

A QUICK REVIEW OF AN HISTORIC PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION - BIDEN AND HARRIS WIN BOTH THE ELECTORAL AND THE POPULAR VOTE WHILE OHIO REMAINS IN THE TRUMP COLUMN

(by Bill Woods for StreetVibes)

What a week! From Tuesday to Saturday, the counting of votes continued. Activists who expected a sweeping repudiation of the President on election night went to bed both disappointed and worried that Trump might be reelected. Then the counting of "vote by mail" ballots began to tighten the race, and the results in states such as Nevada, Arizona, Georgia, and Pennsylvania became critical. The tortuous wait began.

As this article gets written, it now can be said that Joe Biden is the President-Elect. As votes piled up for the former Vice President in Pennsylvania, the TV-networks called him the winner at 12:00-noon on Saturday. The Pennsylvania results give Biden three more votes than the 270 electoral votes needed to win. Three other states may also end up in his column. In terms of the popular vote, the former Vice President has a four-million vote lead over Trump, and his current seventy-four million-total is the highest in U.S. history.



Although the Biden/Harris victory is convincing, the election is not a repudiation of Donald Trump. The President won enough states to have sufficient electoral votes to make the week-long count of ballots in states like Pennsylvania, Arizona, Nevada, and Georgia critical for the eventual winner. Those of us who thought that Trump's overt racism, his anti-immigrant policy, his deregulation of environmental

regulations, his handling of the pandemic, and his autocratic leanings would be rejected resoundingly were wrong. Rural America and a large number of white Americans remain in his camp. This fact reveals what a highly polarized country America is today.

An in depth analysis of the vote will be necessary to find definitive answers. It appears, however, that many people still buy Trump's rhetoric that he is the enemy of a Washington establishment that has ignored average Americans like them. Is it possible that his outrageous Tweets and his rejection of Science and other expertise make him even more appealing to a large contingent of Americans? One can only hope that Joe Biden's message that he is "an average guy" who wants to respond to the needs of working families will begin to resonate with Trump's white working-class base.

One statistic sticks out. The votes of women, especially Black women, were a major factor in the Biden/Harris win. Black women organizers played a key role in producing the large African-American turnout in cities across the country, and having Kamala Harris on the ticket was another major energizing force. Add in a large chunk of suburban white women, and the margin of victory becomes evident.

The next two months could be tricky. Trump's post-election responses show that he will not accept the election results and concede like a normal losing candidate. On election night, he

announced that he was the winner, and he continues to rant about voter fraud and rigged vote counts. In fact, his strategy this fall was to tell his rally supporters that "fraudulent mail-in voting" was the only method that could cause him to lose. Currently a team of Trump campaign lawyers file dozens of law suits in states with close votes that ended up in the Biden column. Fortunately, Biden also has a legal team to contest these legal challenges. These anticipated Trump responses simply continue his four year assault on the democratic process.

A quick glance at Ohio shows the state ending up with a second Trump victory. Despite sold majorities for Biden in Hamilton, Franklin, and Cuyahoga Counties, rural and small town Ohio turned out heavily for the President. Since Ohio currently possesses highly gerrymandered Congressional and state legislative districts, Republicans continued their dominance in in both the General Assembly and in electing members of Congress.

Gerrymandering again prevailed in the First and Second Congressional Districts that carve up Cincinnati and Hamilton County. The two able women running for Congress as Democrats, Kate Schroder and Jaime Castle, lost to incumbents Steve Chabot and Brad Wenstrup. Women running for Hamilton County offices, however, fared much better. Denise Driehaus and Alicia Reece won their races for the Hamilton County Commission, and Charmaine McGuffey prevailed in her contest to become the first female Sheriff of this County. Meanwhile, Jill Schiller appears to have won a close race with Charlie Winburn for the office of County Treasurer.

Finally, one statewide victory for a Democrat should be noted. Amid the sea of red votes across the state, Jennifer Brunner won a seat on the Ohio Supreme Court. Her elevation to Ohio's highest court is a win for advocates of political reform. As Secretary of State, Brunner worked to promote fair elections and reform in general, and her legal opinion will be important as cases involving redistricting and voting rights come before this Court.

