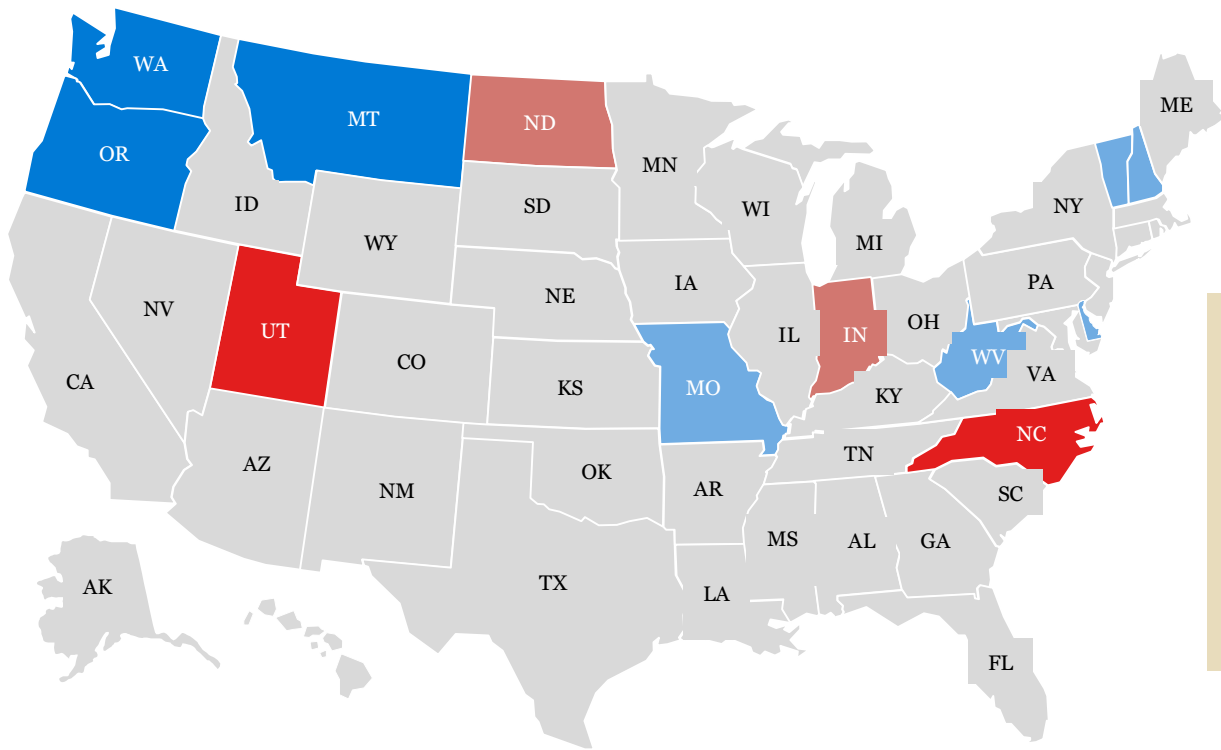


Democrats Hope to Make a Dent in Republican Governor Majority in 2016

Governor Seats up for Election in 2016

■ Open Democrat Seat ■ Incumbent Democrat Seeking Re-election
■ Open Republican Seat ■ Incumbent Republican Seeking Re-election



Summary

- 12 seats are up for election in 2016
- Three incumbent Democrats and two incumbent Republicans are running for re-election.
- There are seven open seats – five formerly Democrat and two formerly Republican.

Source: Reid Wilson, "Dems Look for Comeback in Battle for Governorships," The Hill, September 5, 2016.

Democrats Look to Make up for Gubernatorial Losses in the 2014 and 2010 Midterm Elections

Two Key Republican-Held Gubernatorial Seats Democrats are Targeting



North Carolina

- Incumbent **Gov. Pat McCrory (R)** has been affected by low polling and backlash from the “bathroom bill.”
- Both public and private polls show McCrory’s opponent, **Attorney General Roy Cooper (D)**, holding a narrow lead.
- North Carolina is also a key battleground state in the presidential election where Trump and Clinton will both be highly visible. This may cause Trump’s negative down-ballot effect to impact McCrory.
- The NC bill regarding transgender bathroom legislation will be a key topic in this race.



Indiana

- Indiana polling shows former state **House Speaker John Gregg (D)** running relatively even with **Lt. Gov. Eric Holcomb (R)**.
- Holcomb was picked late in the election cycle because incumbent Mike Pence was tapped to run as Donald Trump’s vice presidential candidate.
- Pence leaves the office amid criticism from equal rights activists for his controversial religious liberty bill and a low approval rating.
- Democrats will likely try to associate Holcomb as much as possible with the Pence administration.

