

GOP Wave & the Founders

Michael Sean Winters | Nov. 4, 2010 Distinctly Catholic

In most recent elections, precise gerrymandering has made most House races non-competitive. And, it is still odd to my ears that we were all surprised that so many House races were "in play" this year when it was about 91 that were in play, out of 435. The Founders, of course, required House elections every two years so that the lower chamber would be close to popular sentiment. But, because of re-districting, the reflection of popular will has come more often in Senate races, where you can't re-district, than in House races.

Tuesday, the system worked as intended. The popular will created a wave that swept the Democrats out of control of the House but the Senate races were much more stable. Indeed, the word "Senate" is derived from the Latin for "old man" and certainly, candidates like Sharron Angle and Linda McMahon and Christine O'Donnell and Ken Buck seemed to lack the wisdom such a designation implies. The "old men" like Harry Reid, Dick Blumenthal, Chris Coons and Michael Bennet prevailed, and it appears that Patti Murray, who is neither very old nor a man, will also be returning to Washington.

Checks and balances. Change and continuity. The House and the Senate. It worked this time as intended, but I am still in favor of reforms that make gerrymandering more difficult.

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