

Open seats in 2018 gubernatorial elections

The high number of open seats in 2018 is resulting in increasingly contested and expensive gubernatorial elections

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In 36 states with 2018 gubernatorial elections, 17 have open seats

2018 gubernatorial elections

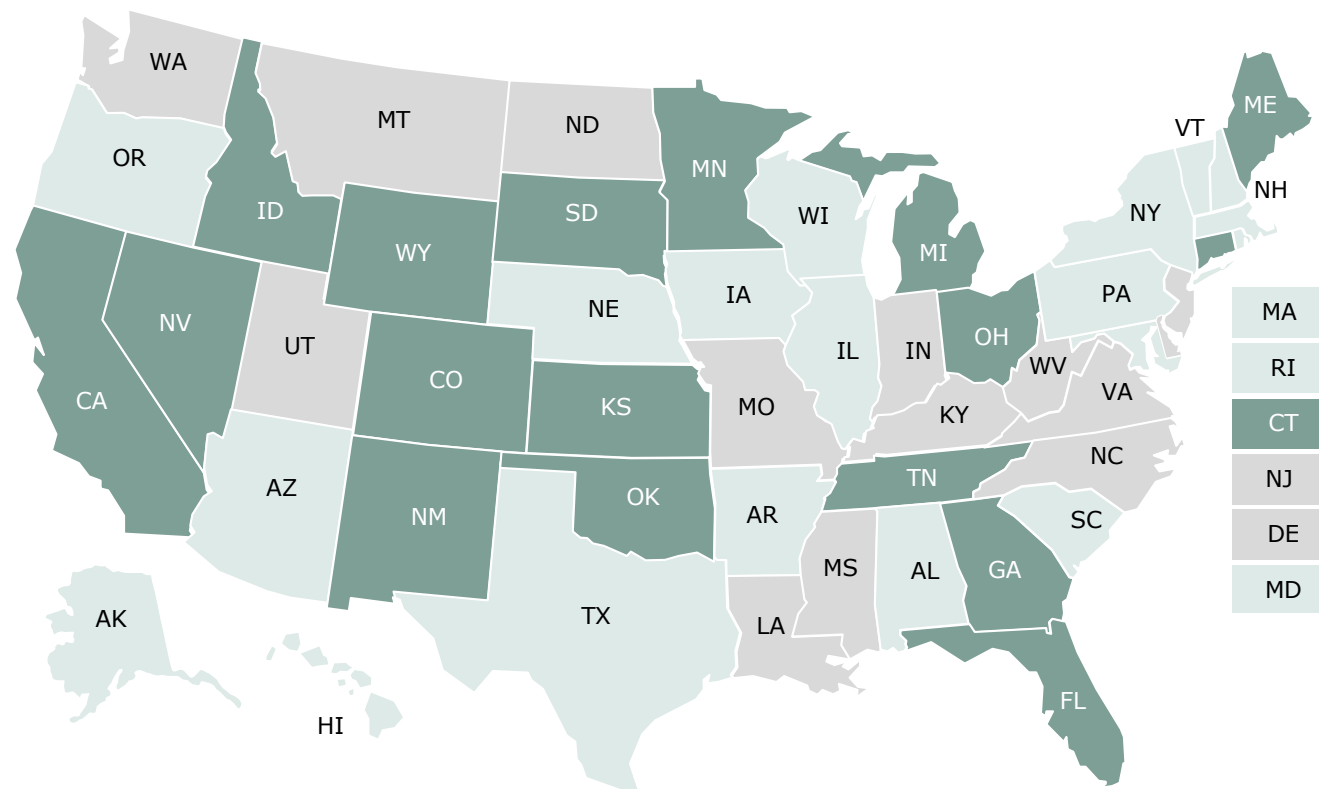
	Governors ineligible for re-election	Eligible incumbent governors not running for re-election	Eligible incumbent governors running for re-election (or undecided)
Democrat	Jerry Brown (D-CA), John Hickenlooper (D-CO)	Dan Malloy (D-CT), Mark Dayton (D-MN)	David Ige (D-HI), Andrew Cuomo (D-NY), Kate Brown (D-OR), Tom Wolf (D-PA), Gina Raimondo (D-RI)
Republican	Rick Scott (R-FL), Nathan Deal (R-GA), Sam Brownback (R-KS), Paul LePage (R-Maine), Rick Snyder (R-MI), Brian Sandoval (R-NV), Susana Martinez (R-NM), John Kasich (R-OH), Mary Fallin (R-OK), Dennis Daugaard (R-SD), Bill Haslam (R-TN), Matthew Mead (R-WY)	C.L. "Butch" Otter (R-ID)	Kay Ivey (R-AL), Doug Ducey (R-AZ), Asa Hutchinson (R-AR), Bruce Rauner (R-IL), Kim Reynolds (R-IA), Larry Hogan (R-MD), Charlie Baker (R-MA), Pete Ricketts (R-NE), Chris Sununu (R-NH), Henry McMaster (R-SC), Greg Abbott (R-TX), Phil Scott (R-VT), Scott Walker (R-WI)
Independent			Bill Walker (I-AK)

