

# Publications

## Ohio 2026 Primary Election Recap

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### CLIENT ALERT | 5.6.2026

Tuesday's Ohio primary election set the stage for the 2026 general election, as voters selected nominees in several high-profile statewide, state legislative, and congressional races. Below is a recap of select notable results and races from the 2026 Ohio primary election.

### GOVERNOR

With Governor Mike DeWine term-limited, Ohio voters will see an open-seat gubernatorial race for the first time since 2018. As expected, Republican Vivek Ramaswamy secured the Republican nomination after handily defeating Casey Putsch, and will face Democrat Amy Acton, former Director of the Ohio Department of Health, in the November general election.

### ATTORNEY GENERAL

Republican Keith Faber, former Senate President and current Auditor of State, advanced to the general election and will face Democrat John Kulewicz, an Upper Arlington City Councilmember and retired Vorys attorney. Kulewicz easily won the Democratic nomination over former State Representative Elliot Forhan.

### AUDITOR OF STATE

Current Secretary of State Frank LaRose secured the Republican nomination for Auditor and will face Democrat Annette Blackwell, Mayor of the City of Maple Heights, in the November general election.

### SECRETARY OF STATE

Republican Robert Sprague, currently serving as Treasurer of State, defeated Marcell Strbich in the Republican primary, while Democratic State Representative Allison Russo defeated Bryan Hambley to secure the Democratic nomination. Sprague and Russo will now compete to succeed outgoing Secretary of State Frank LaRose.

## TREASURER

Former State Representative Jay Edwards won the Republican nomination for Treasurer in one of the more closely watched and heavily contested statewide primaries. He defeated State Senator Kristina Roegner and will face Democrat Seth Walsh, a Cincinnati City Councilmember, in the November general election.

## OHIO SUPREME COURT

Republican Colleen O'Donnell, a former Franklin County Common Pleas Judge, emerged victorious in a crowded four-candidate race, setting up a general election contest with Democratic Justice Jennifer Brunner, the lone Democrat remaining on the Ohio Supreme Court. In the other Supreme Court race that will be on the general election ballot in November, Republican Justice Dan Hawkins will be challenged by Democrat appellate judge Marilyn Zayas – both candidates ran unopposed in the primary.

## U.S. SENATE

As expected, former Democratic U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown easily won the primary to face off against Republican U.S. Senator and former Lieutenant Governor Jon Husted in a general race predicted to be one of the nation's marquee Senate contests, drawing significant national attention and political advertising spending.

## U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The Congressional primaries for U.S. House District seats were generally less competitive, although the crowded five-candidate Republican primary in northwest Ohio's 9th Congressional District drew significant attention. Former State Representative Derek Merrin emerged victorious in the race, setting up a rematch with longtime Democratic Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur who narrowly defeated Merrin in 2024, in what is again expected to be one of the state's most competitive general election races this November.

Also of note, Democrat Don Leonard bested former State Representative Adam Miller in the central Ohio 15th Congressional District primary contest, setting up a general election match-up with incumbent Republican Congressman Mike Carey in a race expected to gain national attention this fall.

## OHIO GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Most state legislative incumbents successfully defended primary challenges, including former Speaker Jason Stephens and Representative Ron Ferguson. However, several lawmakers seeking to move to the opposite chamber were unsuccessful, including Representative Jim Hoops, Representative Beth Lear, and Senator Andrew Brenner. Below is a brief recap of the results of some of the more notable state legislative races.

### Ohio Senate

- SD 1 Republican Primary: Former State Rep. Craig Riedel defeated current State Rep. Jim Hoops.

- SD 19 Republican Primary: Ryan Rivers defeated current State Rep. Beth Lear.
- SD 25 Democratic Primary: Sen. Bill DeMora defeated Jesse Baker.

### Ohio House of Representatives

- HD 40 Republican Primary: Current State Rep. Rodney Creech defeated former State Rep. J. Todd Smith.
- HD 48 Republican Primary: Former State Rep. Christina Hagan won decisively in a four-person race.
- HD 58 Democratic Primary: Former State Rep. and Congressman John Boccieri won decisively in a three-person race.
- HD 61 Republican Primary: Former State Rep. Shawn Stevens defeated current State Senator Andy Brenner.
- HD 93 Republican Primary: Former Ohio House Speaker and current State Rep. Jason Stephens defeated challenger Larry Kidd.
- HD 96 Republican Primary: Current State Rep. Ron Ferguson defeated former State Senator Frank Hoagland.