The 2018 midterm elections refer to the election that happens in the middle of a president's current term. For Donald Trump, this midterm election occurred in his first term as president (2016-2020). Election Day in the United States is the Tuesday following the first Monday in November. So this 2018 election date was Tuesday, November 6th. It is the day when popular ballots are held to select public officials. In addition to many state races, all 435 seats in the United States House of Representatives and 35 of the 100 seats in the United States Senate were contested. Ohio had one Senate seat up for election.

High Voter Turnout

Voter turnout for the midterm election was impressive, with more than 47 percent of the voting-eligible population casting a ballot, according to early estimates from the United States Election Project. A projected 113 million voters cast a ballot, with high participation among both parties. The increase was attributed to a variety of factors, including more high-profile and competitive Senate and governor races in key states. The House races were also much more hotly contested this year in comparison to 2014 when Republicans were considered prohibitive favorites to maintain control.

Highest turnout since 1970

Voter turnout for midterm elections, 1950-2018

Forecast 2018 turnout

Source: US Election Project. Voters as proportion of voting-eligible population B B C

While it is still less than half of possible voters actually voting, it is a large figure. Compare that with just 36.7 percent in 2014, and 41 percent in 2010.

The Congressional Races

Democrats won control of the House, a victory for the party locked out of power since the 2016 elections. This win means a deadlocked Congress — with Republicans in control of the Senate and Democrats in the House.

Democrats gained 30 seats, taking 34 districts that Republicans won in 2016, driven by a mix of successful female candidates, exceptional voter turnout and support from wealthy, suburban voters.

Republicans moved toward expanding their control of the Senate. The Republicans flipped seats in three states — Indiana, Missouri, and North Dakota — that President Trump had won by a large margin in 2016, and earned an open seat in Tennessee.

Now that Democrats have won the House, Republicans will no longer be able to pass legislation with GOP (Republican) votes alone — instead, to get any bills through Congress, the president will have to work with Democrats. However since Democrats did not take the Senate, they did not gain the power to block President Trump's Supreme Court, Cabinet, and other nominees for the next two years.
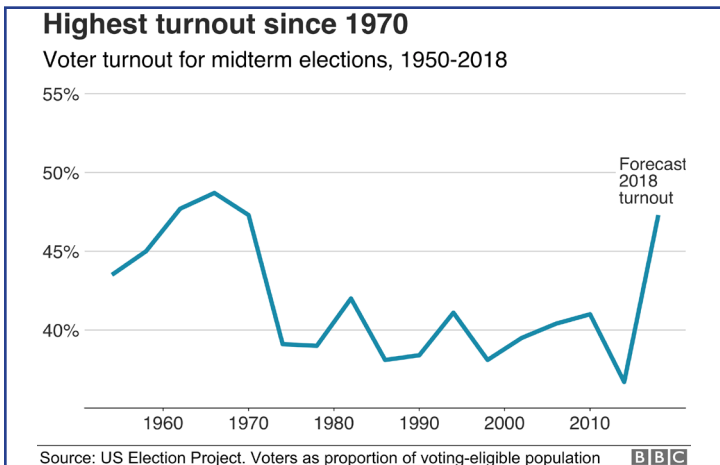
In Ohio, there were 16 House seats up for election. After it was over, Ohio had 4 Democratic seats and 12 Republican seats in the U.S. House of Representatives. This was the same split as before the election, with no seats changing political parties.

Incumbent Senator Sherrod Brown ran against Republican James Renacci in the 2018 midterm election. Senator Brown won re-election to his third term, but will return to a Senate that remains in Republican control. At the start of the 114th Congress in January 2015, Brown became the Ranking Democratic Member on the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs. He was later appointed co-chair of the newly formed Joint Multiemployer Pension Solvency Committee in March 2018. As of 2019, he is the only Democratic statewide elected official in Ohio.

