

ELECTION 2024

An election and a nation on edge

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY ASHLEY BORG/GLOBE STAFF/GETTY IMAGES, BLOOMBERG

Bracing for an outcome where the only certainty is uncertainty

By David M. Shribman

GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

We're entering the last nervous days of a season of contention and of mystery, upheaval and dread, a time when the country could lurch in entirely different directions or completely lose its way. And when there isn't a pollster, politico, or pundit in the land who has any idea which way this presidential election will go. If you hear someone say they do, change the channel. Has America's long political history ever before known such an excruciat-

ingly unpredictable moment? It is surprisingly hard to say. There are in fact few, if any, precedents for the pass the nation has staggered into. There have been many closely contested elections, of course, and many more of high consequence, but 2024 has an almost incomparable character. Perhaps only twice have Americans experienced anything like this: once at the precipice of civil war at home, the other time over a proxy war 8,000 miles away. Everything was on the line in the HISTORY, Page A14



New look

Is identity politics losing its hold on the US electorate? A13.

Purple reign

Newcomers change N.H. map. B1.

Senate

showdown Control of chamber will come down to just a few races. A16.

Election officials vow readiness, resolve in face of challenges, threats to voting

By Sam Brodey and Jim Puzzanghera

GLOBE STAFF

WASHINGTON — When photos emerged last week of smoke billowing from ballot drop boxes in Washington state and Oregon — destroying many ballots inside — politicians and pundits reacted with alarm over what the apparent arson might portend for the security of this fraught election. But to those tasked with administering elections around the country, the shocking scene wasn't surprising. That's because many of them had pre-

pared for this exact scenario. At their summer meeting in July, the Partnership for Large Election Jurisdictions — an association established for election officials after 2020 — conducted 16 training exercises for members to sharpen their readiness ahead of November. One of those scenarios: a dynamite stick dropped into a ballot box. "You need to triage and figure out, what do I need to know, what do I need to do, and what do voters need to know, and what do they need to do," said Carole ELECTION OFFICIALS, Page A12

'You don't know what the future will hold and how the world will react.'

ALENA KHALID, first-time voter in Bloomfield Hills, Mich.

