

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. Illinois did not have any Senate seats up for election.

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 won 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.

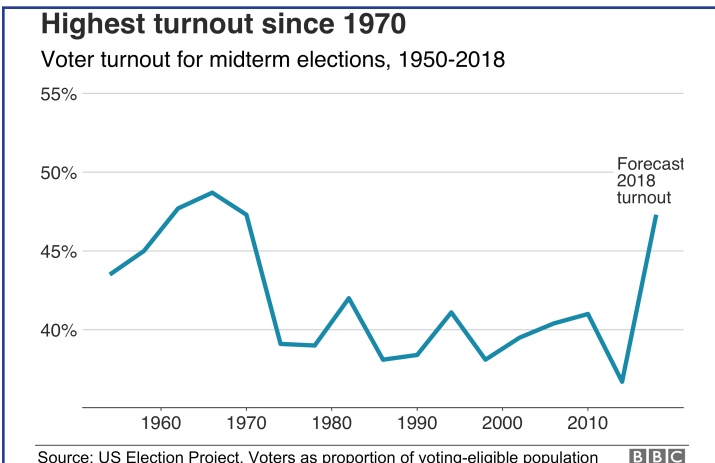
In Illinois, there were 18 House seats up for election. The incumbents retained fifteen of these seats, two spots flipped from a Republican-held post to a Democratic, and one spot was vacant after Luis Gutierrez decided not to run again.

The two house seats that moved from a Republican candidate to a Democratic one could be considered surprises. Lauren Underwood, a Democrat from Naperville who has never held elected office, pulled off the victory, unseating four-term Republican incumbent Randy Hultgren to win a seat in Congress from Illinois’ 14th Congressional District. Underwood, a 32-year-old nurse, garnered about 52 percent of the vote, with Hultgren picking up about 48 percent in unofficial tallies.

In another closely watched campaign of the midterm elections, political newcomer Democrat Sean Casten declared victory over incumbent Republican U.S. Rep. Peter Roskam in the suburban 6th Congressional District.

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.



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

<p>DEMOCRATS WIN THE HOUSE ✓</p> <p>Total of 435 Seats in the U.S. House -- 11 seats still awaiting election results</p> <p>226 THE HOUSE 198</p> <p>218 TO MAJORITY</p>	<p>REPUBLICANS WIN THE SENATE ✓</p> <p>Total of 100 Seats in the U.S. Senate -- 3 seats still awaiting election results</p> <p>46 THE SENATE 51</p> <p>51 TO MAJORITY</p>
---	--

The Women Set a Record

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 reelection 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 Illinois

Democrat J.B. Pritzker on soundly defeated first-term Republican Governor Bruce Rauner, who conceded his re-election bid less than an hour after the polls closed, giving Democrats near total control of Illinois' state government. Pritzker gained 54 percent of the vote as opposed to Rauner's 40 percent.



Governor-elect J.B. Pritzker

Pritzker, a billionaire heir to the Hyatt hotel fortune, has given at least \$146 million to his campaign. Rauner, a multimillionaire equity investor, has pumped at least \$50 million of his own money into his campaign. Because of the personal wealth of both candidates, political observers predict this election could be the most expensive in American history.

Pritzker graduated from Duke University and obtained a law degree from Northwestern University. He has served as chairman of the Illinois Human Rights Commission and founded venture capital firm The Pritzker Group as well as a technology incubator.

Governor-elect Pritzker will take office January 14, 2019, becoming the state's 43rd governor. Juliana Stratton will serve as the new lieutenant governor.

In addition to Illinois, there were 35 other gubernatorial seats up for reelection. Democrats faced mixed results in the governor's races, picking up governorships in Illinois, Kansas, Maine, Michigan, New Mexico, and Wisconsin, but failing to claim the coveted battleground of Florida. At last count, Republicans controlled 26 governorships compared to 23 by Democrats (one race is still unofficial).

Other Illinois State-Wide Races

Other key Illinois state-wide races included the attorney general, comptroller, and the variety of Illinois legislature seats.

Democrat Kwame Raoul cruised to an easy victory over Republican Erika Harold to become Illinois' first new attorney general in 16 years. Raoul had won 54 percent of the vote to Harold's 43 percent. Democrat Susana Mendoza was reelected as Illinois comptroller defeating Republican Darlene Senger.

Of the 59 state Senate seats, 39 were up for election. The current results show that the Democrats retained 38 positions, Republicans 19 spots, and two are still undecided. In the state House, all 118 of Illinois' legislative districts were up for election. Democrats won 71 of these House seats as compared to 44 won by Republicans; three are still undecided.

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.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

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

1. All 100 U.S. Senate seats were up for reelection in the 2018 midterm.
2. All 435 U.S. House seats were up for reelection 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. Illinois receives 18 U.S. House seats based upon population.
7. Illinois is typically a Republican-favored state.
8. Governor-elect J.B. Pritzker will take office immediately and begin his agenda.
9. The 59 state Senators and the 118 state House members conduct 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