

MEMO

To: Interested Parties

From: Brown & Weinraub

Date: November 5, 2014

Re: 2014 General Election Results: New York State

Statewide

In an otherwise outstanding night for Republicans in New York State, the top of the ticket remained solidly blue, as Governor Andrew Cuomo (D) was re-elected with 53% of the vote earned across four different party lines. His opponent, Rob Astorino (R), received 40%. Former Congresswoman Kathy Hochul (D) was elected Lieutenant Governor on the ticket, replacing Robert Duffy (D) who chose not to seek re-election with Cuomo. Comptroller Tom DiNapoli (D) garnered the healthiest margin of victory with 57% of the vote, and Attorney General Eric Schneiderman (D) earned 53% in a highly competitive race.

Below the surface, the secondary story of the 2014 gubernatorial race is the political power struggles that played out through third party ballot positioning. In the wake of Governor Cuomo's brokered truce with the Working Families Party (WFP) in June, which netted him their endorsement, Cuomo launched a new third party called the Women's Equality Party (WEP). Many viewed this move as a rebuke of the WFP's push to drive the Governor farther to the left and an attempt to knock the party farther down the ballot. (Parties must get 50,000 votes in a gubernatorial race to achieve permanent ballot status and their ranking on the ballot is based on the number of votes received in the last election.) Cuomo campaigned hard on the Women's Equality line, spending millions on mail and TV commercials. The WFP argued hard for supporters to vote for him on their party line in order to preserve their positioning and power. And among all of this, Green Party candidate Howie Hawkins emerged as the recipient of a significant share of the progressive vote. In the final accounting, the Women's Equality Party seems on the verge of achieving ballot status; even after seeing their star rise with the 2013 election of NYC Mayor Bill de Blasio, the Working Families Party's political influence has weakened and they will likely fall below several other third parties on future ballots; and the Green Party is the big third-party winner, moving up at least two spots on the ballot.

New York voters also pulled the lever for [three ballot proposals](#) Tuesday night, all of which were approved. The first proposal, which created a split among good government advocates, creates a redistricting commission that will be responsible for redrawing congressional and legislative districts. The second allows for electronic distribution of bills introduced in the legislature, rather than the current requirement that they be physically printed. The final proposal authorizes the state to borrow up to \$2 billion to invest in technology upgrades and capital improvements for schools.

New York State Senate

Election Day 2014 brought with it a Republican wave that Democratic candidates both nationally and here in New York State could not hold off. In New York, the party's biggest prize was gaining a clear 32-seat governing majority in the State Senate. While many predicted tight Senate races that would stretch out into weeks of recounting and for the Independent Democratic Conference (IDC) to once again be

positioned to broker a co-leadership deal with one of the major party conferences, election night brought decisive victories in each of the toss-up races and a clean Republican majority.

A low-turnout election and Democratic underperformance in key areas on Long Island and upstate helped Republicans achieve a net gain of seven seats – holding the four open seats previously in their column and beating three Democratic incumbents:

- Tom Croci (R) won Lee Zeldin’s (R) former seat
- Michael Venditto (R) will replace Charles Fuschillo (R) on Long Island
- Terrence Murphy (R) narrowly beat his opponent to hold Greg Ball’s (R) seat
- Robert Ortt’s (R) win keeps George Maziarz’s (R) seat in the red column
- Sue Serino (R) beat incumbent Terry Gipson (D) in the Hudson Valley
- George Amedore (R) bested incumbent Cece Tkaczyk (D) in their rematch
- Rick Funke (R) took one-term incumbent Ted O’Brien’s (D) seat in Rochester

The only bright spot for the Senate Democrats was Marc Panepinto’s (D) win in a messy four-way race, where incumbent Mark Grisanti (R) was running on the Independence Party line having lost the Republican primary in September.

A simple 32-seat majority (the exact number needed to pass bills) leaves little room for absences or disagreement, but the Republican conference may yet get some padding. Democrat Simcha Felder currently conferences with the Republicans and may continue to do so. There is also the outstanding question of Jeff Klein’s five-member IDC. At the end of the 2014 legislative session, Klein announced that the IDC would conference with the mainstream Democrats in 2015, but later walked back his commitment as poll after poll showed voters breaking heavily for Republican Senate candidates. Months of speculation about whether Klein would keep his promise may now be moot. The question remains: Will the Republicans see any political or governing benefit to continuing an alliance with the IDC now that they have a majority?

By the Number:

Party	Previous	Election Result
Democrat	27	26 (w/Felder)
Republican	31 (w/Felder)	32
IDC	5	5

New York State Assembly

Democrats fared much better in the New York State Assembly this election cycle, holding on to a veto-proof majority. Speaker Sheldon Silver went into the election with 107 members in his conference (the chamber has 150 total seats), and will emerge with somewhere between 104 and 107. There were 16 open seats – 13 formerly held by Democrats and 3 by Republicans. With each party adding one of the opposing party’s seats to their own column and one race yet to be determined, the open seat races appear to be largely a wash. Carrie Woerner (D) picked up the Capital Region seat formerly held by Tony Jordan (R), Angela Wozniak (R) won disgraced former Assemblyman Dennis Gabryszak’s (D) open seat in the Buffalo area, and Elisa Tutini (D) clings to a slim 10-vote lead over Karl Brabenec (R) in the race for Annie Rabbitt’s (R) former seat.

The Assembly's few surprises came at the expense of Democratic incumbents. Edward Hennessey (D) was defeated by Dean Murray (R) in a rematch of their 2012 race, when Hennessey defeated then-incumbent Murray by 226 votes. And two others – Didi Barrett (D) of the Hudson Valley and Addie Russell (D) from the North Country – are both locked in yet-to-be-decided races with their Republican challengers. At this time, Barrett is slightly ahead of her opponent, while Russell is slightly behind.

By the Number:

Party	Previous	Election Result
Democrat	107	104
Republican	43	43
Undecided		3

Congressional Delegation

Continuing a theme, Republicans won big in federal elections across the country this year, regaining a majority in the U.S. Senate. In New York, the party increased their U.S. House delegation by at least three seats, with one race still undecided. Two Democratic incumbents were defeated by surprisingly wide margins – Tim Bishop (D) lost to challenger Lee Zeldin (R) by 10 points in Suffolk County and Dan Maffei (D) lost his seat to John Katko (R) in Central New York by a whopping 20 points. Elise Stefanik (R) picked up the North Country seat previously held by Democrat Bill Owens.

In two of the most watched races of the night, incumbents stood their ground. Indicted Republican Michael Grimm from Staten Island handily beat challenger Domenic Recchia (D). Incumbent Sean Patrick Maloney (D) bucked the upstate Republican tide by eking out a victory in his race with former Congresswoman Nan Hayworth (R).

Perhaps the biggest surprise of the night in New York's congressional delegation is that longtime Democratic Congresswoman Louise Slaughter is fighting for her political life in Western New York. With just under 600 votes between her and challenger Mark Assini (R), the race has yet to be called.

By the Number:

Party	Previous	Election Result
Democrat	21	17
Republican	6	9
Undecided		1

[CLICK HERE](#) for the complete New York State 2014 General Election results.