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## SPECIAL REPORT

November 11, 2016

### *Post-Election Report*

**Donald Trump**, the 70-year-old *New York* populist, real-estate billionaire, and TV personality, will be sworn in as the 45<sup>th</sup> **President of the United States of America (POTUS)**. He achieved this by stunning the political world and sweeping all major battleground states, including **Florida, Ohio, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, Wisconsin**, and Michigan. His victory was based on a message of change in how **Washington, D.C.** functions. **Mr. Trump's** victory, without question, was made possible by the strength of an often understated, under measured and underappreciated movement of white working class and non-college educated voters. His populist messages, including **"Drain the swamp!"** chants, were focused on changing the culture of the nation's capital and resonated in small-town America and rural areas of the nation. Those messages were embraced by voters in Michigan and are reflected in the results for the **State House** and numerous local issues and offices.

Shortly after the polls closed Tuesday evening, it became quickly apparent that 2016 was a "change" election and not the base election many purported political experts were suggesting. In fact, this was clearly not going to be the consensus result that pundits, pollsters, and the "experts" in the political establishment were predicting throughout the presidential campaign – **Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton** would be America's first woman **President**. Now that we know the results of Tuesday's election, we hope nuggets of information within this update help explain what happened in Michigan and provide some insight on the new political landscape.

At the end of last week and earlier this week, the national polls showed **Secretary Clinton** narrowly defeating **Donald Trump**. The Michigan polls largely mirrored the national polls with an outside the margin win for **Ms. Clinton**, though the race was clearly tightening. The polls, and most **Democratic** and **Republican** pundits, predicted a smaller Michigan **House GOP** majority from their current 63 seats. About the only thing the polls got right this year was a national popular vote win for **Ms. Clinton**. For the second time in six elections, the **Democratic** candidate has won the national vote but lost the **Electoral College** vote and thus the **Presidency**.

In **Macomb County**, the birthplace of **"Reagan Democrats"**, voters turned out in huge numbers to support **Mr. Trump**. Of note, longtime GOP Congresswoman and two term Secretary of State, Candice Miller, beat the incumbent and controversial **County Public Works Commissioner**. Political pundits in Lansing continue to wait for Ms. Miller to put her hat in the ring for the 2018 Governor's race. Two key House Michigan House seats remain in the **GOP** column. While the numbers haven't been 100% verified, it appears that **GOP** straight ticket voting in **Macomb** also took out the strong **Democratic** political **Miller** name in incumbent **County Treasurer Derek Miller** and **County Clerk** candidate **Fred**

*Miller*. The *Macomb Trump* vote was massive and carried down the ballot much further than expected.

*Macomb's* strong *Trump* movement also can be attributed to the failed *Regional Transit Authority (RTA)* ballot proposal, which would have funded the *RTA* for decades and expanded a transit system throughout *Southeast Michigan*. While *Wayne* and *Washtenaw* counties supported the *RTA*, *Oakland County* narrowly voted against it and *Macomb County* overwhelmingly voted down the proposal. Regional transit advocates will go back to the drawing board yet again, baffled on how to address this long outstanding issue. Meanwhile, longtime *Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson* won an impressive seventh term after beating former *State Representative Vicki Barnett* by a 51 to 43 percent margin.

Outstate Michigan is where *Mr. Trump* truly clinched the election in Michigan. His large margins in rural counties eventually overcame the strong *Clinton* support in the urban centers. *Cheboygan County* provides an example that was seen in almost all rural counties. *Mr. Trump* gained an extra 1,200 votes over *Mitt Romney* from 2012 and *Ms. Clinton* was down almost 3,000 votes from *President Obama* in 2012. This 4,500 vote swing to *Mr. Trump* was seen in dozens of other counties that helped close the *Democratic* gap in southeast Michigan and propel *Mr. Trump* to his 13,000 vote margin. The Michigan *Republican Party* had identified 68,000 voters outside of southeast Michigan who voted in the March *Presidential* primary and had sat out elections for previous years. These individuals had been targeted by the party for turnout efforts and those numbers are evidenced in counties like *Cheboygan*.

