

# THE MID-TERM ELECTIONS AND OPERA

*The Importance  
of Civic  
Engagement*



## DISCUSSION TOPICS

- Importance of civic engagement
- Importance of advocacy
- Mid-term election results
- Implications on opera community and overall arts and cultural sector – 118<sup>th</sup> Congress
- What can be done now?

## CIVIC ENGAGEMENT – WHAT AND WHY?

- Various types of civic engagement, including advocacy, community engagement, elections, volunteerism, etc.
- Important for opera companies to increase their civic engagement in their communities and across their states
  - Potentially eligible for government support
  - Perceived as a valuable and influential coalition partner to support/oppose various policy issues
  - Increased interest from various types of donors and grant makers

# INCREASE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT – HOW?

## EXAMPLES

- Offering your facility as a meeting place for various community organizations, polling place, candidate forums/town halls, etc.
- Collaborating with the local community colleges to develop/implement arts education programs for students, families, and the general public
- Collaborating with the local business community and/or non-profit community to develop/implement community initiatives (i.e. food drives, clothing drives, donating blood, etc.)

## IMPORTANCE OF ADVOCACY

- Utilize your voice as an important player within the arts and cultural sector at all levels of government
- Telling your story (i.e. adverse impact of the pandemic, how you help your local community, etc.)
- Urging elected/regulatory officials – at levels of government – to support/oppose legislation and regulation that impacts the opera community and the overall arts and cultural sector
- Must engage with all elected officials/regulatory officials regardless of political party as a NONPARTISAN organization

## MID-TERM ELECTION RESULTS

### U.S. House of Representatives

- Prior to the election – Democrats 220 – Republicans 212
- All 435 seats up for election; 218 seats needed to control the chamber
- Result – Republicans 222 – Democrats 212 (1 current vacancy)
  - 6 non-voting members – DC and U.S. territories
- 77 new U.S. Representatives (71 new U.S. Representatives from the 2020 election)
- 124 (91D/33R) women will serve in the U.S. House (28.5% of seats)
  - 18 (13D/5R) Latina/Hispanic; 27 (27D) African-American

# MID-TERM ELECTION RESULTS

## U.S. House of Representatives

- **Republicans – Leadership**

**Current – 117<sup>th</sup> Congress**

Kevin McCarthy (CA) – Minority Leader

Steve Scalise (LA) - Whip

Elise Stefanik (NY) – Conference Chair

Gary Palmer (AL) – Policy Cmte Chair

**New – 118<sup>th</sup> Congress**

Kevin McCarthy (CA) – Likely House Speaker

Steve Scalise (LA) – Majority Leader

Tom Emmer (MN) – Majority Whip

Elise Stefanik (NY) – Conference Chair

Mike Johnson (LA) – Conference Vice Chair

Lisa McClain (MI) – Conference Secretary

- **Democrats – leadership**

**Current – 117<sup>th</sup> Congress**

Nancy Pelosi (CA) - Speaker

Steny Hoyer (MD) – Majority Leader

James Clyburn (SC) – Majority Whip

Katherine Clark (MA) – Asst Speaker

Hakeem Jeffries (NY) – Caucus Chair

**New – 118<sup>th</sup> Congress**

Hakeem Jeffries (NY) – Minority Leader

Katherine Clark (MA) – Minority Whip

Pete Aguilar (CA) – Caucus Chair

James Clyburn – (SC) - Assistant Democratic Leader

Ted Lieu (CA) – Caucus Vice Chair

# MID-TERM ELECTION RESULTS

## U.S. Senate

- Prior to the election – Democrats 50 – Republicans 50
- 35 seats up for election; 50 seats needed to control the chamber
- Result – Democrats 51 – Republicans 49
- 7 new U.S. Senators – AL, MO, NC, OH, OK, PA, and VT; 9 new U.S. Senators from the 2020 election
- 25 (16D/9R) women will serve in the U.S. Senate
  - 1 (1D) Latina/Hispanic; 0 African-American



## MID-TERM ELECTION RESULTS

### Gubernatorial seats

- Prior to the election – 28 Republican governors and 22 Democratic governors
- 36 states and 3 U.S. territories – 31 incumbent governors running for re-election; 8 governors not eligible or not seeking re-election
  - 20 Republican seats and 16 Democratic seats
- Result – 26 Republican governors and 24 Democratic governors

## MID-TERM ELECTION RESULTS

### Gubernatorial seats

- Historic firsts
  - Record number of 12 female governors in 2023 (highest number of female governors in any given year was 9 in 2004).
  - Voters in Arkansas, Massachusetts, and New York elected their first female governors.
  - Arkansas and Massachusetts are the first states to have women serving as governors and lieutenant governors at the same time.
  - Also, the newly-elected governor in Massachusetts will be the first openly-lesbian governor in the U.S.

