

THE ELECTIONS IN VIRGINIA

The Republicans gained two seats in the Senate for a 20/20 tie and seven seats in the House. It appears that the Senate of Virginia will have a 20/20 tie with Republican Lt. Governor Bolling serving as the tie breaker. The Democratic losses were Senator Roscoe Reynolds losing to Senator Bill Stanley and Senator Edd Houck losing to Bryce Reeves by a narrow margin. The closest race that a Democrat won that would have shifted the majority to the Republicans was incumbent Senator John Miller's (D-1st) narrow victory over Mickey Chohaney.

Some other notable Senate races were:

- Incumbent Toddy Puller (D-13th) beat Jeff Frederick (R)
- Incumbent Phil Puckett (D-38th) beat Adam Light (R)
- Incumbent George Barker (D-39th) beat Miller Baker (R)
- Incumbent Dave Marsden (D-37th) beat Jason Flanary (R)
- Incumbent Dr. Ralph Northam (D-6th) beat Ben Loyola (R)
- Incumbent John Edwards (D-21st) beat Delegate Dave Nutter (R) who had retired from the House
- Incumbent Chuck Colgan (D-29th) beat Tom Gordy (R)
- Former Delegate Dick Black (R-13th) won in an open seat election

In the House the Republicans picked up nine seats to have a margin of 67 Republicans to 32 Democrats with one Independent who caucuses with the Republicans. Minority Leader, Ward Armstrong, lost to Delegate Charles Poindexter (R) and Delegate Barlow (D) lost to Rick Morris (R).

The Republicans picked up a majority of the open seats along with the two upsets of incumbent Democrats to increase their numbers in the house by seven seats. This will allow the Republicans to add one new Republican to each committee replacing a Democratic member of each committee. If the Republicans had gained control of one more seat to 69 Republican seats it would have allowed them to replace two Democrats on each committee.

One of the Democrats who lost, Edd Houck, was a supporter of keeping reimbursement for Medicaid services at its current levels. While many in the General Assembly have fought to lower Medicaid rates for physicians and hospitals and other health care providers, Senator Houck was steadfastly supportive of the health care community. He will be missed and medicine will now have to find other supporters to shield physicians from severe cuts to Medicaid reimbursements.

As the Session draws closer, we will be notifying you of any bills affecting your patients, medicine in general and your specialty in particular.

Please call Brian Ball (804-420-6426) or Melanie Gerheart (804-788-8006) with questions.