



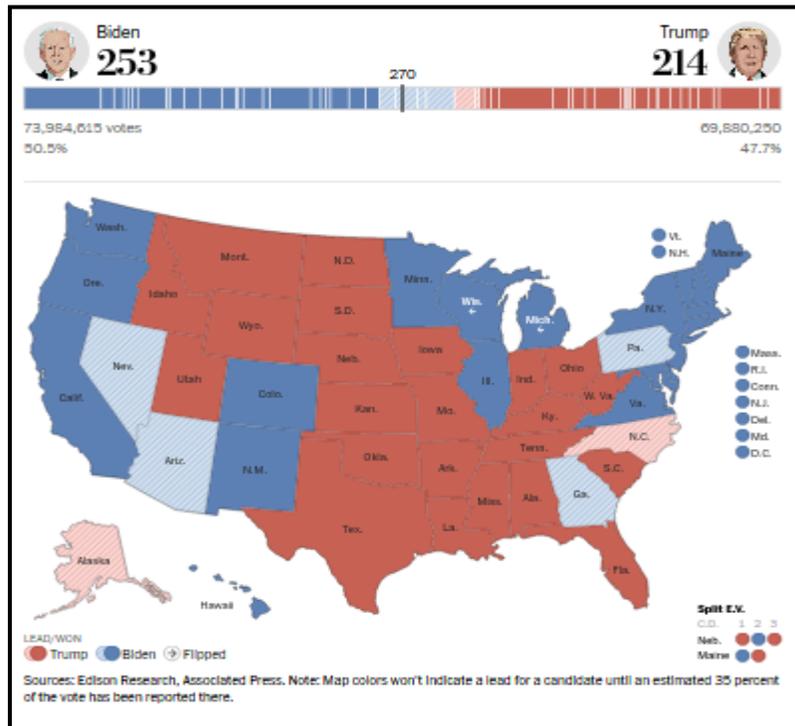
Central Arizona Governments  
 Central Yavapai Metro. Planning Org.  
 Lake Havasu Metro. Planning Org.  
 MetroPlan Greater Flagstaff  
 Northern Arizona Council of Gov'ts.  
 Sierra Vista Metro. Planning Org.  
 Southeastern Arizona Governments Org.  
 Sun Corridor Metro. Planning Org.  
 Western Arizona Council of Gov'ts.  
 Yuma Metropolitan Planning Org.

