



August 15, 2018

Primary Election Over, on to the General

On Tuesday, August 14, nearly one million voters made it out to the polls in Minnesota and cast their ballot to decide who should be the general election candidate for each political party. With the Democrats and Republicans choosing their standard bearers, the focus of political observers will shift to the general election, to be held on Tuesday, November 6.

According to Minnesota Secretary of State Steve Simon, the 2018 primary election had 902,119 people vote. This is the highest number of voters in a Minnesota primary election since 1982, and the 22.7 percent turnout is the highest ratio in a primary since 1994.

Gubernatorial Race: Johnson v. Walz

Both the Republicans and Democrats had competitive primary races that were decided yesterday. Voters in the Republican primary decided that Hennepin County Commissioner Jeff Johnson will be the general election candidate for their party, besting former two-term Gov. Tim Pawlenty by nearly nine percent of the vote. In the Democratic primary, voters opted for six-term U.S. Rep. Tim Walz, who defeated current Attorney General Lori Swanson and DFL-endorsed candidate and sitting state Rep. Erin Murphy (DFL-St. Paul). Rep. Murphy is not running for re-election to the state House.

View the [gubernatorial electoral results](#) on the secretary of state's website.

U.S. Senate Primary Races: Klobuchar v. Newberger; Smith v. Housley

It is highly unusual for a state to elect two U.S. Senators in the same election cycle, but that is what Minnesota voters will do in November. Both DFL

incumbents coasted to victory in their primary races with relative ease, with Sen. Amy Klobuchar receiving 95 percent of her party's support and Sen. Tina Smith, who was appointed in January 2018 following the resignation of Al Franken, receiving 76 percent of the vote following a challenge from Richard Painter, a former White House ethics lawyer. On the Republican side, two sitting state legislators received their party's nomination for U.S. Senate. State Rep. Jim Newberger (R-Becker) will face Klobuchar in November, while state Sen. Karin Housley (R-St. Mary's Point) will square off against Smith.

View the [complete results of all U.S. Senate primary elections](#) on the secretary of state's website.

Attorney General: Ellison v. Wardlow

When Lori Swanson decided to forgo a fourth term as the state's attorney general to instead run as a DFL candidate for governor, a number of prominent Minnesota Democrats decided to run for the office. Party-endorsed candidate Matt Pelikan, state Rep. Debra Hilstrom (DFL-Brooklyn Center), Department of Commerce Commissioner Mike Rothman and Ramsey County Attorney Tom Foley were all defeated by U.S. Rep. Keith Ellison, who received nearly 50 percent of the vote in a crowded field. Ellison will face off against Doug Wardlow, an attorney and former state representative. Wardlow received his party's endorsement in June and fended off two challengers to be the Republican-nominated candidate.

View the [complete results of the attorney general primary elections](#) on the secretary of state's website.

Congressional Races

Minnesota has eight congressional districts, meaning eight members are elected to the U.S. House of Representatives every two years. In this election cycle, almost every district will be competitive in the general election — so there has been increased focus on the primary election over the summer.

When Congressman Tim Walz announced he was running for governor, it meant that his district would become an open seat and therefore much more competitive for Republicans, who would not have to face a popular incumbent. Jim Hagedorn, a Republican who challenged Walz in the last two general elections, was able to defeat sitting state Senator Carla Nelson (R-Rochester) to become the Republican nominated candidate for congress. He will face Democrat Dan Feehan in the general election. Sen. Nelson will remain in her seat in the state senate.

Keith Ellison's decision to run for attorney general caused a significant ripple effect. First-term state Rep. Ilhan Omar (DFL-Minneapolis) decided to run for congress instead of re-election to the state house. Omar faced stiff competition from sitting state senators Patricia Torres Ray (DFL-Minneapolis) and Bobby Joe Champion (DFL-Minneapolis) and former Speaker of the Minnesota House of Representatives Margaret Anderson Kelliher. Omar received nearly 50 percent of the vote in the primary, and will likely ascend to congress in the heavily DFL-leaning congressional district.

On the Iron Range, voters in the DFL primary elected former state Rep. Joe Radinovich as the DFL-nominated candidate to replace outgoing Congressman Rick Nolan. Radinovich received nearly 50 percent of the vote on his way to defeating current state Rep. Jason Metsa (DFL-Virginia) and journalist Michelle Lee. Radinovich will face Republican Pete Stauber, a two-term St. Louis County commissioner, in the general election.

View the complete results of the [congressional primary elections](#).

Minnesota House of Representatives

There were 22 primary races with multiple candidates in the Minnesota House of Representatives. While not much is known statewide about each individual candidate in the state House races, these elections can greatly impact state policy and politics. Republicans currently hold a 20-seat majority in that chamber, meaning it will be an uphill battle for the Democratic Party to make up enough ground to close that gap. The impact of these primary elections will become clearer as the general election date draws closer.

View the [complete results of all Minnesota House of Representatives](#) primary elections or use the [legislative district map](#) to find results in particular areas (note: not all state House districts had primary elections).

Don't know your legislative district? Find out on the [Who Represents Me?](#) webpage.

They Said It

"When you vote at a polling place, today or ever, be sure to thank your election judges for their service. It takes over 30,000 of them to put on an election in Minnesota."

- Steve Simon, Minnesota Secretary of State

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