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2024 Idaho Primary Election Overview

Idaho's Primary Election was held on May 21st. While the Congressional races resulted in no change, the same did not hold true for the Idaho legislature. An immense amount of work by business minded, philosophically moderate organizations went into recruiting, supporting, and keeping sensible candidates. While there were a few races where this effort was successful, the results of this election from our perspective resulted in a shift of the legislative body, further right.

Election results were certified by the State Board of Canvassers on June 5th.

District 31 will perform a recount in the race between incumbent Rep. Julianne Young and her challenger, Ben Fuhriman, who won by just two votes.

Effect of the Presidential Caucus

Aligning with previous years, voter turnout was moderately low, with 23.9% of registered voters participating in the election. We attribute a lower turnout in part to the transition from a presidential primary to a presidential caucus.

State GOP & Precinct Races

Large precinct races in Kootenai County, Ada County, and Bonneville County have been topics of contention given the strong conservatism among the republican central committees. The Kootenai County Republican Central Committee [held on to the majority of their 73 incumbents](#), remaining as one of the more conservative central committees in the state. Chairman Brent Regan was re-elected as committee chair with 58.6% of the vote. To the south in Ada County, many new republican precinct committee persons were elected, yet ACRCC leadership remained largely conservative. Across the plains to the east end of the state, the Bonneville County Republican Central Committee had large turnover, resulting in a more moderate central committee. With just two days until the turning over of power, former leadership of the BCRCC [turned over \\$55,786 to the state GOP](#) in a closed-door meeting, leaving the central committee with just about \$100. Precinct, school board and other local races have seen increased contentious over the last few election cycles and we expect this to continue.

Former Coeur d'Alene Senator Mary Souza plans on challenging current Chairwoman Dorothy Moon as GOP party chair at the state GOP convention this week.

Upsets and Surprises

A whopping 15 GOP incumbent legislators lost their races, including the highest-ranking member of the Senate, Pro Tempore Chuck Winder and former House Majority Leader Megan Blanksma. Chair of the House Education Committee, Julie Yamamoto, was unsuccessful in her bid for reelection as was Sen. Linda Wright Hartgen who chaired the Agricultural Affairs Committee. North Idaho surprised us all in moderating slightly, while Eastern Idaho saw significant turnover with many hard right challenger successes.

Hot Races

***Bold** = Incumbent* *(Lost)*

Senate 1: Jim Woodward 52% (**Scott Herndon** 48%)
House 1A: **Mark Sauter** 50% (Jane Sauter 32%, Spencer Hutchings 19%)
House 4B: **Elaine Price** 60% (Dave Raglin 40%)
Senate 6: **Dan Foreman** 53% (Robert Blair 47%)
House 6A: **Lori McCann** 44% (Colton Bennett 41%, Dave Dalby 16%)
House 7A: Kyle Harris 52% (Jim Chmelik 48%)
Senate 8: Christy Zito 56% (**Geoff Schroeder** 44%)
House 8A: Rob Beiswenger 54% (**Matt Bundy** 46%)
House 8B: Faye Thompson 51% (**Megan Blanksma** 49%)
Senate 9: Brandon Shippy 52% (Scott Syme 42%)
House 9A: John Shirts 62% (**Jacyn Gallagher** 38%)
House 10A: **Mike Moyle** 54% (Rachel Hazelip 46%)
Senate 11: Camille Blaylock 52% (**Chris Trakel** 48%)
House 11A: Kent Marmon 57% (**Julie Yamamoto** 43%)
House 11B: Lucas Cayler 51% (Sarah Chaney 49%)
Senate 13: **Brian Lenney** 56% (Jeff Agenbroad 44%)
House 13B: Steve Tanner 46% (**Kenny Wroten** 36%, Amy Henry 18%)
House 16B: Todd Achilles 47% (Nikson Mathews 28%, Jon Chu 22%, Wayne Richey 3%)
Senate 20: Josh Keyser 52% (**Chuck Winder** 48%)
House 23A: Chris Bruce 51% (**Melissa Durrant** 49%)
House 23B: Shawn Dygert 52% (**Tina Lambert** 48%)
Senate 24: **Glenneda Zuiderveld** 55% (Alex Caval 45%)
House 24A: Clint Hostetter 59% (**Chenele Dixon** 41%)
House 24B: **Steve Miller** 56% (Jeff Faulkner 44%)
Senate 25: Josh Kohl 63% (**Linda Wright Hartgen** 37%)
House 25B: David Leavitt 58% (**Greg Laning** 42%)
House 28A: **Rick Cheatum** 40% (James Lamborn 33%, Mike Saville 27%)
House 30A: **David Cannon** 53% (Josh Sorenson 47%)
House 30B: Ben Fuhriman 50% (**Julianne Young** 50%) – Awaiting an official recount
House 31B: **Rod Furniss** 51% (Karey Hanks 49%)
House 32B: **Wendy Horman** 46% (Sean Coletti 35%, Brian Smith 19%)

Impact of Independent Expenditures and PAC funds

Many key players in the election were large out-of-state organizations, bringing in over [\\$4.6 million](#). In the contentious District 1 Senate race, nearly a quarter-million dollars was raised, with candidate (and former Senator) Jim Woodward retaining \$129,773 and Senator Scott Herndon \$115,865.

The two largest donors in the election were the Citizens Alliance of Idaho (branch of national group Citizens Alliance PAC Inc.) and the Idaho Federation for Children (branch of national group American Federation for Children's Victory Fund) spending about \$400,000 and \$303,000 respectively. We anticipate that the significant influx of out of state dollars will result in legislation during the 2025 session.

2025 Legislative Implications

We do not anticipate that the general election results will deviate significantly from the current slate of those elected in the primary. The legislature will convene in December for their organizational session where they determine leadership roles and committee assignments. While we anticipated leadership challenges; having a known vacancy for the highest-ranking official is unusual. We are aware of at least two Senators who have voiced their desire to run for Pro Tem: Senators Scott Grow who currently co-chairs JFAC, and Senator Doug Okuniewicz who chairs Transportation. Additionally, Representative Sage Dixon opted to not run again leaving a vacancy in the Assistant Majority Leader position. We are eager to watch these races play out and to learn of their impact on committees.

The loss of many moderate candidates in the legislature is significant. The success of hard right challengers in many of these races changes the temperament and dynamic of the body. Additionally, losing 15 incumbents has an overall impact on the level of institutional knowledge within the body.

As with every election we are reminded of the critical importance of relationships. With the election behind us, we will continue our work establishing and reinforcing our relationships with lawmakers. We are grateful for the opportunity to represent you and look forward to a successful 2025 legislative session.