Seats flip and climates change as midterm results are cemented

By CLAIRE JOHNSON
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Tuesday's election results swept over the nation with an unexpected wave of blue.

In Cabell County, several key races pushed Democrats to the top.

In the race for County Commissioner, Tia Rumbaugh, current City Council member, beat out incumbent John Mandt. Her win comes in the wake of Mandt's choice to leave out several organizations from levy funding, resulting in calls for greater budget transparency. Rumbaugh's plans include increased public involvement in budget decision-making through accessible public meetings.

In the West Virginia House of Delegates, a new Democrat joined the ranks, representing District 24. Steve Williams defeated incumbent Republican Patrick Lucas for the seat. Williams brings to his position experience as a former representative from 1987-94, and former Mayor of Huntington. Williams plans to focus on the creation of jobs and keeping young people in the state.

A tight race kept members of District Five on their toes, but DuRon Jackson came through over Chris Miller for the West Virginia Senate seat. Jackson has stated plans to improve four main issues: economic development, education, healthcare and housing.

Overall, West Virginia saw the House and Senate minority shift. The state House now has 21 Democratic seats compared to the previous nine. Democrats in the state Senate gained two more seats, reaching a total of four. The new numbers allow democrats to push for previously unattainable goals like voting transparency and bill amendment.

Despite the flipped regions, West Virginia maintains a sweeping red hue.

Carol Miller defended her U.S. House seat for District One against Democrat Vince George. Her win marks her fifth term as a WV representative. Miller has stated her plans to diversify the West Virginia economy and increase job creation.

Shelley Moore Capito also defended her seat in the U.S. Senate against Morgantown native and Democrat Rachel Fetty Anderson. Capito has served West Virginia in a variety of roles, including West Virginia State Delegate, U.S. House Representative, and U.S. Senator since 2014.

While any election holds uncertainty, these midterms had their fair share of surprise. For Marshall History professor Joshua Kluever, the most shocking results were national.

"The most surprising results have to be the Democratic Party's overwhelming victories in US Senate races," Kluever said. "Democrats flipped, as of Wednesday morning they managed to flip seven seats…Historically, seven seats is already the most accomplished in one cycle."

For a state moored in conservative ideals, the newest democratic swing poses questions about political satisfaction. Kluever believes these results demonstrate unrest with the current political climate.

"The results in Cabell County indicate a growing feeling of disapproval with the status quo in West Virginia and nationally. Senator Shelly Moore Capito won the county by less than 50% of the vote. There was a 30% swing towards the Democratic Party in comparison to the 2024 election," said Kluever. "What that signifies for future agendas in the county is unclear, but it might indicate strong support for local campaigns such as the opposition to Flock cameras."

Despite losing some seats, the West Virginia Republican Party still celebrated their many wins across the state. In particular, the party announced its win on the voter approval of Amendment 1, the Citizenship Requirement to Vote in West Virginia Elections Amendment, which was voted on by the public.

"Tonight West Virginians made it clear that our elections belong to American citizens, and only American citizens," said West Virginia Republican Party Chairman Josh Holstein, quoted in a November 3rd Press Release by the West Virginia Republican Party.

"Voting is one of the most sacred rights we have, and every legal vote deserves to be protected. By putting this protection in our Constitution, West Virginia voters have m ade sure no court, no bureaucrat and no future politician can open our elections to non-citizens. I want to thank the Legislature for putting this question before the people and every West Virginian who voted to safeguard our elections," said Holstein.

The election results of Cabell County, West Virginia, and the nation have, at the very least, edged the current political course. As the new terms unfold, the American people now wait and watch as their votes become action.

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The U.S. Capitol is seen a day after the midterm elections, Wednesday Nov. 4, 2026, in Washington. (AP Photo/Mariam Zuhaib)

Cont. from page 1

Healthcare grant

The foundation was established to repurpose the former Calhoun County High School, a building constructed in 1921 that closed in 1998. The campus, now known as Avalon, is intended to serve as a center for economic and workforce development.

According to the foundation's website, Calhoun County has appeared on the Appalachian Regional Commission's economically distressed list for more than 40 consecutive years.

The challenges facing Calhoun County reflect broader concerns across rural Appalachia, where access to career training, transportation and childcare can affect residents' ability to find stable employment. At the same time, essential services such as healthcare need qualified workers to serve local populations.

By offering training and financial support, the initiative aims to help residents pursue healthcare careers while addressing staffing needs among rural healthcare providers.

The foundation is developing Avalon as a broader community investment, with existing projects including Appleseed, a preschool and childcare center and KOIOS, a K-12 STEM academy. The healthcare training program will add adult workforce development to the campus's efforts to expand educational and economic opportunities.

The federal award will not resolve the region's longstanding economic challenges on its own. However, it provides resources for a locally driven effort to connect residents with career training while strengthening the workforce needed to sustain rural communities.

Through Avalon and Onward Upward, The 1982 Foundation is working to transform a former center of community education into a resource for the region's economic future.

The Parthenon reached out to the 1982 Foundation for comment, but could not be reached in time for publication.

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