

# Major Political Stories of the 2018 Cycle

- 1) **Whack-a-mole.** There are too many Republican open congressional seats and too many seats in play to make keeping a majority in the House an easy assignment.
- 2) **Political geography is destiny.** There are two types of incumbents who are facing a difficult, uphill climb; those House Republicans in seats carried by Hillary Clinton and Democratic Senators in Trump territory. This is why the House is up for grabs and why the Democrats are likely to lose Senate seats.
- 3) **Year of the Woman, Round II.** There is an all-time record 234 women running for Congress, 182 Democratic women and 52 Republican women. The number of women and the ethnic/racial diversity (almost all on the Democratic side) make this a turning point election in terms of the composition of the House of Representatives.
- 4) **The “green wave” – Democratic money.** Democrats raised over a billion dollars. Just one factoid: In the third quarter, 51 incumbent House Republicans were out raised at least 2-to 1. Seventy-one Republican incumbents were outspent by their challenger candidate. Only five Democratic House incumbents were out raised in the third quarter. **The “green wave” – outside money.** Reliable projections are outside, non-Party groups will spend over one billion dollars this cycle, up sharply from just over 550 million dollars four years ago.
- 5) **Beto O’Rourke.** 70 million dollars, 38 million in one quarter, an all-time congressional fundraising record for a quarter. Senator Cruz raised 12 million in the same quarter, and was still out-raised by more than three to one! This is so extraordinary, it merits its own bullet. Think of the implications about what this means about how much the Democratic nominee is going to raise in 2020.

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- 6) **Health care and pre-existing conditions** wins top honors for the most advertised topic in the midterms because it was the number one topic in Democratic advertising.
- 7) **Medicare for All** moves out of this cycle with now a chunk of new Democratic Members of Congress who will support some variation of this proposal.
- 8) **Immigration.** It *is* a major issue and too undervalued by the elite in terms of its importance to many voters.
- 9) **Georgia, Texas, and Arizona are three states the Democrats have talked about turning blue for multiple cycles. It is time for the Democrats to produce.** In each state, the Democrats have a top tier candidate and, as noted earlier, extensive resources. If none of these states turn blue, it is a cautionary note about whether the electoral map can really expand in these states in 2020.
- 10) **The Midwest.** There are three too close to call gubernatorial races in Iowa, Wisconsin, and Ohio. If one party sweeps all three, it should help define the cycle. Either the Democrats will put down an important stake in Trump states from last cycle, or, if Republicans survive these races against candidates more moderate than their party's likely nominee in 2020, it suggests the scope of the challenge the Democrats face in the next presidential election.