

Quite a primary

Well, the Kansas primary election is over and the run up to November 4 began almost immediately.

Results show a sea change in attitude since the 2012 election when Sam Brownback and his allies at Americans for Prosperity and the Kansas Chamber of Commerce campaigned to oust moderate Republicans from the Senate and perhaps the party.

This year, in the House races targeted by AFP and KCC, the outcome was quite different. Moderate candidates who were attacked fought back and won their primaries. In most of those races the moderates won by wide margins.

Public education friendly Republican incumbents who were targeted and won include Barbara Bollier of Mission Hills, Stephanie Clayton of Overland Park, Blaine Finch of Baldwin City, Tom Sloan of Lawrence, Russ Jennings of Lakin, Kent Thompson of LaHarpe, John Barker of Abilene, and Diana Dierks of Salina. Conservative Alan Rothlisberg of Junction City was ousted by Republican challenger Lonnie Clark and conservative Josh Powell of Topeka is losing his seat to Seaman school board member Fred Patton by 64 votes.

In State Board of Education races, Sally Cauble won her primary against a challenger who was appointed by the Governor to the new school efficiency commission - a move which, while not called an endorsement by Brownback, soundly awfully close to one. In the open seat in southeast Kansas, moderate Jim Porter handily won his primary.

The big state-wide and congressional races were also fascinating to watch.

Long time US Senator Pat Roberts had a tough primary and managed to win with a plurality of the vote taking 48% to Milton Wolf's 41%. The rest of the vote was split by two unknown candidates. Roberts had been under heavy attack from the right as a Washington insider out of touch with Kansas. Much was made of the fact that he does not have a home in Kansas. Roberts will face Shawnee County District Attorney Chad Taylor in November.

In the Republican race for Governor, Sam Brownback took 63% of the vote to 37% for Jennifer Winn. Winn, whose campaign had about \$13,000 to spend, campaigned on the theme of liberalized drug laws and the legalization of marijuana - not exactly the kind of issues that would lead one to believe she was more conservative than Brownback. Over 95,000 Kansas Republicans voted against Brownback.

Some pundits are calling these two races possible indicators of where the voters might go in November. Roberts had a very weak showing for an incumbent and Brownback's margin will likely be enough to really worry his campaign team.

It is interesting to note that Brownback, when asked why his margin was lower than one would expect, blamed President Obama for dragging him down, saying voters are just so angry with Obama that they wanted to "throw a brick" at anyone! In attacking their opponents, the Governor and his allies in AFP and KCC have been using the President to discredit moderate Republicans since 2010! It appears that, in their world, Obama just hurts everyone - liberal, moderate, and conservative alike!

It appears, however, that voters are no longer buying the "Obama card" when it comes to state elections. Now they may need to try running on their own records.

And the record becomes clearer!

Speaking of the Governor's record, today - the day after the primary - Kansas received its third bond rating downgrade during Brownback's administration. Moody's Investor Services has twice downgraded Kansas' bond rating because of fears that the state could not sustain itself with the massive Brownback income tax cuts putting bond payments at risk. Today Standard and Poor's downgraded Kansas for the very same reasons. Revenue losses under the Brownback tax plans have been so steep they put the state's ability to pay at risk.

Read more on this from Bloomberg's: <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2014-08-06/brownback-s-tax-cuts-prompt-s-p-to-reduce-kansas-s-credit-rating.html>^[1]

1. <http://click.email.nea.org/?>

qs=421a7fc80b85b5fae16f1d02ac87f2b6b30f77e9a552465de33aac7108f95d64a2e3a0134174cec

