multiple buildings. Authorities pushed back against that characterization, saying it was a single block and the area was once again safe.

Colorado is one of the several states Trump visited down the stretch outside the seven most competitive states. In recent weeks, he also campaigned in California, New Mexico and, memorably, in New York for the rally at Madison Square Garden.

After Senate loss, former Maryland governor calls for divided Americans to 'believe in each other'

Larry Hogan, a popular Republican who lost his bid for a U.S. Senate seat to Democrat Angela Alsobrooks, said in a speech to supporters that he congratulated Alsobrooks on her victory.

Hogan said "we can all take pride" in electing Alsobrooks as the first Black U.S. Senator from Maryland. He said Americans are convinced that the country is "hopelessly divided" and that Washington is "completely dysfunctional."

"No matter what happens in this election, we as a country must move beyond talking only with those we agree with, and we need to stop dismissing or even hating those we disagree with," Hogan said.

"We have got to find a way to come together," he said.

Michigan's top election official refutes Trump's Detroit claims

Michigan Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson refuted Trump's social media claims of "heavy law enforcement" in Detroit on Tuesday before polls closed, calling them "not true."

"The former president said there was a strong law enforcement presence in Philadelphia and Detroit," Benson said. "That was not true. We quickly debunked it."

At a news conference in downtown Detroit after Michigan's polls closed, Benson praised the election as "very successful," and noted minimal issues. She added that the state is on track for record-breaking turnout.

Australian prime minister vows strong partnership with future US president

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese told Parliament on Wednesday that his government will forge a strong partnership with whoever becomes U.S. president.

"The election of a new President of the United States is always a moment of profound consequence for the world, for our region and for Australia," Albanese said.

"Our government will seek and build a strong partnership with whoever the American people choose as their next president. The alliance between Australia and the United States has always been bigger than individuals," he added.

The crowd wants Babydog

A few minutes into his speech after winning his U.S. Senate race, West Virginia Gov. Jim Justice was joined on stage by his wife, children and grandchildren. But something was still missing.

The crowd at the Greenbrier Resort started chanting, "Babydog! Babydog!"

Soon, Justice's English bulldog, wearing a purple bow, trotted onstage to applause and took her usual spot in a chair next to him.

Justice, a two-term governor, has regularly brought his 5-year-old dog to public appearances, including at his State of the State address in 2022 and at the Republican National Convention in July. Babydog even has her own bobblehead and appeared in new murals under the golden dome of the state Capitol.

"What an incredible, incredible time we've had together," Justice said. "She absolutely can make you smile, and she loves everybody."

GOP sees House gains in North Carolina

Republicans have picked up three seats in North Carolina that were redistricted by the state's GOP-controlled General Assembly.

Republicans Addison McDowell, Brad Knott and Tim Moore all won seats that were previously controlled by Democrats.

The victories give Republicans an early and potentially crucial boost in their bid to keep control of the House.

But redistricted seats are not all favorable to the GOP. Democrats are hoping to pick up a seat each in

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 59 of 95

Louisiana and Alabama thanks to redistricting.

Anxiety pools for Harris supporters at Detroit church watch party

A "pray and watch party" is underway at Detroit's Historic King Solomon Baptist Church, which features a rotating group of pastors saying a prayer as results roll in and about two dozen attendees.

When TV coverage of the election goes to commercial, a pastor takes to the pulpit and says a few words.

"I am so glad we are here," said the Rev. Charles Williams II, the event's host. "If I was at home, I would turn off the TV and go to bed. "Because this is challenging," Williams said, reflecting the anxiety in the room filled with Harris supporters.

Montana could be linchpin in race for Senate control

Republicans have banked their bid for a Senate majority on defeating Sen. Jon Tester in red-leaning Montana.

There have been no surprises in congressional races so far, but polls are closing in the Treasure State, as well as in Arizona and Nevada.

Democrats are hoping to somehow run the table in all three states.

In Montana, Republican Tim Sheehy, a retired Navy SEAL and businessman, is looking to flip the only statewide office that Democrats still hold there.

In Nevada, Democratic Sen. Jackie Rosen is trying to win reelection over Republican Sam Brown. And in Arizona, Democratic Rep. Ruben Gallego is looking to make the leap to the Senate over Republican Kari Lake.

Voter Voice: 'Christmas is going to be really tight this year'

Trump won North Carolinian Jordan Voigt's vote because she believes he will make life safer for her children by curbing child sex trafficking and illegal immigration, the 34-year-old single mom told AP at a GOP watch party in Asheville, North Carolina.

"Any time we go to a playground, my senses are very up," Voigt said.

Also at stake is the economy: Voigt said she has been feeling the squeeze financially in the last two and a half years, and Hurricane Helene made things worse. Voigt said she and her family spent 18 days without power after the storm.

"There is no wiggle room" in Voigt's budget. "Christmas is going to be really tight this year," she said.

What to watch as polls are closing in Nevada

Results could take a while since the state doesn't release anything until the last person in line has voted. First updates usually include mailed and early votes. The state will add mailed ballots that arrive through Nov. 9, and these have gone strongly Democratic in the past. In recent elections Nevada has added more than 15% of its vote after Election Day. In a closely-watched Senate race, Democratic incumbent Jacky Rosen is facing Republican Sam Brown

Hours extended at nine precincts in eastern Arizona county

A judge has ordered polling places to remain open two extra hours in nine precincts in an eastern Arizona county after a rocky start to Election Day that included malfunctioning equipment and a lack of printed ballots.

Apache County Superior Court Judge Michael Latham agreed to keep the polls open at the request of the Navajo Nation, which filed a lawsuit asking for extended hours due to the problems.

Meanwhile, bomb threats to polling places at schools in neighboring Navajo County prompted some to close momentarily and one to evacuate and send students home for the day.

Authorities said they received email bomb threats at four locations in Navajo County, including at least three polling sites. They determined the threats were not credible.

Where polls are closing next

At 10 p.m. EST, polls will close in Montana, Nevada, and Utah.

Democrats send out the famous people

Democrats deployed celebrities to keep their voters fired up while they wait in long lines to cast their ballots.

Paul Rudd handed out water to students at Temple University in Philadelphia. Jennifer Garner, Josh Gad,

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 60 of 95

Mark Cuban and Demi Lovato communicated with voters via FaceTime in various battleground states.

Republicans have also encouraged their voters to stay in line, even after polls close.

"Hi, Republicans. We're doing really well," Donald Trump said in a social media video. "If you're in line, stay in line."

House Speaker Mike Johnson reelected to a fifth term in the House

Johnson became speaker a little more than a year ago after eight Republicans joined with Democrats in booting Kevin McCarthy from the job.

The social conservative inherited many of the same troubles that plagued his predecessor when it comes to unifying the conference. He has had to rely on Democratic votes to keep the federal government open and needed their help to prevent the kind of mutiny that toppled McCarthy.

Johnson tied his political fortunes to Trump, showing up at the latter's hush-money trial in New York and embracing his claims of political persecution.

Johnson will be favored to remain as speaker if House Republicans maintain their majority, but could face a serious challenge as the Republican leader should the Democrats take control of the chamber.

Historic change as 2 Black women elected to Senate

Only three Black women have held Senate seats in the nation's history, but that is about to change.

Democrats Lisa Blunt Rochester of Delaware and Angela Alsobrooks of Maryland have won Senate seats, and they will be the first Black women to serve together in the Senate.

The other Black women who have served as senators are Carol Moseley Braun of Illinois, Laphonza Butler of California and current Vice President Kamala Harris of California.

Ohio key to Democratic hopes of holding Senate

Ohio is sending its electoral college votes to Donald Trump, but the state is also key to Democrats' bid to keep control of the Senate and win the House.

Sen. Sherrod Brown, the only Democrat to win a nonjudicial statewide race in Ohio in over 10 years, is running for a fourth term by appealing to working-class voters and making access to abortion a top priority.

He is being challenged by Republican Bernie Moreno, a wealthy businessman backed by Donald Trump.

The state could have big consequences for the House as well. Democrats are defending a trio of House seats that are seen as competitive.

No surprises as polls close. Eyes now turn to Eastern battlegrounds

There has been little surprise in results so far with polls across most of the country having closed.

Trump won Republican-leaning states including Florida, Alabama, Mississippi and Texas, while Harris won a swath of New England and the Northeast including New Jersey and New York.

Meanwhile, attention is gravitating toward the Eastern battleground states of Georgia, North Carolina and Pennsylvania.

House Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries reelected to a seventh term

Jeffries succeeded Rep. Nancy Pelosi as the lead House Democrat after Republicans gained control of the chamber in the 2022 mid-terms and Democrats looked for a generational change in leadership.

Jeffries made sure Democrats delivered the votes necessary to prevent a federal default and to subsequently keep the government open.

But he declined to provide Kevin McCarthy with the Democratic votes he needed to stay on as speaker when eight members of the GOP revolted against McCarthy.

If Democrats are able to gain the House majority, he would almost assuredly be elected the next House speaker.

Kim, elected to Senate from New Jersey, says he's 'humbled and grateful'

Democratic Rep. Andy Kim, who won election to Senate from New Jersey, said that "as a son of immigrants" he never imagined he would become the first Korean American to serve in the chamber.

"I'm deeply humbled and grateful to NJ and for everyone who got us here," Kim wrote on X, the website formerly known as Twitter. "I promise I'll serve with honor and integrity as a public servant for all."

Biden congratulates Democrats on their victories

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 61 of 95

President Biden made a round of congratulatory calls to Democrats who have emerged victorious on Election Day.

According to the White House, he's called Lisa Blunt Rochester, who won a U.S. Senate seat in his home state of Delaware, and Matt Meyer, who was elected the state's governor. He also called the outgoing governor, John Carney, who was elected mayor of Wilmington.

Other calls went to Andy Kim, who will be a senator from New Jersey, and Josh Stein, the next governor of North Carolina.

### Chinese accounts boost Russian election disinformation

Russian disinformation aiming to reduce trust in the U.S. election received some last-minute help from China, according to research from the Atlantic Council's Digital Forensic Research Lab.

Investigators identified several videos linked to Russia that made false claims about voting. Some of the videos mimicked legitimate U.S. news outlets and featured fake audio clips of law enforcement officials supposedly acknowledging widespread voter fraud.

The researchers found the videos were being amplified by a network of fake social media accounts that originated in China. The accounts had spread pro-China propaganda in the past and shifted their focus to the U.S. election only recently.

### Republican Mark Robinson loses North Carolina gubernatorial bid after tumultuous campaign

Mark Robinson, the North Carolina Republican gubernatorial candidate rocked by a CNN report indicating he posted racist and explicit messages on a pornography site more than a decade ago, has lost his race against Democrat Josh Stein, AP projects.

The loss is a cap on a turbulent run for Robinson, the state's lieutenant governor, who rocketed to conservative fame in 2018 by seizing on Trump's MAGA movement.

His campaign was continually tagged with controversial comments Robinson made about everything from abortion to race to gay rights. Trump compared Robinson to Martin Luther King Jr. before his pornography site scandal, and did not explicitly back away from him after the scandal engulfed the North Carolina Republican's campaign.

Stein, the state's Attorney General, will succeed Roy Cooper, North Carolina's popular two-term governor who was term-limited. The race was one of the most closely watched governor's races in the nation this year.

### Pennsylvania officials urge patience when it comes to a lengthy vote-counting process

State officials are preaching calm and patience in the counting of votes in the face of large voter turnout across the state and a spate of disruptive bomb threats at polling locations and government buildings.

Gov. Josh Shapiro, a Democrat, said at a Tuesday night news conference that every legal, eligible vote will be counted. He says that takes time and that the state's goal is to do it right and accurately.

Al Schmidt, the state's top elections official, said in-person turnout numbers will not be available Tuesday night. He said the state's counties could not even begin processing and opening the millions of returned mail ballots until 7 a.m. EST Tuesday and that the last of them would not have been received until 8 p.m. EST.

### AP Race Call: Constitutional amendment that protects abortion fails in Florida

A measure that would have protected abortion rights in Florida's state constitution failed Tuesday after not meeting the 60% threshold to pass.

The rejection of the measure makes Florida the first state where a measure protecting abortion rights failed after Roe V. Wade was overturned in 2022.

The initiative would have prevented lawmakers from creating and enforcing restrictions or prohibitions on abortions before viability or when necessary to protect the patient's health.

Amendment supporters were hoping to overturn Florida's current six-week abortion ban.

The rejection of the measure makes Florida one of the first states where voters opposed protecting abortion rights after Roe V. Wade was overturned in 2022.

The Associated Press declared the amendment was rejected at 9:06 p.m. EST.

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A previous version of this post said the amendment had failed to pass, but at the time of publication not

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 62 of 95

enough votes had been counted to determine the result.

Jim Jordan wins reelection to House

Rep. Jim Jordan, the Republican chairman of the House Judiciary Committee and a Donald Trump loyalist, has won reelection to a 10th term in the House representing a conservative district in central Ohio.

Jordan has spent the run-up to the election campaigning for Republicans across the country. Many see his activities as a shadow race of sorts to become GOP leader, particularly if it loses the majority and members seek a fresh start.

Jordan denies he's running for any leadership job.

Jordan made an unsuccessful bid to become speaker when eight Republicans joined with Democrats in ousting then-Speaker Kevin McCarthy.

Trump endorsed Jordan, but more centrist Republicans viewed him as too extreme and objected to rewarding someone on the party's right flank after some had helped oust McCarthy.

Florida voters will decide fate of six-week abortion ban in state

Florida voters are deciding whether to pass an abortion rights amendment and keep in place Gov. Ron DeSantis' six-week ban. The measure faces an uphill battle in the deeply red state where Trump, a Florida resident, said during the campaign that he would vote against it.

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This post has been updated to correct that the abortion rights amendment had not yet been called at this time.

Almost every region of Florida shifted to the right

In comparison to 2020, nearly all of Florida has moved right during this presidential election cycle.

Miami-Dade County saw the greatest increase, with an 18 percentage point shift right. It was enough to move the county from the Democrats' column in 2020 to the Republicans' this year.

Some precincts in Boston ran out of ballots

In Massachusetts, the group Lawyers for Civil Rights warned that multiple precincts in Boston ran out of ballots, including in the city's Hyde Park, Roslindale and West Roxbury neighborhoods.

In some locations, ballots were replenished but only after wait times of up to two hours, the group said.

The secretary of the commonwealth's office said the Boston Elections Department opted not to send all their ballots to polling places.

Secretary of State William Galvin told the department to send ballots using police cars. Poll workers were also told get contact information for voters who chose not to wait. Those voters have been contacted and anyone in line at 8 p.m. will be able to vote.

## **]Republicans take Senate majority with wins in Ohio and West Virginia**

By LISA MASCARO and MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Republicans seized control of the U.S. Senate late Tuesday after flipping Democratic held seats, holding onto GOP incumbents and wresting away the majority for the first time in four years.

The unexpected battleground of Nebraska pushed Republicans over the top. Incumbent GOP Sen. Deb Fischer brushed back a surprisingly strong challenge from independent newcomer Dan Osborn.

