9CHNET ACTION NEWS
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FROM THE EDITOR

The Autopsy of 2026

You didn't sea and you drowned. Tsunami.

That is the editor's note, and it is the whole story in eight words. For months this country was told a red wave was coming. The water that actually arrived was blue, and it covered the House, the Senate and a majority of the governorships.

This is a pro-America, pro-results outlet. Results include the nights that go against you. As of November 8, 2026, five days after the November 3 election, the picture is not mixed and it is not close. It was a repudiation. Some races are still uncalled. They can change the final margin. They cannot change who will gavel in the 120th Congress.

What follows is an autopsy: how many seats flipped, ten reasons the map broke, how 2026 compares with other midterm routs, and what the President said on the trail versus what he said when the returns came in. Every number and every quote is linked. Check them yourself.

Chief of Staff, 9chnet Action News

IN THIS ISSUE

01 What flipped: House, Senate, governors
02 Ten reasons the GOP lost
03 2026 against other midterm waves
04 What he said vs. what happened

D+42	D+7	5	38%	63%
HOUSE NET GAIN (AP/FOX, 19 RACES UNCALLED)	SENATE NET GAIN (2 RACES UNCALLED)	GOVERNORSHIPS DEMOCRATS HAVE FLIPPED	TRUMP ELECTION DAY APPROVAL (NBC)	SAID THE IRAN WAR WAS THE WRONG DECISION

01 THE SCORECARD

What Flipped on November 3

House, Senate and governors, as counted on November 8, 2026. Uncalled races are marked as uncalled.

254	54	28-20
DEMOCRATIC HOUSE SEATS, AP/FOX	DEMOCRATIC SENATE SEATS, INCL. 2 INDEPENDENTS	GOVERNORS, D-R, WITH 2 UNCALLED

The House

Republicans walked into Tuesday defending a narrow House majority. They walked out without it. Fox News, citing Associated Press counts updated November 8 at 9:30 p.m. Eastern, shows Democrats with 254 seats, a net gain of 42, and Republicans with 162, a net loss of 42. Democrats have flipped 44 seats. Republicans have flipped 2. That leaves 19 of 435 races uncalled.

Decision Desk HQ has the same Democratic total, 254, and Republicans at 161, with 20 seats still outstanding, and the same net: Democrats plus 42, Republicans minus 42, with 44 Democratic pickups and 2 Republican pickups. CBS News projected Democratic control on election night. The remaining races can still move the final margin. They cannot move the majority. Democrats needed a net of only a handful of seats. They have already many times that.

The Senate

The upper chamber is the sharper shock. CBS News and The Guardian both show Democrats at 54 seats, a net gain of 7, and Republicans at 44, a net loss of 7. Those Democratic totals include two independents who caucus with Democrats. Two races remain uncalled, both Republican-held seats: Alaska and Mississippi. Even if Republicans hold both, Democrats will organize the Senate.

The seven called flips, compiled by Ballotpedia, all came out of Republican hands: Iowa, where Josh Turek defeated Ashley Hinson; Kansas, where Adam Hamilton defeated Sen. Roger Marshall, the first Democratic Senate victory there since 1932; Maine, where Troy Jackson defeated Sen. Susan Collins; North Carolina, where Roy Cooper defeated Michael Whatley; Ohio, where former Sen. Sherrod Brown defeated Sen. Jon Husted in a special election; South Carolina, where Annie Andrews defeated Sen. Darline Graham; and Texas, where James Talarico defeated Ken Paxton, the first Democrat to win a statewide race in Texas since the 1990s.

Governors and the states

Republicans entered the night with a 26 to 24 edge in governorships. NBC News reports Democrats flipped five: Georgia (Keisha Lance Bottoms), Iowa (Rob Sand), Nevada (Aaron Ford), Ohio (Amy Acton) and Texas, where Gina Hinojosa defeated three-term GOP Gov. Greg Abbott. NPR says that is enough for Democrats to hold a majority of governorships for the first time since 2010. Decision Desk HQ has the running total at Democrats 28, Republicans 20, with two races still outstanding.