# MID-TERM ELECTION RESULTS

## State Legislative Seats

- Voters in **46 states** decided **6,279 state legislative seats and 133 statewide ballot measures**. There are a total of **7,383 state legislative seats** across the country (1,972 state Senate seats and 5,411 state House seats).
- Prior to the November 8 election, the Republican Party controlled 61 individual state legislative chambers (either the state House or Senate) and the Democrats controlled 37 chambers. The major political parties share one chamber (i.e., Alaska House of Representatives). There are a **total of 98 individual chambers across the country**.
- Prior to the November 8 election, the Republicans had full control of the gubernatorial seat and the state legislature in **23 states** and Democrats had full control in **15 states** with **12 states under divided control** between the major political parties.

# MID-TERM ELECTION RESULTS

## State Legislative Seats

- Result
  - Republicans control **57 individual chambers (lost 4 seats)** and the Democrats **control 41 individual chambers (4 pickups)**.
  - As a result of the election, the Republicans maintain full control in **23 states**, the Democrats are in full control in **19 states** and the **number of states with divided control is 8**.

## 118<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS

- New two-year session of Congress commencing January 3, 2023
- All legislation not passed by the end of 2022 will have to be reintroduced
- Major issues to be considered:
  - Crime
  - Inflation
  - Border security
  - Debt limit
  - Funding the federal government – FY2024 budget/appropriations
- Presidential election politics will be a factor heading into 2024 and the Presidential election

# CONGRESSIONAL CAUCUSES

- Congressional caucuses are groups of congressional members who are interested in specific issues and/or serve a large population that is interested in specific issues
  - Congressional Arts Caucus
  - Congressional Humanities Caucus
  - Congressional STEAM Caucus
  - Recording Arts and Sciences Congressional Caucus
  - Senate Cultural Caucus
- **ACTION ITEM:** Urge your U.S. Representatives and Senators to join one or more of the caucuses for the 118<sup>th</sup> Congress

# WHITE HOUSE SUPPORT FOR THE ARTS

- Increased annual appropriations to federal arts and cultural-related agencies, including the NEA and NEH
- Initiative to Advance Equity and Racial Justice Through the Federal Government - <https://www.whitehouse.gov/equity/>
  - NEA Arts Equity Action Plan - <https://www.arts.gov/equity>
  - NEH Equity Action Plan - <https://www.neh.gov/equity>
- Presidential Proclamation Recognizing October 2022 as National Arts and Humanities Month
- Executive Order on Promoting the Arts, the Humanities, and Museum and Library Services

## OUTSTANDING ISSUES

- **ACTION ITEM:** FY2023 appropriations – OPERA America  
action alert
  - Urge “at least \$207 million” for NEA and NEH
  - Urge increased appropriations for the other federal arts and cultural-related agencies and arts education programs at U.S. Department of Education
  
- **ACTION ITEMS:** Potential Tax Extenders Package – OPERA  
America action alert
  - Urge Employee Retention Tax Credit (ERTC) program reinstatement – 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2021
  - Urge reestablishment and increased federal incentives for charitable giving
  - Urge passage of Setting Every Community Up for Retirement Enhancement Act (SECURE Act 2.0)



## ADVOCACY – WHERE TO START?

- Develop and maintain working relationships elected/regulatory officials and media at all levels – **RELATIONSHIPS, RELATIONSHIPS, RELATIONSHIPS**
  - Communicate throughout the year – **staff are important**
  - Learn what their priorities are (integrate the arts and humanities)
  - Invite to public performances and public programming
  - Engage with the national, state, and local media throughout the year

## ADVOCACY – WHAT TO SAY?

- **Thank them** for their leadership and service.
- Ask how your opera company can be most helpful as a partner and resource.
- Tell them what issues that your opera company and the local arts community are most concerned about.
- Tell your story – successes and failures
  - Adverse impact of the pandemic
  - How your opera company effectively used its pandemic relief for its operations and to support the community
  - What other things you do to service your local community
- Discuss economic impact of the sector at all levels – NEA/U.S. Department of Commerce report – 2020 data

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Relationships are important at all levels
- Engage with elected/regulatory officials at all levels throughout the year
- Increase your visibility – social media, email, etc. AND civic engagement
- Highlight successes
- Collaborate with other orgs and interested stakeholders on common issues of interest
- Utilize OPERA America as a resource

# THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

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