Democrats watched their efforts to salvage their slim majority slip out of reach.

Early in the night, Republicans flipped one seat in West Virginia, with the election of Jim Justice, the state's governor, who replaced retiring Sen. Joe Manchin, and then another in Ohio when Democratic Sen. Sherrod Brown lost to wealthy newcomer Bernie Moreno.

Democratic efforts to oust firebrand Republicans Ted Cruz of Texas and Rick Scott of Florida collapsed.

And there are more Senate races still to come. The focus now turns to the Democratic "blue-wall" states of Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin, where Democrats are fighting to protect seats and avoid a Republican sweep of the Senate.

It's a political coda for outgoing Senate GOP Leader Mitch McConnell, who has made a career charting

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 63 of 95

the path to power and recruiting wealthy Republicans in races that topped \$2 billion with outside spending. With control of Congress at stake, the contests for the House and Senate will determine which party holds the majority and the power to boost or block a president's agenda, or if the White House confronts a divided Capitol Hill.

The House races are in a state-by-state slog. For Republicans, it's a chance to gain full control of Congress as they try to sweep into power. For Democrats, a House majority will give them an important check on the GOP's power and force compromise in Washington.

In the end, just a handful of seats, or as little as one, could tip the balance in that chamber.

The key contests are playing out alongside the first presidential election since the Jan. 6, 2021, attack on the Capitol, but also in unexpected corners of the country after what has been one of the most chaotic congressional sessions in modern times.

Top House races are focused in New York and California, where Democrats are trying to claw back some of the 10 or so seats where Republicans have made surprising gains in recent years with star lawmakers who helped deliver the party to power.

Other House races are scattered around the country in a sign of how narrow the field has become. Only a couple of dozen seats are being seriously challenged, with some of the most contentious in Maine, the "blue dot" around Omaha, Nebraska, and in Alaska.

Vote counting in some races could extend well past Tuesday.

Several states will send history-makers to the new Congress.

Voters elected two Black women to the Senate, Democrat Lisa Blunt Rochester of Delaware and Democrat Angela Alsobrooks of Maryland, in a historic first.

Blunt Rochester won the open seat in her state while Alsobrooks defeated Maryland's popular former governor, Larry Hogan. Just three Black women have served in the Senate, and never before have two served at the same time.

And in New Jersey, Andy Kim became the first Korean American elected to the Senate, defeating Republican businessman Curtis Bashaw. The seat opened when Bob Menendez resigned this year after his federal conviction on bribery charges.

In the House, candidate Sarah McBride, a Democratic state lawmaker from Delaware who is close to the Biden family, won her race, becoming the first openly transgender person elected to Congress.

What's still unclear is who will lead the new Republican Senate, as longtime leader McConnell prepares to step down from the post.

South Dakota Sen. John Thune, the No. 2 Republican, and Texas Sen. John Cornyn, who previously held that post, are the front-runners to replace McConnell in a secret-ballot election scheduled for when senators arrive in Washington next week.

Voters said the economy and immigration were the top issues facing the country, but the future of democracy was also a leading motivator for many Americans casting ballots in the presidential election.

AP VoteCast, an expansive survey of more than 110,000 voters nationwide, found a country mired in negativity and desperate for change as Americans faced a stark choice between former President Donald Trump and Vice President Kamala Harris.

Congress plays a role in upholding the American tradition of peacefully transferring presidential power. Four years ago, Trump sent his mob of supporters to "fight like hell" at the Capitol, and many Republicans in Congress voted to block President Joe Biden's election. Congress will again be called upon to certify the results of the presidential election in 2025.

"We're in striking distance in terms of taking back the House," House Democratic leader Hakeem Jeffries, who is in line to make history as the first Black speaker if his party wins control, told The Associated Press during a recent campaign swing through Southern California.

But House Speaker Mike Johnson, drawing closer to Trump, predicts Republicans will keep "and grow" the majority. He took over after Kevin McCarthy was booted from the speaker's office.

One of the most-watched Senate races, in Montana, may be among the last to be decided. Democrat

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 64 of 95

Jon Tester, a popular three-term senator and “dirt farmer” is in the fight of his political career against Trump-backed Tim Sheehy, a wealthy former NAVY Seal, who made derogatory comments about Native Americans, a key constituency in the Western state.

In the Southwestern states, Arizona firebrand Republican Kari Lake has struggled against Democrat Ruben Gallego in the seat opened by Sen. Krysten Sinema’s retirement. In Nevada, Democratic Sen. Jacky Rosen has been holding out against newcomer Sam Brown.

Democrats had intensified their challenges to Cruz and Scott in states where reproductive rights have been a focus in the aftermath of the Supreme Court decision rolling back abortion access. Scott defeated Democrat Debbie Mucarsel-Powell, a former member of Congress.

While Texas hasn’t elected a Democrat statewide in almost 30 years, Colin Allred, a Dallas-area congressman and former NFL linebacker, positioned himself as a moderate and leaned into his support for reproductive rights amid Texas’ abortion ban, which is one of the strictest in the nation.

Brown’s loss in Ohio to Moreno, an immigrant from Bogota, Colombia, who built a fortune as a luxury car dealer and blockchain entrepreneur, puts the Democrats on the edge of losing Senate control. A three-term senator, he is the first incumbent to lose reelection.

The Ohio race between Brown and Moreno, who was backed by Donald Trump, is the most expensive of the cycle, at some \$400 million.

What started as a lackluster race for control of Congress was instantly transformed once Harris stepped in for Biden at the top of the ticket, energizing Democrats with massive fundraising and volunteers that lawmakers said reminded them of the Obama-era enthusiasm of 2008.

Billions of dollars have been spent by the parties, and outside groups, on the narrow battleground for both the 435-member House and 100-member Senate.

Fallout from redistricting, when states redraw their maps for congressional districts, is also shifting the balance of power within the House, with Republicans gaining three seats from Democrats in North Carolina and Democrats picking up a second Black-majority seat in Republican-heavy Alabama.

Lawmakers in the House face voters every two years, while senators serve longer six-year terms.

If the two chambers do in fact flip party control, as is possible, it would be rare.

Records show that if Democrats take the House and Republicans take the Senate, it would be the first time that the chambers of Congress have both flipped to opposing political parties.

## Early election takeaways: Trump weakens Democrats’ coalition

By STEVE PEOPLES and BILL BARROW Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Even with the outcome uncertain Tuesday night, the 2024 presidential election already has exposed the depths of a fractured nation as the candidates navigated political shifts based on class, race and age under the near-constant threat of misinformation and violence.

Early data suggests that Republican Donald Trump may benefit from some of the shifts more than Democrat Kamala Harris. And the Republican former president may have also benefited from frustrated voters’ focus on the economy.

The biggest conclusions from the election so far, however, may be the most obvious.

The United States is poised to elect either its first female president in Harris or its first president with a felony conviction in former president Trump, whose enduring political strength through chaos — much of it his own making — has carried few political costs so far.

With votes still being counted across the country, here are some early takeaways:

With modest shifts, Trump weakens the Democrats’ coalition

Black voters — men and women — have been the bedrock of the Democratic Party, and Democrats have had a strong pull for Latino voters. It’s been the same with young voters.

But preliminary data from AP VoteCast, an expansive survey of more than 115,000 voters nationwide, suggested that the groups shifted in Trump’s direction.

Voters under age 30 represent a fraction of the total electorate, but about half of them supported Har-



# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 65 of 95

ris. That's compared to the roughly 6 in 10 who backed Biden in 2020.

Slightly more than 4 in 10 young voters went for Trump, up from about one-third in 2020.

Another shift that emerged was among Black and Latino voters, who appeared slightly less likely to support Harris than they were to back Biden four years ago, according to AP VoteCast.

About 8 in 10 Black voters backed Harris, down from the roughly 9 in 10 who backed Biden. More than half of Hispanic voters supported Harris, but that was down slightly from the roughly 6 in 10 who backed Biden in 2020. Trump's support among those groups appeared to rise slightly compared to 2020.

Trump boasted throughout the fall that he would get more support from Black men and Latino men than he had before.

Harris, meanwhile, went after more educated voters — including moderate Republicans — repelled by Trump.

It may turn out that the Trump era is not a permanent realignment of the major party coalitions. But it's clear that old coalitions and longstanding understandings of how to win the White House simply do not apply with Trump in the mix.

A new president will take charge of a nation with deep fissures

Whether Trump or Harris ends up behind the Resolute Desk, the 47th president will lead a nation with deepening political and cultural fissures and a worried electorate.

AP VoteCast found that about 4 in 10 voters considered the economy and jobs the most important problem facing the country. Roughly 2 in 10 voters said the top issue is immigration, an anchor of Trump's argument, and about 1 in 10 picked abortion, a pillar of Harris' campaign.

In a reminder of just how unusual this election has been, about 1 in 4 Trump voters said the assassination attempts against him were the most important factor in their vote.

But when asked what most influenced their vote, about half of voters cited the future of democracy. That was higher than the share who answered the same way about inflation, immigration or abortion policy. And it crosses over the two major parties: About two-thirds of Harris voters and about a third of Trump voters said the future of democracy was the most important factor in their votes.

That's not surprising given the realities of the Trump era and the rhetoric of the campaign.

Trump refused to acknowledge his 2020 defeat and watched his supporters ransack the U.S. Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, as Congress convened to certify Democrat Joe Biden's victory. Trump even mused two days before Election Day that he "shouldn't have left" the White House after repeatedly promising retribution to his political enemies.

Harris, by the end of the campaign, joined other critics — including some of Trump's former White House chief of staff — in describing the former president as a "fascist." Trump, meanwhile, labeled Harris a "fascist" and a "communist."

Trump's criminal baggage not an issue for many voters

Incomplete returns show that Donald Trump's criminal convictions, additional pending indictments and any concerns over his most incendiary rhetoric simply were not a sufficient concern to keep tens of millions of Americans from voting for him.

According to AP VoteCast, slightly more than half of voters said Harris has the moral character to be president, compared to about 4 in 10 who said that about Trump. It's quite possible, as Trump has said many times on the campaign trail, that his legal peril actually helped him.

As it stands, Trump may never actually face sentencing in a New York business fraud case in which he was convicted of 34 felonies. For now, his sentencing is scheduled for later this month.

He's already had one federal indictment in Florida dismissed, sparing him from a trial on whether he flouted U.S. law on protecting national security secrets. And he's made clear he would use his power as president to spike the federal case against him for his role in the Jan. 6 attack on the U.S. Capitol. That would leave a Georgia racketeering case pending against Trump and others accused of trying to subvert the 2020 election result.

Relatively few voters said Trump's legal cases was a major factor in their decision-making this election. Only about a quarter of Trump voters said the legal cases involving Trump were an important factor.

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 66 of 95

Mars and Venus: Abortion, 'bro' politics illuminate gender voting differences

It was the first presidential election after the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade and ended a woman's national right to terminate a pregnancy. It was also the first time that a Republican presidential candidate overly courted males with a hypermasculine approach.

Both Harris' and Trump's advisers expected a historic "gender gap" between the two candidates, with women making up a clear majority of Harris' supporters and men providing the clear majority of Trump's total.

But about half of women backed Harris, while about half of men went for Trump, according to AP VoteCast. That appears largely consistent with the shares for Biden and Trump in 2020.

VoteCast found that about 1 in 10 voters said abortion is the top issue facing the country, reinforcing the newfound salience of an issue that barely registered for voters four years ago.

About one-quarter of voters said that abortion policy was the single most important factor for their vote, while close to half said it was an important factor, but not the most important.

Questions about 'election integrity' persist — thanks to misinformation

Trump spent the closing days of the election aggressively promoting baseless claims about the integrity of the election, insisting that would lose only if Democrats cheat. Not long after, he claimed on social media, without evidence, that there was "a lot of talk about massive CHEATING in Philadelphia."

There is no credible information pointing to significant fraud in this election — or the last one, despite Trump's claims to the contrary. A broad coalition of top government and industry officials, many of them Republicans, found that the 2020 election was the "most secure" in American history."

At the same time, a misinformation campaign promoting false instances of election fraud is spreading online.

The FBI on Tuesday issued a statement highlighting two examples of its name and insignia being misused in election-related videos. One of them featured a fabricated press release alleges that the management of five prisons in Pennsylvania, Georgia, and Arizona rigged inmate voting and colluded with a political party.

"This video is also not authentic, and its contents are false," the FBI said.

## Israel's Netanyahu dismisses his defense minister as wars rage. Protests erupt across country

By JOSEF FEDERMAN Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Tuesday dismissed his popular defense minister, Yoav Gallant, in a surprise announcement that came as the country is embroiled in wars on multiple fronts across the region. The move sparked protests across the country, including a mass gathering that paralyzed central Tel Aviv.

Netanyahu and Gallant have repeatedly been at odds over the war in Gaza. But Netanyahu had avoided firing his rival before taking the step as the world's attention was focused on the U.S. presidential election. Netanyahu cited "significant gaps" and a "crisis of trust" in his Tuesday evening announcement as he replaced Gallant with a longtime loyalist.

"In the midst of a war, more than ever, full trust is required between the prime minister and defense minister," Netanyahu said. "Unfortunately, although in the first months of the campaign there was such trust and there was very fruitful work, during the last months this trust cracked between me and the defense minister."

In the early days of the war, Israel's leadership presented a unified front as it responded to Hamas' Oct. 7, 2023, attack. But as the war has dragged on and spread to Lebanon, key policy differences have emerged.

While Netanyahu has called for continued military pressure on Hamas, Gallant had taken a more pragmatic approach, saying that military force has created the necessary conditions for at least a temporary diplomatic deal that could bring home hostages held by the militant group.

In a late-night news conference broadcast on national TV, Gallant said that he had disagreed with Ne-

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 67 of 95

tanyahu over three main issues: the need to end controversial exemptions from the military draft for ultra-Orthodox men, the urgent need for a hostage deal and the need to establish an official commission of inquiry into the political and security failures of Oct. 7, when Hamas militants stormed into Israel and killed 1,200 people and took 250 others hostage. Israel estimates that about 100 hostages remain in captivity, only about 65 of them still alive.

With military service compulsory for most Jews, Gallant said that drafting the ultra-Orthodox was both an issue of fairness and security at a time when Israel faces so many challenges.

He said a hostage deal was needed "as quickly as possible, when they are still alive" and said there will be "no forgiveness" for neglecting them. And he said a full investigation into the events of Oct. 7 was the only way to ensure the government would learn the proper lessons. Netanyahu has rejected calls for an inquiry, saying it should only take place when the war is over.

Gallant ended his statement by honoring the soldiers serving in the army and those who have died in the wars. He held up his hand and saluted as he walked away from the podium.

Many of the families of the hostages, along with tens of thousands of people who have joined anti-government protests, accuse Netanyahu of scuttling a deal in order to maintain his hold on power.