November 6, 2020

# RTAC LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

## THE ELECTION:

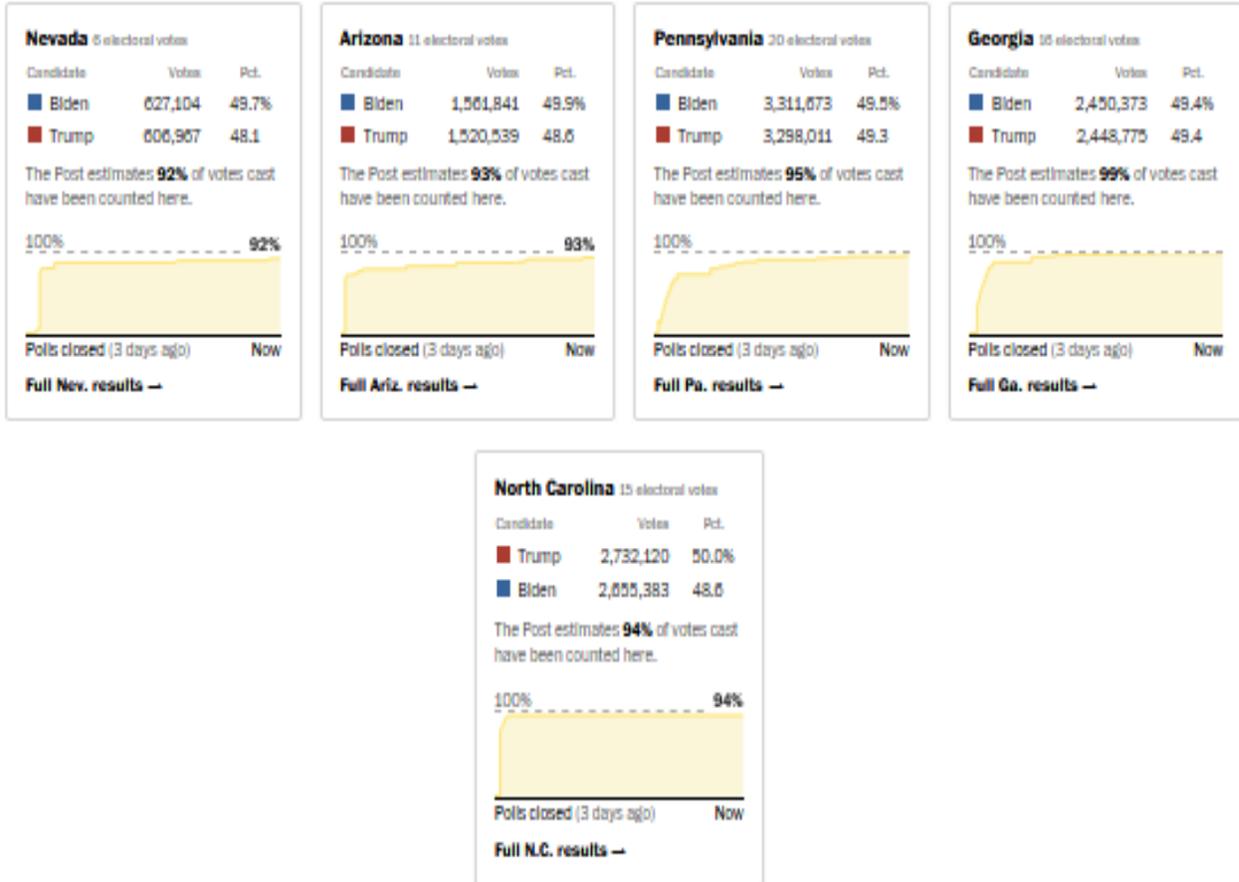
**WHITE HOUSE:** As of 4:00 PM today, November 6th, the electoral vote count stood at 253 to 214 in favor of former Vice President Biden, 17 votes shy of the 270 needed to secure the Presidency. The key undeclared states are Arizona, Georgia, Nevada, North Carolina and Pennsylvania. Vice President Biden has several paths to victory. A win in Pennsylvania or any combination of two of the other four would place him at 270 or higher. With the closing vote counts, the race could be called as early as today. Lawsuits challenging the elections in several states have already been filed and numerous others are anticipated. Due to the close numbers, recounts are also anticipated. The Georgia Secretary of State has already indicated a recount will likely occur there. So, the race could be called as early as today but challenges and recounts could drag out the outcome indefinitely.



Washington Post 11/6/20

The status of the remaining key states as of 1:00 PM on November 6th are:

**States to watch** Here's where the results stand in key states and our estimates of the ballots counted so far. [View details.](#)



Washington Post 11/6/20

**THE U.S. SENATE:** The Senate is currently split 53-47 in favor of Republicans. Based on current projections including the anticipated win of Mark Kelly over incumbent Senator Martha McSally in Arizona, Democrats have secured a net gain of at least one seat.

While all the races have not been called yet, incumbent Republicans Dan Sullivan of Alaska and Thom Tillis of North Carolina are expected to win which would place Republicans on course for a 50-48 majority.

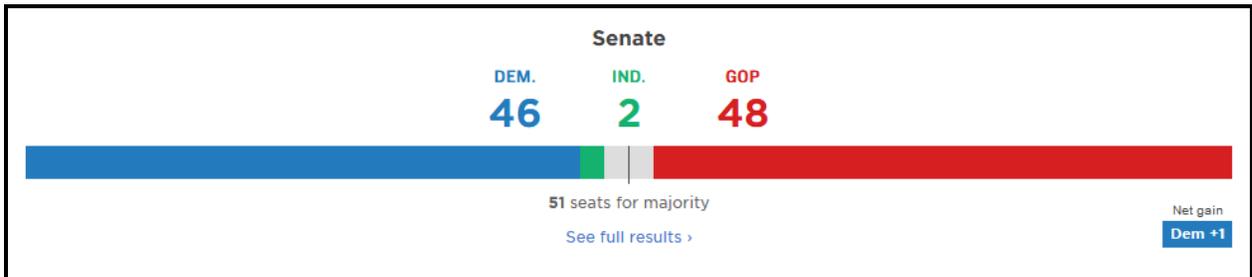
That leaves two seats unresolved, both from Georgia. One is a regularly scheduled election due to the expiring term of Senator David Perdue (R) and the other is due to the early retirement of Senator Johnny Isakson for health reasons last year. Senator Kelly Loeffler (R) was appointed to fill that vacancy until this year's election.

