

While this year's election has been dominated by stories of insurgent and anti-establishment candidates, Ohio bucked the trend tonight as Governor John Kasich and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton swept to victory in the Buckeye State. The story was the same in primary races for the Ohio House and Senate as most long-time incumbents and so-called "establishment" candidates won. Ohioans were so focused on making a statement that untold numbers crossed over party lines to cast their ballots. What does that mean for the state's legislative agenda? All signs point to officeholders viewing these results as a vindication of the direction they have taken with the main focus on tax and spending policy.

Beyond the presidential race, the results in several races across Ohio will have significant impact on Ohio's direction – from both a policy, as well as a political standpoint – for the next several years. In the Ohio Senate, the frontrunner for Senate President, Larry Obhof, defeated his challenger by a substantial margin in a race that drew attention from the start. In fact, all incumbent state senators won their primaries. In a closely watched race in Cuyahoga County, Matt Dolan won a three-way race to become the Republican nominee in the 24th Senate District over two House members. In Ohio House races, former Speaker Larry Householder won the right to appear on the fall ballot. Apparently only one incumbent state representative will lose his seat in this primary as businessman Craig Riedel is defeating Rep. Tony Burkley in the 82nd House District. All other incumbents appear to have survived the night on both sides of the aisle.

The results of tonight's election are a good indicator of what we can expect on the policy agenda for the remainder of 2016 as the legislature undertakes Mid-Biennial Budget Review (MBR) and looks forward to the next operating budget cycle. Republicans have been consistent in their desire to reduce the state income tax, but have differed significantly in the method used to achieve that objective. Governor Kasich has proposed an expansion of the sales tax base and a rate increase to the Commercial Activity Tax (CAT) over the past few cycles, and although the Administration has been successful in reducing the state income tax, the General Assembly has resisted

those two approaches. Also on the horizon is a debate on the state's renewable energy policy. The Republican-controlled legislature recommended an extension of the freeze on renewable sources, while the Governor in recent days has called for a further evaluation of the state's renewable portfolio. We can expect the conversations on both energy and tax policy to continue as both of the Governor and the legislature can point towards a victorious night.

Looking forward to this fall's General Election, the Republican legislature will seek to defend large majorities in the both the House and Senate. It is unlikely that the Democrats will take over either Chamber, but there remains a possibility that the Democrats will pick up seats. During the course of budget debates, this may force more consensus-building between the two parties. The Ohio Supreme Court races will also be closely watched as the outcome of two contested races will have implications on the state's business climate.

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