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It's 'No-Contest' once again in state legislative elections

Minneapolis, MN – FairVote Minnesota today released a comparison of predictions of state legislative elections made one year ago with actual results from the November 7 election. Predicting winners in two-thirds of the districts, the actual results showed the predictions to be over 90 percent accurate in the Senate and nearly 95 percent accurate in the House of Representatives.

“The presidential election might have been a cliff-hanger. But most Minnesota legislative elections were real yawners,” says Tony Anderson Solgård, co-author of the report. “Minnesotans deserve better choices in competitive elections, not one-party domination year after year.”

The predictions were contained in FairVote Minnesota’s “No-Contest Elections” report, published in November, 1999. The purpose of the report was to assess the level of competitiveness of Minnesota legislative elections. The conclusion: Very few districts offer competitive elections to their voters.

According to the report, non-competitive elections are undemocratic, do not provide adequate accountability to voters, deny political power to competitive areas, balkanize the state and add to petty partisanship, exclude most voters from the campaign, and take away important incentives for citizens to turn out to vote.

Isn't this just about the advantage of incumbency?

“Not at all,” says Solgård. “Our accuracy in open seats was even better than where we predicted an incumbent to win. If people think term limits will make elections more competitive, they’d better think again.” The accuracy of predictions was 100 percent in open seats and 97 percent when an incumbent was picked to win.

What effect did Independence Party candidates have on the results?

In three Senate districts and five House districts, the presence of Independence Party candidates meant that the winner was chosen with less than a majority of the vote. “That means the wishes of the majority were not discovered in those districts,” says Solgård. “We’ll never know if the majority would have supported the candidate who was elected or would have gotten behind another candidate instead.”

Recommendations

The report recommends that legislators address the problem when they draw new district lines next year. “Legislators should redraw district boundaries with a goal to assure majority rule, fair representation for all voters, and competitive elections,” says Solgård. Advanced alternative election systems that accomplish these goals are discussed in the report as well.

To obtain a copy of the report...

Go to <http://www.FairVoteMN.org>

Table 1. Results summary

	House		Senate	
	#	%	#	%
“Untouchable”				
Right	56	98.25	24	92.31
<u>Wrong</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1.75</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>7.69</u>
Total	57	100	26	100
“Comfortable”				
Right	31	88.57	14	87.50
<u>Wrong</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>11.43</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>12.50</u>
Total	35	100	16	100
Open Seats				
Right	13	100	6	100
<u>Wrong</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	13	100	6	100
Incumbents				
Right	73	97.33	32	96.97
<u>Wrong</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2.67</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3.03</u>
Total	75	100	33	100
Overall				
Right	87	94.57	38	90.48
<u>Wrong</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>5.43</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>9.52</u>
Total	92	100	42	100

Table 2. Comparison of Predictions and Actual Results in State House and Senate Elections, November 7, 2000.

District	96-98 District Profile	Incumbent's Party/ Open Seat	2000 Prediction	2000 RESULT	R(ight) or W(rong)
01A	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	GOP	W
01B	Comfortable DFL	GOP	DFL	GOP	W
02A	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
02B	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
03A	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
03B	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
04A	Leaning DFL	GOP	Not called	GOP	
04B	Leaning DFL	GOP	Not called	GOP	
05A	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
05B	Untouchable DFL	OPEN	DFL	DFL	R
06A	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
06B	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
07A	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
07B	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
08A	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
08B	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
09A	Leaning DFL	GOP	Not called	GOP	
09B	Comfortable DFL	GOP	DFL	DFL	R
10A	Leaning GOP	GOP	Not called	GOP	
10B	Leaning GOP	GOP	Not called	GOP	
11A	Comfortable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
11B	Comfortable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
12A	Comfortable DFL	DFL	DFL	GOP	W
12B	Comfortable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
13A	Comfortable DFL	GOP	DFL	GOP	W

13B	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
14A	Leaning DFL	GOP	Not called	GOP	
14B	Leaning GOP	GOP	Not called	GOP	
15A	Leaning DFL	DFL	Not called	DFL	
15B	Comfortable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
16A	Comfortable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
16B	Leaning GOP	GOP	Not called	GOP	
17A	Leaning DFL	GOP	Not called	GOP	
17B	Leaning DFL	DFL	Not called	DFL	
18A	Leaning DFL	OPEN	Not called	GOP	
18B	Comfortable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
19A	Leaning GOP	GOP	Not called	GOP	
19B	Comfortable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
20A	Comfortable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
20B	Leaning GOP	GOP	Not called	GOP	
21A	Leaning GOP	GOP	Not called	GOP	
21B	Leaning GOP	GOP	Not called	GOP	
22A	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
22B	Comfortable DFL	GOP	DFL	GOP	W
23A	Comfortable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
23B	Leaning GOP	GOP	Not called	GOP	
24A	Comfortable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
24B	Leaning DFL	GOP	Not called	DFL	
25A	Leaning DFL	GOP	Not called	GOP	
25B	Leaning GOP	GOP	Not called	GOP	
26A	Untouchable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
26B	Comfortable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
27A	Leaning GOP	GOP	Not called	GOP	
27B	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
28A	Untouchable GOP	OPEN	GOP	GOP	R
28B	Untouchable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
29A	Leaning GOP	GOP	Not called	GOP	
29B	Comfortable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
30A	Untouchable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
30B	Untouchable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
31A	Untouchable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
31B	Comfortable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
32A	Leaning DFL	DFL	Not called	DFL	
32B	Untouchable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
33A	Untouchable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
33B	Untouchable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
34A	Untouchable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
34B	Untouchable GOP	OPEN	GOP	GOP	R
35A	Comfortable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
35B	Leaning DFL	GOP	Not called	GOP	
36A	Leaning GOP	GOP	Not called	GOP	
36B	Untouchable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
37A	Untouchable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
37B	Comfortable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
38A	Leaning GOP	GOP	Not called	GOP	
38B	Untouchable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
39A	Comfortable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
39B	Comfortable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
40A	Leaning DFL	DFL	Not called	DFL	
40B	Leaning GOP	DFL	Not called	DFL	

