

Jacob Stampen: Was there a Blue Wave in Wisconsin?

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Results of Wisconsin's November 2018 elections were nearly identical to the results of the elections two years earlier. Despite talk about a "blue wave," there was only a hint of improvement for Wisconsin Democrats. The margins of incumbent victories either remained similar (22) or grew larger (11). On the Republican side, 33 remained similar, 18 became tighter, but still greater than 60%, and only four margins became wider.

Other than Caleb Frostman (D- Sturgeon Bay), who won a low turnout special election in June, there were no incumbent defeats by members of either party in the Assembly or the Senate. Winners in 94 of the 99 November 2018 Assembly elections received more than 53% of the votes in their districts. There were only five closer elections, four won by Republicans and one by a Democrat. Of the 13 races in the Senate only three were won by less than 53%, of these two were Democrats and one was a Republican.

In the Assembly, of 36 Democrats, 34 were incumbents. Only seven of the incumbents' races were contested and four were won by more than 70%. The average margin of victory in the three more contested elections was 59%. Only two Democrats were elected for the first time. Their margins of victory were 48% and 67%.

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Of the 63 Republicans running for seats in the Assembly, 55 were incumbents. Eight received more than 70% of the votes cast in their districts. 47 won closer elections.

The average margin of victory in the more contested elections was 62%. Eight new Republicans were elected. Their average margin of victory was 56%.

In the Senate, 6 of the members up for election were Democrats, five were incumbents. Two received more than 70% of the votes in their districts. The margins of victory for the remaining three averaged 61%. The only first-time Democratic Senator won with 52% of his district's vote.

All nine of the Republican Senators up for election were incumbents. Two won by more than 70%. The remaining 7 averaged 58%. The average margin of victory for the two remaining Republican senators was 53%.

-Stampen is professor emeritus of educational leadership and policy analysis at UW-Madison.