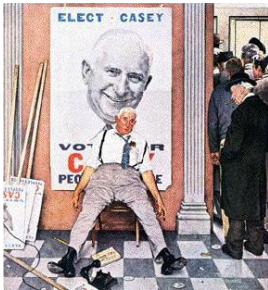




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Election Day Tidbit

113 out of 129 Tea Party-promoted House candidates won

There's a New Sherriff In Town

As results of House races began to stream in, it became readily apparent that House Republicans were on their way to a deep and broad victory, thus ending the Democrat's 4-year reign as the majority party. As of Wednesday morning, GOP claimed 239 seats and Democrats claimed 183 seats. Of the 11 remaining seats, the GOP candidate holds a narrow lead in 5 and the Democratic candidate holds a lead in 6. So, while the GOP needed only 39 seats to reclaim the Speaker's gavel, they picked up at least 60.

For Postmasters, the change in leadership will be most obvious on the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee, where Rep. Darrell Issa (R-CA) will inherit the chair from Rep. Ed Towns (D-NY). While it is assumed that Rep. Jason Chaffetz (R-UT) will succeed Rep. Steve Lynch (D-MA) as chairman of the postal and federal workforce subcommittee, Rep. Issa will need to decide the number and jurisdiction of the subcommittees, in consultation with his GOP members. Before this process can take place, the GOP Leadership will need to define the Committee structure of the House, including the partisan ratios on each Committee. Once this exercise is completed, the GOP Leadership will assign newly elected Representatives to their respective Committees. The complete organization process is usually completed by mid-January. At that point, Rep. Issa will be able to organize his Committee, designate subcommittee chairs, and assign members to their subcommittees.

In 2009, Rep. Issa spoke in favor of and voted for short-term USPS relief; however, he has recently stated that he opposes granting the USPS access to surplus CSRS contributions as it would relieve pressure on postal unions to make concessions at the bargaining table. Moreover, Issa believes that USPS is grossly over-staffed. During a postal subcommittee meeting, Rep. Chaffetz was the lone "no" vote against HR 5746, legislation to recalculate the USPS retirement liability consistent with methodology endorsed by the Postal Regulatory Commission. In addition, he has introduced legislation to establish 12 postal holidays, when mail would not be delivered, and has expressed interest in creating a postal facility closing commission.

The Government Reform lost a number of key members through defeat or retirement. Reps. Paul Kanjorski (D-PA), Bill Foster (D-IL), Steve Driehaus (D-OH) and Anh Cao (R-LA) were defeated. Rep. Paul Hodes (D-NH) lost in a Senate race, and Reps. Watson (D-CA) and Patrick Kennedy (D-RI) retired.

The change in leadership of the House Budget Committee, will also impact Postmasters, as well as the entire federal and postal retirees. During the previous episode of GOP congressional control, proposals to chip away at retirement and health reductions were spawned on this panel. The Committee takes on added importance, in light of the anticipated deficit and debt reducing recommendations of the National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform. (The Commission is required to release its report by December 1.) The

Budget Committee had been chaired by John Spratt (D-DC). Spratt lost his re-election, and will be replaced by Rep. Paul Ryan (R-WI). Rep. Ryan is fiscally conservative, akin to former Rep. John Kasich. It appears that Rep. Allyson Schwartz (D-PA) will assume the ranking position on the Budget Committee.

Another Committee leadership post that may impact Postmasters is on the House Appropriations Committee. Rep. Jo Ann Emerson (R-MO) will take over as chairman of the House Appropriations Financial Services Subcommittee from Rep. José Serrano (D-NY). The Subcommittee has jurisdiction over the USPS. In addition, Emerson is a senior member of the Congressional Rural Caucus. This past spring, NAPUS honored Rep. Emerson as *NAPUS Champion* for 2010. She has been a strong advocate for a universal postal service, including the protection of small town and rural post offices.

Changes at the Ways and Means Committee may also impact Postmasters. Rep. Dave Camp (R-MI) will succeed Rep. Jim McDermott (D-WA) as chairman. Earlier this year, McDermott took the helm from Rep. Charlie Rangel (D-NY). On the Social Security panel, which has jurisdiction over the government pension offset (GPO) and windfall elimination provision (WEP), it appears that Rep. Sam Johnson (R-TX) will succeed Rep. Earl Pomeroy (D-ND), who was defeated.

The Old Boss, Same As the New Boss

Despite losing 6 Senate seats, the Democrats retain control of the Senate. A winner has yet to be declared in 2 races. Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA) is clinging to lead and Sen. Murkowski (R-AK) awaits the tabulation of a very large number of write-in ballots, which may very well provide her the victory; this is, despite having been defeated in the AK GOP primary.

The retained Democratic majority means that Sen. Joseph Lieberman (I-CT) will continue to chair the Homeland and Governmental Affairs Committee, Sen. Tom Carper (D-DE) will keep the gavel as chair of the postal subcommittee, and Sen. Akaka (D-HI) continues as chair of the federal workforce and benefits subcommittee. In addition, Sen. Collins (R-ME) will retain the ranking GOP position on the full Committee. Departing the committee through retirements are Sens. Roland Burris (D-IL), Edward Kaufman (D-DE) and George Voinovich (R-OH); Sen. Bennett (R-UT) lost his GOP primary. Sen. Voinovich served as the ranking GOP on the federal workforce subcommittee, so a new ranking member would have to be designated.

Historically, the Governmental Affairs is organized by mid-to-late January. It is usually one of the last Committees to organize, because its senior members serve on other major committees. The Democratic Leadership will be consulting with their GOP counterparts to determine the committee ratios. Unlike the House, the Senate leaders are more collaborative on the ratios; hence, the committees more accurately reflect the partisan make-up of their legislative body than the House. While the Democrats may have to fill one or two slots, the GOP will probably fill 3 or 4 slots. Some of the slots may be occupied by Tea Party promoters, who campaigned on dismantling the federal government.

On the Appropriations Committee, Sen. Collins will continue as the ranking GOP member of the Financial Services Subcommittee, which has jurisdiction over the USPS.

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