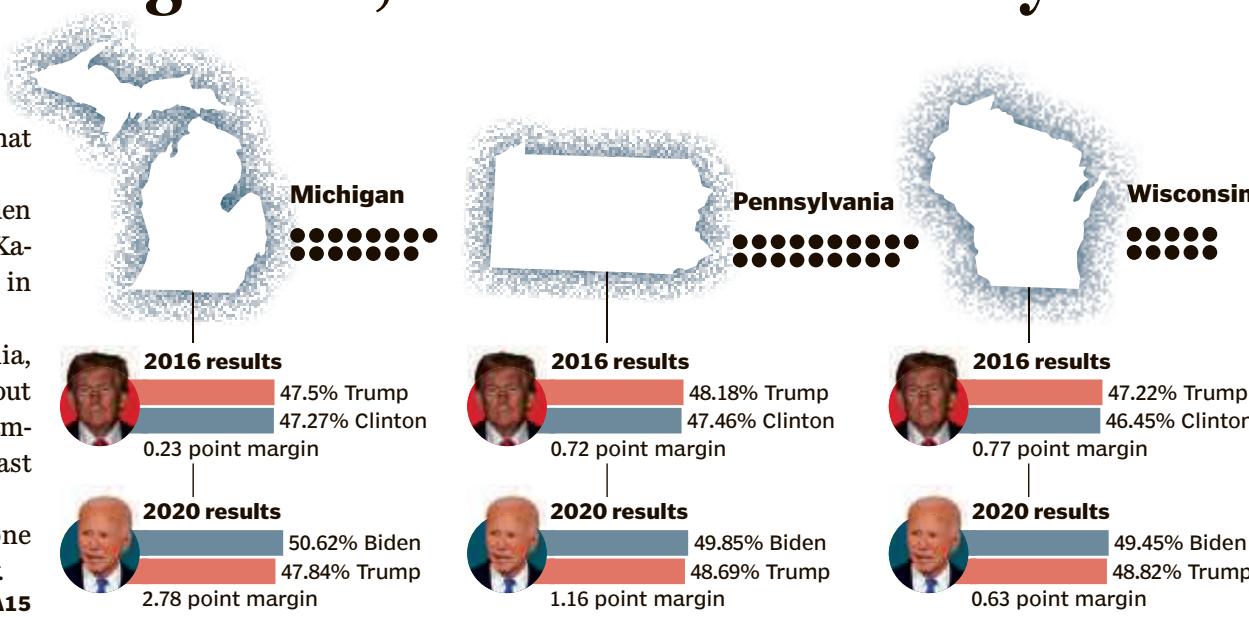


In once-solid Democratic ground, a blue wall of anxiety

By Jim Puzzanghera, Tal Kopan, and Sam Brodey

GLOBE STAFF

They're three states so important to Democratic presidential hopes that they're known as the "blue wall." That wall crumbled for Hillary Clinton in 2016. It held fast for Joe Biden in 2020. And now, four years later, its strength is again being tested, as Kamala Harris seeks the presidency and Donald Trump tries to topple it in hopes of returning to the White House. For months, Globe reporters have traveled to Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin, speaking to people from across the political spectrum about what matters most to them in this election year. They returned in the campaign's final days to talk with voters about how they are deciding to cast their ballots. And throughout all the twists and turns of an extraordinary race, one word — in several different iterations — emerged again and again: anxiety. BLUE WALL, Page A15



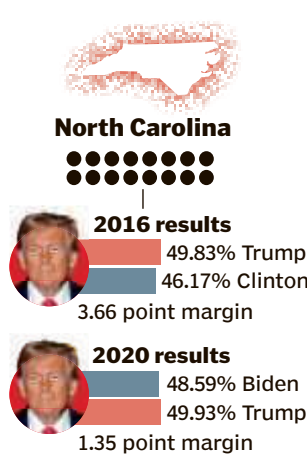
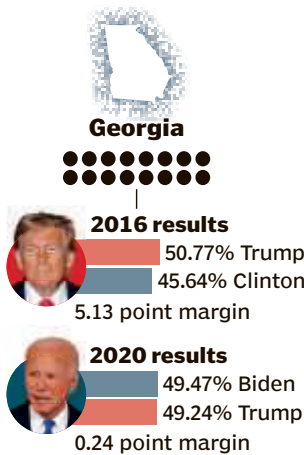
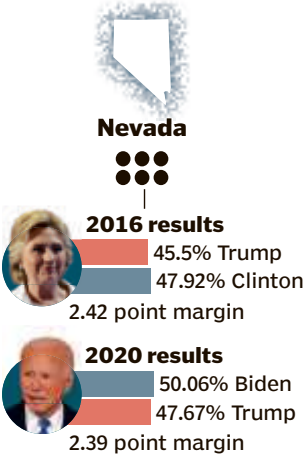
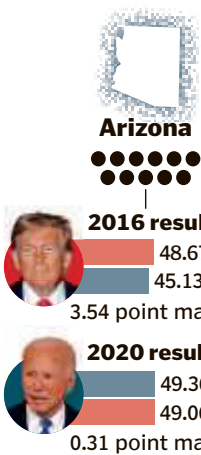
Other battleground states

As it was in the previous two presidential elections, the 2024 campaign is expected to be decided by tight margins in just seven states.



Previous election result  
2024 electoral votes

SOURCE: US Federal Election Commission  
GLOBE STAFF



It's crunch time

Sunday: Mostly sunny. High: 48-53. Low: 36-41. Monday: Clouds and sun. Complete report, A24. Deaths, A19-23.

American Airlines created the phenomenon of gate-crowding; now it wants to stop people from trying to jump the line. SundayTravel, N11. In East Boston, a community gathers to celebrate Día de los

Muertos, honoring lost loved ones. Metro, B1. The Mookie Betts story is starting to feel like Babe Ruth Redux, exactly 100 years later, writes Dan Shaughnessy. Sports, C1.

Standard settings

Daylight saving time ended at 2 a.m. Sunday. Make sure your clocks are returned to Eastern Standard Time.



VOL. 306, NO. 126

Suggested retail price \$6.00