Sources: "2018 Gubernatorial Elections," National Governors Association.

In nearly half the states with 2018 elections, the incumbent governor is either ineligible to run or has decided not to run

States with open seats vs. states with incumbents running

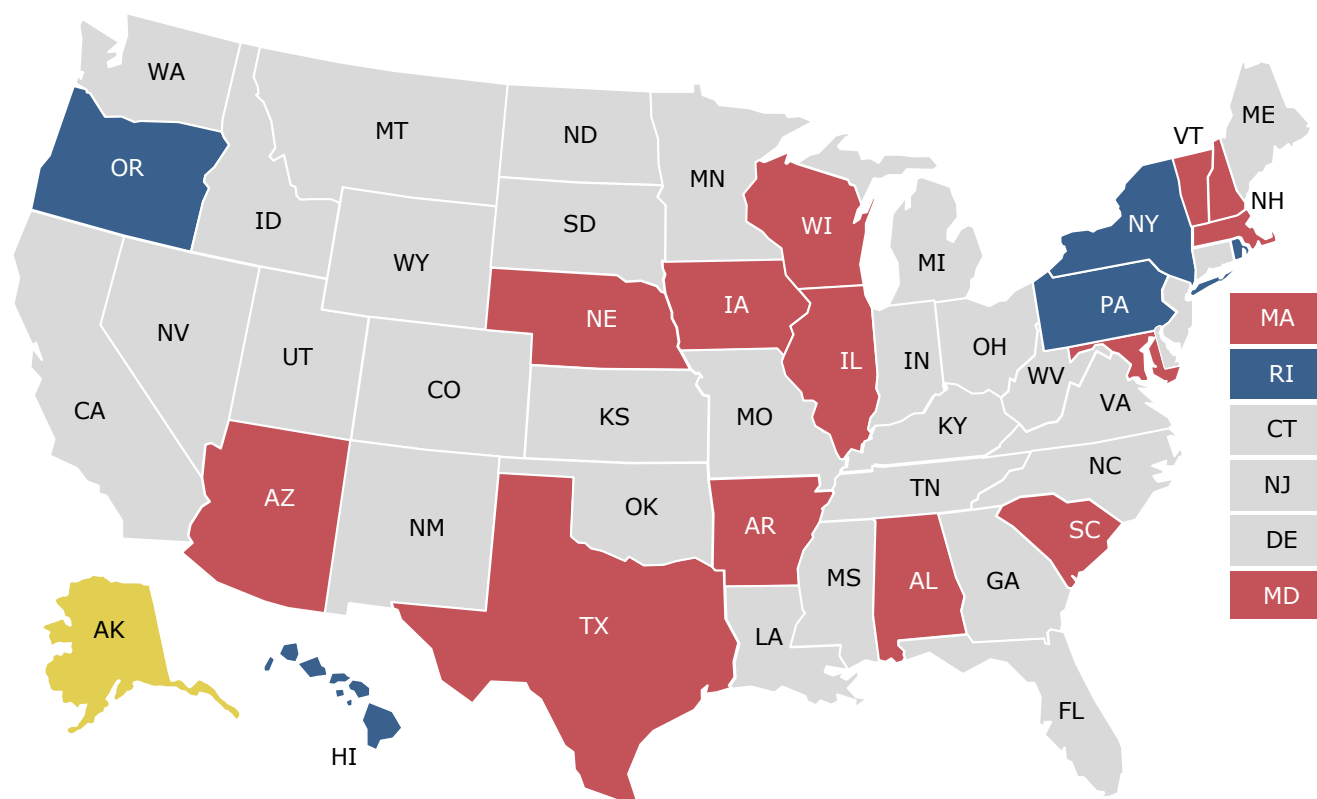
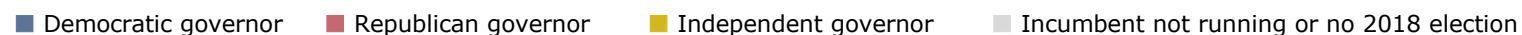
- States with an incumbent governor running for re-election (or hasn't made a decision)
- States with an incumbent governor not running for re-election
- No gubernatorial election in 2018



Sources: "2018 Gubernatorial Elections," National Governors Association.