One of the most glaring deficiencies in the *Clinton* campaign in Michigan is the low turnout in her urban core base. It's not difficult to see that her television campaign of constantly vilifying *Mr. Trump* as unable to fulfill the duties of *Commander in Chief* was done at the expense of explaining what she would accomplish for Michigan voters. This strategy left her devoid of a Michigan message and didn't drive her voters to the polls on election day. Anecdotally, we know that a large number of *Senator Bernie Sanders* supporters sat out this general election and contributed to *Ms. Clinton's* lack of turnout among *Democrats*.

**The Supreme Court:** The *Supreme Court* race may have been the only election that played out the way all pundits had expected-uneventful. Incumbent *Republican Justices David Viviano* and *Joan Larsen* handily won re-election to the high court with *Mr. Viviano* securing 67% of the vote and *Ms. Larsen* 59% respectively.

#### **THE CONGRESSIONAL RACES:**

The 1<sup>st</sup> Congressional district includes all of the Upper Peninsula and a large segment of the northeastern and northwestern portion of the Lower Peninsula including Traverse City. This seat is open after current *Republican Congressman Dan Benishek* honored his promise of not running due to self-imposed term limits. The base of the district is 55% *Republican*. We knew *Mr. Trump* would have broad appeal in the *Upper Peninsula* and boy did he ever. His coattails ran long, with *Republicans* picking up seats in a tidal wave. *Republican Jack Bergman* retained the *Republican* seat definitively dispatching *Democrat Lon Johnson* by 15%; *Mr. Bergman* took 55% of the vote with *Mr. Johnson* garnering 40%.

The 7<sup>th</sup> Congressional district includes all or parts of Branch, Eaton, Hillsdale, Jackson, Lenawee, Washtenaw and Monroe counties, as well as all or parts of August, Bridgewater, Dexter, Freedom, Lima, Lodi, Lyndon, Manchester, Northfield, Pittsfield, Salem, Saline, Scio, Sharon, Sylvan, Webster and York townships with the cities of Chelsea, Milan and Saline also represented. This

seat has been a political ping pong, vacillating between the two parties throughout the 2000's. Even with a **55% Republican base**, this seat has been a challenge for Republicans due in large part to the University of Michigan professor-types in Washtenaw County and state workers in Eaton County. Incumbent *Congressman Tim Walberg* is heading back to *Washington* with a little help from his friends *Donald Trump* and *U.S. House Speaker Paul Ryan*.

The 8<sup>th</sup> Congressional district is comprised of all of Ingham and Livingston counties as well as parts of Addison Brandon, Groveland, Holly, Independence, Oakland, Orion, Oxford, Rose and Springfield townships as well as the cities of Fenton, and Rochester, a portion of Rochester Hills and the Village of Clarkston. The seat holds a **56% Republican base**. This honorable mention was just that, honorable with no real threat to *Congressman Mike Bishop's* incumbency chances materializing. The *Republican* captured 56% of the vote.

## STATE LEGISLATIVE RACES:

### Michigan House of Representatives

Winning back the *House* from *Republican* control is the shiny elusive object *Democrats* have been pining for since 2010 when they lost control in a *Republican* tsunami. Unfortunately for them, 2016 largely mirrored 2010's *Republican* tidal wave and that shiny elusive object remains just that, elusive. In perhaps the most surprising result of election night, *House Democrats* (and every Lansing pundit) were stunned by the 63-47 majority the *Republicans* were able to maintain. *Democrats* picked up only one competitive seat, but lost an incumbent two-term *Democrat* to offset that gain. The *Trump* effect loomed large and loud throughout the state and *House Republicans* were able to capitalize on his momentum, sweeping seats most felt were undeniably lost to the *D's* this election cycle. One of the biggest concerns for both parties all election had been how the top of the ticket would affect down ballot races, that question was resoundingly answered November 8-*Trump!* Read on as we highlight the results from the 15 most competitive *House* races this election.

