


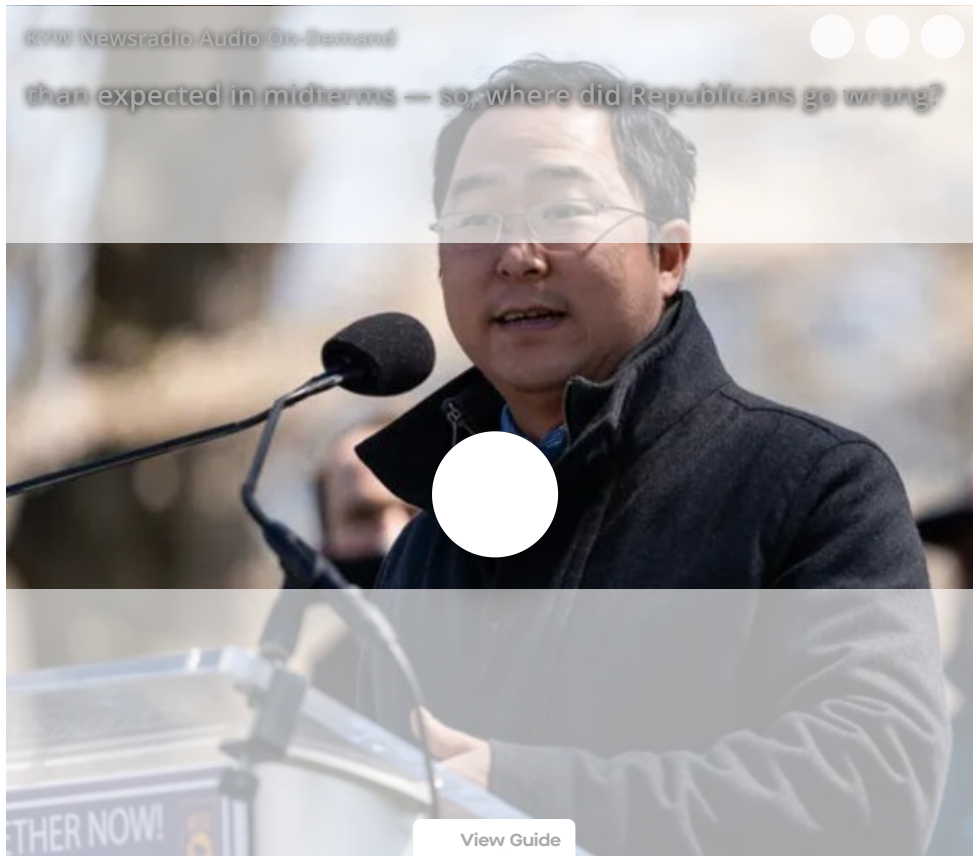
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 KYW NEWSRADIO NEWS LOCAL

NJ Dems did better than expected in midterms – so, where did Republicans go wrong?



11:00am

12:00pm

Live

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Philadelphia's Midday News With I

Aired 11:00am To 12:00pm EST

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Micah Rasmussen, director of the Rebovich Institute at Rider University, said 28,000 more Democrats than Republicans had voted early. Rasmussen says Healey only clawed back a fraction of those votes on Election Day.

Incumbent Democrats held steady in Camden, Burlington and Atlantic counties, and Rep. Donald Norcross easily won his rematch with Clair Gustafson.

"Democrats banked a lot of votes early and, for whatever reason, same-day turnout was a little less than expected, and the fact is, incumbents generally win," said John Froomjian, director of the Hughes Center for Public Policy at Stockton University.

He says the Republican playbook has been encouraging in person voting on Election Day while failing to embrace early voting and VBM — and it's proving to be a huge disadvantage for Republicans both locally and nationally.

"I'm interested in seeing if there's a wholesale reevaluation of that strategy and that thinking going forward," Froomjian said. "And the Republicans' concentration on claims of voter fraud is really hurting the party."

Froomjian points to "Trumpism" for this mentality, and nationwide, some of Trump's chosen ones didn't have a great night.

Rasmussen says Republicans in New Jersey are already at a significant voter registration disadvantage in most parts of the state, so they needed to have a huge turnout on Election Day. Turns out, this year was about average in that regard.

"They are fired up. They are working hard. But they are out-spent and they are outnumbered," Rasmussen said of Republicans in Jersey.

Froomjian thinks there could have also been some over-confidence on the Republican side, both from candidates and voters, though that's more of a national issue that may have had a trickle down effect on enthusiasm.

"In Washington, there were Republicans talking about who was going to be in their leadership, talking about their plans for holding investigations, and maybe even reviewing social security and Medicare," Froomjian said. "And I think that kind of reinforced for many people that 'well maybe they don't need my vote, this is going to be a wipeout.'"

Republicans did show up in Cumberland County, taking control of the commissioners office there, and the GOP is dominating areas near the shore. Congressmen Chris Smith and Jeff Van Drew coasted to victory, and Froomjian said state Sen. Michael Testa is a very effective leader for South Jersey Republicans.

And Rep. Tom Malinowski lost his congressional seat to Republican Tom Kean Jr. in the newly drawn 7th district, making New Jersey's congressional contingent nine Democrats and three Republicans.

Technical difficulties

We are also still waiting to hear what happened with the brand-new voting equipment in Mercer County that went down on Election Day. Rasmussen says it could be that the counting machines weren't scanning ballots properly because of an issue with the type of ink used on the voting machines.

"One of the things we see in New Jersey constantly is new equipment, new processes, new requirements. ... You're saying to these county boards of elections, 'Here's something else you have to do differently, and here's something else you have to do flawlessly, and execute it right the first time.' At some point, that's going to catch up with us," Rasmussen said. "At some point, somebody is going to miss something."

County officials say the ballots are secure, and each one will be counted.

[2022 Election](#) [Andy Kim](#)

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