Netanyahu's hard-line partners have threatened to bring down the government if he makes concessions to Hamas, raising the risk of early elections at a time when the prime minister's popularity is low. This week, authorities announced the arrest of a Netanyahu aide on suspicion of leaking classified information to foreign media that gave the prime minister political cover as hostage talks fell apart.

"Firing Gallant in the middle of a war is an act of madness," opposition leader Yair Lapid said on X. "Netanyahu is selling Israel's security and the Israeli army soldiers for a disgraceful political survival."

Israel's president, Isaac Herzog, whose largely ceremonial office is meant to help unify the country, called the dismissal "the last thing Israel needs."

The grassroots forum representing hostage families said Gallant's dismissal is "a direct continuation of the 'efforts' to torpedo the abductee deal."

Within hours, thousands of protesters gathered in central Tel Aviv, blocking the city's main highway and crippling traffic. The crowd, many holding blue and white Israeli flags and others blowing whistles and pounding drums, gathered around multiple bonfires. Several thousand people demonstrated outside Netanyahu's home in Jerusalem and elsewhere in the city. Protesters gathered and blocked roads in several other spots across the country, and Israeli TV stations showed images of police scuffling with protesters.

The dismissal comes at a delicate time. Israeli troops remain bogged down in Gaza, over a year after invading the territory in a war that has killed over 43,000 Palestinians, including tens of thousands of civilians, and caused widespread destruction, while Israeli ground troops are pressing ahead with a month-old ground invasion against Hezbollah militants in Lebanon. Hundreds of Israeli soldiers have been killed in the fighting.

Israel also has clashed with Iranian-backed groups in Iraq, Syria and Yemen, and is facing the possibility of another strike by Iran. Iran has vowed to avenge an Israeli strike that came in response to an Oct. 1 Iranian missile attack, itself a reprisal for earlier Israeli attacks on Iranian-linked targets.

On Monday, Gallant announced he had sent out thousands of draft notices to young ultra-Orthodox men. The system of exemptions for religious men has bred widespread resentment among the secular majority, and Israel's Supreme Court has ordered the government to scrap the system. Netanyahu, whose governing coalition depends on ultra-Orthodox parties, has not yet implemented the order.

Channel 13 TV said Netanyahu had also taken advantage of the U.S. election, when American attention is focused elsewhere, to dismiss his rival.

The White House on Tuesday declined to comment on the firing but called Gallant "an important partner on all matters related to the defense of Israel."

"As close partners, we will continue to work collaboratively with Israel's next minister of defense," the White House National Security Council said.

Gallant, a former general with a gruff, no-nonsense demeanor, has emerged as the most popular figure with the public in Israel's wartime government. Gallant has worn a simple, black buttoned shirt through-

out the war in a sign of sorrow over the Oct. 7 attack and developed a strong relationship with his U.S. counterpart, Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin.

A previous attempt by Netanyahu to fire Gallant in March 2023 sparked widespread street protests against Netanyahu. He also flirted with the idea of dismissing Gallant over the summer but held off until Tuesday's announcement.

Israel Katz, his replacement, currently serves as foreign minister and is a longtime Netanyahu loyalist and veteran Cabinet minister. Katz thanked Netanyahu and pledged to lead the security establishment to victory in the wars against Israel's enemies.

Katz, 69, was a junior officer in the military decades ago and has little military experience, though he has been a key member of Netanyahu's Security Cabinet over the years. Gideon Saar, a former Netanyahu rival who rejoined the government in September, will take the foreign affairs post.

Netanyahu has a long history of neutralizing his rivals. In his statement, he claimed he had made "many attempts" to bridge the gaps with Gallant.

"But they kept getting wider," he said. "Our enemies enjoyed it and derived a lot of benefit from it."

## How the AP is able to declare winners in states where polls just closed

By ROBERT YOON Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Associated Press declared winners Tuesday in some states where polls had just closed, and in some cases before any votes had been released.

How is that possible?

While hotly contested races that take hours or days to count may attract the most attention, the AP for decades has called landslide or uncontested races at poll closing time.

That's what happened Tuesday, when AP declared Vice President Kamala Harris the winner in California and Washington and former President Donald Trump the winner in Idaho as polls closed in those states at 11 p.m. ET. The AP also declared winners as poll closed in earlier states, as well as in some races for U.S. Senate and governor.

The AP considers multiple factors and analyzes available data before determining whether a winner can be declared when polls close in a given state. But the AP will never declare the outcome in a competitive contest before enough votes are counted to make the winner clear.

Many poll closing-time calls are for uncontested elections

Many of the races called just as the polls close are uncontested elections where only one candidate appears on the ballot and is therefore the only possible winner of the race. Voters in some parts of the country live in multimember districts for offices such as state legislature, where more than one candidate is elected in a district. In those districts, an uncontested race is one where the number of candidates on the ballot is equal to or less than the number of seats available in that district.

In the 2024 general election, the AP is declaring winners in nearly 2,000 uncontested races, compared with about 4,500 contested races.

Sometimes it's possible to declare winners at poll closing time in noncompetitive races with multiple candidates in areas where one political party has an established history of lopsided victories.

In these cases, the AP analyzes multiple sources of available data to confirm the outcome. That includes the results of AP VoteCast, a comprehensive survey of both voters and nonvoters that determines who voted, how they voted and why.

The AP will not call a race when polls close if AP VoteCast's results indicate a deviation from the state's long-standing political trends and voting history.

Only a small number will be poll-closing calls

AP VoteCast results will be available for all 50 states, though only a relatively small number of the least competitive races will be considered as potential poll-close calls. There is no AP VoteCast survey in the District of Columbia; therefore, none of the contests there will be called when polls close even though the

nation's capital has a long history of overwhelming victories for Democratic candidates.

For example, the AP's poll-close calls in the 2020 presidential election included Wyoming, a state that last voted for a Democrat in 1968 and that Donald Trump won over Joe Biden by 44 points; and Massachusetts, which last voted for a Republican in 1984 and that Biden won by 34 points over Trump.

A handful of states and districts have multiple poll closing times because they are in more than one time zone. In these cases, the AP will never declare a winner before the final poll closing time in that state or district. Florida, Texas and some others begin to release vote results from most of the state shortly after polls close in the earlier time zone. Votes that are already counted from areas in the earlier time zones will also be considered in determining whether a winner can be declared at the moment when the last polls close.

Other election data the AP takes into account include an area's voting history from recent elections, voter registration statistics and pre-Election Day polling.

When the above data points confirm the expected result in a state where either major party has a history of dominating elections, the AP may call the race as soon as voting ends.

## **AP VoteCast: Harris voters motivated by democracy, Trump supporters by inflation and immigration**

By JOSH BOAK and LINLEY SANDERS Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Voters for Kamala Harris and Donald Trump who cast their ballots for Tuesday's presidential election had vastly different motivations — reflecting a broader national divide on the problems the United States faces.

AP VoteCast, an extensive survey of more than 115,000 voters nationwide, found that the fate of democracy appeared to be a primary driver for Vice President Harris' supporters. It was a sign that the Democratic nominee's messaging in her campaign's closing days accusing Trump of being a fascist may have broken through.

By contrast, Trump's supporters were largely focused on immigration and inflation — two issues that the former Republican president has been hammering since the start of his campaign. Trump has pledged that tariffs would bring back factory jobs and that greater domestic oil production would flow through the economy and lower prices.

Overall, the presidential candidates' coalitions, based on race, education and community type, appeared largely similar to the 2020 results. Preliminary AP VoteCast findings, however, hinted at some shifts among demographic groups that could be meaningful for the ultimate outcome, including among younger, Black and Hispanic voters.

Voters' conflicting views on key priorities set up a challenge for whoever ultimately wins the election to lead the world's premier economic and military power. Voters saw the qualities of each candidate differently. They were more likely to describe Trump as a strong leader than they were Harris, but she had an edge over him on being seen as having the moral character needed to be president.

Harris and Trump voters couldn't agree on what matters

About two-thirds of Harris voters said the future of democracy was the most important factor for their votes. No other topic — high prices, abortion policy, the future of free speech in the country or the potential to elect the first female president — was as big a factor for her backers.

Trump voters were more motivated by economic issues and immigration. About half said high prices was the biggest issue factoring into their election decisions. About as many said that of the situation at the U.S.-Mexico border. Only about one-third of Trump's voters said democracy was the most important factor for their vote.

About half his backers labeled the economy and jobs as the top issue facing the country, while about one-third said the top issue was immigration.

Harris's base, by contrast, was focused on a broader range of issues. About 3 in 10 called the economy a top issue, while about 2 in 10 said abortion and about 1 in 10 named health care or climate change.

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 70 of 95

Small but possibly important shifts from 2020

Just as in 2020, more than 8 in 10 Trump voters were white, and more than 1 in 10 were nonwhite. Harris' coalition largely resembled the diverse group that President Joe Biden assembled four years ago. About two-thirds of Harris's backers were white, similar to Biden, and about one-third were nonwhite.

About half of women backed Harris, while about half of men went for Trump. That appears largely consistent with the shares for Biden and Trump in 2020.

Other key elements of the candidates' coalitions appeared to hold as well. More than half of voters with a college degree backed Harris, and about half of those without a college degree voted for Trump. Harris performed more strongly in cities and suburbs nationally than Trump did, while Trump drew more support in small towns and rural areas.

Preliminary AP VoteCast data suggested that some groups may have shifted, though, and any such changes could be significant in swing states where margins are likely tight.

One potential trend could be among younger voters, whose political lives have been shaped by the presence of Trump, now in his third presidential election. Voters under age 30 are a fraction of the total electorate. But about half of them supported Harris, compared to the roughly 6 in 10 who backed Biden in 2020. Slightly more than 4 in 10 young voters went for Trump, up from about one-third in 2020.

Another shift that emerged was among Black and Latino voters, who appeared slightly less likely to support Harris than they were to back Biden four years ago. About 8 in 10 Black voters backed Harris, down from the roughly 9 in 10 who backed Biden. More than half of Hispanic voters supported Harris, but that was down slightly from the roughly 6 in 10 who backed Biden in 2020. Trump's support among those groups appeared to rise slightly compared to 2020.

Most Trump and Harris voters motivated in support of their candidate

Both candidates generated loyalty among their coalitions, a change from four years ago when Trump was ousted from the White House by Biden.

In 2020, about half of Biden's backers said their vote for him was cast in opposition to Trump, and about half said their vote was for Biden. This year, roughly two-thirds of Harris voters said they were motivated to vote in favor of her. Only about one-third were voting in opposition to Trump.

Enthusiasm for Trump within his base held steady. Similar to in 2020, about 8 in 10 Trump voters said they cast their ballot in a sign of support for him, rather than to simply oppose his opponent.

Voters give Harris an edge on moral character, Trump on being a strong leader

The candidates had different strengths in the eyes of voters. Slightly more than half of voters said Harris has the moral character to be president, compared to about 4 in 10 who said that about Trump.

Nearly 6 in 10 said Trump lacked the moral character to be president, a reflection of his criminal convictions, his often inflammatory rhetoric, his sexist remarks and actions and his denial of the 2020 presidential election results that fed into the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection. Slightly fewer than half said Harris did not possess the morality to be president.

But voters gave Trump an edge on being a strong leader. Slightly more than half of voters described Trump as a strong leader, and slightly fewer than half said the same about Harris.

About 6 in 10 said Harris has the mental capability to serve effectively as president, compared to about half who said that about Trump.

## Florida voters reject measures to protect abortion rights and legalize recreational marijuana

By STEPHANY MATAT Associated Press

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — Florida voters rejected ballot measures Tuesday to protect abortion rights and legalize marijuana, handing victories to Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis and solidifying the state's new reputation as a conservative stronghold.

DeSantis used state resources and campaigned heavily against each issue, telling voters that whether they were for or against marijuana or abortion rights, the measures were flawed, poorly worded and would

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 71 of 95

likely never be repealed if enshrined in the state constitution.

But DeSantis' campaign would have failed if it wasn't for former Republican Gov. Jeb Bush, who 20 years ago successfully pushed the threshold to change the constitution to 60% support. Both measures had support from a majority of voters, but not enough to pass.

"We fought the good fight, we kept the faith, and we finished the race. Thanks to @GovRonDeSantis and our great team for everything they sacrificed over the past months to protect our great state from amendments that sought to attack our families and way of life," DeSantis' chief of staff, James Uthmeier said on X, where DeSantis simply posted that both issues were defeated.

Still, supporters of the amendment criticized DeSantis for using state resources, including television ads and a social media campaign, to fight the measures.

"This is no longer the 'Free State of Florida'" said Florida Women's Freedom Coalition executive director Anna Hochkammer in a news release. "This is a state that strips humans of their freedoms and dignity. A state whose government pushed a taxpayer-funded campaign using government resources to intimidate voters, silence women, and undermine democracy."

The abortion measure would have prevented lawmakers from passing any law that penalized, prohibited, delayed or restricts abortion until fetal viability, which doctors say is sometime after 21 weeks. The state's restrictive six-week abortion law still stands. Florida is one of the first states to reject abortion rights in a ballot measure since *Roe v. Wade* was overturned.

The marijuana measure would have allowed people 21 years old and older to possess about 3 ounces of marijuana, and it would have allowed businesses already growing and selling medical marijuana to sell it to them. This vote came at a time when federal officials are moving to reclassify marijuana as a less dangerous drug.

The ballot measures needed approval from at least 60% of voters. In other states, abortion rights helped drive turnout and were a leading issue that allowed Democrats to retain multiple Senate seats in 2022.

DeSantis and other state leaders spent months campaigning against the measures. Democrats heavily campaigned in support of both issues, hoping to inspire party supporters to the polls. Republicans have a 1 million-voter registration edge over Democrats.

Among DeSantis' arguments against the marijuana initiative is that it would have hurt the state's tourism because of a weed stench in the air. But other Republican leaders, including Florida resident Donald Trump and former state GOP Chairman Sen. Joe Gruters, supported legalizing recreational marijuana.

Trump went back and forth on how he would vote on the state's abortion rights initiative before finally saying he would oppose it.

## Why AP called Florida for Trump

By BRIAN SLODYSKO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A strong across-the-board showing by Donald Trump helped propel the Republican former president to victory in Florida, once a preeminent swing state that has increasingly slipped out of Democrats' grasp. Exhibit A: Trump was on track to win the longtime Democratic stronghold of Miami-Dade County when The Associated Press called the race at 8:01 p.m. ET.

Trump not only improved on his 2020 performance in Republican areas of the state. He made inroads with voters in Florida's battleground areas and was on pace to outperform Vice President Kamala Harris in areas considered to be moderately Democratic. Trump led Harris by 11 percentage points with about 80% of the expected vote report when the race was called.

But his lead in Miami-Dade County was perhaps the most surprising — and the most dispiriting for Democrats. It's been decades since a Republican presidential contender carried the county, which Joe Biden won by roughly 7 percentage points four years ago.

Over 81% of the vote had been counted in Florida when the AP called the race. Harris would have needed to get 73% of the outstanding vote left to be counted in order to overtake Trump's lead.

CANDIDATES: President: Harris (D) vs. Trump (R) vs. Claudia De la Cruz ( Socialism and Liberation) vs.

