

# TENNESSEE GOVERNMENT

## Update

NEWS FOR THE CLIENTS AND FRIENDS OF BASS, BERRY & SIMS PLC

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### Post-Election Analysis Wednesday, November 5, 2008

Barack Obama was elected President yesterday, but John McCain carried Tennessee by 15 percentage points (57%-42%). As a result of McCain's big win and other factors, including incumbent retirements, both houses of the Tennessee General Assembly are now majority Republican.

#### Tennessee Senate

Republicans will control the Tennessee Senate with a 19-14 margin. Republicans won three of the five most-highly publicized Senate contests. In two non-incumbent races, Delores Gresham (54%) defeated Randy Camp (46%) to replace former Democratic Lieutenant Governor John Wilder and Ken Yager (51%) defeated Becky Ruppe (44%) to replace Democrat Tommy Kilby. Independent Mike Williams (48.8%) lost to Republican Mike Faulk (50.2%). In the 14th District, Democrat Eric Stewart (53.5%) defeated Mike Niederhauser (46.5%). Rosalind Kurita's write-in campaign, after her Democratic primary win by 19 votes was voided by the Democratic State Primary Board, was unsuccessful. Democrat Tim Barnes (83%) will replace her in the Senate.

#### Tennessee House

In the House, Republicans will hold a 50 to 49 margin. Two Democratic incumbents, Nathan Vaughn of Kingsport and Bob Bibb of Springfield, lost their contests for re-election. In addition, Republicans won three non-incumbent House seats from which Democrats had retired. One Republican incumbent, Tom Dubois of Columbia, lost. The result is a net gain of four seats for Republicans giving that party 50 members of the 99-person House of Representatives.

An important result of the election will be the likely change in Tennessee's so-called constitutional officers (the Comptroller, the Treasurer and the Secretary of State), each of whom is elected by joint convention of the two houses of the General Assembly. The Constitutional officers sit on many of the decision-making boards and commissions of the state, including the Funding Board, the State Building Commission and the Higher Education Commission. In addition, the Comptroller and Treasurer have traditionally served as ad hoc, super-staff to the legislature on budget and other high profile matters.

The joint convention will occur in January after the 106th General Assembly convenes on January 13. The incumbent constitutional officers are:

Comptroller – John Morgan;  
Treasurer – Dale Sims; and  
Secretary of State – Riley Darnell.

### Tennessee Federal

Eight of nine of Tennessee's congressional delegation were re-elected. One-term incumbent David Davis was defeated in the Republican primary in August by Phil Roe who was elected in the First Congressional District with 71% of the vote.

Senator Lamar Alexander won re-election to a second term, taking 65% of the vote.

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