KRIEG DEVAULT

Insights

Take Five: Election Preview - 5 Things you Need to Know About Indiana Government - October 2022

October 25, 2022

By: Amy M. Levander, Amy E. Schwarz, and Bianca Mizimakoski

1. US Senate

Early voting in Indiana has already begun and the 2022 midterms are just two weeks away. In the US Senate race, incumbent Senator Todd Young (R) is facing five-term Hammond Mayor Tom McDermott (D) and behavior therapist James Sceniak (Libertarian). Public polling in the race suggests that Senator Young will be victorious on election night, and the race has not attracted the level of national attention that Indiana saw in 2018 when then-incumbent Senator Joe Donnelly (D) ultimately lost to current Senator Mike Braun (R).

2. Congress

The most competitive Congressional race this year is in Northwest Indiana's Congressional District 1, where incumbent Congressman Frank Mrvan (D) is running against veteran Jennifer-Ruth Green (R) in a tight race attracting national attention from both sides of the aisle. Other races of note include Congressional District 2, where new Congressman Rudy Yakym (R) is expected to prevail after winning a caucus to finish the late Congresswoman Jackie Walorski's term and replace her on the ballot, and Congressional District 9, where former State Senator Erin Houchin won a crowded May primary and is positioned to win on Election Day. All other incumbents, including central Indiana's Congressman Andre Carson (CD 7), Congressman Greg Pence (CD 6), and Congresswoman Victoria Spartz (CD 5), are expected to win re-election handily.

3. Secretary of State

One of the most competitive races in Indiana this year is the race for Secretary of State. Businessman and veteran Diego Morales (R) was victorious in a close race against incumbent Secretary of State Holli Sullivan at the Republican state convention in June and now faces Army Reserve Lieutenant Colonel and attorney Destiny Wells (D) and Libertarian entrepreneur Jeff Maurer in the general election. Throughout the race, Morales has been the subject of controversies including having been previously fired from the Secretary of State's office, unanswered questions about his military record, two allegations of inappropriate sexual behavior, and not attending any public debates. Polling indicates that Wells is tied with Morales, giving the Democrats their best chance at winning the office since 1990.

4. State Senate

Half of the Indiana State Senate is up for election in November, and both parties seek strategic pickups against the backdrop of a 39-11 Republican supermajority. The most competitive seats are in suburban Indianapolis and Hamilton County, where Fishers City Councilwoman Jocelyn Vare (D-Fishers) is running against incumbent Sen. Kyle Walker (R-Indianapolis) in Senate District 31 and Dr. Alex Choi (R-Zionsville) is running against incumbent Sen. J.D. Ford (D-Indianapolis) in Senate District 29. Both of these seats reflect the political changes that suburban areas have undergone across the country. There is another cluster of competitive races in Northwest Indiana, where incumbent Sens. Michael Griffith (D-Highland) in Senate District 1 and Rodney Pol (D-Chesterton) in Senate District 4, who were both caucused into their seats, face challengers in Dan Dernulc (R-Highland) and Jeff Larson (R-Chesterton), respectively. These two races are within the geography of the contested Congressional District 1, so the results in that contest will likely affect these down-ballot races.

5. State House

With all 100 seats in the Indiana House on the ballot this November, Democrats hope to prevail in enough races to at least undo the current 71-29 GOP supermajority. As in the Senate, the most competitive seats are in the suburban areas around Indianapolis. In House District 39, longtime incumbent Jerry Torr (R- Carmel) is running against Democrat Matt McNally, while incumbent Donna Schaibley (R- Carmel) is running in neighboring House District 24 against Democrat Joey Mayer and Independent Ken Tucker. Democrats also hope to pick up a seat in the new House District 32, which includes southern Hamilton County and northern Marion County, and the new House District 25 in Hendricks County. Several Republican-held seats in northern Indiana are also in in play. In the South Bend area, five-term incumbent Dale DeVon (R- Granger) is running against Democrat Heidi Beidinger. There are also two rematches from 2020 House races, which feature Rep. Jake Teshka (R-South Bend) against former Representative Ross Deal (D-South Bend) in House District 7 and Rep. Julie Olthoff (R- Crown Point) against former Representative Lisa Beck (D-Crown Point) in House District 19.

Disclaimer. The contents of this article should not be construed as legal advice or a legal opinion on any specific facts or circumstances. The contents are intended for general informational purposes only, and you are urged to consult with counsel concerning your situation and specific legal questions you may have.