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 72 of 95

Chase Oliver (Libertarian) vs. Peter Sonski (American Solidarity) vs. Jill Stein (Green) vs. Randall Terry (Constitution).

WINNER: Trump

POLL CLOSING TIME: 7 p.m. and 8 p.m. ET. Florida covers two time zones.

ABOUT THE RACE: The last time Florida swung for a Democratic presidential candidate was over a decade ago, when Barack Obama beat Mitt Romney by less than a percentage point. Voters in the state haven't looked back.

Once a pivotal battleground, Florida's political DNA has been altered by organizational stumbles by Democrats along with demographic shifts. That culminated in Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis' nearly 20-point landslide win in 2022, when he clinched the longtime Democratic stronghold of Miami-Dade County.

It's not just conservative seniors leaving the north to live out their golden years in the sunshine state who have rewired Florida's politics. Immigrants fleeing a despotic Venezuelan government have been welcomed by the Republican Party, just as Cuban exiles — reliable GOP voters — were more than a generation ago.

Meanwhile, the Democratic Party has struggled with candidate recruitment and money woes. Democrats also incorrectly assumed that younger generations of Cuban Americans would naturally gravitate toward the party — a prediction that hasn't panned out. Combine all that with the fact that that advertising in the sprawling state, with has nearly a dozen different media markets, is just so dang expensive, Democrats have effectively been cast into into the political wilderness — er, Everglades.

Consider this: Young voters who will cast their first ballot this year weren't alive when the state was the epicenter of political drama during the 2000 presidential election, when disputes over "hanging chads" and miscounted ballots made their way to the Supreme Court, which sealed George W. Bush's 537-vote win over Democrat Al Gore.

The state is a considerable prize in presidential races, offering the winner 30 electoral votes.

WHY AP CALLED THE RACE: The AP determined that Harris had no mathematical path to victory given Trump's massive lead and the amount of outstanding vote.

## Florida has nearly all ballots counted on Election Day, while California can take weeks. This is why

By MAYA SWEEDLER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — In the 2020 presidential election, Florida reported the results within a few hours of poll close of more than 99% of ballots cast.

In California, almost one-third of ballots were uncounted after election night. The state was making almost daily updates to its count through Dec. 3, a full month after Election Day.

This wasn't unusual or unexpected.

California, the nation's most populous state, is consistently among the slowest to report all its election results. Florida, the third-most populous state, is generally among the first to finish.

The Constitution sets out broad principles for electing a national government and leaves the details to the states. The choices made by state lawmakers and election officials as they sort out those details affect everything from how voters cast a ballot, how quickly the tabulation and release of results takes place, how elections are kept secure and how officials maintain voters' confidence in the process.

The gap between when California and Florida are able to finalize their count is the natural result of election officials in the two states choosing to emphasize different concerns and set different priorities.

How California counts

Lawmakers in California designed their elections to improve accessibility and increase turnout. Whether it's automatically receiving a ballot at home, having up until Election Day to turn it in or having several days to address any problems that may arise with their ballot, Californians have a lot of time and opportunity to vote. It comes at the expense of knowing the final vote counts soon after polls close.

"Our priority is trying to maximize participation of actively registered voters," said Democratic Assembly-member Marc Berman, who authored the 2021 bill that permanently switched the state to all-mail elec-



# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 73 of 95

tions. "What that means is things are a little slower. But in a society that wants immediate gratification, I think our democracy is worth taking a little time to get it right and to create a system where everyone can participate."

California, which has long had a culture of voting absentee, started moving toward all-mail elections last decade. All-mail systems will almost always prolong the count. Mail ballots require additional verification steps — each must be opened individually, validated and processed — so they can take longer to tabulate than ballots cast in person that are then fed into a scanner at a neighborhood polling place.

In 2016, California passed a bill allowing counties to opt in to all-mail elections before instituting it state-wide on a temporary basis in 2020 and enshrining it in law in time for the 2022 elections.

Studies found that the earliest states to institute all-mail elections — Oregon and Washington — saw higher turnout. Mail ballots also increase the likelihood of a voter casting a complete ballot, according to Melissa Michelson, a political scientist and dean at California's Menlo College who has written on voter mobilization.

In recent years, the thousands of California voters who drop off their mail ballots on Election Day created a bottleneck on election night. In the past five general elections, California has tabulated an average of 38% of its vote after Election Day. Two years ago, in the 2022 midterm elections, half the state's votes were counted after Election Day.

Slower counts have come alongside later mail ballot deadlines. In 2015, California implemented its first postmark deadline, meaning that the state can count mail ballots that arrive after Election Day as long as the Postal Service receives the ballot by Election Day. Berman said the postmark deadline allows the state to treat the mailbox as a drop box in order to avoid punishing voters who cast their ballots properly but are affected by postal delays.

Initially, the law said ballots that arrived within three days of the election would be considered cast in time. This year, ballots may arrive up to a week after Election Day, so California won't know how many ballots have been cast until Nov. 12. This deadline means that California will be counting ballots at least through that week because ballots arriving up to that point might still be valid and be added to the count.

## How Florida counts

Florida's election system is geared toward quick and efficient tabulation. Coming out of its disastrous 2000 presidential election, when the U.S. Supreme Court settled a recount dispute and George W. Bush was declared the winner in the state over Al Gore, the state moved to standardize its election systems and clean up its canvass, or the process of confirming votes cast and counted.

Republican Rep. Bill Posey, who as state senator was the sponsor of the Florida Election Reform Act of 2001, said the two goals of the law — to count all legal votes and to ensure voters are confident their votes are counted — were accomplished by mandating optical ballot scanners in every precinct. That "most significant" change means no more "hanging chads" in Florida. The scanners read and aggregate results from paper ballots, immediately spitting back any that contain mistakes.

Florida's deadlines are set to avoid having ballots arrive any later than when officials press "go" on the tabulator machines. The state has a receipt deadline for its absentee ballots, which means ballots that do not arrive by 7 p.m. local time on Election Day are not counted, regardless of when they were mailed.

Michael T. Morley, a professor of election law at Florida State University College of Law, pointed out that Florida election officials may begin processing ballots, but not actually count them, before polls close. That helps speed up the process, especially compared with states that don't allow officials to process mail ballots before Election Day.

"They can determine the validity of ballots, confirm they should be counted and run them through machines," Morley said. "They just can't press the tally button."

Florida takes steps to avoid a protracted back-and-forth on potentially problematic ballots. At the precinct, optical scanners catch some problems, such as a voter selecting too many candidates, that can be fixed on-site. Also, any voter who's returned a mail ballot with a mismatched or missing signature has until 5 p.m. two days after the election to submit an affidavit fixing it. California gives voters up to four weeks after the election to address such inconsistencies.

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 74 of 95

## Want to follow election results like a pro? Here's what to watch in key states

By LEAH ASKARINAM Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Election night in the United States is a bit like a jigsaw puzzle, except that only one piece appears at a time, and you don't get to look at the picture on the box.

As thousands of counties and towns report vote totals, it can be hard to figure out when the results reported so far will reflect the outcome.

The first report of the night might show a massive lead for one candidate, but why does that lead dwindle in some races and grow in others? Why does a single vote update from a big city sometimes confirm the winner when there's still a substantial number of votes left to count? What's the difference between a "mirage" and a real outcome?

Past elections can provide a guide.

They show that mail-in votes in recent elections have leaned heavily toward Democrats and that in some states, counties report those ballots first. That can create a "blue mirage" in races that end up being only narrow victories for Democrats or even substantial victories for Republicans. They show that Republicans can lose big cities overwhelmingly and still win the election.

Even so, sometimes the usual rules and patterns get thrown out the window, either because of unexpected changes to the state's administration process or major swings in voter behavior.

Some recent examples in key states can help provide some idea of what to expect between the time that polls close in Florida early in the evening all the way through Arizona, where polls close at 10 p.m. EST.

Florida

The first clues of how election night is going usually come from Florida. Results start coming in at 7 p.m. EST even though the final polls don't close in the state until 8 p.m. EST.

Not every state makes clear when it releases vote updates whether the reports include mail-in ballots, early in-person or Election Day ballots. But when states do provide that information, or enough clues are available to figure it out on our own, it's hugely helpful in figuring out why the vote count looks like it does at that moment.

Florida law requires each county to report its early and absentee ballots first. That includes mail-in ballots, which lean heavily Democratic.

Over the past two election cycles, Democrats have tended to vote by mail more than Republicans. That means the first results reported often look stronger for Democratic candidates than the eventual outcome. Then, as the votes cast on Election Day trickle in, Republicans start seeing much more favorable results.

Take the 2022 Senate race, when Republican Sen. Marco Rubio faced a challenge from Democrat Val Demings.

Demings won an early update in Broward County, giving her a lead of nearly 30 percentage points at the beginning of the night. But she lost an update two minutes later in Miami-Dade County, a particularly concerning sign for Democrats because these early updates should be the votes that are most favorable to them. In the end, Demings lost her lead as more Election Day votes and more votes from Republican-leaning areas were counted. Rubio won reelection, 58% to 41%.

Virginia

While the first votes of the night should favor Democrats in Florida, the order of events in Virginia tends to vary depending on what each county decides to do.

There are no strict rules dictating how counties should release results. But in past elections, early returns favored Republicans until the big cities and large northern Virginia suburbs reported their results, which took hours.

In Virginia and in most other states, Republican voters are more spread out geographically than Democratic voters, who are concentrated in major population hubs. So throughout the night, while the major Democratic-leaning counties were still counting votes, smaller counties, which tend to lean Republican, had already started reporting their votes.

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 75 of 95

In 2020, Republican Donald Trump led Democrat Joe Biden for five hours after polls closed on election night before heavily Democratic Fairfax County reported a nearly 400,000-vote update about 12:30 a.m. EST. Biden won Virginia that year by a margin of 10 percentage points.

## Georgia

Georgia allows counties to begin counting absentee ballots on Election Day. By the time polls close, some counties already have major batches of votes ready to report.

Those first reports are often disproportionately favorable to Democrats. Then, prepare to wait for a while. After the first reports, it may be hours before the rest of the state starts sending in results as they continue to count votes, meaning that blue mirage could stick around for quite a while.

In 2022, the Senate election went to a runoff, because neither candidate received 50%. Democrat Raphael Warnock did end up with a single percentage point lead by the time votes were certified in the general election.

This fall, the State Election Board approved a new rule that requires poll workers to hand count the number of ballots cast — not the actual votes — after voting is complete. Critics, including GOP Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger, worried the rule would delay the reporting of election results.

## Ohio

In the 2022 Ohio Senate race, Rep. Tim Ryan started out with an early lead when Franklin County, home to the state capital of Columbus, reported its first batch of ballots of the night, which went 74% to 26% for Ryan over Republican JD Vance, now Trump's running mate. That was the high point for Ryan. In the end, he carried Franklin with slightly less of the vote — about two-thirds — and lost the race statewide.

So why was his lead so much bigger early in the night?

Again, it's all about mail-in ballots. Ohio releases its pre-Election Day votes first thing on election night, including mail-in votes. Like in other races since 2022, mail-in votes tended to lean toward Democrats. As Election Day votes trickled in, Republican JD Vance took the lead and eventually won by 6 points.

## North Carolina

In the 2022 Senate race, about a half hour after polls closed in North Carolina, Democrat Cheri Beasley had a lead of nearly 200,000 votes. By midnight, Republican Ted Budd had a lead of over 150,000 votes.

North Carolina counts nearly all its ballots on election night. The first reports of the night in most North Carolina counties will be the results of mail ballots, followed by early in-person votes. Later updates will include results from ballots cast on Election Day. North Carolina has a history of counting its Election Day vote pretty quickly, so if a blue mirage does arise from those first reports, it might not last very long.

It's unclear how vote counting may be affected by emergency changes put in place in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene, which ravaged western parts of the state. Among other changes, the legislature decided that voters in 25 counties affected by Helene may drop off their absentee ballots at open early in-person voting sites and county elections offices anywhere in the state. Those ballots still must be turned in by 7:30 p.m. on Election Day in order to count.

## Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania followed the same pattern as Georgia and Ohio in 2022.

Initial vote updates, which included a big chunk of mail-in ballots, gave Democrat John Fetterman a lopsided advantage before votes from Republicans began to narrow the gap in the Senate race. The state had reported even before poll closing that more than 7 in 10 mail ballots returned before Election Day came from registered Democrats.

Republican Mehmet Oz began to catch up as more of the rural and Election Day votes were tabulated. But those votes weren't enough to overcome Fetterman's lead.

When the AP called Fetterman the winner, he led by 2 percentage points. The AP estimated there were more than 800,000 votes left to be counted, but most of them were in counties where Fetterman was winning by large margins: Philadelphia and the surrounding counties of Delaware, Bucks and Montgomery. But the way Pennsylvania counts its votes could lead to a blue mirage, a red mirage, or both — at different times in the evening. Pennsylvania doesn't require counties to report their mail-in votes first, and they aren't allowed to start processing those votes until Election Day.

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 76 of 95

In the 2020 presidential election, Biden took a massive lead as pre-Election Day votes were counted, then Trump took a huge lead as Election Day votes were counted, and then Biden eventually regained his narrow margin as more mail votes were counted.

## Wisconsin

In Wisconsin, municipalities report their vote totals to counties, and each city can choose how to report its results. Most combine mail-in ballots with Election Day votes, but some, including Milwaukee, release them separately. That dilutes the chances of a mirage but also adds an element of unpredictability.

The city of Milwaukee reports Election Day votes before mail-in votes. That can make it difficult to know how many votes remain to be counted there until election officials give specific information about how many mail ballots remain or confirm that they have been counted already.

In Wisconsin, information about the last votes to come from Milwaukee, which typically reports into wee hours of Wednesday morning, is often necessary to determine the winner in close races.

## Michigan

As in Wisconsin, there's no universal pattern in Michigan for when counties report their mail ballots. That often makes geography a better indicator of the direction of a race than vote type.

The key to a close race in Michigan is to wait for Wayne, Oakland, and Washtenaw counties to release significant batches of votes before jumping to any conclusions. Wayne includes Detroit, while Oakland is made up of the city's northern suburbs. Washtenaw County is home to Ann Arbor and the University of Michigan.

Michigan doesn't permit absentee ballots to be counted until the morning of Election Day and warns on its elections website that high numbers of absentee ballots usually prolongs the counting process by hours if not days.

## Arizona

Arizona won't report votes until an hour after polls close, due to the state law. But that means when that first update comes in, it's pretty big. Historically, about half of the state's total votes are reported in the first update.

That update, like in many other states, has tended to lean heavily Democratic in recent elections because it includes mail ballots cast well before Election Day. That gap usually narrows as Election Day votes are counted. But after that, things take a more complicated turn in Arizona than in other states.

Ballots counted after Election Day include "late earlyies" — the last-arriving mail ballots that include those dropped off on Election Day. Those ballots heavily favored Trump in 2020.

