

## 2016 Election Review

### A. Presidential

Election Day 2016 has come and gone with President-elect Donald J. Trump defeating Democratic Nominee Hillary Clinton. Out of the myriad of storylines coming out of this election, polling may be the most stunning. Only a handful of surveys showed Trump ahead in Michigan, Pennsylvania, or Wisconsin, yet he emerged victorious in all three. Further, Trump swept what looked like toss-ups in Florida and North Carolina and tallied a resounding win in Ohio. While state polls were consistently wrong, national polls fared better. Tuesday morning, the Real Clear Politics' average showed Clinton with a 3.2-point<sup>1</sup> national lead in a 4-way race. Although Clinton lost the Electoral College, she is poised to win the popular vote by roughly a percentage point after all the ballots in California are counted. The fact that Clinton will win the popular vote<sup>2</sup> but lose the Electoral College seems to validate the storyline that she traded voters and ran up her raw vote total in non-battleground states such as California and Texas in exchange for votes in battleground states such as Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. Another storyline that cannot be ignored is the rural vs. urban divide. As evidenced by the returns, Clinton won urban areas such as Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and New York by large margins while most of rural America either flipped from Democrat to Republican between 2012 and 2016 or voted increasingly Republican. Additionally, voter turnout proved to be Democrat's Achilles heel. Vote totals<sup>3</sup> were lower in 46 states for Clinton compared to Obama in 2012 while Trump's vote totals were higher than Romney's in 28 states. When the final ballot is counted, Clinton is

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<sup>1</sup> Real Clear Politics. "General Election: Trump vs. Clinton." Accessed November 9, 2016. [http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/president/us/general\\_election\\_trump\\_vs\\_clinton-5491.html](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/president/us/general_election_trump_vs_clinton-5491.html)

<sup>2</sup> Price, Greg. "Latest Popular Vote Results 2016: Hillary Clinton Has Almost 400,000 More Votes Than Winner Donald Trump." Accessed November 10, 2016. <http://www.ibtimes.com/latest-popular-vote-results-2016-hillary-clinton-has-almost-400000-more-votes-winner-2445216>.

<sup>3</sup> Bump, Phillip. "Hillary Clinton's campaign was crippled by voters who stayed home." Accessed November 10, 2016. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/wp/2016/11/09/hillary-clintons-campaign-was-crippled-by-voters-who-stayed-home/>.



expected to garner 6 million<sup>4</sup> fewer votes than Obama in 2012. Democrats' inability to get their electorate to the polls was likely exacerbated by the feeling the Democratic Primary was rigged and Washington is broken. This coupled with a general feeling of loss most likely contributed to white working-class Midwesterners<sup>5</sup> who voted for Obama in 2012 pulling the lever for Trump in 2016. Hillary Clinton's inability to connect with these voters likely cost her the Presidency.

## B. Senate

Republicans will hold a narrow lead in the Senate after defending 24 seats compared to the Democrats 10. Republicans currently hold a 51-48 lead with a run-off slated in Louisiana. The biggest surprise comes from Wisconsin where incumbent Senator Ron Johnson (R-WI) overcame long odds to win re-election over former US Senator Russ Feingold (D-WI). Johnson won by a robust 3.4 points after the Real Clear Politics' average<sup>6</sup> showed Feingold leading by 2.7 percentage points just hours before the election. Also, Pat Toomey (R-PA) ran ahead of Donald Trump in Pennsylvania and won re-election over Katie McGinty (D-PA) after trailing in the Real Clear Politics' average<sup>7</sup> by 2 percentage points. Additionally, Representative Todd Young (R-IN) defeated former Senator Evan Bayh (D-IN) by over 10 percentage points<sup>8</sup> after a hotly contested contest. Democrats didn't come away empty-handed, picking up 2 Senate seats; one in New Hampshire and one in Nevada. However, Democrats will look back upon 2016 as a missed opportunity with an uphill battle to keep their current numbers in the Senate looming in 2018.

## C. Congressional

As expected, Republicans held onto their majority in the House of Representatives. After a tense relationship throughout the last 18 months, House

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<sup>4</sup> Waldman, Paul. "Why did Trump win? In part because voter turnout plunged." Accessed November 10, 2016. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/plum-line/wp/2016/11/10/why-did-trump-win-in-part-because-voter-turnout-plunged/>.

