2026

# Minnesota Election Update

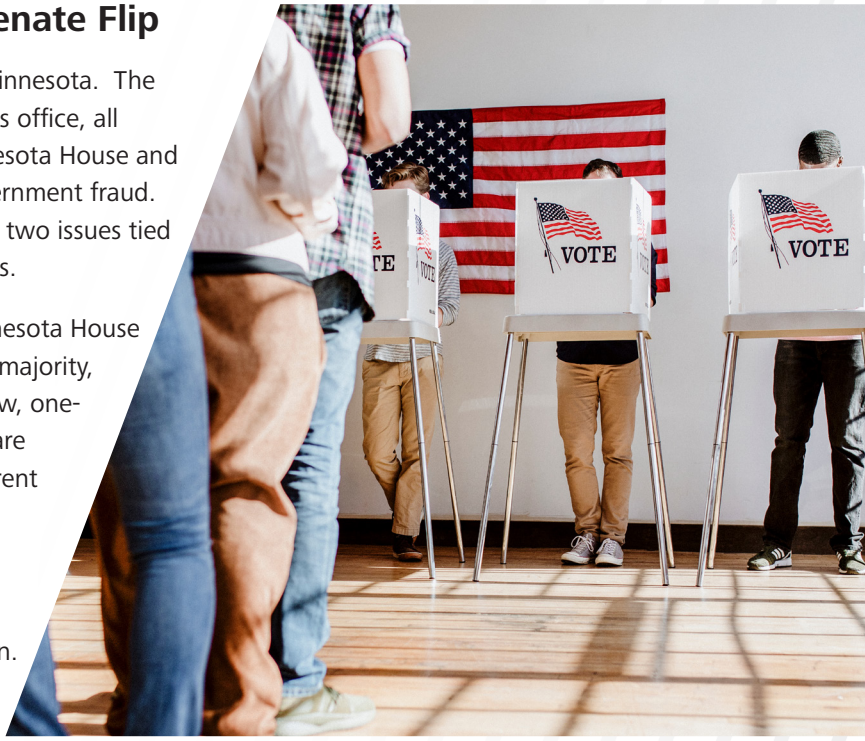
Taft/ Advisors LLC

## DFL Sweep in MN, U.S. House and Senate Flip

The national blue wave of Democrat wins carried into Minnesota. The Democrat Farmer Labor party ("DFL") won the Governor's office, all constitutional offices, and took the majority in the Minnesota House and Senate. Republicans tried to tie Democrats to state government fraud. The poor economy and ICE's Metro Surge activities were two issues tied to President Trump and ultimately Minnesota Republicans.

Strong voter turnout produced decisive results. The Minnesota House jumped from an evenly divided chamber to a 77-57 DFL majority, while Senate Democrats expanded their previously narrow, one-seat advantage to an astonishing 39-28 majority. There are several recounts pending, and these numbers reflect current standings.

Pending an anticipated recount, there was one upset in Minnesota's Congressional delegation, with incumbent Republican Brad Finstad falling to Democrat Jake Johnson.




## Governor's Race

DFL Governor-elect Amy Klobuchar defeated Republican Lisa Demuth with 55 percent of the vote to Demuth's 43 percent, underscoring the strength of the Democratic wave.

Every part of the state leaned more DFL than in 2024. While Demuth won many parts of greater Minnesota, Klobuchar overwhelmingly prevailed in the metro-area where the majority of votes are cast. Klobuchar also won in the arrowhead and in southeastern Minnesota.

Klobuchar's victory marked a historic milestone: the election of Minnesota's first female governor. Despite a long history of women serving in prominent leadership roles—including an unbroken succession of female lieutenant governors since 1983—Minnesota has never elected a woman to its highest office.



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## MN House Results

Winner:
**DFL Majority**

Aside from a pending recount in District 32A, the DFL will have a 20-seat majority going into the 2027 legislative session. The DFL held off all challenges to incumbent members, giving them a majority of 77 to the Republicans 57. The caucus will welcome 20 new members and have 57 incumbents returning.