But in the 2022 Senate race, Democratic Sen. Mark Kelly took the lead in the first update, when Maricopa County, the state's most populous county and home to Phoenix, released 837,000 ballots in its first report. He maintained that initial lead, even though it narrowed, when Election Day votes were reported. Votes counted after election night failed to eat into his advantage.

## **Don't count on a recount to change the winner in close elections this fall. They rarely do**

By STEPHEN OHLEMACHER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — With the American electorate so evenly divided, there will be elections in November close enough that officials will have to recount the votes. Just don't expect those recounts to change the winner. They rarely do, even when the margins are tiny.

"The (original) count is pretty accurate because the machines work — they work very well," said Tammy Patrick, a former election official in Arizona who is now with the National Association of Election Officials. "We have recounts and we have audits to make sure we got it right."

There have been 36 recounts in statewide general elections since America's most famous recount in 2000. That year, Republican George W. Bush maintained his lead over Democrat Al Gore in Florida — and won the presidency — after a recount was stopped by the Supreme Court.

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 77 of 95

Since then, only three of those statewide recounts resulted in a new winner, and all three were decided by hundreds of votes, not thousands. That's according to an Associated Press review of statewide recounts using data from the AP vote count, state election offices and research by FairVote, a nonpartisan organization that researches elections and advocates for changes in the way elections are conducted.

Most states allow recounts when the margin between the top candidates falls within a specific margin, such as 0.5 percentage points, even when that means the number of votes separating them is actually in the thousands or even tens of thousands. But there is no precedent for a recount changing the winner in a race with margins that big, at least not since Congress made sweeping changes to U.S. election law in 2002.

The most recent statewide race overturned by a recount was in 2008 in Minnesota. Republican Sen. Norm Coleman led Democrat Al Franken by 215 votes in the initial count, out of more than 2.9 million ballots cast. After a hand recount, Franken won by 225 votes, a shift of 0.02 percentage points, or two one-hundredths of a percentage point.

Among the 36 statewide recounts since 2000, the average change in the winning margin, whether it grew or shrank, was 0.03 percentage points. The biggest shift was 0.11 percentage points in a relatively low turnout race for Vermont auditor in 2006. In that race, incumbent Republican Randy Brock led Democrat Thomas Salmon by 137 votes after the initial count. A recount flipped the race and Salmon won by 102 votes.

Recounts aren't limited to general elections. They happen in primaries, too.

Earlier this year, the Washington state primary for commissioner of public lands went to a recount after the initial tally had Democrat Dave Upthegrove leading Republican Sue Kuehl Pederson by 51 votes, out of more than 1.9 million votes counted, as they vied for second place.

After the recount, Upthegrove's lead shrank by just two votes. In Washington's primary system, the top two candidates advance to the general election, regardless of their political party.

There are even more recounts in downballot races that are sometimes decided by a handful of votes. But even in these lower turnout elections, recounts rarely change the winners.

"Recounts are shifting a very small number of votes," said Deb Otis, director of research and policy at FairVote. "We're going to see recounts in 2024 that are not going to change the outcome."

States have a wide variety of laws on when and how recounts are conducted. Many states have automatic recounts if the margin between the top two candidates is within a certain margin. The most common margin is 0.5 percentage points, but there is a lot of variation. Some states allow candidates to request recounts but require that they pay for them — unless the winner changes.

Alaska, Montana, South Dakota and Texas mandate recounts only if there is an exact tie, though candidates in those states can request a recount. South Carolina has automatic recounts if the margin between the top two candidates is 1% or less of the total votes cast in the race.

The AP may declare a winner in a race that is eligible for a recount if the AP determines the lead is too large for a recount or legal challenge to change the outcome.

In Washington's public lands primary, which was ultimately decided by 49 votes, the AP waited until after the recount to declare the winner because the margin was so close. But in cases where the number of votes separating the top candidates is larger, for example in a statewide race where the candidates are separated by thousands or tens of thousands of votes, the AP may determine that it's not possible for a recount to reverse the outcome.

Statewide recounts almost always change the results by a few votes.

Patrick said that's usually because of human error — either by an election worker or by voters. For example, paper ballots are often rejected because voters didn't fill them out correctly, but they might later get added to the count after a review.

Paper ballots usually require voters to fill in little bubbles next to their chosen candidate, just like students taking standardized tests. Tabulation machines count the votes by looking for a mark on a very specific area of the ballot, Patrick said. If voters indicate their preference in some other way, like circling

their chosen candidate, the machines won't count the vote.

In some states, bipartisan panels review rejected ballots to see if they can determine the intent of the voter. Some states do these reviews whether there is a recount or not. Other states only do them if there is a recount. Still others never do these reviews and the ballots are simply rejected.

Patrick said she's seen ballots marked many different ways that weren't picked up by the tabulation machines, like voters using crayons or marking their choices with a highlighter.

In the Minnesota recount, a voter filed in the dot for Franken but also wrote "Lizard People" in the box for write-in votes. The ballot was rejected.

"Voters do a lot of very interesting things with their ballots," Patrick said.

## What is the Electoral College and how does the US use it to elect presidents?

By MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Donald Trump won the presidency in 2016 because of the Electoral College. So did George W. Bush in 2000.

The Electoral College is the unique American system of electing presidents. It is different from the popular vote, and it has an outsized impact on how candidates run and win campaigns. Republicans Trump and Bush lost the popular vote during their presidential runs but won the Electoral College to claim the nation's top office.

Some Democrats charge that the system favors Republicans and they would rather the United States elect presidents by a simple majority vote. But the country's framers set up the system in the Constitution, and it would require a constitutional amendment to change.

A look at the Electoral College and how it works, as Trump and Vice President Kamala Harris, the Democratic nominee for president, compete for the White House on Election Day, Nov. 5:

What is the Electoral College?

The Electoral College is a 538-member body that elects a president. The framers of the Constitution set it up to give more power to the states and as a compromise to avoid having Congress decide the winner.

Each state's electors vote for the candidate who won the popular vote in that state. The runner-up gets nothing — except in Nebraska and Maine where elector votes are awarded based on congressional district and statewide results.

To win the presidency, a candidate must secure 270 electoral votes — a majority of the 538 possible votes.

How is it different from the popular vote?

Under the Electoral College system, more weight is given to a single vote in a small state than to the vote of someone in a large state, leading to outcomes at times that have been at odds with the popular vote.

It also affects how candidates campaign. Because the outcome is almost certain in solidly Republican states and solidly Democratic states, candidates tend to focus most of their efforts on a handful of swing states that have split their votes in recent elections.

How many electoral votes does each state have?

Electors are allocated based on how many representatives a state has in the House of Representatives, plus its two senators. The District of Columbia gets three, despite the fact that the home to Congress has no vote in Congress.

California has the most electoral votes at 54, followed by Texas with 40 and Florida with 30. Pennsylvania with 19 electoral votes is the largest prize of the presidential battlegrounds, followed by Georgia and North Carolina with 16 each.

Who are the electors?

It varies by state, but often the electors are picked by state parties. Members of Congress cannot serve as electors.

How and when are the votes counted?

After state election officials certify their elections, electors meet in their individual states — never as one body — to certify the election. This year, that will happen on Dec. 17.

If the two candidates have a tied number of votes, the election is thrown to the House, where each state's congressional delegation gets one vote. That has happened only twice, in 1801 and 1825.

Once a state's electors have certified the vote, they send a certificate to Congress. Congress then formally counts and certifies the vote at a special session on Jan. 6. The vice president presides as the envelopes for each state are opened and verified.

Can lawmakers object?

Lawmakers can object to a state's results during the congressional certification, as several Republicans did after the 2020 election. On Jan. 6, 2021, the House and Senate both voted to reject GOP objections to the Arizona and Pennsylvania results.

After Trump tried to overturn his defeat to Democrat Joe Biden and his supporters stormed the Capitol on Jan. 6, Congress updated the 1800s-era Electoral Count Act to make it harder to object and to more clearly lay out the vice president's ceremonial role, among other changes. Trump had pressured Vice President Mike Pence to try and object to the results — something the vice president has no legal standing to do.

Once Congress certifies the vote, the new or returning president will be inaugurated Jan. 20 on the steps of the Capitol.

## **NFL trade deadline: Commanders acquire Lattimore; Lions get Za'Darius Smith; Steelers add Williams**

By ROB MAADDI AP Sports Writer

Marshon Lattimore, Za'Darius Smith, Mike Williams, Preston Smith and Tre'Davious White were sent to winning teams. Jonathan Mingo and Khalil Herbert are going to a place where they'll play more.

NFL teams, especially contenders, were active before Tuesday's trade deadline at 4 p.m. EST.

The NFC East-leading Commanders made a move to help them try to stay in first place, acquiring Lattimore from the struggling Saints (2-7). The four-time Pro Bowl cornerback bolsters a defense that's already No. 5 against the pass. The Saints are getting a third-round pick, a fourth-rounder and their own sixth that they previously sent to Washington. The Commanders also receive a fifth along with Lattimore.

The NFC North-leading Lions (7-1) kicked off deadline day by acquiring Smith from the Cleveland Browns (2-7). The three-time Pro Bowl edge rusher helps fill the void created by the loss of star Aidan Hutchinson, who suffered a leg injury on Oct. 13 and still leads Detroit with 7 1/2 sacks.

The Browns, already looking to rebuild in a disappointing season, are sending Smith and a seventh-round pick in 2026 to Detroit for a fifth-round pick in 2025 and a sixth-round pick in 2026.

The Steelers (6-2) were busy, adding Williams to give Russell Wilson another option and Smith to bolster the pass rush.

Pittsburgh, which leads the AFC North, sent a fifth-round pick in next year's draft to the New York Jets (3-6) to get Williams, who had 12 catches for 166 yards in nine games. They traded a 2025 seventh-round pick to Green Bay (6-3) for Smith, who has 2 1/2 sacks this season after averaging 8 1/2 per year over the previous three.

The Ravens (6-3) improved their secondary by acquiring White from the Rams. The two-time Pro Bowl cornerback was inactive the past four games with Los Angeles. Baltimore sent a seventh-round pick in 2026 to Los Angeles for White and a seventh-round pick in 2027, two people with knowledge of the compensation told the AP. Both people spoke on condition of anonymity because the teams didn't announce terms.

The injury-plagued Cowboys (3-5) agreed on a deal with Carolina (2-7) to acquire Mingo and a seventh-round pick in 2025 for a fourth-round pick next year, two people with knowledge of the trade told the AP. Both people spoke on condition of anonymity because the teams haven't announced the deal.

Mingo, a second-round pick last year, only has 12 receptions for 121 yards in nine games. He won't be catching passes from Dak Prescott for a while. Prescott is expected to miss several games with a hamstring

injury. Dallas has dropped three straight games.

The Bengals (4-5) added depth at running back following an injury to Zack Moss, getting Herbert from Chicago (4-4) for a 2025 seventh-round draft pick. Herbert had just eight carries for 16 yards and one touchdown for the Bears. He'll join leading rusher Chase Brown to give Cincinnati another option in the backfield.

The San Francisco 49ers (4-4) acquired defensive tackle Khalil Davis from Houston for a 2026 seventh-round pick. Davis had one sack and nine tackles in nine games this season.

Some of the biggest moves came ahead of the trade deadline.

The Chiefs (8-0), Bills (7-2), Ravens and Jets added playmakers, acquiring wide receivers over the past month. The Vikings (6-2) filled a big need on the offensive line last week and the Cardinals (5-4) got defensive help on Monday.

Two-time defending Super Bowl champion Kansas City got three-time All-Pro receiver D'Andre Hopkins and edge rusher Josh Esche.

Hopkins made his presence felt in Monday night's 30-24 overtime victory over Tampa Bay. He caught eight passes for 86 yards and two touchdowns in his second game with Patrick Mahomes.

The Jets acquired three-time All-Pro Davante Adams three weeks ago. He caught seven passes for 91 yards and one TD in New York's 21-13 win over Houston last Thursday.

Amari Cooper had a TD reception in his first game with Buffalo two weeks ago. Diontae Johnson played 17 snaps in his debut with Baltimore, a 41-10 win over Denver.

Left tackle Cam Robinson had a solid first start in Minnesota's 21-13 victory against Indianapolis. Arizona (5-4) picked up outside linebacker Baron Browning from Denver for a sixth-round pick, a day after taking over first place in the NFC West.

The NFL pushed the trade deadline back an extra week this year, giving teams more time to improve their rosters.

## **'Fat Leonard,' Navy contractor behind one of the military's biggest scandals, sentenced to 15 years**

SAN DIEGO (AP) — Former military defense contractor Leonard "Fat Leonard" Francis was sentenced Tuesday to 15 years in prison for masterminding a decade-long bribery scheme that swept up dozens of U.S. Navy officers, federal prosecutors said.

U.S. District Judge Janis L. Sammartino also ordered Francis to pay \$20 million in restitution to the Navy and a \$150,000 fine, according to a statement from the U.S. Attorney's Office. He was also ordered to forfeit \$35 million in "ill-gotten proceeds from his crimes," the statement said.

Prosecutors said the sentence resulted from Francis' first guilty plea in 2015 concerning bribery and fraud, his extensive cooperation with the government since then and another guilty plea Tuesday for failing to appear for his original sentencing hearing in 2022.

Shortly before he was due to be sentenced in September 2022, Francis cut off a GPS monitor he was wearing while under house arrest and fled the country. He was later arrested in Venezuela and brought back to the U.S. in December 2023.

Sammartino sentenced him to more than 13 1/2 years for the bribery and fraud charges, plus 16 months for failing to appear. The sentences are to be served consecutively.

"Leonard Francis lined his pockets with taxpayer dollars while undermining the integrity of U.S. Naval forces," U.S. Attorney Tara McGrath said in Tuesday's statement. "The impact of his deceit and manipulation will be long felt, but justice has been served today."

Email and phone messages seeking comment were left Tuesday for William Douglas Sprague, an attorney for Francis.

Sprague, who sought a sentence of just under nine years, argued that his client's cooperation should warrant a lesser sentence, 10 News San Diego reported.



Sprague also said Francis' company provided the Navy with exemplary services for many years. "Unfortunately, as Leonard acknowledged in his early guilty plea and immediate cooperation, his greed drove him to commit bribery and to commit fraud," Sprague said.

Prosecutors said Francis' actions led to one of the biggest bribery investigations in U.S. military history, which resulted in the conviction and sentencing of nearly two dozen Navy officials, defense contractors and others on various fraud and corruption charges.

An enigmatic figure who was 6-foot-3 and weighed 350 pounds at one time, Francis owned and operated his family's ship servicing business, Singapore-based Glenn Defense Marine Asia Ltd. or GDMA, which supplied food, water and fuel to vessels. The Malaysian defense contractor was a key contact for U.S. Navy ships at ports across Asia for more than two decades. During that time, Francis wooed naval officers with Kobe beef, expensive cigars, concert tickets and wild sex parties at luxury hotels from Thailand to the Philippines.