Georgia requires winners to receive a majority of votes cast which will likely not be reached in either race. Senator Perdue came out the leader in his re-election race but with only 49.8% of the vote, setting up a runoff election against the second-highest vote getter, Jon Ossoff, who received

47.8%. The other race was a far more crowded field. Senator Loeffler was the second highest vote getter (26%) and will face Democrat Raphael Warnock (33%) in the runoff.

A runoff election will occur on January 5th potentially delaying a determination of which party will control the Senate until the outcome of that vote. As previously indicated in the White House discussion, Georgia is likely headed for a recount that could alter the Senate numbers as well. The recount could propel Senator Perdue over the 50% mark and to a victory in his race but the other is certainly headed to a runoff.

So, if both Georgia races head to a runoff election, and the Democrats win both, the Senate would be split 50/50. If that's the case, the Vice President would cast the tie breaker vote so the outcome of the Presidential election could also determine the partisan control of the Senate. This scenario will also assure that control of the Senate will remain in limbo for at least another two months.

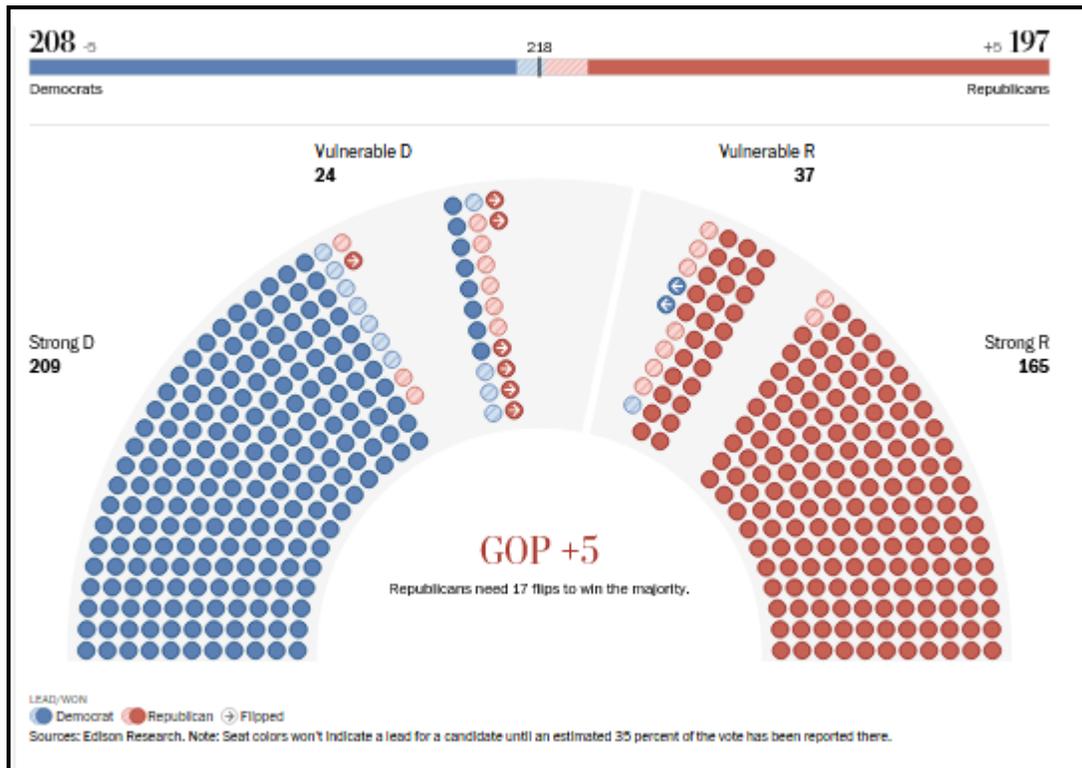


NPR 11/6/20

**THE U.S. HOUSE:** When compared to the White House, Senate and Arizona legislative chambers, the U.S. House was expected to be the least likely for any major partisan shifts. Going into the election, Democrats already had a sizable advantage and were expected to grow that margin. That has not happened. While many races have not been called yet, no Republican incumbents running for re-election have lost and Republicans have already picked up 5 seats previously held by Democrats and are anticipated to pick up more. Democrats are not at risk of losing the 218 seats needed to retain the majority, at least this time. Republicans needed to pick up 17 seats to take control this election. While they are not projected to reach that total, they could cut it roughly in half, setting up a very competitive election for control in 2022.

