



CAPITOL REPORT

November 5, 2008

Michigan Democrats swept to an across-the-board victory Tuesday, carrying the state for Barack Obama and Senator Carl Levin in landslides, electing their entire slate of education board candidates, dumping two incumbent GOP U.S. Congressmen, expanding their State House of Representatives margin to 67-43, and stunning Republican-nominated Chief Justice Cliff Taylor who lost his re-election bid by nearly a quarter million votes.

Only the Republican-dominated State Senate, which did not face re-election this year, was left standing in the wreckage. This means Michigan will continue to have divided government (Dem Governor and House, Republican Senate) for the next two years. State education boards (MSU Trustees, U of M Regents, Wayne State Governors, State Board of Education) will all continue to have heavy Democratic majorities. The State Supreme Court heads into uncertain territory since it will have three Dem-nominated justices, three Republican-nominated justices, and one Republican-nominated maverick who has publicly feuded with her GOP nominated brethren.

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Democrats, gained nine seats in the State House of Representatives, giving them their biggest majority in nearly 30 years. A highlight was the landslide victory of Speaker Andy Dillon who cruised to re-election and crushed a recall effort against him. Democrats picked up these seats now held by Republicans:

<u>Area</u>	<u>Winner</u>
-Grosse Pointe, Harper Woods	(Timothy Bledsoe)
-Battle Creek	(Kate Segal)
-Mason, Manistee, Benzie, Leelanau counties	(Dan Scripps)
-Central UP	(Judy Nerat)
-Montcalm, Ionia counties	(Mike Huckleberry)
-Macomb county (2 seats)	(Sarah Roberts, Jennifer Haase)
-Western Wayne county	(Dian Slavens)
-Oakland county	(Lisa Brown)

Interestingly, the 43-member House Republicans will have two African-Americans, first in caucus history. They are newcomers Larry DeShazor of Portage and Paul Scott of Grand Blanc. Over in the Senate, a vacancy will be created there by Mark Schauer's winning a hotly-contested U.S. Congressional seat. That vacancy will be filled in a special election in early 2009 that, ironically, may very well produce a Republican victory that would expand the party's hold on the State Senate.

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Here is the complete list of state education board winners:
Wayne State Board of Governors – Paul Massaron (D), Gary Pollard (D)
Michigan State Board of Trustees – Dianne Byrum (D), Diann Woodward (D)
University of Michigan Board of Regents – Denise Ilitch (D), Lawrence Deitch (D)
State Board of Education – Kathleen Straus (D), John Austin (D)

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The Senate begins its lame duck session at noon today and the House returns tomorrow. The two chambers will be in for two days next week and then take a two week hunting season/Thanksgiving break. Members then return for two and possibly three weeks before concluding the 2008 session just before Christmas. A long list of unfinished bills lie before them but it remains uncertain what measures bill will actually be taken up. Kelley Cawthorne will keep you posted.

The two House caucuses will be holding leadership elections this week and next. Major spots to fill by Dems are Speaker Pro Tem and Floor Leader and for Republicans it's the position of Minority Leader.

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