Ballotpedia, in a November 6 snapshot, recorded a Democratic net gain of 12 state legislative chambers, with 2 chambers then still uncalled, and said Democrats had won a plurality of state government trifectas for the first time since before the 2010 elections. Those down-ballot figures can still move as canvasses finish. The direction has not.

“The remaining races can change the margin. They cannot change who holds the gavel.”

02 THE CHECKLIST

Ten Reasons the GOP Lost

What voters said, not what consultants wished they had said. Each item is sourced.

FIELD NOTES

Ten Reasons the GOP Lost

Autopsy checklist · Midterms of November 3, 2026 · Read against the returns

- [x] **01 The checkout line beat the stump speech.**
  CBS News reported that 89 percent of voters said cost of living was a major or crucial factor in their votes. In the NBC News Exit Poll, 88 percent were concerned about food and groceries, 87 percent about gas and diesel, and just under 8 in 10 said inflation was causing hardship for their families. The economy was the top issue, named by 39 percent.

- [x] **02 Voters blamed this White House, not the last one.**
  About two-thirds of voters in the AP Voter Poll said President Trump's own policies had fueled inflation. NBC found that 65 percent said his policies had made the economy worse and 62 percent said he was responsible for high prices. The argument that this was still Joe Biden's fault did not land.

- [x] **03 The tariffs showed up in the price of everything.**
  Sixty-five percent of voters said the President's tariff policies had hurt the national economy. That is not a Beltway talking point. It is how the people who voted described the trade war at the grocery store and the pump.

04 The Iran war was a drag, and the Vice President said so.

Sixty-three percent said the United States made the wrong decision in taking military action against Iran. Reuters reported that anger over the war's role in pushing the cost of living higher helped Democrats take the Senate. The next day, Vice President JD Vance wrote, "The reason we lost is the war." When your own vice president names the cause, the autopsy does not have to guess.

05 A 38 percent president cannot carry a midterm map.

Trump's Election Day job approval among voters was 38 percent in the NBC News Exit Poll, the lowest for any sitting president on Election Day since 2008. CBS called that historically low for a midterm president. Presidents in that range do not get the benefit of the doubt. They get the bill.

06 It was a referendum, whether anyone wanted one or not.

Forty-three percent of voters said they cast their House ballot to express opposition to Trump. Only 16 percent said they voted to express support for him. That anti-Trump share was higher than in 2018, his first midterm.

07 Young voters left, and they left in a hurry.

After moving toward Trump in 2024, voters under 30 swung sharply back. The AP Voter Poll found Democratic House candidates winning about 70 percent of that group, against about 30 percent for Republicans. Young voters were also more likely than older voters to say their House vote was cast against the President.

08 Hispanic voters did not stay where 2024 left them.

About one-third of Hispanic voters backed the Republican in their local House race, the AP Voter Poll found, down from roughly 4 in 10 who voted for Trump two years ago. In Texas, roughly 7 in 10 Hispanic voters supported Democrat James Talarico over Republican Ken Paxton. A realignment that lasts two years is not a realignment. It is a rental.

09 The red wall cracked in places the GOP had owned for a generation.

Kansas had not elected a Democratic senator since 1932. Texas had not handed Democrats a statewide win in more than three decades. South Carolina and Iowa fell too. In the losing Senate races in Ohio, Iowa, Maine and North Carolina, majorities told the AP Voter Poll that the Republican candidates were "too supportive" of an unpopular president. That is candidate quality and presidential gravity, together.

10 Voters thought he was focused on himself.

Sixty-two percent said the President prioritizes his own personal interests over the country's. About two-thirds told the AP Voter Poll he does not have the right priorities. His first public event after the returns was not a reckoning. It was a tour of the White House ballroom he is building.

CHECKED AGAINST AP VOTER POLL, NBC NEWS EXIT POLL, CBS NEWS, REUTERS AND PUBLIC STATEMENTS. WE REPORT. YOU DISCERN.

03 HISTORY

How 2026 Stacks Up Against Other Midterm Waves

Seat changes for the president's party, from the American Presidency Project. 2026 House figures are as of November 8 and not yet final.