Of states where the current governor is running for re-election, 13 Republicans and 5 Democrats are incumbents

Map of governors running for re-election, by party



Sources: “2018 Gubernatorial Elections,” National Governors Association

Three incumbents are eligible in 2018 for their first gubernatorial elections

Governors in Alabama, Iowa, and South Carolina assumed their position after the 2014-elected governor stepped down



Kay Ivey

- Governor of Alabama
- Former lieutenant governor, elected in 2010 and 2014
- Replaced Governor Robert Bentley in 2017 who stepped down after campaign finance violations and a sex scandal
- Has yet to decide if she is running for re-election in 2018



Kim Reynolds

- Governor of Iowa
- Former lieutenant governor, elected in 2010 and 2014
- Replaced Governor Terry Branstad after he was appointed as the U.S. Ambassador to China in 2017
- Already declared her candidacy for the 2018 election



Henry McMaster

- Governor of South Carolina
- Former lieutenant governor, elected in 2014
- Replaced Governor Nikki Haley after she was appointed as the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations
- Already declared his candidacy for the 2018 election

Sources: National Journal research, 2017; "2018 Gubernatorial Elections," National Governors Association.

At least seven members of Congress are running for governor, all in open seats

Instead of running for another term in Congress, these members have chosen to seek the governorship



Raúl Labrador

- Republican congressman from Idaho
- Running in an open seat, current Governor Butch Otter stated he would not seek re-election



Michelle Lujan Grisham

- Democratic congresswoman from New Mexico
- Running in an open seat, current Governor Susana Martinez is term-limited



Steve Pearce

- Republican congressman from New Mexico
- Running in an open seat, current Governor Susana Martinez is term-limited



Jared Polis

- Democratic congressman from Colorado
- Running in an open seat, current Governor John Hickenlooper is term-limited



Kristi Noem

- Republican congresswoman from South Dakota
- Running in an open seat, current Governor Dennis Daugaard is term-limited



Tim Walz

- Democratic congressman from Minnesota
- Running in an open seat, current Governor Mark Dayton stated he would not seek re-election



Jim Renacci

- Republican congressman from Ohio
- Running in an open seat, current Governor John Kasich is term-limited

Other possible candidates:

- John Delaney (D-MD)

Sources: National Journal research, 2017; Reid Wilson, "Open seats make for crowded, expensive governor battles," The Hill, July 12, 2016; Ballotpedia, 2017.

Gubernatorial elections by the numbers

The 2018 election is not like any previous gubernatorial election

200+

The number of candidates who have announced their candidacy for governorships throughout the United States. Many more are expected to join the race before next year.

2/3

The approximate proportion of states that elect governors on this midterm election cycle every 4 years. Virginia and New Jersey are the only two states holding gubernatorial elections in 2017.

8

The average number of open seats in past midterm gubernatorial elections, as compared to the 17 open seats in 2018.

27

The number of seats up for election that currently belong to Republican governors.

5

The number of races in 2018 deemed a toss-up by The Cook Political Report. All are in Republican-governor states – Florida, Maine, Michigan, Nevada and New Mexico.

\$300

The projected millions of dollars the Illinois election will cost, a record for gubernatorial elections. So far, Illinois candidates combined have already raised over \$90 million.

Impact of the 2018 election

- For many candidates running in states with two-term limits, 2018 may be their only opportunity to run for another eight years
- In 35 states, governors are part of the redistricting process, meaning many governors elected in 2018 will be responsible for how lines are drawn for congressional districts. This gives the winners of the 2018 elections significant power in determining the partisan makeup of Congress for the next 10 years
- In addition to the congressional elections in 2018, the gubernatorial elections will be an important test reflecting attitudes towards Republicans who are attaching themselves to President Trump
- Democrats see this as an opportunity to attack Republican opponents who embrace Trump's policies

Sources: National Journal research, 2017; Reid Wilson, "Open seats make for crowded, expensive governor battles," The Hill, July 12, 2016; Ballotpedia, 2017; "2018 Gubernatorial Elections," National Governors Association. Natasha Korecki and Alex Isenstadt, "The election that's on pace to shatter U.S. spending records," Politico, July 13, 2017.