



eNAPUS Legislative & Political Bulletin

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Election Day
November 2
Postmasters --
Vote Before Going
to Your Post Office

Elections 2010 - One Lump or Two?

Next Tuesday, voters will elect the 112th Congress; the races have developed into proxy wars between the national parties, challenging House Speaker Tip O'Neill's adage that "all politics is local." Political pundits have preached that the Tea Party movement will have a dramatic impact on the general election, and that voter anger will advance GOP candidates. However, it is noteworthy that the primary beneficiaries of this right-wing small-government anti-Washington faction might be mainstream conservative candidates – not necessarily Tea Party standard-bearers. This is born out by recent Senate polling data where the general election aspirations of pure-bred Tea Party candidates never took off or seem to be losing strength. For example, in Delaware, after the shocking primary upset of the GOP favorite Rep. Mike Castle, Tea Party darling Christine O'Donnell apparently ran aground. In states such as Alaska, Colorado, Kentucky, Nevada, and Pennsylvania, where the Tea Party-endorsed candidates jumped to an early lead, the advantages narrowed. In Alaska, write-in candidate, Senator Lisa Murkowski, has pulled even with Tea Party/GOP candidate Joe Miller. At the same time, in states such as Indiana, Ohio, and Missouri mainstream conservative GOP Senate candidates have held a steady lead or expanded the lead. In sum, while the GOP may ride the Tea Party to victory, the movement may not be a fertile breeding ground for winning Senate or national candidates. Political handicappers predict a 7-9 seat GOP gain, not enough to wrest Senate control from the Democrats.

However, the voter electability criteria for the House may be less stringent than the Senate. A two-year grace period for House members is less risky, and not as enduring as the six-year Senate term. This is evidenced by a large number of formerly safe House Democratic seats being contested by über-conservative GOP candidates. This is due to voter anger, aided and abetted by the Tea Party and antipathy towards President Obama. Politicos think that 100 House seats are in play and the GOP could nab 40-60 of them. A GOP net gain of 39 seats puts the GOP in control of the House.

NAPUS has expressed concern about the tone of the 2010 election campaign, the Tea Party, and the possible election of Members of Congress who harbor a deep hostility towards public service, and the individuals who perform these services. Despite polling data that ranks the U.S. Postal Service as the most respected and trusted government institution, Postmasters recognize that the Tea Party movement and a cadre of vocal anti-Postal forces will place the Postal Service and its employees in the bull's-eye. For this reason, it is crucial for Postmasters to exercise their constitutionally protected right to vote and campaign – on their own time and consistent with Hatch Act Reform – for present and potential Members of Congress who will fight for Postmasters. NAPUS members who have any questions about candidates may contact their Chapter Legislative Chair, or the NAPUS Department of Government Relations.

NAPUS Election Night 2010

For the third election cycle in a row, the NAPUS Government Relations Department will monitor congressional election returns throughout the nation – *in real time* – at [NAPUS Election Night](#). Ever since the 2006 general election, NAPUS political activists have benefited from up-to-the-minute updates of key House of Representative races that are often overlooked by national media coverage. NAPUS pays close attention to those races that are crucial to Postmasters, membership of postal Committees, and control of the 112th Congress. For example, NAPUS will be paying close attention to the re-election efforts of Rep. Gerry Connolly (D-VA), author of H.R. 5004, legislation to strengthen Postmasters consultative rights. The Congressman is a strong ally of Postmasters and federal employees, and is engaged in a highly competitive race. In fact, this weekend and on Election day, NAPUS plans to participate in a major get-out-the-vote campaign on behalf of Rep. Connolly.

Postmasters can watch the early trends among contests where pro-Postmaster and pro-Postal Members of Congress and candidates are being challenged.

At 6:00 PM EDT, we should begin to see signs of what voters are doing when the polls in Indiana and Kentucky close. Besides 2 Senate races, the undercard will be illuminating. Two strongly pro-Postmaster incumbents are in serious jeopardy, Rep. Joe Donnelly (IN-2) and Rep. Baron Hill (IN-9). Rep. Hill has a long and close history with Hoosier State Postmasters. In addition, there is the open seat being vacated by Rep. Brad Ellsworth who is running for Senate against former Senator Dan Coats. In Kentucky, we will be watching the re-election efforts of NAPUS-supported Rep. John Yarmouth (KY-3), and a close race is being waged by another one of our allies, Rep. Ben Chandler (KY-6). Of course, we will eagerly await the returns of the marquee race for the Senate seat being vacated by Jim Bunning, NAPUS-supported Attorney General Jack Conway against Libertarian Tea Party adherent Rand Paul.

At 7:00 PM EDT, polls will close in Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, Vermont and Virginia. The Florida Senate race is the main attraction, with 3 candidates vying for the Senate – Gov. Charlie Christ, the independent; former state Rep. Marco Rubio, the Tea Party candidate; and Rep. Kendrick Meek, the Democrat. There are 5 House seats that are in play, one is a serious bellwether, the race involving NAPUS-supported Rep. Alan Boyd (FL-2). In Georgia, we will be carefully watching the returns of NAPUS-supported Reps. Sanford Bishop (GA-2) and Jim Marshall (GA-8). However, probably the most watched House race of 7:00 PM will be that of NAPUS-supported Rep. James Spratt (SC-5), who chairs the House Budget Committee. Chairman Spratt has been a loyal ally of Postmasters for many years.

At 7:30 PM EDT, polls will close in North Carolina, Ohio, and West Virginia. All 3 states are hosting Senate races; however, only West Virginia is truly competitive, where NAPUS-supported candidate Gov. Joe Manchin is clinging to a slight lead over Tea Party-supported John Raese. In North Carolina there are 3 competitive races that NAPUS will be watching, and in Ohio 5 congressional races are very close.

Beyond 8:00 PM EDT, returns will begin pouring in from the eastern and central times zones. Our expectation is that we will be on-line reporting returns through about 3:00 AM EDT. However, control of the House and the Senate should be decided by approximately 11:00 PM EDT.

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