DEMOCRATS WIN THE HOUSE ✓

Total of 435 Seats in the U.S. House -- 11 seats still awaiting election results

226 THE HOUSE 198
218 TO MAJORITY

REPUBLICANS WIN THE SENATE ✓

Total of 100 Seats in the U.S. Senate -- 3 seats still awaiting election results

46 THE SENATE 51
51 TO MAJORITY

The Women Set a Record in Congress

A record number of women will serve in the House of Representatives as a result of the midterm election contests, with several making history due to their race, religious beliefs or sexual orientation. Some 95 women have won, or are projected to win, their House races, which is up from the current 84 women in the House. In addition, at least 13 women won Senate seats. That's on top of the ten female senators who were not up for re-election this year.

Among the notable names on the new House roster: Deb Haaland of New Mexico and Sharice Davids of Kansas are the first Native American women elected to Congress, and Rashida Tlaib and Ilhan Omar will be the first Muslim women in the House. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York and Abby Finkenauer of Iowa, both 29, will become the youngest women to serve in the House.

The New Governor of Ohio

Mike DeWine, the former Lieutenant Governor of Ohio and Ohio Attorney General, became Ohio's 70th governor, succeeding fellow Republican John Kasich (who was term-limited). Mr. DeWine beat Democrat Richard Cordray, a former Consumer Financial Protection Bureau Chief.

DeWine's victory preserved the state's Republican trifecta, consisting of the majority in the state House, state Senate, and governorship. The new governor will influence the state's redistricting process following the 2020 census. Under Ohio state law, the governor may veto congressional district maps proposed by the state legislature and sits on the seven-member commission responsible for drawing a congressional district map in the event the legislature is unable to settle on a proposal. The governor also sits on the seven-member commission responsible for drawing new state legislative district maps.

Governor Mike DeWine

Governor DeWine took office on January 13, 2019. Former Ohio Secretary of State Jon Husted was DeWine's running mate and became the next lieutenant governor. In addition to Ohio, there were 35 other gubernatorial seats up for re-election. Democrats faced mixed results in the governor's races, picking up governorships in Illinois, Kansas, Maine, Michigan, and New Mexico, but failing to claim the coveted battleground of Florida. At last count, Republicans controlled 27 governorships compared to 23 by Democrats.

Lt. Governor Jon Husted

Other Ohio State-Wide Races

Other key Ohio state-wide races include the election of the secretary of state, attorney general, treasurer, and auditor. The Republicans easily won each of these offices.

Also in the midterm, voters rejected Drug and Criminal Justice Policies Initiative, which would have made offenses related to drug possession and use no more than misdemeanors.

Let's Start Thinking about 2020

Now that the midterm elections are over, the political world will turn its attention to the 2020 Presidential Election. Political advisers for both parties will map out a strategy to win the 2020 presidential election. Ohio and Florida become must-win states. Democrats gained some momentum with the midterms and will be looking to make a bigger splash in 2020. President Trump and the Republicans will push their agenda and appeal to the conservative movement.

Ohio, a crossroads of the Midwest, has long been a bellwether state politically – it has not voted for a presidential loser since 1960. True to form, Ohio shifted by a double-digit margin from supporting Barack Obama in 2012 to backing Donald Trump in 2016. But Ohio's role as a bellwether could be in jeopardy if the Trump-era Republican Party can consolidate gains among working-class white workers.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

TRUE OR FALSE? Write a ***T*** or ***F*** in the space provided.

___ 1. All 100 U.S. Senate seats were up for re-election in the 2018 midterm.
___ 2. All 435 U.S. House seats were up for re-election in the 2018 mid-term.
___ 3. General election days in the United States are held the Tuesday after the first Monday in November.
___ 4. The 2018 midterm election had less ballots cast than in the two previous midterms.
___ 5. The year 2022 is the next presidential election year.
___ 6. Ohio receives 16 U.S. House seats based upon population.
___ 7. The state Senate was controlled by the Democrats before the mid-term.
___ 8. Governor Mike DeWine took office November 8, 2018.
___ 9. The Ohio General Assembly conducts their business in Washington D.C.

Answers: 1–F, 2–T, 3–T, 4–F, 5–F, 6–T, 7–F, 8–F, 9–F