**House District 23:** This Wayne County district includes the cities of Gibraltar, Trenton and Woodhaven and the townships of Brownstown, Grosse Ile and Huron. After 6 years of *Republican* control, incumbent *Representative Pat Somerville* is finally term-limited and *Democrats* couldn't be more eager to flip this traditionally *Democratic* seat back in their column. **The Republican base vote in this district is 50%.** The only thing *Democrats* had to celebrate this election was the successful flipping of this *Republican* seat back to *Democratic* control. In a nail bitter of a finish, *Darrin Camilleri* narrowly snatched the "W" from *Republican Bob Howey* by a mere 320 votes.

**House District 24:** This Macomb County district includes Harrison Township as well as parts of Clinton and Macomb Townships. This seat has a **54% Republican leaning**. As predicted, the *Trump* effect pummeled *Democratic* candidates all across *Macomb County*, including the 24<sup>th</sup> district where *Steve Marino* was able to overcome an audio tape scandal and garner 55% of the vote beating *Democrat Dana Camphous-Peterson*.

**House District 30:** This Macomb County district includes portions of the cities of Sterling Heights and Utica and a portion of Shelby Township. This seat holds a **55% Republican base**. *Democrats* were feeling confident about flipping this *Republican* seat despite acknowledging a *Macomb* electorate energized by *Trump*. Most believed the *Notte* name could "trump" *Trump*. Instead, *Diana Farrington* trumped *Michael Notte* claiming 54% of the vote and ensuring another 2 year term for a *Farrington* in Lansing.

**House District 39:** This Oakland County district is comprised of the city of Wixom, Commerce Township and a portion of West Bloomfield Township. The seat has a 55% *Republican* base. Perhaps one of the only things the polls correctly predicted regarding November 8, was *Trump* doing poorly in *Oakland County* and he did. *Clinton* actually out-performed *President Obama* in Michigan's wealthiest and most educated community. But, third term incumbent *Klint Kesto* was able to hold on to his seat garnering 50% of the vote in the 39<sup>th</sup> district.

**House District 56:** This Monroe County district is comprised of Bedford, Dundee, Erie, Ida, LaSalle, Milan, Monroe, Raisinville, Summerfield, and Whiteford Townships, along with the cities of Luna Pier, Milan and Petersburg. This seat has a 54% *Republican* base. Talk about a reversal of fortune; 2014 saw *Jason Sheppard* beating *Democratic* opponent *Tom Redmond* by less than 900 votes. Fast forward to 2016 and *Mr. Sheppard* easily claimed victory again, beating *Tom Redmond*, but this time by over 8,000 votes. *Trump!*

**House District 57:** This district includes all of Lenawee County except for Cambridge Township. It is largely comprised of rural farmland and small towns with its largest population center being Adrian followed by Tecumseh. The seat holds a 56% *Republican* base. At one point, *Republicans* had grown concerned about retaining this seat, but *Republican Bronna Kahle* did what she needed to do and retained the seat being vacated by outgoing *Representative Nancy Jenkins*. *Ms. Kahle* received 56% of the vote beating perennial, but solid *Democratic* candidate, *Harvey Schmidt*.

**House District 61:** This district is completely comprised within Kalamazoo County with the townships of Oshtemo, Texas, Schoolcraft and Prairie Ronde along with the City of Portage. This seat has a 55% *Republican* tilt. We'll admit it, we thought incumbent *Brandt Iden* was unlikely to survive a presidential turn which traditionally benefits *Democrats*. The turn-out, compounded by a particularly unpredictable *Kalamazoo County* created a precarious environment for the freshman lawmaker. But, although he garnered less than 50% of the vote, it was enough to return *Mr. Iden* to Lansing for a second term.