Republicans Aim to Take Advantage of Vulnerable Democrat-Held Seats

Two Key Democrat-Held Gubernatorial Seats Republicans are Targeting



Missouri

- **Gov. Jay Nixon (D)** is retiring from his position and the GOP sees his seat as the primary pick-up opportunity among gubernatorial races.
- Polls show a tight race between **Attorney General Chris Koster (D)** and **Eric Grietens (R)**, a veteran of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.
- Koster is a Republican-turned-Democrat campaigning with \$11 million in the bank.
- Grietens is a newcomer to politics, but beat three more experienced candidates in his run for the Republican nomination.



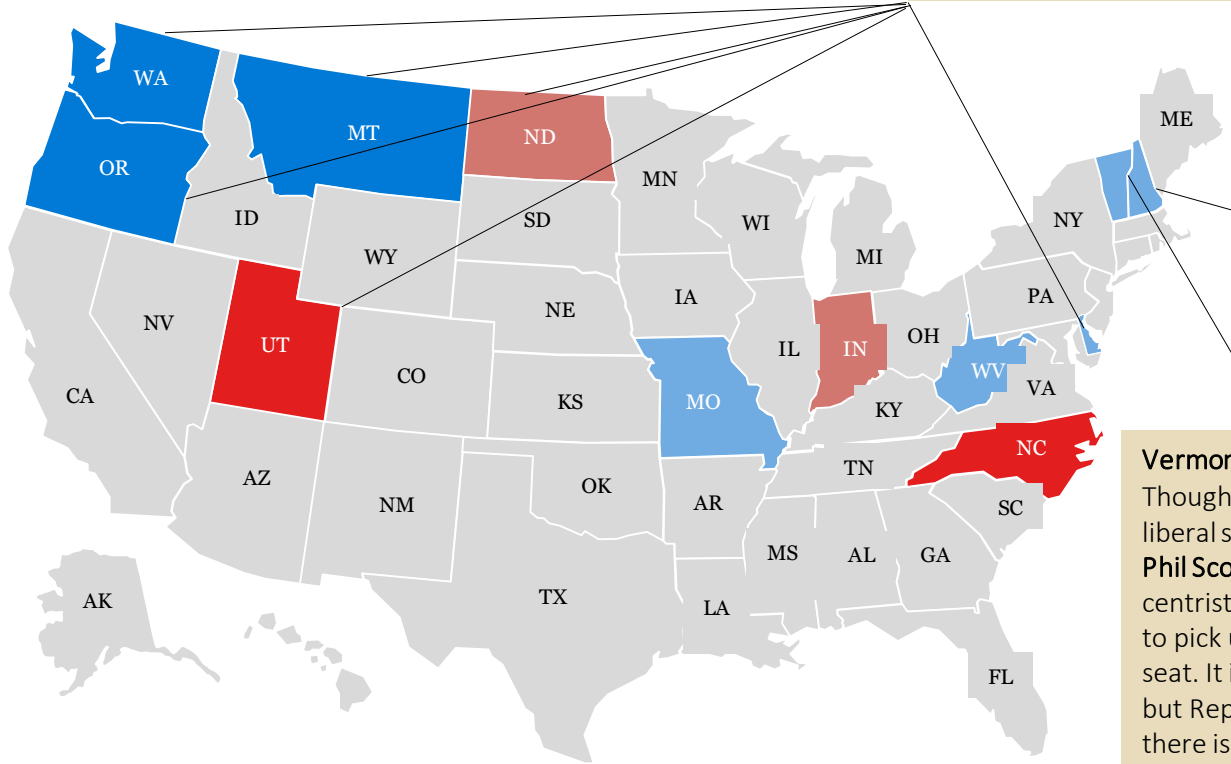
West Virginia

- West Virginia was initially a likely pick-up opportunity for the GOP, but state **Senate President Bill Cole's (R)** chances have been hurt by a fight over state budget problems.
- Meanwhile billionaire **Jim Justice (D)** has a slight lead in the polls.
- Republicans seem to be moving their focus to other races as Cole's outlook looks grim in this election.

Six of the Twelve Seats Up for Re-Election are Unlikely to Switch Parties

Gubernatorial Seats up for Election in 2016

- Open Democrat Seat
- Incumbent Democrat Seeking Re-election
- Open Republican Seat
- Incumbent Republican Seeking Re-election



States Unlikely to Switch
 Republicans hoped they might be able to sway voters in **Montana** and **Washington**, but both appear unlikely. The GOP is “cautiously optimistic” about its candidate in **Oregon**, but again the state hasn’t had a Republican Governor since 1982. **Delaware**, **North Dakota**, and **Utah** are all likely to maintain their party.

New Hampshire
 The state’s governor’s election appears to be a toss up. Former Gov. Maggie Hassan (D) is running for Senate as both parties gear up for the **Sept. 13th primary** to choose the candidates that will fight to replace her.

Vermont
 Though Vermont is a liberal state, **Lt. Gov. Phil Scott (R)** crafted a centrist platform to try to pick up the open seat. It is a long shot, but Republicans say there is a chance.

Source: Reid Wilson, “Dems Look for Comeback in Battle for Governorships,” The Hill, September 5, 2016.