In Arizona, it appears that all the incumbents will win their re-elections. Representative Schweikert was trailing late on election night but is now roughly 12,000 votes ahead.

Here's how the House election totals shape up for now:



Washington Post 11/6/20

**THE ARIZONA SENATE:** The Arizona Senate currently has a 17-13 Republican advantage. Polling suggested that Democrats had a strong chance of taking the Arizona House and possibly the Senate as well. In fact, late on election night, the vote tallies gave the Democrats a 16-14 majority. Around 2 AM, the vote tallies flipped two of those elections to Republicans reversing the total to a 16-14 Republican majority. While several of the elections are still too close to call, that two-seat advantage for Republicans has held steady since.

Anticipating that they would retain the majority, the Republican senators-elect conducted a caucus meeting on Wednesday and elected their leadership team for the upcoming session:

**SENATE PRESIDENT**

**KAREN FANN**

**SENATE MAJORITY LEADER**

**RICK GRAY**

**SENATE MAJORITY WHIP**

**SONNY BORRELLI**

Senator Fann, the incumbent Senate President, former Chino Valley Mayor and long-time transportation advocate, was expected to receive competition for the leadership post which she apparently fended off. Senator Gray was previously the House Transportation Committee Chairman, playing a major role in the legislative transportation road show across the state, and the transportation revenue task force and study which laid the groundwork for the efforts taken up by his successor, Representative Noel Campbell. Democrats have delayed caucusing to select their leadership team, waiting for more finality to the election outcomes.

**THE ARIZONA HOUSE:** In the 2018 election, Democrats picked up four seats narrowing the Republican lead to a 31-29 majority. It was anticipated that Democrats would continue that trend and possibly take control of the chamber this election which would be the first time that Democrats controlled the Arizona House of Representatives since 1966! As with the Senate, late on election night, the vote tallies had Democrats taking a 31-29 majority. Also, like the Senate, two of those races flipped to the Republicans late that night and have held steady since providing Republicans with a 31-29 advantage – the status quo.

The Republican representatives-elect caucused yesterday and elected the following leadership team:

**SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE**  
**MAJORITY LEADER**  
**MAJORITY WHIP**

**RUSTY BOWERS**  
**BEN TOMA**  
**LEO BIASIUCCI**

As with the Senate, a challenge to the current House leadership team was also anticipated, and like Senate President Fann, the incumbent leader, Speaker Bowers prevailed. While retaining the current leaders will likely provide some stability for both chambers; committee chairmanships and members will be adjusted due to departing and new members. Particularly for the House, the makeup and leadership of the House Transportation Committee will go through substantial reforms. After a tenure of strongly advocating to address the massive levels of underinvestment for our transportation infrastructure, Chairman Campbell opted to not run for re-election. The current Vice-Chairman is Representative Leo Biasiucci. Members in leadership posts are typically not appointed committee chairmanships, so, he is not likely to be the next Transportation Chair.

The House Democrats are also waiting for more definitive election outcomes before caucusing and that leadership race is also expected to be highly contested between current Minority Leader Charlene Fernandez and Representative Diego Espinoza.

## **WHAT'S NEXT:**

- At the state capitol, appointing the committee chairs and then the memberships are the next two major steps after a new legislature elects its leaders. With the potential for some election results to still change, those further decisions could be put off until there is more certainty with the outcomes. Also, while the current race leaders have remained constant since very early Tuesday morning, the 16-14 and 31-29 Republican advantages are the narrowest of margins and it would only take one change to put either chamber in a partisan tie. Arizona Secretary of State Katie Hobbs has indicated that she expects the vote tally to be completed by the end of the weekend.
- In Washington, the Presidential election could be called in a matter of hours but lawsuits and recounts could delay the final outcome. The partisan control of the U.S. Senate currently favors Republicans but could shift depending on the two Georgia races which may not be decided until a January 5th runoff election and who is the Vice President.

- For the immediate legislative agenda, economic growth continues to slow as new COVID-19 cases surge, reinforcing the need for further federal relief funding. On Wednesday, Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell expressed his desire to pass another relief package this calendar year. To date, Senate Republicans have been far less supportive than President Trump and the House. This statement by Majority Leader McConnell suggests a stronger consensus for the need and likely quicker action.
- Also, the federal government is currently funded through a Continuing Resolution that expires on December 11th so the lame duck Congress will need to act prior to then to avoid a government shutdown.