**House District 62:** This Calhoun County district consists of the cities of Albion and Battle Creek as well as the townships of Albion, Bedford, Clarence, Convis, Lee, Pennfield, and Sheridan. The *Republican* base is 48%. In perhaps the most telling example of the kind of night *Democrats* had, *Republican* incumbent *Dr. John Bizon* retained this *Democratic* leaning seat in what was expected to be an unquestionable pick-up for the *Democrats*. *Democratic* attorney *Jim Haadsma* was a mere 209 votes short of adding *State Representative* to his resume. *Dr. Bizon* may need to treat some *Democrats* from the apoplectic shock they received November 8.

**House District 66:** This district includes all of Van Buren County and a portion of Kalamazoo County. The 66<sup>th</sup> also includes the townships of Alamo and Cooper and Parchment City. This seat has a 56% *Republican* base. What's that old adage: "Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me." This is the second consecutive election that saw *Democrats* invest an exorbitant amount of money into this seat with zero return on investment. *Beth Griffin* retained this seat for the *Republicans* with 54% of the vote. This was *Democrat Annie Brown's* second run at the seat and second defeat.

**House District 71:** This district encompasses a number of Eaton County townships including but not limited to Bellevue, Benton, Eaton Rapids, Vermontville, Windsor and Delta, the most populated. The district also includes the cities of Charlotte, Grand Ledge and Potterville. The base vote in this district is practically a 50%-50% split. Truly, you couldn't have predicted most of the

story lines coming out of the election night races and *District 71* is no different. Two years ago, *Republican Tom Barret* won this seat by a mere 148 votes. Fast forward two years later and he out punts *Theresa Abed* by 5,390 votes! Incredible considering how evenly split this district truly is. Match, game, point for the *GOP*.

**House District 91:** This Muskegon County district includes the following townships: Blue Lake, Casnovia, Cedar Creek, Dalton, Egelston, Fruitport, Holton, Montague, Moorland, Ravenna, Sullivan and White River. It also includes the cities of Montague, Norton Shores and Whitehall. The base vote in this district is 52% *Republican*.

In what was expected to be another nail bitter and a likely flip from red to blue, *Holly Hughes* persevered and stopped the recent tradition of this seat flipping between the two parties every two years. In a repeat grudge match of 2014, *Democrat Colleen Lamonte* was unable to garner the necessary *Democratic* turn out to reclaim the seat she lost to *Ms. Hughes* two years prior, chalking up another unexpected win for the *Republicans*.

**House District 99:** This district includes all of Isabella County and the northern, southern, and western townships of Midland County. The major population center rests in Mt. Pleasant. The district has a 51% *Republican* base. We admit it, we bought the hype and thought this long held *Republican* seat was flipping much to the delight of *Democrats*. With *Democratic* candidate *Bryan Mielke* essentially running for the last 4 years, most felt his ground game was strong and early momentum had shifted in his favor. But, as *Republicans* neared election day, they grew increasingly confident about *Roger Hauck's* ability to retain the *Republican* controlled seat and they were right. They invested fiercely in the seat, both financially and with man power and it paid off-*Hauck* won the seat with 55% of the vote.

**House District 101:** This district encompasses the northwestern shoreline of the Lower Peninsula and includes Leelanau, Benzie, Manistee, and Mason counties. This seat shows *Republicans* with a slight edge, with a district base of 53%, and is open since incumbent *Republican Ray Franz* is term-limited. However, there is at least one very familiar name running to replace him; former *Representative* of the 101<sup>st</sup> district, *Dan Scripps*. *Scripps* lost to *Franz* in 2010 by a mere 891 votes and is looking to avenge the loss. Since his defeat, *Scripps* has been working as an energy attorney. He is also leading the development of the *Grand Rapids 2030 District*. His *Republican* opponent, *Curt Vanderwall* is from *Ludington* and has been chair of the *Mason County Board of Commissioners* since 2010. He is also a small business owner. *Mr. Vanderwall* pulled through on Tuesday, maintaining the seat for Michigan *GOP*.