41A	Untouchable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
41B	Untouchable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
42A	Untouchable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
42B	Untouchable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
43A	Untouchable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
43B	Untouchable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
44A	Leaning DFL	DFL	Not called	DFL	
44B	Leaning DFL	GOP	Not called	GOP	
45A	Untouchable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
45B	Comfortable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
46A	Comfortable DFL	OPEN	DFL	DFL	R
46B	Comfortable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
47A	Leaning DFL	DFL	Not called	DFL	
47B	Leaning DFL	OPEN	Not called	DFL	
48A	Comfortable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
48B	Comfortable DFL	OPEN	DFL	DFL	R
49A	Leaning GOP	GOP	Not called	GOP	
49B	Leaning DFL	DFL	Not called	DFL	
50A	Leaning DFL	GOP	Not called	GOP	
50B	Leaning GOP	GOP	Not called	GOP	
51A	Leaning DFL	GOP	Not called	GOP	
51B	Leaning GOP	GOP	Not called	GOP	
52A	Comfortable DFL	OPEN	DFL	DFL	R
52B	Leaning DFL	OPEN	Not called	DFL	
53A	Comfortable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
53B	Comfortable GOP	OPEN	GOP	GOP	R
54A	Leaning DFL	DFL	Not called	DFL	
54B	Comfortable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
55A	Leaning GOP	GOP	Not called	GOP	
55B	Comfortable DFL	OPEN	DFL	DFL	R
56A	Comfortable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
56B	Comfortable GOP	OPEN	GOP	GOP	R
57A	Leaning DFL	GOP	Not called	DFL	
57B	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
58A	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
58B	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
59A	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
59B	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
60A	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
60B	Untouchable DFL	OPEN	DFL	DFL	R
61A	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
61B	Untouchable DFL	OPEN	DFL	DFL	R
62A	Untouchable DFL	OPEN	DFL	DFL	R
62B	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
63A	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
63B	Comfortable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
64A	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
64B	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
65A	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
65B	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
66A	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
66B	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
67A	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
67B	Untouchable DFL	OPEN	DFL	DFL	R
			House	Right	87 (94.57%)

			Summary		
				Wrong	5 (5.43%)

SD01	Comfortable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
SD02	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
SD03	Untouchable DFL	other	DFL	Other	W
SD04	Leaning DFL	DFL	Not called	DFL	
SD05	Untouchable DFL	OPEN	DFL	DFL	R
SD06	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
SD07	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
SD08	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
SD09	Leaning DFL	DFL	Not called	DFL	
SD10	Leaning GOP	GOP	Not called	GOP	
SD11	Leaning DFL	DFL	Not called	DFL	
SD12	Comfortable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
SD13	Untouchable DFL	GOP	DFL	GOP	W
SD14	Leaning GOP	GOP	Not called	GOP	
SD15	Leaning DFL	DFL	Not called	DFL	
SD16	Leaning DFL	GOP	Not called	GOP	
SD17	Leaning DFL	GOP	Not called	GOP	
SD18	Comfortable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
SD19	Leaning GOP	GOP	Not called	GOP	
SD20	Comfortable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
SD21	Leaning GOP	GOP	Not called	GOP	
SD22	Comfortable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
SD23	Comfortable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
SD24	Leaning DFL	DFL	Not called	DFL	
SD25	Leaning GOP	GOP	Not called	GOP	
SD26	Leaning GOP	GOP	Not called	DFL	
SD27	Comfortable DFL	DFL	DFL	GOP	W
SD28	Untouchable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
SD29	Leaning GOP	DFL	Not called	DFL	
SD30	Untouchable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
SD31	Untouchable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
SD32	Leaning GOP	GOP	Not called	GOP	
SD33	Untouchable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
SD34	Untouchable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
SD35	Leaning GOP	GOP	Not called	GOP	
SD36	Comfortable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
SD37	Comfortable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
SD38	Comfortable GOP	DFL	GOP	DFL	W
SD39	Comfortable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
SD40	Leaning GOP	DFL	Not called	DFL	
SD41	Untouchable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
SD42	Untouchable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
SD43	Untouchable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
SD44	Leaning DFL	DFL	Not called	DFL	
SD45	Untouchable GOP	GOP	GOP	GOP	R
SD46	Comfortable DFL	OPEN	DFL	DFL	R
SD47	Leaning DFL	DFL	Not called	DFL	
SD48	Leaning GOP	DFL	Not called	DFL	
SD49	Leaning DFL	DFL	Not called	DFL	
SD50	Leaning GOP	OPEN	Not called	GOP	
SD51	Leaning GOP	DFL	Not called	DFL	
SD52	Leaning DFL	OPEN	Not called	DFL	

SD53	Comfortable GOP	OPEN	GOP	GOP	R
SD54	Comfortable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
SD55	Leaning DFL	DFL	Not called	DFL	
SD56	Comfortable GOP	OPEN	GOP	GOP	R
SD57	Comfortable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
SD58	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
SD59	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
SD60	Untouchable DFL	OPEN	DFL	DFL	R
SD61	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
SD62	Untouchable DFL	OPEN	DFL	DFL	R
SD63	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
SD64	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
SD65	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
SD66	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
SD67	Untouchable DFL	DFL	DFL	DFL	R
			Senate Summary	Right	38 (90.48%)
				Wrong	4 (9.52%)