

Chairman's Report – November 2016

The dust is now settling on one of the most successful elections for the Montana Republican Party in modern times. I want to report what we accomplished, who we all want to thank for their contributions of time and treasure, and what our plans are for the future.

Statewide – Federal

Montana Republicans were successful in 6 of the 7 statewide races on the ballot. Donald Trump beat Hillary Clinton by nearly 100,000 votes in Montana, and Congressman Zinke beat Denise Juneau by 16 percentage points. I am happy that Nancy Pelosi burned \$500,000 in her wasted effort to help Juneau, revealing the lack of appeal of the Democrat message in Montana. This was a huge strategic mistake for Montana Democrats and with Trump's election Juneau now has no backup plan.

Statewide – State

Montana Republicans were successful in winning 4 of the 5 races for the Land Board. Corey Stapleton was elected Secretary of State where he will lead an effort to restore integrity to our election process, including eliminating the improper practice of strangers collecting voted ballots and adopt measures to insure that people are not voting in multiple states. Tim Fox was re-elected as Attorney General where he can continue to fight government overreach by the EPA and other agencies. Matt Rosendale was elected Auditor where he will be busy implementing whatever comes out of the new Congress and President to Repeal and Replace Obamacare. And finally, Elsie Arntzen was elected Superintendent of Public Instruction where she will be returning control to our local

school boards and parents. Our only loss was that of the Governor's race. Greg Gianforte fought a hard and expensive race, but was unable to overcome millions of dollars in spending by the Democrats and their Dark Money allies. However, the fact that his race drew all the fire enabled us to elect all our other candidates by huge margins. We owe Greg and Susan a debt of gratitude. Thank them when you see them.

Public Service Commission

I want to first congratulate Tony O'Donnell for being elected to the PSC. He won a hard fought primary and then went on to achieve victory in the general election. With the re-election of Roger Koopman and Bob Lake on Tuesday, Montana Republicans continue to own all five seats on the Montana Public Service Commission. Koopman got so much financial help from the County committees in his district that the MTGOP was unable to give him but we were able to get some last minute financial help to Bob Lake when he needed it.

Montana Legislature

Under the leadership of Speaker Austin Knudsen and the leadership committee of the Montana Republican Legislative Campaign Committee both houses of the Montana legislature remained firmly in the control of Montana Republicans. Pending final results from the counting of provisional ballots next Monday the Montana House remains at 59-41 and the margin in the Montana Senate increased by 2 to 32-18. I believe that with continued recruitment of good candidates and the leadership of the MRLCC the Montana Legislature is now permanently in Republican hands. I also want to thank the MRLCC for transferring money to the state party enabling us to expand our independent expenditure effort late in the election cycle. This was a unified effort.

Our Plans for the Future

I believe that pro-growth policies will be coming out of a

Washington DC that is now in Republican control. I think the Republican Congress will be motivated to take swift action on the bread and butter issues that the American people want to get our economy moving again and bring good paying jobs back to this country. If they don't, I don't think the American people will forgive them. But I also believe that the policy initiatives coming out of DC will be ones that will tend to unite Republican members of the Montana Legislature rather than ones that were used by Democrats to divide us. Freeing our people from the burdens of Obamacare and the oppressive regulations on our small businesses, farms and ranches, and putting the needs of the people ahead of the wants of the government will be policies that should unite all Republicans. It will be a test of our leadership, our common sense, and our willingness to make progress in a series of 3 to 5 yard gains, as stated so often by Greg Gianforte, which will dictate our success. The desire for perfection cannot become the opponent of achieving the good.

At this point Montana Republicans hold 6 of the 8 statewide seats. Jon Tester and Steve Bullock are the only remaining statewide elected Democrats. I am happy to announce that Jon Tester has been officially added to the Endangered Species list as he is up for election in 2018. And I believe we will continue our success and replace him then and elect a Republican Governor in 2020. We just need to work together and work strategically to remove Democrats from the infrastructure in the executive branch offices in Helena. There are many Montana Democrats that will be looking for work come January 3. There needs to be many more.

We have assembled a great team of employees that achieved a great victory for Montana Republicans on Tuesday. I would like to keep the entire team together so that we do not have to start rebuilding from scratch a year from now when things will be gearing up for the race to replace Jon Tester. But that will take more money than we have traditionally been able to

raise from our Membership card mailers and our conventions. I would like to ask you to click on the donate button and set up a monthly donation of \$25, \$50 or \$100 dollars or more if you can afford it to support our ongoing efforts. I have worked hard to reduce our ongoing spending to the absolute bare bones minimum, but I cannot run this organization without employing good people and that takes ongoing money. I hope that you will agree that our efforts have borne fruit that will benefit future generations. Now is not the time to take a break.

Thank you for everything you have done for the Montana Republican Party.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'JE' with a stylized flourish.

Jeff Essmann
Chairman
Montana Republican Party