The DFL will be operating with a much larger margin than their last trifecta, where they only held 70 total seats. These margins are driven by gains in more moderate districts, but it remains to be seen if the caucus will be as progressive as they were in the 2023-2024 biennium.

House Republicans had several surprising upsets last night, including some suburban races previously considered to be likely GOP holds. Greater Minnesota also saw surprise flips from Republican to DFL in areas like St. Cloud, Winona, and Cloquet. The Republican Caucus will include 13 new members and 44 returning incumbent legislators.

## MN Senate Results

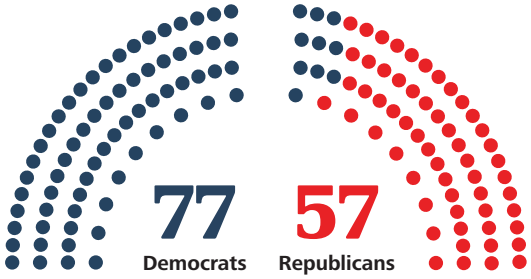
Winner:
**DFL Majority**

The Minnesota Senate will also have a DFL majority, with Democrats flipping six seats out of GOP control. One surprise for the DFL is a pending recount in District 4 where incumbent DFL Senator Rob Kupec lost to the GOP challenger by four votes. Assuming the election results all stand, the DFL will have a 39-28 majority, welcoming 14 new members and seeing 25 incumbents winning reelection.

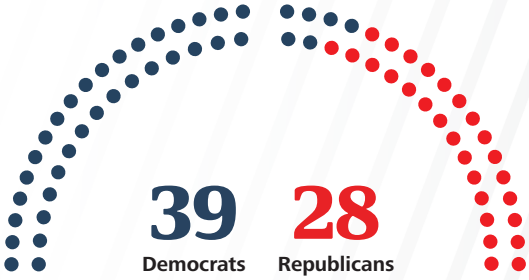
Senate Republicans will return to the legislature with 28 seats, including GOP Senator Karin Housley who is facing a recount in District 33, which she won by 42 votes. The caucus will have eight new members and 20 incumbents who won their re-election bids.

The Senate GOP also had surprising upsets in districts that historically lean or are likely GOP holds. Districts in Blaine, Rochester, Maple Grove, Northfield, and Shakopee all saw flips from GOP to DFL.

### Minnesota House of Representatives




### Minnesota Senate




All four caucuses will meet in the coming weeks to determine chamber leadership positions, along with committee structure, chair assignments, and membership makeup. Topics heard on the campaign trail are likely to spill into policymaking as the legislature returns in January. Along with setting the biennial state budget, we can expect fraud, healthcare, affordability, and actions by the federal government to be part of the discussion next session.

## U.S. Congress

In this year's midterm election, voters delivered a strong message to President Trump. His low approval ratings caused down ballot ripple effects that negatively impacted GOP candidates. The cost of living, the Iran war, and immigration enforcement are among the factors that drove voters to the polls in large numbers.

## Minnesota Angle

### Senate:

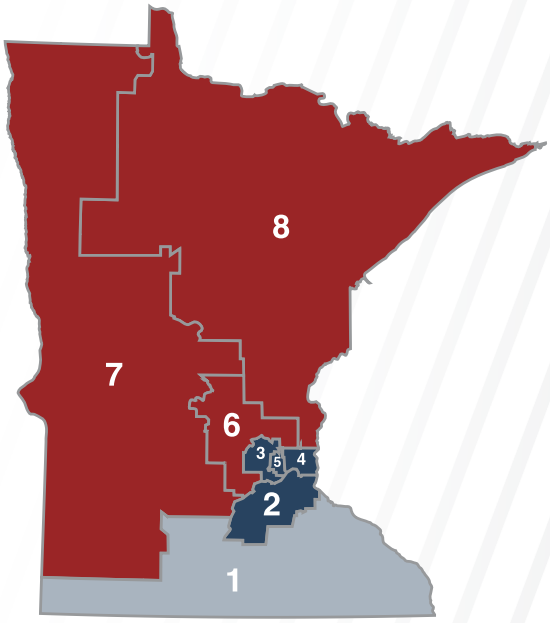
Lieutenant Governor, now Senator-elect, Peggy Flanagan secured a decisive victory, defeating former sports broadcaster Michele Tafoya by just over 10 points. She will be the first Native American woman to represent Minnesota in the U.S. Senate and potentially the first in the country. Tafoya led in early returns, but the race shifted decisively toward Flanagan when metro counties reported vote totals.