PRESIDENT'S PARTY SEAT CHANGE IN SELECTED MIDTERMS

Year	President's party	House	Senate	What happened
1938	Democrats (FDR)	-72	-7	Kept both chambers, majority slashed
1946	Democrats (Truman)	-56	-12	Lost House and Senate
1958	Republicans (Eisenhower)	-48	-13	Democrats enlarged existing majorities
1966	Democrats (LBJ)	-47	-4	Kept both chambers
1974	Republicans (Ford)	-48	-5	Democrats enlarged the House majority
1994	Democrats (Clinton)	-54	-8	Lost House and Senate
2006	Republicans (G.W. Bush)	-30	-6	Lost House and Senate
2010	Democrats (Obama)	-63	-6	Lost the House, kept the Senate
2018	Republicans (Trump I)	-41	+2	Lost the House, gained Senate seats
2026*	Republicans (Trump II)	about -42	-7	Lost House and Senate; some House seats uncalled

Source: American Presidency Project, UC Santa Barbara. House and Senate columns are net change for the party that held the White House. 2026 House net of about minus 42 follows AP/Fox (Democrats plus 42 among called races); about 19 House seats remain uncalled, so the final House number can still move. The 2026 Senate net of minus 7 is the seven called Democratic pickups; Alaska and Mississippi, both Republican-held, are still uncalled, so the Senate net could grow. By Senate swing against a president's party, Ballotpedia already ranks 2026 in the top 20 percent of election years and treats that as a wave. Its House wave threshold is 48 seats.

04 THE RECORD

What He Said vs. What Happened

Verified quotes from the trail, election night and the day after. Nothing here is paraphrased into a sharper point than the speaker made.

On the trail: a bigger map, a landslide, a golden age

In February 2025, with the midterms still 21 months away, the President told Republican governors he expected the party to do "fantastically." "I think we're going to really increase our margins by a lot," he said.

As the campaign tightened, the prediction did not. CBS News reported him saying Republicans "should win in a landslide." At an Ohio rally he told the crowd, "If you do that, we're gonna win and we're gonna win big." On the night before the election, on Hannity, he closed with this: "If our people vote, we win in a landslide." He also called this "the hottest country anywhere in the world."

He spent the fall asking voters to treat the midterms as a race about him. In Dallas on September 9 he said, "I am asking you to pretend I'm on the ballot. I'm on the ballot. I'm on the ballot. Just one more time." He had been workshopping the line since summer. At an August rally in South Carolina he said, "So what I really want you to do is pretend, please, that I'm on the ballot." An Associated Press review of 39 speeches and rallies he staged from September 1 onward found a version of that phrase in 30 of them.

After the returns: he was never on the ballot

On election night he told Fox News, "I don't like to consider it a defeat for me. I wasn't on the ballot." Voters, he said, just "didn't like the candidates." On his social media site he wrote that if he had been running, "We would have won IN A LANDSLIDE!"

The next day, at a ceremony for the final steel beam of the White House ballroom, he talked about the building for nearly 20 minutes before taking questions. Then he said it again: "If I were on the ballot I would have won." The

rallies, he added, had featured a lot of love from supporters that "we weren't able to transfer love to the candidates." He congratulated Democrats and said the election was not a referendum on his work.

The contradiction, without embroidery

These are not ambiguous quotes. He asked the country, in at least 30 rallies, to pretend he was on the ballot. Hours before the polls opened he said that if his people voted, "we win in a landslide." When they voted, and the landslide ran the other way, he said he was not on the ballot, that the candidates were the problem, and that if he had been running there would have been a landslide in his favor.

That is the opposite of accountability. Barack Obama called 2010 "a shellacking." George W. Bush called 2006 "a thumping." The Vice President, at least, named a cause. The President named a ballroom.

"I am asking you to pretend I'm on the ballot."

DALLAS, SEPTEMBER 9, 2026

Say it plainly

An autopsy is not a eulogy and it is not a pep talk. The Republican Party lost the House by a wide margin, lost the Senate in states it had owned for a generation, and lost the majority of American governorships. Voters said the reasons out loud: prices, tariffs, a war they did not think was worth it, and a president they no longer wanted to reward.

If this outlet stands for results and no spin, then the result is this. You didn't sea and you drowned. Tsunami. The water is still on the floor. The first job is to say so.

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