

Primary Election Results – August 3, 2022

I'm not very good at hiding my disappointment, so I'm forwarding the excellent analysis of the first count of yesterday's election by Troy Nichols. While there is reason to believe that the numbers will improve with time, and that the general election may be an improvement over the primary performance, those hoping for a possible flip of control of either chamber are now betting with their hearts rather than their heads. We will provide follow-up as more ballots are received and totals are updated in the coming weeks. – Brad Tower

By Troy Nichols

Tonight is Primary Election Night in Washington State, and given our 'top-two' primary system, the results will be the largest sample size poll we'll see in statewide, congressional and legislative districts ahead of the general election in November. All 98 seats in the State House of Representatives are up this November, along with 25 of the 49 Senate seats. In the House, Democrats currently enjoy a 57-41 majority, while the Democrats control the Senate 28-21. Based on our conversations over the last couple of months with legislators and campaign staff from both parties in both chambers, the general consensus has been that Republicans stand to gain seats in both chambers, but [tonight's results](#) seem to indicate a more status-quo election in November. There are still about 350,000 votes left to count statewide, and historic trends indicate that late returns should favor Republican candidates whose supporters tend to hold their ballots longer, so a handful of legislative races may end up being much more competitive by the end of the week.

The Senate Democrats were looking to challenge newly-appointed Republican Senator Simon Sefzic in the 42nd Legislative District, while Senate Republicans were hoping to challenge Democratic incumbents Emily Randall in the 26th Legislative District and Claire Wilson in the 30th Legislative District, and pick up an open seat in the 47th Legislative District. None of those things seem to be happening – at least in the initial returns – as the Republican vote total in LD 42 is over 52%, while Senator Randall is currently receiving 53.3 % in LD 26, and Senator C. Wilson is receiving 55.3% in LD 30. In LD 47, Republican Bill Boyce stands at 44.6%, while the two Democratic candidates are splitting 55.4% of the remaining votes cast. Senate Republicans were also hoping to expand the political battlefield in Democratic-controlled LD's 21, 38, 44 and 45, but the Democratic incumbents hold commanding leads in all four of those districts. If tonight's results held up through November, the 2023 Senate would remain unchanged – 28 Democrats vs. 21 Republicans.

In the House, leading up to tonight's election, Republicans were hoping to target about a dozen swing districts currently held by Democrats, and it looked as though Democrats would be playing mostly defense to preserve their 57-41 majority in November. That conventional wisdom was upended by tonight's primary results – Republicans are behind in two districts they currently hold (Rep. Greg Gilday in LD 10 and Spencer Hutchins in LD 26), while Stephanie McClintock holds a 242 vote lead in LD 18, an open seat but an historically conservative SW Washington district. In the 42nd legislative district, incumbent Democrat Alicia Rule is behind at 49.2%, and the combined Republican vote in the other open House seat is 51.3%. Republicans were hoping to be competitive in LD's 24, 28, 30, 44, and 47, but Democratic incumbents currently hold comfortable leads in these districts. Some of these seats may appear more competitive as the late ballots are counted, as we've seen Republicans gain several percentage points a week after the primary election day. However, If tonight's results held up on Election Day in November, the 2023 House would also remain unchanged – 57 Democrats vs. 41 Republicans.

Voter turnout is currently 29% statewide, which is very low – it was just under 41% in 2018, the last mid-term primary election. There are still an unknown amount of ballots that were put in the mail late that haven't yet arrived at the county auditors' office, and, again, there are still approximately 350,000 ballots left to count across the state. As a result, we expect the margins in several of these legislative races to narrow in the coming days, so stay tuned. We will provide an update later this week on the results as more ballots are counted. The results of the most interesting legislative races are pasted below my signature. If you have any questions or need anything else, please don't hesitate to ask!

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