

# 2019 MIDTERM ELECTIONS: A TRANSITION TO NEW LEADERSHIP

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As we approach the Thanksgiving holidays, a time for each of us to reflect on the past year and give thanks for the blessings around us, we remain a nation with much uncertainty. We at ZHF Consulting have been closely monitoring the 2018 mid-term federal and state elections from the very beginning. As the unofficial results in Ohio have now been announced, our team is already working on key policy areas with the new administration and legislature. Across our nation emotions ran high on both sides with the intensity of this mid-term election, and while Florida and Georgia were decided over the weekend, lawsuits continue to be filed. The strong desire to win was reflected from the top, with both former President Obama and President Trump each hitting the campaign trail hard and both making stops in Ohio. It was displayed around a series of attempts to fire up their bases and sway those few undecided voters in close elections in a much divided nation. Most public polls were mixed and elections were ultimately not decided until election night, when the voters came out in high numbers. In the end, with a nation divided, we saw a split decision, with the United States House of Representatives going Democratic, while Republicans gained seats in the United States Senate.

[Bloomberg election map >](#)

Voters in Ohio were just as divided as they headed out to vote, also resulting

in a split ticket at the top in Ohio with Senator Sherrod Brown being re-elected to the US Senate, while Mike DeWine earned the Governor's office by narrowly defeating Richard Cordray in a very competitive race. In other statewide races, the Republicans won all the down-ticket non-judicial statewide offices, while the Democrats won the two open Ohio Supreme Court seats. In the state legislature, the Republicans held the Ohio House, but Democrats closed the margin by winning several seats, while the Republicans increased their majority in the Ohio Senate with a win.

### **[Ohio Secretary of State Election results >](#)**

In his acceptance speech, Governor-elect DeWine encouraged Ohioans to unify, stating "We must work together not as Republicans, not as Democrats, but as Ohioans....I take it very, very seriously to pull people together." Looking ahead, where is Ohio headed from a policy and political standpoint in 2019? Governor-elect DeWine, an experienced public servant, hit the road running, immediately setting up his new transition team and outlining his new policy agenda on how he intends to lead Ohio forward in healthcare, the well-being of Ohio's children, public education including early childhood education, mental health services, tackling the opioid crisis, tax policies, jobs and the economy and children's initiatives across state agencies. One of DeWine's first staff announcements was the naming of LeeAnne Cornyn, Director of Children's Initiatives, which is a new position in the Governor's Office. There will be many more significant personnel announcements made by the Governor-elect in the coming weeks which will provide us with more insight as to the direction he and his team will be seeking to take Ohio over the next few years.

In addition to the candidates on the ballot, Ohio voters also made their voices heard as State Issue 1 was soundly defeated. Issue 1 was a proposed constitutional amendment designed to change Ohio law by decriminalizing certain drug offenders and traffickers in an effort to promote treatment as an alternative. Heavily funded from out-of-state contributors, Issue 1 gained much attention and became a contentious issue in the Governor's race. Mike DeWine strongly opposed Issue 1, while Richard Cordray supported the measure. In the end, Ohioans sent a decisive message, rejecting the initiative 63 percent to 37 percent.

Also, at stake in the 2018 general elections was redistricting in Ohio, the redrawing of the state legislature and congressional districts. While Ohio has changed the state's redistricting process to include more bipartisan support, the Governor, Secretary of State and State Auditor, along with the leadership in the state legislature will still drive the redistricting process and redistricting commission in 2020. As

a result of the recent mid-term elections, all of the statewide seats will now be controlled by Republicans in 2020.

All eyes in Ohio will be focused on whether or not the leadership, Republican controlled state legislature and executive branch can come together amongst themselves and across the aisle to pass critical legislation and effective policies to continue to move Ohio forward? Will the Democrats join Republicans and work in a bipartisan manner in an effort to get things done or attempt to disrupt and obstruct the process? Regardless of the politics, the burden is now on the Republican majority to deliver, as the race for 2020 elections has now begun. Opportunities to work with the White House through seeking federal funding, promoting our businesses both small and large, including our farmers, as well as, working with local communities and schools throughout the state will be part of Ohio's agenda in the legislature and the Governor's Office.

[Govelect.ohio.gov](https://govelect.ohio.gov) >

The ZHF Consulting team will continue to be engaged with our new Governor, Mike DeWine and his administration, along with our state legislature, US Senators and members of Congress in policy decision making, both in Ohio and in Washington DC. Our professional team includes experienced former state legislators, a former US Congressman and Ohio tax commissioner to help our clients navigate through government bureaucracy and achieve positive results. For more information about our professional team visit our ZHF Consulting website at [www.zhfconsulting.com](http://www.zhfconsulting.com)

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