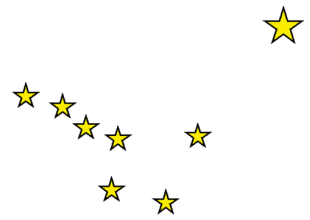




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Nov. 10, 2024

Alaska Legislative Update

2024 General Election

Day 5 Update

Four days after the election we have slightly better information on voter turnout, trends, some clear winners and a few races which are still in play.

Turnout: With 401 of 403 precincts reported on November 8th, turnout for the general election, turnout for the General Election is being reported at 42.16%.

72,234 **Absentee** ballots were requested, and 56,461 have been returned as of Nov. 8th. Of these, 31,237 have been incorporated in the counts released by the Division of Elections. This number may grow a little more as more ballots come in. **Early Votes** cast before October 31st have been incorporated in the counts, totaling 51,264 votes out of the 73,098 early votes cast.

This means that 21,834 early votes and at least 25,224 absentee votes still to be counted. These 47,058+ votes represent about 7.7% of Alaska's total electorate.

Reporting Timeline: The next round of data, including early votes cast through Election Day, is scheduled to be released on **Tuesday, November 12th**. All absentee and questioned ballots must be counted no later than 15 days after the general election – **Wednesday November 20th**. After all votes are counted, ranked-choice rules may apply. Reallocation of votes under Alaska's ranked-choice format will occur for races where no single candidate has greater than 50% of the vote; this process will also be conducted on **Wednesday November 20th**.

Toplines:

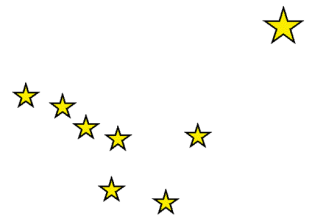
Topline results remain unchanged, with results favoring the Trump/Vance ticket for President and Nick Begich for US House. By our rough numbers, Peltola would need to secure more than 60% of the outstanding ballots to pull even with Begich, and then overcome the ranked choice reallocation.

Ballot measure 1, increasing minimum wage and requiring certain paid leave minimums, is poised to pass by a healthy margin. Ballot measure 2, repealing ranked choice and open primaries, still leads by 4,000 votes.

The final outcome of Ballot Measure 2 – which won't be known until November 20th – may have an impact on some districts when it comes to organizing majorities. Passage of BM2 would



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repeal ranked choice voting and return Alaska to partisan primaries – subjecting officials in several districts to “getting primaried” and replaced by their own party before the general election each cycle.

Organization

Senate – Members of the Alaska Senate quickly announced the formation of a bipartisan majority. According to a written statement Sen. Gary Stevens will continue as President, Sen. Cathy Giessel will continue as majority leader and Sen. Bill Wielechowski will continue as chair of the rules committee. Sen. Lyman Hoffman, D-Bethel, will be chair of the operating budget in the finance committee, Sen. Bert Stedman, R-Sitka, will be chair of the capital budget in the finance committee, and Sen. Donny Olson, D-Golovin, will be chair of any non-budget bills in the finance committee.

Sen. Kelly Merrick, R-Eagle River, was named as majority whip, and Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson, D-Anchorage, was named chair of the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee.

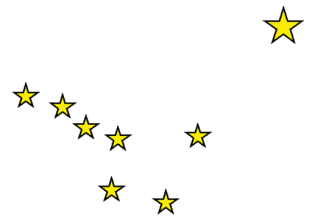
Two Republican members of the previous bipartisan coalition are not returning to Juneau this session, and their successors are not expected to join a coalition. Additionally, Sen. James Kaufman (R – Anchorage) has stated that he will not be rejoining the majority. This creates a minority of at least 6 (all R’s) and a majority of 13 (8D – 5R) with one race still somewhat undecided in Fairbanks.

One senate race remains too close to call, where Fairbanks incumbent Sen. Scott Kawasaki (D) leads challenger Leslie Hajdukovich (R) by 74 votes. This district has historically been very close, and the challenge to Sen. Kawasaki has resulted in one of the more expensive races in the state. Approximately 1,500 votes remain to be counted as early or absentee – we won’t know how this race goes until the 20th.

House – Members of the Alaska House also quickly announced the formation of a bipartisan majority, albeit with fewer details and fewer overt commitments from members than their Senate counterparts. Along partisan lines, Republicans currently appear to leading in 20 districts while registered Democrats (and AK Democratic Party supported Undeclared and Independent candidates) hold 20 districts. Consistent with previous organizational moves, Rep. Louise Stutes (R-Kodiak) and Rep. Chuck Kopp (R-Anchorage) negotiated leadership positions within a multipartisan coalition across the aisle. The coalition has been making overtures to bring over additional moderate Republicans. The newly-announced majority stated a membership of 22 and hopes to end up with 26-27 members. The Leadership announced shortly after the election includes Rep. Bryce Edgmon (I – Dillingham) returning to his role as Speaker of the House, Rep. Louise Stutes (R – Kodiak) as the powerful Rules chair, and Rep. Chuck Kopp (R – Anchorage) as Majority Leader.



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However, there are some who think the House majority announcement may have been hasty. It is rumored that in its initial caucus meeting several attendees were concerned that they had not been consulted on the announced leadership positions and had yet to be asked to confirm their commitment to the organization. Complicating things are two (maybe even three) races which are too close to call. If both 18 and 22 flip to the Republicans then the conversations around a majority will open back up, as even with Stutes and Kopp gone the House will be divided 20-20. And while it's a long-shot until we know the outcome of final early and absentee vote numbers, if District 40 flips then the next likely winner would be Saima Chase, who ran as a Democrat but without the support of (or obligation to) the Party.

- In District 18 (Anchorage) Cliff Groh (D) is defending his seat against David Nelson (R), who was unseated by Groh two years ago. This race is currently divided by 28 votes at 1,365 – 1,337. Some 500+ votes are still expected to counted in this district.
- District 22 (Anchorage) has Stanley Wright (R) defending his seat against Ted Eischeid (D), in a rematch from 2022. Eischeid currently leads in this race, holding a 111 vote advantage at 2,019 – 1,908. While this is a larger margin to make up than in the Groh/Nelson race, some 1,000 ballots are still expected to be counted in this district.
- District 40's most recent numbers moved Robyn Burke from a clear winning position to being the leading candidate in a race which may require a ranked choice runoff. In the same release of data, former Kotzebue Mayor Saima Chase moved up into second place. Without the data from outstanding early and absentee votes – that is, if the reallocation of votes was held today – Ms. Chase would need to carry 88% of the reallocation from former Rep. Thomas Baker. Even if the outstanding votes further dilute Ms. Burke's lead, we believe this is a highly unlikely outcome but worth mentioning.

We've attached the latest results of the election in an email alongside this update and we'll have another note out in the near future with an update on these races. As always, please feel free to contact me or Ben if you have any questions.

All the best,

Eldon Mulder & Ben Mohr