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General Election 2006

Posted 4:18 AM – Nov 8, 2006

21 of 24 PEG Endorsed legislative candidates victorious!!!!

Tommy Tomlinson (R) - 6th Senate District	Mike Folmer (R) - 48th Senate District	Jay Moyer (R) - 70th House District
Chuck McIlhinney (R) - 10th Senate District	Bob Robbins (R) - 50th Senate District	Jennifer Mann (D) - 132nd House District
Lisa Baker (R) - 20th Senate District	Brad Roae (R) - 6th House District	Bob Mensch (R) - 147th House District
Ted Erickson (R) - 26th Senate District	Art Hershey (R) - 13th House District	Mike Vereb (R) - 150th House District
John Eichelberger (R) - 30th Senate District	Michele Brooks (R) - 17th House District	Josh Shapiro (D) - 153rd House District
Jake Corman (R) - 34th Senate District	Joe Markosek (D) - 25th House District	Duane Milne (R) - 167th House District
Mike Brubaker (R) - 36th Senate District	Bill Kortz (D) - 38th House District	George Kenney (R) - 170th House District

US SENATE -- SANTORUM FALLS. Senator Rick Santorum was defeated by Bob Casey, Jr. in his bid for a third term in the United States Senate. Casey won by a margin of 59 percent to 41 percent, proving you can in fact win a statewide campaign by saying virtual nothing. Casey is the first Pennsylvania Democrat to win a full six-year term in the Senate since Senator Joseph Clark in 1962. Democrats also briefly held this Senate seat from 1991 to 1994 when Harris Wofford won a Special Election to replace Senator John Heinz following his tragic death. Senator Santorum, in turn, defeated Wofford in 1994 to win his first term. Santorum was joined by fellow incumbents Linc Chaffee, Jim Talent and Mike DeWine in what has been a tough election for the Republican Party. Other races results are still pending. Republicans could lose only five seats in order to hold on to control of the US Senate.

RENDELL RE-ELECTED; EIGHT YEAR RULE CONTINUES. Lynn Swann made a valiant effort, but in the end, history prevailed as Governor Ed Rendell coasted to a 61 percent to 39 percent victory. Rendell is the fifth Pennsylvania Governor to seek and win re-election since the state Constitution was changed in 1968 to allow for a second term. Challengers of the last two Governors to seek re-election failed to garner a third of the vote against the incumbent. Then Republican Barbara Hafer received 32.4 percent of the vote against Governor Bob Casey in 1990 while Democrat Ivan Itkin received 31 percent of the vote against Governor Tom Ridge in 1998. Since 1946, the two major parties have flip-flopped control of the governor's mansion every eight years. If the trend holds true, it will be the Republican's turn again in 2010. Let the race begin.

DEMOCRATS WIN U.S. HOUSE; APPEARS FOUR REPUBLICANS DEFEATED IN PA. As was widely expected, Democrats won control of the United States House of Representatives picking up an unofficial minimum of 25 seats as of this posting. Members of Congress Don Sherwood, Curt Weldon and

Melissa Hart were defeated in Pennsylvania, contributing to the Democrats winning control. Results in the re-election bids of Congressmen Mike Fitzpatrick and Jim Gerlach are still unresolved.

Congressman Don Sherwood fell to Chris Carney by a 53 percent to 47 percent margin. Sherwood largely lost the seat as a result of personal transgressions, making this traditional Republican seat one to watch in 2008 as the GOP will look to win back control of the House.

Congressman Curt Weldon lost to Joe Sestak by a 56.5 percent to 43.5 percent margin. Weldon had held the Delaware County based seat since 1986.

Congresswoman Melissa Hart was likely "collateral damage" in losing her 4th District Congressional seat to Democrat Jason Altmire. Polls showed the race close throughout the tall and political pundits felt Hart could be vulnerable as a result of an anti-Rick Santorum, anti-Republican, anti-incumbent atmosphere. Altmire received 52 percent of the vote to Hart's 48 percent.

Congressman Mike Fitzpatrick appears to have lost a tough challenge from Patrick Murphy to win a second term representing the 8th Congressional District. With 100 percent of the vote counted, Fitzpatrick reportedly lost by just over 1,500 votes out of nearly 250,000. Patrick Murphy had good results from the Montgomery and Philadelphia portions of the district. Fitzpatrick – a former Bucks County Commissioner – did best in this home region.

Congressman Jim Gerlach MAY once again win election by the slimmest of margins. At press time, Gerlach led with slightly more than 50 percent of the vote while challenger Lois Murphy trailed with just under 50 percent of the vote. It appears, however, that the remaining votes to be counted will all come from Chester County where Gerlach is enjoying a t 55 percent to 45 percent advantage. This mirrors the 2004 race in which Gerlach defeated Murphy by less than 2 percent.

Final results will be posted on the PEG website.

