

Update from J. Doss Consulting, LLC to MCCF November 8, 2010

Election 2010

As we all know by now, Tuesday's election will long be remembered as a massive tidal wave that swept Republicans to power nationwide and here in Michigan. The Republicans ran the tables on every statewide race winning the Governor, Attorney General, Secretary of State, Supreme Court, State Board of Education, and the three universities.

Pundits claim that the results clearly indicate that the electorate wanted change and a focus on fixing the economy. Contrast this with 2008 when pundits claimed the electorate wanted change with the massive tide that swept Democrats into power nationwide and gave the Democrats a near historic 67 seat majority in the state House.

Governor

Republican Rick Snyder scored an easy and impressive win over Democrat Virg Bernero. Nearly every county in Michigan went for Rick. One might argue the Governor-elect Snyder had coattails that helped Republicans up and down the ticket.

Mr. Snyder wasted no time in calling for a bi-partisan approach to fixing Michigan and outlined his broad principles for which he will govern. To that end he has chosen Democrat Speaker Dillon as Incoming-State Treasurer.

Michigan Supreme Court Race

The two Republican nominated candidates – Mary Beth Kelly and Justice Bob Young won the nod of the electorate. Justice Alton-Davis, recently appointed by Governor Granholm to fill a vacancy, lost his bid for election for serving a full term.

The election of Kelly and Young shifts the control of the court back to the Republicans, giving them a 4-3 majority.

Attorney General

Bill Schuette defeated David Leyton ensuring the Attorney General stays in Republican hands. This is the first time the Republicans have held this seat for 3 consecutive terms (2 under current AG Mike Cox) in more than 50 years.

Secretary of State

The race for Secretary of State was a bit closer than other statewide races. Republican Ruth Johnson won after defeating Jocelyn Benson. This win continues the GOP 16 year streak for control of this statewide office.

Michigan Senate

The Senate Republicans have achieved an unprecedented supermajority of at least 26 out of 38 seats. This puts the Senate Democrat caucus at 12, the smallest in modern times and essentially relegates them to having near zero input on budgets or policy. Now the Republicans can ignore the Democrats on procedural votes because of their supermajority status.

House of Representatives

The Republican tide has swept the House Republicans from a dismal 43 seat minority to a majority of 63 seats; a historic gain of 20 seats for the Republicans. This is unprecedented, even surpassing the massive Republican tide in 1966. Multiple incumbent Democrats were defeated while not a single Republican lost re-election. One of Tuesday's great losses was the defeat of Rep. Terry Brown (D-Pigeon), K12/Dept. of Ed Appropriations Subcommittee Chair, and a tremendous champion of school nurses.

What's Next?

In the Legislature....

In the next 9 days the legislature will elect new leadership for each of the four caucuses. The House Republicans have coalesced around Representative Jase Bolger (R-Marshall); he will be the next Speaker of the House. We are still waiting to see who is elected to other leadership positions (Speaker Pro Tempore, Majority Floor Leaders, etc.).

This week the House Democrats will decide between Representatives Woodrow Stanley (D-Flint) and Rick Hammel (D-Mt. Morris) in voting for their Minority Leader in the 2011-2012 Legislative Session.

The Senate Democrats chose Senators Gretchen Whitmer (D-East Lansing) as Minority Leader and Sen. Tupac Hunter (D-Detroit) as Minority Floor Leader

Last week Senate Republicans chose Senator Randy Richardville (R-Monroe) as the next Senate Majority Leader.

The short legislative session after leadership elections is commonly known as "lame duck." Typically many issues previously thought dead come to life in lame duck as legislators look to complete their legacy (e.g., "I've fought to pass anti-bullying legislation for eight years – now JUST DO IT!") and move controversial issues that might have been blocked prior to the election. This lame duck session may be even more brief than usual as Republicans have little motivation to negotiate with Democrats in order to move bills now when they will control the process in a few short months.

Governor-elect Rick Snyder...

Governor-elect Rick Snyder has named former Governor Engler administration official and Business Leaders for Michigan executive, Doug Rothwell, to be his transition director. Mr. Rothwell served as the Michigan Economic Development Corporation director in the Engler administration. Others are expected to be named as part of the transition team which will be responsible for working with the out-going Granholm administration, vetting and appointing the Governor-elect's cabinet and doing all those things necessary so Mr. Snyder is ready to govern on January 1st when he takes office. Look for notable names from the Engler and Milliken administrations to serve in the new Snyder administration.

Mr. Snyder will also begin to spell out his priority list for the first days of his administration. Expect a significant focus on eliminating the Michigan Business Tax and enacting his corporate income tax as well as comprehensive regulatory reform. Add to that, Michigan is facing a \$1.6 billion dollar deficit which will have to be addressed.

Mr. Snyder has expressed an interest in school reform, early childhood education, and better coordinated health care (e.g., "medical home" models).

Overall...

With the Republicans controlling all three branches of government, they will have a free hand in the redistricting process which begins next year. Districts are reapportioned after each census. When the current districts were reapportioned 10 years ago after the 2000 census, the Republicans controlled all three branches of government and drew a favorable electoral map.

I will continue to monitor developments and report back as necessary. Stay tuned for further updates.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at: jmdoss@comcast.net if you have any questions or need additional information on the current developments.