

Decision 2018: Kelly named KS Governor

TOPEKA, Kan. (AP) — The Latest on the midterm election in Kansas (all times local):

11:30 p.m.

Republican novice Steve Watkins has won a congressional race in eastern Kansas that Democrats had hoped to flip to their column.

Watkins defeated Democrat Paul Davis in Tuesday's election in the 2nd District. Watkins will replace retiring five-term GOP Rep. Lynn Jenkins.

The district leans Republican and President Donald Trump carried it by nearly 17 percentage points in 2016. Watkins had Trump's endorsement.

Democrats saw an opportunity because Davis was better known as a former Kansas House minority leader. Davis won the district in an unsuccessful run for governor in 2014.

Davis pitched himself as a bipartisan problem solver.

Watkins is a former Army officer and government contractor. He overcame questions about living outside Kansas most of his adult life and being caught embellishing his accomplishments.

10:35 p.m.

Democrat Laura Kelly has won the hotly contested Kansas governor's race even though Republican Kris Kobach played up his ties to President Donald Trump.

Kelly prevailed over Kobach in Tuesday's election with independent candidate and Kansas City-area businessman Greg Orman trailed far behind them.

Kelly is a veteran state senator from Topeka. She made the election a referendum on former Republican Gov. Sam Brownback's ill-fated 2012-13 experiment in slashing state income taxes that legislators largely reversed in 2017.

Kobach promised to shrink government and cut taxes again.

He is Kansas secretary of state and built a national profile as an advocate of tough immigration policies and strict voter identification laws.

Kobach was an early 2016 backer of Trump and served as vice chairman of Trump's now-disbanded commission on voter fraud.

10:15 p.m.

Republican incumbent Jake LaTurner has won a full, four-year term as Kansas state treasurer after being appointed last year to the office.

LaTurner prevailed in Tuesday's election over Democratic state Sen. Marci Francisco of Lawrence.

He was appointed in April 2017 by former Republican Gov. Sam Brownback to replace Republican Ron Estes, who won a special election for the Wichita-area congressional seat formerly held by U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.

LaTurner was a state senator from Pittsburg at the time. He was first elected to the Senate in 2012.

Francisco is a former Lawrence mayor who was first elected to the Senate in 2004.

The treasurer's most visible programs find owners of unclaimed property and manage education savings accounts and savings accounts for the disabled.

10:15 p.m.

Republican state Sen. Vicki Schmidt has been elected Kansas insurance commissioner.

The Topeka lawmaker defeated Democrat Nathaniel McLaughlin of Kansas City, Kansas, in Tuesday's election.

Schmidt is a pharmacist who has served in the Senate since 2005. She is chairwoman of its Public Health and Welfare Committee and has been a key player on health legislation.

She's also a GOP moderate who has supported expanding the state's Medicaid health coverage for the poor and disabled following the 2010 federal Affordable Care Act.

McLaughlin is a former regional manager for a health services company and has served as president of the state NAACP chapter. He ran unsuccessfully for Congress in 2016.

Incumbent Insurance Commissioner Ken Selzer unsuccessfully sought the Republican nomination for governor this year.

10:15 p.m.

Republican Derek Schmidt has won a third term as Kansas attorney general.

Schmidt easily defeated Democrat and Lawrence attorney Sarah Swain in Tuesday's election after the Kansas Democratic Party refused to support her.

The Democratic Party called on Swain to drop out of the race in June because of a poster in her law office showing the superhero Wonder Woman pulling a lasso around a police officer's neck. Critics said the poster promoted violence against law enforcement officers.

Swain apologized but said it was meant as a metaphor for cross-examination and a zealous defense of clients. She also said she had seen injustices caused by "less-than-honest police officers."

Schmidt is a former Kansas Senate majority leader who was first elected attorney general in 2010 and re-elected in 2014.

Associated Press