GOP RETAINS CONTROL OF PA SENATE. Control of the Pennsylvania state Senate will remain in the hands of Republicans with a balance of power at 29 R to 21 D – no change from the status quo. Half of the state Senate – 25 seats were up for re-election in 2006. Three Republicans decided to retire (Conti, Lemmond and Wenger) and two Republicans (Brightbill and Jubelirer) were defeated in the May 16 Primary. There were no Democrat retirements or Primary losses to defend. In fact, five of the 10 Democrat Senators seeking re-election did not even have a Republican opponent. Going into the election, Republicans held 29 seats to the Democrats 21. Despite the many factors benefiting Democrats in 2006, it was widely acknowledged that there was little chance to take control of the Senate in this election cycle. Democrats confessed that their best chances were the "open" 10th District race in Bucks County in which Republican House Member Chuck McIlhinney successfully defended the seat vacated by the retirement of Joe Conti against the challenge from Democrat Chris Serpico. Democrats also tried to unseat Senator "Ted" Erickson in Delaware County and took at least a passing look at unseating Senators Jake Corman, Tommy Tomlinson, and Bob Robbins but this proved impossible. Republicans were content to defend their incumbents and open seats. In addition to McIlhinney, get ready to welcome Republican Senators-elect Lisa Baker, Michael Brubaker John Eichelberger Mike Folmer. Now the REAL Senate election begins – selection by the Republicans of a new President Pro Tempore, Majority Leader and full Leadership slate.

CONTROL OF PENNSYLVANIA HOUSE HINGES ON ONE REMAINING SEAT. VEON LOSES. Maybe the Republicans will hang on to control of the Pennsylvania House by a slim margin – what was once faint hope around midnight brightened as morning approached. At 3:30 AM, it's the PEG tally puts the seat count at 101-101 with one race (187th District in Lehigh/Berks County) undecided. Republican Carl Mantz leads Democrat Archie Follweiler by a slim margin.

The Democrats could still take control – but it would be without the guide of their long hunt back to the majority. Like Moses, Mike Veon isn't destined to make it to the Promised Land. He could see it. But he'll be left behind in Beaver County. Veon – the #2 Democrat in the Pennsylvania House was defeated on

Tuesday along with short-lived incumbent Shawn Flaherty. Veon is the only member of the legislature to TWICE vote against rescinding the ill-fated pay raise. Flaherty was elected in May to fill the unexpired term of Jeff Habay.

In a year where Republicans faced an uphill battle Speaker John Perzel, Majority Leader Sam Smith and their compatriots made a strong showing. Republicans were playing defense in a total of 27 seats. Fifteen Republicans chose to retire in 2006 and an additional 12 were defeated in the May 16 Primary. Democrats were defending 17 seats (13 by retirement and 4 by Primary loss). Because of reapportionment strategies in 1991 and 2001, Democrats were largely defending “safe” seats with strong party registration. Republicans were not only defending a greater number of seats, but many seats in which Republicans and Democrats had near parity in party registration giving Independent and Third Party voters real power to swing elections. The national mood, a very strong ticket featuring Governor Ed Rendell and PA Treasurer (now US Senator-elect) Bob Casey, and a mandate for “change” benefited the Democrats and makes the Republican outcome all the more impressive. Democrats needed to defend one open seat from a recent retirement and pick-up 8 Republican seats to take control.

Veon had controlled the House Democrat campaign process for several cycles but gave much of the strategic and tactical control to “NEW” Democrats (many of them more pro-business) this year: Dan Frankel, now former member Steve Stetler, and Jen Mann. Freshmen Josh Shapiro and Mike Gerber also played major roles recruiting and counseling candidates. The team fielded some truly talented candidates, but surprisingly were more effective against incumbents than in open seats.

Five Republican incumbents were defeated: Mike Diven (Allegheny Co.), Tom Gannon (Delaware Co.), Gene McGill (Montgomery Co.), Matt Wright (BucksCounty), Matt Good (R-Erie). Republicans have lost (at press time) at least four open seats: 42nd in Allegheny County, 77th in Centre County, 125th in Schuylkill County and the 130th in Berks County.

Still in play until the wee hours were the 187th in Berks/Lehigh Counties, 156th in ChesterCounty and the 167th in ChesterCounty. Chester County Republican candidates Duane Milne and Shannon Royer pulled out tight wins. Only about two-thirds of the precincts are listed as counted in the 187th and no results have been posted for hours. If Republican Mantz wins (and assuming PEG has counted correctly), he will allow the GOP to retain the House with a 102 to 101 majority. (Barring party switches.)

With these results 51 lawmakers – 25 percent – of the House of Representatives will be brand new “freshmen” members. Some of the candidates who successfully defeated Republican incumbents in the GOP Primary found it impossible to prevail in the General Election without the pay raise issue on which to base a campaign. At least three of the Republican candidates who defeated incumbents on May 16 went down to defeat on Election Day.

IT WAS ALL ABOUT TURNOUT. Voter turnout had a major impact on the election. Democrats tried hard to nationalize the election as a referendum on President George W. Bush and the war in Iraq – regardless of the office. Republicans hoped to capitalize on the late Speaker “Tip” O’Neill’s admonition that “All elections are local.” Historically, turnout in a non-presidential year when an incumbent governor faces re-election is the lowest “even year” turnout in Pennsylvania. In 1990 and 1998 only about 3 million votes were cast. Voter participation was SIGNIFICANTLY higher in 2006 – an estimated 4 million votes cast. Many Democrats were energized by the thought of taking the US Congress and the Pennsylvania House. But some thought the difficulty in Pennsylvania might be convincing Democrats that they need to vote despite strong polling by Ed Rendell and Bob Casey. Apparently, it wasn’t a problem. On the other hand, going into the election there was anecdotal evidence that conservatives were disheartened and thinking of staying home out of frustration. GOP political operatives hoped they could pump-up turnout with a strong 72-hour GOTV program like that they employed in 2004. Central Pennsylvania turnout was high – suggesting they were successful.