In exchange, officers, including the first active-duty admiral to be convicted of a federal crime, concealed the scheme in which Francis would overcharge for supplying ships or charge for fake services at ports he controlled in Southeast Asia. The officers passed him classified information and even went so far as redirecting military vessels to ports that were lucrative for his Singapore-based ship servicing company.

In a federal sting, Francis was lured to San Diego on false pretenses and arrested at a hotel in September 2013. He pleaded guilty in 2015, admitting that he had offered more than \$500,000 in cash bribes to Navy officials, defense contractors and others. Prosecutors say he bilked the Navy out of at least \$35 million. As part of his plea deal, he cooperated with the investigation leading to the Navy convictions. He faced up to 25 years in prison.

While awaiting sentencing, Francis was hospitalized and treated for renal cancer and other medical issues. After leaving the hospital, he was allowed to stay out of jail at a rental home, on house arrest with a GPS ankle monitor and security guards.

But three weeks before his scheduled sentencing in September 2022, he snipped off his monitor and made a brazen escape, setting off an international search. Officials said he fled to Mexico, made his way to Cuba and eventually got to Venezuela.

He was arrested more than two weeks after his disappearance — caught before he boarded a flight at the Simon Bolivar International Airport outside Caracas. Venezuelan officials said he intended to reach Russia.

The cases were handled by the U.S. Attorney's Office in an effort to be independent of the military justice system. But they have come under scrutiny.

The felony convictions of four former Navy officers were vacated following allegations of prosecutorial misconduct. Sammartino agreed to allow them to plead guilty to a misdemeanor and pay a \$100 fine each.

Last year, Sammartino ruled that the lead federal prosecutor in the officers' case committed "flagrant misconduct" by withholding information from defense lawyers, but that it was not enough to dismiss the case.

## **76ers' Joel Embiid is suspended by the NBA for three games for shoving a newspaper columnist**

NEW YORK (AP) — Philadelphia 76ers center Joel Embiid was suspended by the NBA on Tuesday for three games without pay for shoving a member of the media.

Embiid's suspension will begin with the next regular-season game for which he is eligible and able to play. The 2023 NBA MVP has yet to play this season because of what the 76ers call left knee management.

The Sixers begin a road trip in Los Angeles against the Clippers on Wednesday night.

Embiid shouted at and eventually shoved a newspaper columnist in a locker room altercation Saturday night.

"Mutual respect is paramount to the relationship between players and media in the NBA," league executive Joe Dumars said in a statement announcing the suspension. "While we understand Joel was offended by

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 82 of 95

the personal nature of the original version of the reporter's column, interactions must remain professional on both sides and can never turn physical."

Embiid took issue with Philadelphia Inquirer columnist Marcus Hayes, who mentioned the seven-time All-Star's late brother and his son — both named Arthur — in columns questioning Embiid's professionalism and effort not being in shape after playing in the Paris Olympics.

As reporters entered the locker room to talk to players following a 124-107 loss to the Memphis Grizzlies, the two-time NBA scoring champion stood and confronted Hayes.

"The next time you bring up my dead brother and my son again, you are going to see what I'm going to do to you and I'm going to have to ... live with the consequences," Embiid said to Hayes.

Embiid continued, with several instances of profanity in the next few sentences. Hayes offered an apology, which Embiid did not want. "That's not the f—— first time," Embiid said.

Embiid later said that he doesn't care what reporters say. "But you do," Hayes answered.

Embiid appeared to get louder at that point, and not long afterward pushed Hayes on the shoulder while the team's public relations chief got between them. Another PR person moved Tyrese Maxey's interview to the hallway outside the locker room, trying to clear reporters.

Embiid was the No. 3 pick in the 2014 draft but missed his first two full seasons with injuries. Since his first full season in 2016, he has played in 433 of a possible 805 regular-season games and only 59 of 67 possible playoff games.

## When polls close in battleground states on Election Day

By MEG KINNARD Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The results on Election Day will come down to seven states: Arizona, Georgia, Michigan, Nevada, North Carolina, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

Vice President Kamala Harris and former President Donald Trump have visited them the most. Together, these states are likely to deliver the Electoral College votes needed for the winning candidate to get a majority of 270.

It will be a game of hopscotch to keep up with key times in each of the states, which stretch across four different time zones.

A look at the Election Day timeline across the seven, with all listings in Eastern Standard Time:

Arizona

Polls opened at 8 a.m. in Arizona, which Joe Biden carried in 2020 by 0.3%. He was only the second Democratic presidential candidate to do so in nearly 70 years. Polls will close at 9 p.m.

Arizona does not release votes until all precincts have reported or one hour after all polls are closed, whichever is first.

In 2020, The Associated Press first reported Arizona results at 10:02 p.m. ET on Nov. 3, Election Day, and declared Biden the winner at 2:51 a.m. ET on Nov. 4.

Georgia

Polls opened at 7 a.m. in Georgia, which played a key role in 2020. Biden was the first Democrat in a White House race to carry the state since Bill Clinton in 1992, defeating Trump by less than one-quarter of a percentage point, a margin of 11,779 votes.

Since then, Trump's efforts to overturn those results have been at the heart of a criminal case in Fulton County. It is on hold while his legal team pursues a pretrial appeal to have District Attorney Fani Willis removed from the case and the indictment tossed. The Georgia Court of Appeals will hear those arguments after the election.

Georgia's polls close at 7 p.m.

In 2020, the AP first reported Georgia results at 7:20 p.m. ET on Nov. 3 and declared Biden the state's winner at 7:58 p.m. ET on Nov. 19, more than two weeks after Election Day.

Michigan

Polls opened at 7 a.m. ET in Michigan, one of the "blue wall" states that went narrowly for Trump in 2016

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 83 of 95

after almost 30 years of voting for Democratic candidates. Biden won it back four years later. His margin was about 154,000 votes out of more than 5.5 million votes.

Michigan covers two time zones, but polls in most of the state close at 8 p.m. ET, with the rest at 9 p.m. ET.

In 2020, the AP first reported Michigan results at 8:08 p.m. ET on Nov. 3 and declared Biden the winner at 5:58 p.m. ET on Nov. 4.

Nevada

Polls opened at 10 a.m. ET in Nevada, the smallest electoral vote prize of the battlegrounds. But it has one of the best track records as a presidential bellwether. The candidate who won Nevada has gone on to win the White House in 27 of the past 30 presidential elections.

Polls close at 10 p.m. ET. The state doesn't release results until the last person in line has voted, so there's usually been a wait between poll close and the first results.

In 2020, the AP first reported Nevada results at 11:41 p.m. ET on Nov. 3 and declared Biden the winner at 12:13 p.m. ET on Nov. 7.

North Carolina

Polls opened at 6:30 a.m. ET in North Carolina, which has been carried by Democrats only two times in presidential elections since 1968. But the state has stayed competitive for both major parties. Trump's 2020 victory in North Carolina, by about 1 percentage point, was his smallest winning margin in any state.

Polls close at 7:30 p.m. ET.

In 2020, the AP first reported results at 7:42 p.m. ET on Nov. 3 and declared Trump the winner at 3:49 p.m. ET on Nov. 13.

Pennsylvania

Polls opened at 7 a.m. ET in Pennsylvania, another "blue wall" state. Biden's 2020 margin in Pennsylvania was about 80,000 votes out of more than 6.9 million votes. This year, it's the spot where Harris and Trump met for the first time at their sole debate in September in Philadelphia.

Polls close at 8 p.m. ET in a state with more electoral votes, 19, than any of the battlegrounds.

In 2020, the AP first reported results at 8:09 p.m. ET on Nov. 3 and declared Biden the winner at 11:25 a.m. ET on Nov. 7.

Wisconsin

Polls opened at 8 a.m. ET in Wisconsin, the third "blue wall" state in this group. Wisconsin is no stranger to close elections; the margin of victory in the state was less than 1 percentage point in 2020, 2016, 2004 and 2000.

Polls close at 9 p.m. ET.

In 2020, the AP first reported Wisconsin results at 9:07 p.m. ET on Nov. 3 and declared Biden the winner at 2:16 p.m. ET on Nov. 4.

## **Boeing's machinists strike is over but the troubled aerospace giant still faces many challenges**

By DAVID KOENIG, LINDSEY WASSON, HANNAH SCHOENBAUM and CATHY BUSSEWITZ Associated Press SEATTLE (AP) — Factory workers at Boeing have voted to accept a contract offer and end their strike after more than seven weeks, clearing the way for the company to restart idled Pacific Northwest assembly lines.

But the strike was just one of many challenges the troubled U.S. aerospace giant faces as it works to return to profitability and regain public confidence.

Boeing's 33,000 striking machinists disbanded their picket lines late Monday after leaders of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers district in Seattle said 59% of union members who cast ballots agreed to approve the company's fourth formal offer, which included a 38% wage increase over four years.

Union machinists assemble the 737 Max, Boeing's bestselling airliner, along with the 777 or "triple-seven" jet and the 767 cargo plane at factories in Renton and Everett, Washington. Resuming production will allow

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 84 of 95

Boeing to generate much-needed cash, which it has been bleeding.

"Even for a company the size of Boeing, it is a life-threatening problem," said Gautam Mukunda, lecturer at the Yale School of Management.

The union said its workers can return to work as soon as Wednesday or as late as Nov. 12. Boeing CEO Kelly Ortberg has said it might take "a couple of weeks" to resume production in part because some workers might need retraining.

As the machinists get back to work, management will have to address a host of other problems. The company needs to get on better financial footing. But while doing so, it also needs to prioritize the quality of its workmanship and its relationships with employees and suppliers, analysts said.

Boeing has been managing itself to meet short-term profit goals and "squeezing every stakeholder, squeezing every employee, every supplier to the point of failure in order to maximize their short-term financial performance," Mukunda said. "That is bad enough if you run a clothing company. It is unacceptable when you are building the most complex mass-produced machines human beings have ever built."

Above all, Boeing needs to produce more planes. When workers are back and production resumes, the company will be producing about 30 737s a month, and "they must get that number over 50. They have to do it. And the people who are going to do that are the workers on the factory floor," Mukunda said.

Another challenge will be getting the company's fragile supply chain running again, said Cai von Rumohr, an aviation analyst at financial services firm TD Cowen. Suppliers that were working ahead of Boeing's schedule when the strike began may have had to lay workers off or finance operations on their own.

"There are lots of nasty questions in terms of complexities that go into revamping the supply chain," he said.

One way Boeing could generate cash would be to sell companies that don't fit directly in the business, such as flight information provider Jeppesen Sanderson, which it bought in 2000 for \$1.5 billion, von Rumohr said.

"They'd lose some earnings but they'd get a lot of cash to reduce their debt," he added. "They really need to get to a more stable position where they have a solid credit rating."

Ortberg acknowledged the challenges ahead in a message to employees after they voted to end the walkout.

"There is much work ahead to return to the excellence that made Boeing an iconic company," he said.

The average annual pay of Boeing machinists is currently \$75,608 and eventually will rise to \$119,309 under the new contract, according to the company. The union said the compounded value of the promised pay raise would amount to an increase of more than 43% over the life of the agreement.

Reactions were mixed even among union members who voted to accept the contract.

Although she voted "yes," Seattle-based calibration specialist Eep Bolaño said the outcome was "most certainly not a victory." Bolaño said she and her fellow workers made a wise but infuriating choice to accept the offer.

"We were threatened by a company that was crippled, dying, bleeding on the ground, and us as one of the biggest unions in the country couldn't even extract two-thirds of our demands from them. This is humiliating," she said.

For other workers like William Gardiner, a lab lead in calibration services, the revised offer was a cause for celebration.

"I'm extremely pumped over this vote," said Gardiner, who has worked for Boeing for 13 years. "We didn't fix everything — that's OK. Overall, it's a very positive contract."

Along with the wage increase, the new contract gives each worker a \$12,000 ratification bonus and retains a performance bonus the company wanted to eliminate.

President Joe Biden congratulated the machinists and Boeing for coming to an agreement that he said supports fairness in the workplace and improves workers' ability to retire with dignity. The contract, he said, is important for Boeing's future as "a critical part of America's aerospace sector."

A continuing strike would have plunged Boeing into further financial peril and uncertainty. Last month, Ortberg announced plans to lay off about 17,000 people and a stock sale to prevent the company's credit

rating from being cut to junk status.

The labor standoff — the first strike by Boeing machinists since an eight-week walkout in 2008 — was the latest setback in a volatile year for the aerospace giant.

Boeing came under several federal investigations this year after a door plug blew off a 737 Max plane during an Alaska Airlines flight in January. Federal regulators put limits on Boeing airplane production that they said would last until they felt confident about manufacturing safety at the company.

The door-plug incident renewed concerns about the safety of the 737 Max. Two of the planes had crashed less than five months apart in 2018 and 2019, killing 346 people. The CEO at the time, whose efforts to fix the company failed, announced in March that he would step down. In July, Boeing agreed to plead guilty to conspiracy to commit fraud for deceiving regulators who approved the 737 Max.

## Western officials suspect Russia was behind a plot to put incendiary packages on cargo planes

By VANESSA GERA Associated Press

WARSAW, Poland (AP) — Western security officials suspect Russian intelligence was behind a plot to put incendiary devices in packages on cargo planes headed to North America, including one that caught fire at a courier hub in Germany and another that ignited in a warehouse in England.

Poland said last month that it has arrested four people suspected to be linked to a foreign intelligence operation that carried out sabotage and is searching for two others. Lithuania's prosecutor general Nida Grunskiene said Tuesday there were an unspecified number of people detained in several countries, offering no elaboration.

The events come as Western officials say they are seeing an intensification of a hybrid war of sabotage by Russia targeting Ukraine's allies, including election disinformation and arson attacks in Europe this year. Several officials said they believe the attacks were the work of Russian military intelligence, the GRU, although Moscow denied involvement.

Poland's Internal Security Agency, or ABW, says that incidents in Poland, as well as other EU and NATO members, had intensified this year. ABW believes they are initiated and coordinated by the Russian special services. So far, 20 people have been charged in investigations led by the prosecutor's office, the ABW and police.

Polish Prosecutor Katarzyna Calów-Jaszewska said the investigation focuses on foreign agents conducting acts of sabotage, including damaging industrial facilities or critical infrastructure such as airports, airplanes and other vehicles, and as well as arson using self-combustible parcels sent to EU countries and the U.K. that would ignite during road or air transport.

She added that the group tested a channel for sending such parcels to the United States and Canada.

The Wall Street Journal first reported the details of the cargo plane incidents.

The U.S. Transportation Security Administration said it has put extra security measures in place in recent months for certain cargo shipments heading to the United States.

"We continually adjust our security posture as appropriate and promptly share any and all relevant information with our industry partners, to include requirements and recommendations that help them reduce risk," the TSA said.

There was no active threat targeting flights heading to the United States, according to a U.S. official, who was not authorized to comment publicly.

Dirk Heinrichs, a spokesperson for DHL in Germany, said in an emailed statement to The Associated Press that the company could not provide details about the matter but was "fully cooperating with the relevant authorities to protect our people, our network and our customers' shipments."