### House:

Democrat Jake Johnson flipped CD1, currently represented by Brad Finstad, by less than 350 votes, pending a recount. Southern Minnesota has been hit especially hard by high diesel prices and federal trade policies. Johnson is a Rochester based teacher who is a newcomer to politics.

In CD2, Matt Little won comfortably, defeating current State Senator Eric Pratt 57% to 42%. Strong turnout in CD2 helped fuel DFL victories down ballot in the state legislature. CD2 has shifted consistently more democratic over the past couple election cycles.

Republicans retained CD6 (55-44%), CD7 (65-35%), and CD8 (53-46%). Democrats retained CD3 (64-35%), CD4 (73-26%) and CD5 (76-16%).




*Midterms are viewed as referendums on the party in power. These elections ended the Republican trifecta control in Washington. A divided government will require dealmaking and compromises if lawmakers intend to deliver on campaign promises.*

## National Angle

### US House

House Democrats appear likely to secure their largest majority since the 1990s. Republican-led mid-cycle redistricting efforts appeared to backfire, with Democrats making substantial gains in redrawn districts in Texas, Florida, and North Carolina. Across the country, congressional Republicans suffered devastating losses amid the Democratic surge.

### US Senate

Democrats flipped seven Senate seats; South Carolina, North Carolina, Texas, Kansas, Iowa, Maine & Ohio with more races still too close to call. Together, these gains marked a sweeping setback for the GOP, with Democratic breakthroughs extending into traditionally conservative states. The GOP did not flip any seats in the Senate.

## Minnesota Attorney General

Winner:
**Keith Ellison**

DFL incumbent Keith Ellison won reelection as Minnesota Attorney General, securing a third term, by a margin of 54% – 46% over Ron Schutz. He campaigned on the offices continued emphasis on consumer protection, affordability, fraud enforcement, and legal challenges to federal actions. This continues the DFL streak in the office, which the party has held since 1971.

## Minnesota Secretary of State

Winner:
**Steve Simon**

DFL incumbent Steve Simon won reelection as Minnesota Secretary of State, securing a fourth term. He defeated Tad Jude 55% – 42%. Simon campaigned on protecting voter access and data privacy while increasing transparency and clarity in election administration. His reelection signals continuity in the office's leadership, with further work on voter information and election procedures his stated priorities.

## Minnesota State Auditor

Winner:
**Zack Filipovich**

DFL candidate Zack Filipovich won the race for Minnesota State Auditor, succeeding Julie Blaha, who did not seek reelection. Filipovich defeated former State Senator and Gubernatorial candidate Scott Jensen by a margin of 53% – 44%. An accountant and former Duluth City Council member, Filipovich campaigned on strengthening local government financial oversight, improving internal controls, and providing communities with additional technical assistance. His stated agenda emphasizes proactive fraud prevention, timely audits, and greater transparency in the use of local taxpayer dollars. This continues the DFL streak of holding the office, when they took control in the 2006 election.

## Bottom Line

The national blue wave didn't stop at the shores of Minnesota. Total turnout is estimated to be over 2.8 million voters, an increase of over 300,000 voters compared to 2022. All DFL statewide candidates won by at least 8.5 points, shocking pollsters who had the races much closer.

Republicans campaigned on fraud in state programs and public safety. Some thought these issues would dull the effects of the DFL messages regarding the weakening economy and the President's policies which included Metro Surge. The impact on Minnesota voters of Operation Metro Surge were felt deeply, with many voters pointing specifically to the treatment of Minnesota by ICE as a primary motivating factor in their vote.

This new DFL trifecta will begin session in a different environment than the last DFL trifecta in 2023-facing a new, more moderate governor and building a state budget with limited resources. Caucuses will begin organizing Thursday and another budget setting session will begin on January 12, 2027.




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