

# [***Republicans Are Overperforming in Recent Elections***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:6BNK-DX41-DY68-14V8-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Highlight:** The Republican Party has performed marginally better in special elections this year than former President Trump did in the 2020 election.

**Body**

Republicans appear to be overperforming in elections this year compared to former President [*Donald Trump*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/donald-trump?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships)'s performance in the 2020 presidential election.

Despite a [*recent high-profile defeat*](https://www.newsweek.com/marilyn-lands-achieves-stunning-swing-democrats-alabama-1883920?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) in a special election to the Alabama state House, the GOP has done marginally better in special elections this year than their presidential candidate did when he ran against President [*Joe Biden*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/joe-biden?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships).

Figures prepared by progressive news site *Daily Kos* about the average margin of victory in the 16 special elections that have taken place in 2024 show a swing of around 0.4 percent in [*Republicans*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/republicans?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships)' favor.

Recent polling suggests that the November presidential election is likely to be close as Biden faces a rematch with Trump, while close margins have previously decided victory in key swing states such as Pennsylvania, Michigan and Wisconsin.

Garrett Herrin, a Geographic Information System (GIS) analyst, pointed to the *Daily Kos*'s spreadsheet of figures on X, formerly [*Twitter*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/twitter?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships), on Wednesday and noted that the average margin had not yet been updated.

"Good catch from @charles\_gaba: it looks like @DKElections hasn't yet accounted for tonight in their averages. The number is actually about 0.4 pts in GOP's direction," Herrin noted.

Though 0.4 percent might not appear significant, a close election could be decided by [*an extremely narrow margin*](https://www.newsweek.com/joe-biden-bad-news-swing-state-1884282?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships). Of the 16 special elections, eight were won by [*Democrats*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/democrats?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) and eight by Republicans.

*Newsweek* has reached out to the [*Republican*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/republican?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) National Committee (RNC) via email for comment.

Thomas Gift, founding director of the Centre on U.S. ***Politics*** at University College London, whose home state is Pennsylvania, was skeptical that special elections could indicate a wider trend.

"My sense is that special elections—or any down ballot election in the last few years—is unlikely to be a good bellwether for 2024," Gift told *Newsweek.*

"Trump is such a uniquely iconoclastic, and alienating, figure that other Republican candidates aren't a good proxy for how voters will respond to when Trump is on the ticket," he added.

Poll tracker FiveThirtyEight's analysis of the generic congressional ballot—an indication of which party Americans will vote for—showed Democrats with a narrow lead of 0.2 percent as of Wednesday with 44.5 percent support to the GOP's 44.3 percent.

During the 2022 midterm elections, the closest race for the House saw Republican Representative [*Lauren Boebert*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/lauren-boebert?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) defeat her Democratic challenger by a margin of 0.17 percent or just 546 votes [*in Colorado's 3rd district*](https://www.newsweek.com/lauren-boebert-colorado-special-election-4th-primary-1883133?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships).

Republican Mariannette Miller-Meeks defeated her Democratic opponent Rita Hart by just six votes in 2020 to win a congressional election in Iowa's second district—a margin of effectively zero.

With numbers tight in the House of Representatives, every single seat is likely to count when the new [*Congress*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/congress?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) meets in January and some races could be just as close as Boebert's and Miller-Meeks'.

Narrow margins can also be key in presidential elections where Trump won three states—Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin—by less than one percent in 2016. His victories in those states were crucial to winning the White House.

The most recent polls also show that the race between Biden and Trump nationally [*is extremely close*](https://www.newsweek.com/joe-biden-scores-poll-boost-among-republicans-1884044?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships).

A YouGov/*The Economist* poll conducted from March 24 to 26 showed Trump leading by just one point—with 44 percent to Biden's 43 percent among registered voters.

However, Beacon Research/Shaw & Company Research for [*Fox News*](https://www.newsweek.com/topic/fox-news?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) conducted from March 22 to 25 [*showed Trump leading Biden*](https://www.newsweek.com/donald-trump-electoral-poison-former-gop-strategist-1883994?utm_source=Synacor&utm_medium=Attnet&utm_campaign=Partnerships) among registered voters by 50 percent to 45 percent in a straight race.

[*Link to Image*](https://d.newsweek.com/en/full/2369637/republicans-are-overperforming-recent-elections.jpg)

**Graphic**

Republicans Are Overperforming in Recent Elections

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