The head of Britain's domestic intelligence agency, MI5, said last month the U.K. is facing a "staggering rise" in attempts at assassination, sabotage and other crimes on its soil by Russia as well as Iran.

Calów-Jaszewska said Oct. 25 that parcels with camouflaged explosives were sent via cargo companies

to EU countries and Britain to “test the transfer channel for such parcels” that were ultimately destined for the U.S. and Canada.

The incendiary devices in Germany and the U.K. both ignited in July.

One was at a stopover at a DHL logistics center at an airport in the city of Leipzig, according to Thomas Haldenwang, head of the German intelligence service. The German news agency dpa reported that the connecting flight containing the package, which came from one of the Baltic nations, was delayed in Leipzig and was on the ground when it ignited and set fire to a freight container.

British counterterrorism police are investigating whether Russian agents were behind an incendiary device in a parcel that caught fire in a DHL warehouse in Minworth, near Birmingham, in central England on July 22. The incident, first reported by the Guardian newspaper and German broadcasters, was similar to the one in Germany.

The Polish newspaper Gazeta Wyborcza also reported that a fire was reported in a courier truck near Warsaw.

“We are observing aggressive action by the Russian intelligence services. In particular Russian espionage and sabotage in Germany are on the rise, both quantitatively and qualitatively,” Haldenwang told the German Bundestag, or parliament, last month while discussing the Leipzig incident.

“The activities of Russian intelligence services in the real world as well as in cyberspace show that Germany is the focus of this Russia’s hybrid war against Western democracies,” he added. “Russia is using its entire toolbox: from influencing political discussions within Germany to cyber attacks against critical infrastructure and sabotage. Russia’s willingness to use force proves that it is also willing to put human lives at risk.”

In a rare public speech setting out the major threats to the U.K., MI5 Director General Ken McCallum said “the GRU in particular is on a sustained mission to generate mayhem on British and European streets: We’ve seen arson, sabotage and more. Dangerous actions conducted with increasing recklessness.”

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov on Tuesday called media reports about the alleged sabotage plot an example of a “vague fabrication.”

## **With or without the far right in power, Austria’s links with Russia cause concern among allies**

By STEPHANIE LIECHTENSTEIN Associated Press

VIENNA (AP) — Tens of thousands of devastated Swifties trading friendship bracelets, wearing sparkly dresses and singing songs in the streets of Vienna. Workers taking down the Taylor Swift stage inside an empty stadium.

This was the scene at the beginning of August in the Austrian capital after organizers abruptly canceled Swift’s three shows over threats of an attack by Islamic State group militants.

Intelligence-sharing was instrumental in preventing a tragedy, Austrian and U.S. officials said. But it relies on mutual trust — confidence that secrets will not fall into the wrong hands or be leaked to hostile governments.

Austria’s Western allies have grown increasingly worried about this possibility in recent weeks. The country’s political parties have maintained an openness to Russia for decades — part of a traditional foreign policy of neutrality — but none more so than the far-right Freedom Party, which secured the largest share of the vote in last month’s national election.

If the Freedom Party is part of Austria’s next government, some analysts warn that intelligence-sharing could be drastically restricted, if not stopped altogether.

For now, the center-right People’s Party has a mandate to form a governing coalition. Negotiations will be held in the weeks and months ahead without the Freedom Party since the conservatives and all other parties have ruled out governing with the far right. But if those negotiations fail, the Freedom Party will be waiting in the wings.

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 87 of 95

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Austrian and U.S. officials confirmed that intelligence-sharing was instrumental in preventing a tragedy. But that kind of exchange of information relies on mutual trust – confidence that secrets will not fall into the wrong hands or be leaked to hostile governments. In the case of the U.S. and most of the EU, those hostile governments include Russia.

In February 2018, when Freedom Party leader Herbert Kickl was interior minister, several foreign intelligence services cut Austria out from intelligence sharing as a result of a police raid that his ministry ordered on its own domestic intelligence agency.

The raid, which was ruled illegal by an Austrian court in August 2018, shocked the country. It prompted a parliamentary inquiry and led to the agency being shut down.

A Russian role?

It is still unclear if or to what extent Russia could have pulled the strings.

Beate Meinl-Reisinger, who heads the liberal Neos party in Austria, told a news conference in May that Kickl and the Freedom Party in 2018 either knowingly agreed to work for Russia's interests or acted as "useful idiots."

The parliamentary inquiry found that senior officials at the Interior Ministry, at the time headed by Kickl, played an active role by using accusations against senior government and intelligence officials in an anonymous dossier to push prosecutors to sign off on the raid. Kickl has denied any wrongdoing.

The accusations in the dossier, including corruption, the mishandling of sensitive data and sexual harassment, went up in smoke, but after four years of investigation, it's still not clear who compiled and leaked the document.

Austrian media report that investigators are pursuing whether Egisto Ott, a disgruntled former intelligence official suspected of spying for Russia, may have compiled the dossier in an effort to undermine the intelligence service, possibly because of his own frustrations with the agency.

Green Party lawmaker David Stögmüller said that by pushing for the raid, the Freedom Party "wanted to smash the domestic intelligence agency and create something new with faces close to their own party."

The party's alleged attempts to reshape the domestic intelligence agency were only disrupted after its then-leader was forced to resign after being caught on video apparently offering public contracts in return for campaign donations.

The raid's repercussions are still being felt. German lawmakers have said their government should review its cooperation with Austria if the Freedom Party is part of the new government.

"In light of the massive danger posed by Russia to peace and stability in Europe, we cannot allow relevant information to be handed over directly to Russia," Konstantin Kuhle, a lawmaker with one of Germany's governing parties and a member of the intelligence oversight committee in the German parliament, told German newspaper Handelsblatt earlier this month.

"Should the far-right Freedom Party become part of the next government and be given control over the intelligence agencies again, the trust of foreign intelligence services will certainly be up for debate again," said Thomas Riegler, an espionage expert affiliated with the Austrian Center for Intelligence, Propaganda and Security Studies.

Among the items seized in the illegal 2018 raid was a copy of the so-called Neptune Database — a hard drive containing sensitive information shared by foreign intelligence agencies with Austria.

"The mistrust foreign partners have of the Freedom Party is rooted in the party's relationship with Russia," Riegler said.

The Freedom Party calls for an end to sanctions against Russia. It is critical of Western military aid to Ukraine, and signed a friendship agreement in 2016 with Putin's United Russia Party that it now claims has expired.

But the Freedom Party is not the only one to have enabled Russian influence. Mainstream parties have also played their part, at the risk of undermining Austrian and European security. This has a lot to do with Austria's post-war history.

Austria, which was annexed by Nazi Germany in the run-up to World War II, declared neutrality after the war under pressure from Western allies and the Soviet Union. It sought a role as a mediator between East and West, developing ties with Moscow that outlasted the Cold War.

"Austria's neutrality, the many international organizations in Vienna, its geostrategic location and lenient espionage laws all have turned Austria into a hotbed for Russian and other espionage," Riegler said.

Espionage is only explicitly banned if directed against Austria itself, not if it targets other countries or international organizations.

Since 2020, 11 Russian diplomats suspected of spying have been told to leave Austria. In contrast, Germany closed down four out of five Russian consulates last year.

As of March 2024, Russia had 142 diplomats and 116 administrative and technical personnel accredited in Austria. Approximately 25% are likely spies, said an Austrian intelligence official, who requested anonymity to discuss the sensitive topic.

The true number is likely higher: it may include diplomats' relatives and employees of semi-official institutions such as schools, airlines offices or media organizations, the official added.

"The reluctance of the Austrian Foreign Ministry to expel more Russian diplomats is a scandal and poses a security risk for the country," said Stephanie Krisper, whose NEOS party champions a tougher stance towards Russia.

Austria's foreign ministry says the number of Russian diplomats expelled is "in the median of the European field."

In a written response to The Associated Press, Foreign Minister Alexander Schallenberg said: "My position is very clear: International law is the basis of my actions. As the first Austrian Foreign Minister ever, I have not shied away from taking appropriate measures and expelled diplomats whenever it is brought to my attention that they have engaged in acts incompatible with their diplomatic status."

But in its 2023 annual report, Austria's domestic intelligence agency DSN emphasized the danger of Russian and other espionage. Radar and satellite installations on the roofs of Russian diplomatic representations in Vienna are used for gathering intelligence on European NATO states, it said, thereby leading to a "loss of reputation" for Austria.

"Austria lets espionage happen on its soil that is directed against the security interests and values of European and other partner states," said a senior European diplomat who requested anonymity to discuss the sensitive topic.

Given the historical connections between Austria and Russia, the situation is unlikely to change much, no matter who is in the next government, the diplomat said.

## **The AP has called winners in elections for more than 170 years. Here's how it's done**

By ROBERT YOON Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — One question will be asked over and over on election night: Who won?

The Associated Press will answer that question for nearly 5,000 contested races across the United States and up and down the ballot, from president and state ballot measures to a variety of local offices.

The AP has compiled vote results and declared winners in elections for more than 170 years, filling what could otherwise be a critical information void of up to a month between Election Day and the official certification of results.

What goes into determining the winners? A careful and thorough analysis of the latest available vote tallies and a variety of other election data, with the ultimate goal of answering this question: Is there any circumstance in which the trailing candidate can catch up? If the answer is no, then the leading candidate



# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 89 of 95

has won.

Analyzing the vote

Race calls are based on provable facts, primarily from the AP's vote count, which is compiled from state and local election offices around the nation.

As more and more ballots are tabulated starting on election night, the AP will monitor the incoming vote at the county level and analyze who is in the lead and what areas the votes are coming from.

At the same time, the AP tries to determine throughout the night how many ballots are uncounted and from what areas. State and local election officials don't immediately know by election night exactly how many ballots were cast in every contest. Determining how many remain has become more complicated because of the growing number of ballots cast by mail that may arrive after Election Day, which is Nov. 5 this year.

This means there are usually no official and exact tallies of the outstanding vote to rely on once the vote counting gets underway. As a result, the AP estimates the turnout in every race based on several factors and uses that estimate to track how much of the vote has been counted and how much remains.

The AP also tries to determine how ballots counted so far were cast, and the types of vote — such as mail ballots or Election Day in-person — that remain.

That's because the method a voter chooses often speaks to whom they voted for. Since the issue of voting by mail became highly politicized in the 2020 election, most mail votes nationally have been cast by Democratic voters, while most in-person Election Day votes have been cast by Republicans.

In many states, it is possible to know which votes will be counted first from past elections or plans announced by election officials. In some others, votes counted so far are clearly marked by type.

This helps to determine if an early lead is expected to shrink or grow. For example, if a state first counts votes cast in person on Election Day, followed by mail-in votes, that suggests that an early Republican lead in the vote count may narrow as more mail ballots are tabulated. But if the reverse is true and mail ballots are counted first, an early Republican lead could be the first sign of a comfortable victory.

Finding clues from election data

The AP's analysis to determine the winners is also greatly informed by other election data, especially the long-standing voting trends in a given area. Past election results over time show that states and counties with a long history of lopsided Republican or Democratic victories tend to continue the same voting patterns from one election to the next.

Even in closely contested races, comparing current vote patterns with those in past races can provide important clues.

For example, if a Democratic candidate is performing a few percentage points better across all counties that have reported votes in a state a Democrat previously won by a narrow margin, that could be a sign of a more comfortable Democratic victory. But if the Republican is performing a few percentage points better, that could point to an exceedingly close race or even a flipped result.

Large changes in an area's voting patterns that differ substantially from statewide trends are certainly possible but tend to take root over a time frame of multiple elections. This helps analysts understand whether one candidate's lead is an expected result or a sign of tight race. It also helps determine whether the remaining uncounted ballots are from areas that would likely benefit one candidate over another.

Demographic data can also shed light on the vote count. For example, shifts that differ from statewide patterns might be explained by a shift among a specific group, such as Hispanic voters or white voters without college degrees.

Harnessing AP VoteCast

Another tool available to the AP's decision teams is AP VoteCast, a comprehensive, 50-state election survey that provides a detailed snapshot of who voted in an election and what was on their minds when they voted. Data from AP VoteCast makes it possible in some cases to call non-competitive or less competitive races as the polls close or shortly afterward with the initial release of votes.

When considering poll-close calls, the AP will only declare a winner if AP VoteCast data confirms the expected result in that contest based on past vote history and other preelection data.

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 90 of 95

When does the AP call a race?

In almost all cases, races can be called well before 100% of the votes have been counted. The AP's team of election journalists and analysts will call a race as soon as a clear winner can be determined. That may sound obvious, but it is the guiding principle that drives the organization's election race-calling process.

The AP's race calls are not predictions and are not based on speculation. They are declarations based on an analysis of vote results and other election data that one candidate has emerged as the winner and that no other candidate in the race will be able to overtake the winner once all the votes have been counted.

Why might the AP not declare a winner?

The AP may delay calling a winner if the vote results go against the expected outcome of the contest as indicated by the available election data. In other words, if the vote results show a large lead for one candidate but some combination of the past vote history, demographic data or AP VoteCast data point to a different outcome, the AP would carefully review the vote results before making any determination.

In competitive races, AP analysts may need to wait until additional votes are tallied or to confirm specific information about how many ballots are left to count.

The AP may declare that a race is "too close to call" if a race is so close that there's no clear winner even once all ballots except for provisional and late-arriving absentee ballots have been counted.

Competitive races where votes are actively being tabulated — for example in states that count a large number of voters after election night — might be considered "too early to call." The "too close to call" designation is not used for these types of races.

The AP may also decide not to call a race if the margin between the top two candidates is less than 0.5 percentage points unless it determines that the margin is wide enough that it could not change in a recount.

Things that don't affect a call

AP race calls are never made based on lobbying from campaigns or political parties or announcements made by other news organizations, or on candidate victory speeches. Although it will never call a winner based on a concession speech, in some cases, a concession is the final piece of the puzzle in confirming that there will be no recount in a close race.

## The Associated Press' role in calling races and polling voters

By HAYA PANJWANI and JAIME HOLGUIN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Hundreds of news organizations, readers, listeners and viewers will look to the The Associated Press Decision Desk on Nov. 5 to learn dozens of election results. Some have already been looking to the AP to learn where voters stand on certain issues and candidates.

The AP has been calling elections since the 1800s. The work begins well before election night, with months of work leading up to the first Tuesday in November.

On this episode of The Story Behind the AP Story, a recurring audio production that features extended interviews with AP journalists, vice president of news operations David Scott walks listeners through what a typical election day looks like for the Decision Desk, and how the AP calls races. Emily Swanson, director of public opinion research, will explain how AP conducts its polling to understand voter sentiments.

HAYA PANJWANI, HOST: The Decision Desk at The Associated Press has been calling races since 1848. David Scott, vice president and head of news strategy and operations at the AP, leads the team that does that in 2024.

SCOTT: Voters are voting. They're out there. They're casting their ballots, and the last ones to do so. So many Americans vote in advance these days. You get to sort of the late afternoon and, you know, the pizza's coming at 5 or 6 o'clock before first polls close. But you're doing your final prep work, you're doing your final analysis. You're going through your checklist to make sure that you've got all the information that you need.