<sup>5</sup> Levitz, Eric. "Trump Won a Lot of White Working-Class Voters Who Backed Obama." Accessed November 10, 2016. <http://nymag.com/daily/intelligencer/2016/11/trump-won-a-lot-of-white-working-class-obama-voters.html>.

<sup>6</sup> Real Clear Politics. "Wisconsin Senate - Johnson vs. Feingold." Accessed November 9, 2016. [http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/senate/wi/wisconsin\\_senate\\_johnson\\_vs\\_feingold-3740.html](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/senate/wi/wisconsin_senate_johnson_vs_feingold-3740.html)

<sup>7</sup> Real Clear Politics. "Pennsylvania Senate - Toomey vs. McGinty." Accessed November 9, 2016. [http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/senate/pa/pennsylvania\\_senate\\_toomey\\_vs\\_mcginty-5074.html](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/senate/pa/pennsylvania_senate_toomey_vs_mcginty-5074.html)

<sup>8</sup> Real Clear Politics. "Indiana Senate - Young vs. Bayh." Accessed November 9, 2016. [http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/senate/in/indiana\\_senate\\_young\\_vs\\_bayh-6003.html](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/senate/in/indiana_senate_young_vs_bayh-6003.html)





Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI) may look to garner President-elect Donald Trump's favor in order to stave off any bid by the ultra-conservative Freedom Caucus for his Speakership.

## **D. Looking Forward**

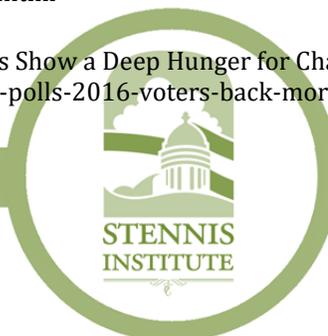
In the days between now and President-elect Donald Trump's inauguration, decisions will be made on cabinet members and much punditry will take place over who will fill Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia's vacant seat on the Supreme Court and the Republican-led government's agenda for the first 100 days. Allies of Trump who have shown loyalty such as Chris Christie, Newt Gingrich, Reince Priebus, and Rudy Giuliani are rumored<sup>9</sup> to be offered top administration positions. Also, repeal and replacement of Obamacare will receive widespread Republican support on Capitol Hill. However, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell has stated<sup>10</sup> Trump's proposals of an infrastructure bill and term limits will not be a priority. In an election where voters valued change<sup>11</sup>, the American people ultimately rejected politics as usual in favor of an outsider. Election 2016 could reverberate for years to come with changes likely to upend the traditional nature of politics.

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<sup>9</sup> Cook, Nancy, Restuccia, Andrew. "Meet Trump's Cabinet-in-waiting." Accessed November 10, 2016. <http://www.politico.com/story/2016/11/who-is-in-president-trump-cabinet-231071>.

<sup>10</sup> Tornoe, Rob. "Here's what President Donald Trump plans to do in his first 100 days." Accessed November 9, 2016. <http://www.philly.com/philly/blogs/real-time/Heres-what-President-Donald-Trump-plans-to-do-in-his-first-100-days.html>

<sup>11</sup> Meckler, Laura. "Exit Polls 2016: Voters Show a Deep Hunger for Change." Accessed November 10, 2016. <http://www.wsj.com/articles/exit-polls-2016-voters-back-more-liberal-immigration-policy-oppose-border-wall-1478646147>.



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## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

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In 2011, Camp worked as North MS field director for Lynn Fitch's successful campaign for Mississippi Treasurer. In the summer of 2013, Camp clerked at BGR Group; a D.C.-based governmental relations firm consistently described as a powerhouse. BGR Group is a global leader in governmental affairs, strategic communications and investment banking. Following his graduation from the University of Mississippi in 2014, Camp took over field operations in North MS for Thad Cochran. After Cochran's successful bid for reelection, Camp was invited to intern in Senator Cochran's DC office. Following his internship, Camp moved back to BGR Group where he served as a researcher and writer for the firm's clients. Camp is a native of Corinth, MS and currently resides in Starkville, MS where he is pursuing his Master's in Public Policy and Administration.

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