**House District 106:** This district includes the counties of Alcona, Alpena, Iosco and Presque Isle and a number of small townships in Cheboygan. The base of the electorate resides in Alpena and Iosco Counties. The district leans *Republican* with a 54% base. This race was as good as over once *Democratic* candidate *Robert Kennedy* was photographed stealing the lawn signs of his *Republican* opponent *Sue Allor* and *Republican Congressional* candidate-elect *Jack Bergman*. *Democrats* had already started turning their focus to other seats and as predicted, *Ms. Allor* is coming to Lansing besting *Mr. Kennedy* by nearly 13,000 votes.

**House District 108:** This district in the Upper Peninsula encompasses Delta, Dickinson and Menominee Counties. The *Republican* base in the district is 55%. We're going to start the recap of this seat with the closing line of our pre-election prediction: "We think the Dems will be hurting over this one for a while-advantage LaFave." Enough said. Superstar candidate and *Dickinson County*

*Sheriff, Scott Celello* couldn't overcome the effective campaigning of *Republican* newbie, *Beau LaFave* nor the droves of *UP* residents that took to the polls to support *Donald Trump*. *LaFave* took the seat by just under 2300 votes. Hurt, devastated, despondent, you pick the adjective.

**\*\* House District 17:** This district is comprised of both *Monroe* and *Wayne Counties*. The *Monroe* portion includes *Ash, Berlin, Exeter, Frenchtown,* and *London Townships* as well as the *City of Monroe*. The *Wayne County* portion includes the cities of *Flat Rock* and *Rockwood* as well as *Sumpter Township*. The seat has a **46% Republican** base. In perhaps the biggest surprise and vomit-inducing moment of the night for the *Democrats*, incumbent two term *Representative Bill LaVoy* lost his seat to *Republican* challenger, *Joseph Bellino*. *Mr. Bellino* is unquestionably a terrific candidate with strong roots in *Monroe*. He has served as a trustee of *Monroe Community College* for the last 16 years and is the long-time owner of the popular *Broadway Market* in *Monroe*. Rumors of *Mr. Bellino* springing a surprise upset were swirling, but *Mr. LaVoy* was working the district hard, recognizing the threat was real and not taking anything for granted. As expected, *Mr. Trump* played well in *Monroe* and after the dust had settled, *Mr. Bellino* flipped the seat by just over 3,000 votes landing a defiant blow to an already reeling *Democratic* party.

When the fall presidential campaign began, we knew that the race would be unpredictable and at times, unbelievable. Four essential factors played a role in this unusual race: first, a volatile electorate – voters were angry, frustrated, and scared; second, the choices came down to two of the most unpopular candidates of modern times – both with 59 percent negative ratings, resulting in more voters choosing against a presidential candidate as opposed to voting for a presidential candidate; third, *Mr. Trump* was an asymmetrical candidate running an unconventional campaign utilizing millions of dollars in free media and his celebrity status – all while attacking ethnic groups, immigrants, the media and the establishment; fourth, *Hillary Clinton* was an ethically challenged candidate – haunted by the email private server issue and, with eleven days remaining before the election, *FBI Director James Comey's* unprecedented letter to *Congress* suggesting a reopening of the investigation into the private server issue.

Unfortunately, the 2016 presidential election focused more on personality than on issues, more on conflict and division than unity, and more on what is wrong with each other than what is right with America. Despite the contentious tone of the presidential race, the election was executed as our founding fathers intended and our *Democratic* system prevailed. The strength of our *Republic* was witnessed by the tenor of *President-elect Trump's* victory speech, the concession speech of *Hillary Clinton* and the post-election comments of *President Barack Obama* on accepting the results of the election. The first meeting between *President-elect Trump* and *President Obama* also showcased the seamless transition of power in our system of government.

All of these events are both meaningful and symbolic and attest to the strength of our democracy.

That's a wrap folks! We hope you find this information useful and informative. Please contact anyone from the *MHSA* team if you have any specific questions regarding any particular race.

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