

August 2016

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Few Surprises in State Primary

Low voter turnout (usually) benefits conservative candidates

...provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth... --Exodus 18:2

Despite heightened interest in this year's exceptional "tabloid campaign" for room and board at the White House, nearly two-thirds of registered voters in the Evergreen State didn't participate in the August 2 State Primary. About one-third (34.75%) of registered voters took the time to place a stamp on their return-mail ballots this go-around.

Topping all counties in voter participation this primary cycle was left-of-center Jefferson County with 48.04% and reliably conservative Garfield County at 46.12%. In the turnout cellar were Yakima and Franklin counties at 27.62% and 27.83% respectively. Interestingly, it is not unusual for Jefferson County to be at the top nor Yakima County to come in last.

In the past, it has been generally accepted that a low turnout favors the more conservative candidates. That is because many "low-information" voters seldom take notice of the political landscape until about 12 days out from the General Election. And, many of those vote only once every four years during Presidential elections.

Low voter turnout aside, there were some EXCEPTIONAL candidates for conservative Christians to consider. Kudos to those working hard each election cycle to recruit the most qualified and electable candidates possible. (You done good this year)! So good in fact, there were several statewide races where conservatives couldn't go wrong. More on that in a moment.

Concerning top-of-the-ballot federal races, we were pleased that 90% of our preferred and website recommended candidates will advance to the November General Election. In statewide contests, 78% of our "picks" made the cut, and, in legislative district races, 96% of those we recommended also qualified for the November finals. Following are the current "D" v. "R" match-ups.

AUGUST 2 STATE PRIMARY RESULTS

US SENATE	(D) Patty Murray	53.82%	(R) Chris Vance	27.51 %
US HOUSE	District 1	(D) Suzan DelBene	53.6%	(R) Robert Sutherland 31.0%
	District 2	(D) Rick Larsen	51.8%	(R) Marc Hennemann 32.3%
	District 3	(D) Jim Moeller	24.4%	(R) Jaime Herrera Beutler 55.8%
	District 4	(R) Dan Newhouse	45.8%	(R) Clint Didier 27.5%
	District 5	(D) Joe Pakootas	31.5%	(R) Cathy McMorris Rodgers 42.2%
	District 6	(D) Derek Kilmer	58.4%	(R) Todd Bloom 24.5%
	District 7	(D) Pramila Jayapal	42.1%	(D) Brady Walkinshaw 21.3%
	District 8	(D) Tony Ventrella	17.0%	(R) Dave Reichert 56.8%
	District 9	(D) Adam Smith	56.3%	(R) Doug Basler 23.4%
	District 10	(D) Denny Heck	46.5%	(R) Jim Postma 36.7%

Barring unanticipated death, illness or withdrawals before the November 8 elections, we anticipate no changes in our congressional delegation. Incumbents will be handily reelected and retiring Rep. Jim McDermott in the 7th Congressional District (mostly urban Seattle and Vashon Island) will be replaced by a Democrat with similar uber-liberal leanings.

If there was a surprise in the August 2 vote outcome, it was undoubtedly the top statewide race of 2016—the Gubernatorial contest. Opinion-page writers have been speculating that due to Jay Inslee’s generally low job performance ratings, coupled with a high-energy and especially visible and appealing challenge embodied in the Bill Bryant campaign, preliminary results would be different. They were not.

STATEWIDE RACES

GOVERNOR	(D) Jay Inslee	49.3%	(R) Bill Bryant	38.3%
Lt GOVERNOR	(D) Cyrus Habib	22.3%	(R) Marty McClendon	19.2
SECRETARY OF STATE	(D) Tina Podlowski	46.1%	(R) Kim Wyman	47.9%
STATE TREASURER	(R) Duane Davidson	25.1%	(R) Michael Waite	23.3%
STATE AUDITOR	(D) Pat McCarthy	29.1%	(R) Mark Milosia	36.7%
ATTORNEY GENERAL	(D) Bob Ferguson	72.6%	(R) Joshua Trumbull	27.4%
COMM OF PUBLIC LANDS	(D) Hilary Franz	22.9%	(R) Steve McLaughlin	38.9%
SUPT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION	(NP) Chris Reykdal	21.9%	(NP) Erin Jones	25.8%
INSURANCE COMMISSIONER	(D) Mike Kriedler	58.4%	(R) Richard Schrock	34.1%

Republicans have an outside chance to have three-of-their kind elected to statewide office—maybe even four—as highlighted above. Currently, incumbent SECRETARY OF STATE Kim Wyman is the only Republican statewide official on the west coast. Seriously! Retaining that position, however, isn’t a given following her narrow 47.9%-to-46.13% showing in the Primary. But should she win, she will be joined by either Duane Davidson or Michael Waite, both Republicans, as our next STATE TREASURER. Both are excellent choices!

A third contest within GOP reach is that of STATE AUDITOR. Republican Mark Milosia bettered Democrat Pat McCarthy by eight points. Mark would be a sure bet were it not for other Ds in the race that siphoned some 35% of the Democrat votes from their lead teammate. Even so, we’re tempted to give Mark the edge based on his qualifications, experience, temperament and name recognition.

And, the fourth GOP aspirant with an outside chance for victory is Republican Steve McLaughlin for COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC LANDS. It doesn’t look like an “R” win now due to the high combined Democrat vote in this race (as in most of these races)—but who knows?

LOCAL HOUSE RACES: No doubt Republican Minority Leader Dan Kristiansen is hoping that this is the year he moves his furniture into the Speaker of the House office. With only two more seats to pick up, House Republicans are hopeful they can help their senate colleagues not only stop frightful legislation, but actually put worthwhile measures on the Governor’s desk. That has not happened since 1998.

As luck would have it, however, three King County incumbent House Republicans may be in trouble. In the 5th District, Rep. Chad Magendaz (R-Issaquah) notched only 49.31% of the votes in a two-person race. Similarly, two stalwarts from Federal Way, Rep Linda Kochmar and Rep. Teri Hickel, also underperformed in each of their “two-man” races.

LOCAL SENATE RACES: Even the Republican-controlled state senate may be in play following a very competitive primary contest to replace retiring Senator Don Benton in the 17th legislative district. A very competent House member, Lynda Wilson (R-Vancouver), is attempting to retain the seat for the Rs, but with a narrow primary win of 50.11%, odds-makers may also see this race as a toss-up. We’ll see.

Stay tuned!

Rick Forcier