And then around 6:30, 6 o'clock, votes start coming in. And then it just goes — it just goes — and there's 5,000 races to call — contested races to call. And polls will keep closing up until 1 a.m. on the East Coast.

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 91 of 95

Then, election night is not over. The vote count continues till 3 or 4 in the morning on the East Coast. And then we get up the next day and our team keeps counting the vote and we keep declaring it.

PANJWANI: I'm Haya Panjwani. In this episode of The Story Behind The AP story, we'll be learning about how the AP calls races and how our polling team AP VoteCast operates.

SCOTT: So literally, at the dawn of the cooperative, two years after the Associated Press was founded, we decided as a membership cooperative that we weren't going to wait any more for the time it would take for the mechanism of government to sort of collect all the votes and say who won.

On election night, we are still out there calling counties, putting reporters in county election offices, scraping websites, taking in data feeds from multiple sources. We are getting the vote, the results of the election, and we combine all those results together into one source, one feed, one graphic, one story, so that on election night or in the days thereafter, Americans can know and the world can know who Americans have picked to be their new leader.

This fall, in this year's general election, we'll tabulate results in 7,000 races total, including more than 5,000 contested races. For every race that we count the vote in, where we report results, we also declare a winner.

SWANSON: A lot of people think of the importance of polling around elections as being something that tells us who's going to win.

PANJWANI: Emily Swanson is the director of public opinion research at the AP.

SWANSON: I tend to think that that is an overrated reason to think that polling is important. In part because polling by its very nature is an imprecise science and can't necessarily tell us who is going to win, especially in a close election. But also because there's so much more that polling has to offer. It can tell us what people find most important, what they think about those issues that they're finding most important. And it can also tell us a lot about what people are experiencing.

PANJWANI: Since the 1960s, news organizations like the AP have used exit polls to survey voters and analyze election results. While this method has been effective, it has become harder in recent years as voting methods have evolved.

SWANSON: So many people now, instead of going to the polls, they vote by mail, they vote early in person. And it just became more and more difficult for us to reach the true universe of voters by talking to them in person at polling stations.

PANJWANI: So to address these challenges, AP VoteCast was created to accurately reflect the electorate regardless of how individuals cast their ballots.

SWANSON: One of my jobs, one of the Decision Desk's jobs, is to reduce the number of unknowns. And to the extent that we can't do that, reduce the number of unknown unknowns — make sure that the things we don't know are things that we know we don't know, and (that we) are able to factor the fact that we don't know them into our decision making.

But the reality is that there can be new curveballs, new changes in the way that somebody counts their votes that could come at us. That's always something that's a little bit scary, and always something that we need to make sure that we have on the back of our minds when we're doing important work that we really need to make sure that we get right.

SCOTT: Our standard for declaring winners in elections is 100%. If we don't get every single one right, we consider that — now, I wouldn't say a failure, but it's an opportunity for improvement. We want to be right all the time. It's really important to us that when we are declaring a winner, we are confident that there's no chance the trailing candidate can catch up. And so our standard is 100%.

SWANSON: One thing that we've really had to pay more and more attention to on the Decision Desk is how different vote types impact how votes are counted. At least as much as if not more than geography does.

In a traditional election, 20 years ago, or even 10 years ago, the primary thing that we were looking at on Decision Desks was how specific counties are coming in and how that compares to past elections — and that's pretty basic. But ultimately, that's sort of like the core of what you're doing when looking at an election. It's what has already come in? What do we know about it and what do we know about the

counties that are still out?

The major thing that has changed over the last 10 years or so and is only getting to be more of an issue is that now people are to a large extent voting by mail. They're voting before Election Day. And it's not just that more people are doing it, but that they're different from the people who are voting on Election Day. It adds an additional dimension to what we need to pay attention to.

SCOTT: For years, we had all of these internal conversations in the newsroom about the status of the vote count or when it was the right time to call a winner, what we were looking for, what piece of information was missing that wasn't allowing us to make a call. Then when we got it, OK, now's the moment we can declare somebody the winner.

What we found is that, in this moment, those internal conversations needed to be journalism. We needed to be showing our work. Just like you're back in high school and math class, you need to show your work. You need to show your proof of why this call was the right call to make at this time.

The audience for journalism in our country just expects more. Trust but verify, as President Reagan would say. They have an expectation that in order to trust, they want to see what's gone into our reporting.

And, you know, think about it like a story, right? Like you don't send out a headline. There's the headline, but then there's the story that has all the information, the background and the interviews and the context that explains what goes into that headline. And that's the same sort of approach now we're just taking with race calls.

There's certainly been a rise of misinformation and disinformation, particularly on social media, places where those headlines in isolation can be challenged. And the best way to fight that, we think, is by showing our work, showing what's taking place behind the scenes so that it's not even really behind the scenes anymore. It's just part of the journalism that goes into election night.

JAIME HOLGUIN, PRODUCER: This has been The Story Behind the AP Story. For more on AP's election coverage, visit APNews.com.

## Ukrainian troops have engaged with North Korean units for the 1st time in Russia, an official says

By ILLIA NOVIKOV Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Ukrainian troops have for the first time engaged with North Korean units that were recently deployed to help Russia in the war with its neighbor, Ukraine's defense minister said Tuesday.

Another Kyiv official said Ukraine's army fired artillery at North Korean soldiers in Russia's Kursk border region.

The comments were the first official reports that Ukrainian and North Korean forces have engaged in combat, following a deployment that has given the war a new complexion as it approaches its 1,000-day milestone.

Neither claim could be independently confirmed.

The Ukrainian and North Korean troops engaged in "small-scale" fighting that amounted to the start of Pyongyang's direct involvement in Europe's biggest conflict since World War II, Ukraine's Defense Minister Rustem Umerov told South Korea's public broadcaster KBS in an interview.

North Korean soldiers are mixed with Russian troops and are misidentified on their uniforms, Umerov was quoted as saying by KBS. That makes it hard to say whether there were any North Korean casualties, he said.

Umerov reportedly said he expects that five North Korean units, each consisting of about 3,000 soldiers, will be deployed to the Kursk area.

Meanwhile, Andrii Kovalenko, the head of the counter-disinformation branch of Ukraine's Security Council, said "the first North Korean troops have already been shelled, in the Kursk region."

He provided no further details.

Western governments had expected that the North Korean soldiers would be sent to Russia's Kursk

border region, where a 3-month-old incursion by the Ukrainian army is the first occupation of Russian territory since World War II and has embarrassed the Kremlin.

U.S., South Korean and Ukrainian intelligence assessments say up to 12,000 North Korean combat troops are being sent by Pyongyang to the war under a pact with Moscow.

The Pentagon said Monday that at least 10,000 North Korean soldiers were in Russia near Ukraine's border. More troops from North Korea's 1.3-million-strong army may be slated for deployment in Russia, according to an analysis published Tuesday by the European Council on Foreign Relations, an international think tank.

The ramifications extend far beyond Europe, it said.

"Despite integration challenges — including communication barriers and differing military doctrines — the deployment of North Korean troops to Russia represents a significant shift in European and Asian security relations," the analysis said. "For the first time in generations, troops from East Asia are actively engaging in a European conflict."

The North Korean troops, whose fighting quality and battle experience is unknown, are adding to Ukraine's worsening situation on the battlefield.

Ukrainian defenses, especially in the eastern Donetsk region, are buckling under the strain of Russia's costly but relentless monthslong onslaught.

Russian advances have recently accelerated, with battlefield gains of up to 9 kilometers (more than 5 miles) in some parts of Donetsk, the U.K. Defense Ministry said Tuesday on the social platform X.

It said Russia has superior troop numbers, and despite heavy casualties the Kremlin's recruitment drive is providing enough new troops to keep up the pressure.

Russia has held the battlefield initiative in Ukraine for the past year. Ukrainian officials have long complained that Western military support takes too long to arrive in the country.

In early October, Russian forces drove Ukrainian troops out of Vuhledar, a town perched atop a tactically significant hill in eastern Ukraine.

It was part of a key belt of Ukrainian defenses in the east. Russia's next targets likely are the key logistics hub of Pokrovsk and the strategically important city of Chasiv Yar.

In the meantime, Russia has kept up its long-range aerial attacks on civilian areas of Ukraine, authorities say.

A Tuesday morning attack on the southern city of Zaporizhzhia killed six people and injured 23 others, regional Gov. Ivan Fedorov said.

The head of Ukraine's presidential office, Andrii Yermak, said the Russian attacks "must be stopped with strong action."

"A stronger position by (Ukraine's Western) allies is needed," he wrote on Telegram.

## **An Israeli strike kills 20 in north Gaza, where Palestinians say they've had little food for weeks**

By WAFAA SHURAFI and SAMY MAGDY Associated Press

DEIR AL-BALAH, Gaza Strip (AP) — An Israeli airstrike in northern Gaza killed at least 20 people, mostly women and children, Palestinian officials said Tuesday, as Palestinians fled Israel's assault. Some said they had hardly eaten, with aid cut off for weeks to the most isolated and heavily destroyed part of the territory.

Israel has been waging an offensive in Gaza's northernmost end for weeks, saying it is targeting Hamas militants who regrouped in the area.

The U.N. has said Israel hasn't allowed food and other supplies into the area north of Gaza City since the assault began, even as tens of thousands of people remain there. That has drawn rebukes from the Biden administration, which has warned that U.S. laws might force it to curb military aid to Israel if more aid is not allowed in.

The strike late Monday hit a home where several displaced families were sheltering in the town of Beit Lahia, near the border with Israel, according to Hossam Abu Safiya, the director of the recently raided

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 94 of 95

and barely functioning Kamal Adwan Hospital, which received the casualties.

The Israeli military said it targeted a weapons storage facility from which a militant had operated, and that "numerous steps were taken to mitigate the risk of harming civilians."

The dead included eight women and six children, according to a list provided by the Gaza Health Ministry's emergency service. Separate strikes elsewhere in Gaza early Tuesday killed another 10 people, according to health officials.

Dozens of Palestinians trickled out of Beit Lahiya on Tuesday — mostly women and children — dragging rucksacks and satchels with belongings. They entered Gaza City on a street where every building had been completely flattened or heavily damaged.

"We came barefoot. We have no sandals, no clothes, nothing. We have no money. There is no food or drink," said Huda Abu Laila.

"We are hungry. Hunger has killed us. We were under siege for one month without water or food," the gaunt elderly women continued, before erupting in tears.

Um Nidal Abu Laila, another woman fleeing Beit Lahiya, said there were bodies of Palestinians killed in the assault lying in the streets. "No one is able to retrieve them," she said.

Gaza's civil defense agency said it had received reports of people trapped alive under the rubble of buildings destroyed by Israeli troops in Beit Lahiya, but it was unable to send teams to rescue them. It said the military has prevented its teams from operating in the area for the past two weeks. The Palestinian Health Ministry in Gaza said there are no ambulances currently operating north of Gaza City.

Two elderly patients, one who was battling cancer, died as they tried to leave Beit Lahiya as they waited to cross an Israeli military checkpoint, the Palestinian Red Crescent said.

The military has ordered the complete evacuation of Beit Lahiya, the nearby town of Beit Hanoun and the urban Jabaliya refugee camp. Still, the U.N. estimated last week that around 100,000 people remain there even after tens of thousands fled the past month, the latest wave of displacement within the besieged territory. Around 90% of the population of 2.3 million have fled during the 13-month-old war, often multiple times.

The army has returned to several areas of Gaza multiple times after previous operations, as Hamas continues to carry out hit-and-run attacks on troops and fire occasional rockets into Israel.

The three hospitals serving the area have been largely inaccessible because of the fighting, and ambulances have stopped operating. Israeli troops raided Kamal Adwan Hospital last month, saying Hamas militants were sheltering there, allegations denied by Palestinian health officials.

The offensive has raised fears among Palestinians that Israel is implementing a surrender-or-starve plan for northern Gaza proposed by former generals, in which civilians would be ordered out, aid would be cut off and anyone remaining would be considered a fighter.

The Israeli military has denied receiving such orders, but the government has not said whether it is adopting part or all of the plan.

Early Tuesday, an Israeli strike hit a house in the Tufah neighborhood in Gaza City, killing two children and their parents, according to the Health Ministry's emergency service. Two other children were wounded, it said.

In the central town of Zuweida, a strike hit a tent where a displaced family was sheltering, killing four people, including a mother and her two children, according to Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in the nearby city of Deir al-Balah. Another strike hit a house in Deir al-Balah, killing two people, the hospital said. An Associated Press journalist counted the bodies at the hospital morgue.

The Israeli military says it only targets militants and accuses them of hiding among civilians. It rarely comments on individual strikes, which often kill women and children.

The war began when Hamas-led militants attacked southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, killing some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, taking another 250 people hostage. Around 100 captives are still inside Gaza, about a third of whom are believed to be dead.

Israel's retaliatory offensive has killed over 43,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry,

# Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Nov. 06, 2024 ~ Vol. 32 - No. 134 ~ 95 of 95

which does not distinguish between civilians and combatants in its toll but says over half of those killed were women and children.

## Today in History: November 6, Abraham Lincoln wins presidency

By The Associated Press undefined

Today is Wednesday, Nov. 6, the 311th day of 2024. There are 55 days left in the year.

Today in history:

On Nov. 6, 1860, former Illinois congressman Abraham Lincoln of the Republican Party was elected President of the United States as he defeated John Breckinridge, John Bell and Stephen Douglas.

Also on this date:

In 1861, James Naismith, the inventor of basketball, was born in Almonte, Ontario, Canada.

In 1888, Republican presidential candidate Benjamin Harrison won the electoral vote over incumbent Democrat Grover Cleveland, despite Cleveland gaining 90,000 more total votes; it would be the last time the popular vote winner would lose the election until 2000.

In 1947, "Meet the Press," the longest-running television show in America, made its debut on NBC; the host was the show's co-creator, Martha Rountree.

In 1956, President Dwight D. Eisenhower won reelection, defeating Democratic nominee Adlai Stevenson II for the second time.

In 1977, 39 people were killed when the Kelly Barnes Dam in Georgia burst, sending a wall of water through Toccoa Falls College.

In 1984, President Ronald Reagan easily won reelection over former Vice President Walter Mondale, the Democratic challenger who won just one state, his native Minnesota.

In 2012, President Barack Obama won reelection, vanquishing Republican former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney with 332 electoral votes to Romney's 206.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Sally Field is 78. Jazz musician Arturo Sandoval is 75. Author Michael Cunningham is 72. Journalist-author Maria Shriver is 69. Author Colson Whitehead is 55. Actor Ethan Hawke is 54. Actor Thandiwe (tan-DEE'-way) Newton is 52. Model-actor Rebecca Romijn (roh-MAYN') is 52. Actor Taryn Manning is 46. Actor Emma Stone is 36. Comedian-actor Bowen Yang is 34. Olympic swimming gold medalist Bobby Finke is 25.