

RI Election 2022 – Magaziner, McKee, cannabis sales win big: Democrats sweep all state general offices

Republican candidates, expected to mount strong challenges in marquee races, went down to defeat against Democratic opponents in RI in the Nov 8 election, although by varying margins.

Representative in Congress District 2

Candidate	Ballot breakout	Total votes	Pct
DEM Seth M. Magaziner (DEM)	Polling place: 64439 Mail ballots: 12484 Early Voting: 22515	99438	50.3%
REP Allan W. Fung (REP)	Polling place: 73050 Mail ballots: 4252 Early Voting: 15568	92870	46.9%
MOD William H. Gilbert (MOD)	Polling place: 4025 Mail ballots: 513 Early Voting: 814	5352	2.7%
Write-in	Polling place: 153 Mail ballots: 15 Early Voting: 25	193	0.1%

For the seat being vacated by retiring **James Langevin** (D) in the US House of Representatives for the 2nd congressional district, **Allan Fung** (R), who served as mayor of Cranston for 12 years, lost by a narrow margin to **Seth Magaziner** (D), who is completing eight years as general treasurer. Fung conceded around 10pm, his 92,870 votes (46.9%) significantly behind Magaziner's 99,438 votes (50.3%) with 99% (412 of 414) of precincts reporting. At one point in the counting an hour earlier, there was a virtual tie between Fung 81,275 (48.6%) and Magaziner 81,192 (48.6%) separated by only 83 votes. What tipped the scales irretrievably were mail ballots reported into the tally over an hour after polls closed at 8pm, as usually happens, Magaziner's 12,484 beating Fung's 4,252, a ratio of nearly 3-to-1. Fung was hurt by worse than expected performance in Cranston (Fung 50.1% - Magaziner 48.2%) and Warwick (Magaziner 51.5% - Fung 45.3%), which should have been Fung's base. Polls consistently showed Fung leading, but we criticized those polls on the basis of biased statistical sampling and consequent over-weighting, and our criticisms proved vindicated. **William Gilbert**, formerly head of the Moderate Party but running as an independent after that party lost ballot access, received 2.7% of the vote, well below the margin separating Magaziner and Fung and therefore too little to be a "spoiler" as some feared.

In the other major contest expected to be somewhat competitive, incumbent **Daniel McKee** (D) (57.7%) handily defeated newcomer **Ashley Kalus** (R) (39.1%), a margin of 18.6 percentage points and much greater than the 45% - 32% polling prediction and its margin of 13 percentage points.

Among the other statewide general officers, **Gregg Amore** (D) (59.2%) trounced **Pat Cortellessa** (R) (40.6%) for secretary of state as did incumbent **Peter F. Neronha** (D) (61.2%) over **Charles C. Calenda** (R) (38.7%) for attorney general. In a closer race than expected, incumbent **Sabina Matos** (50.9%) defeated **Aaron C. Guckian** (R) (43.4%) and **Ross K. McCurdy** (I) (5.5%) to win her first full term as lieutenant governor after being appointed to replace McKee when he became governor as a result of the resignation of **Gina Raimondo** to become US commerce secretary. For general treasurer, a stepping stone to higher office in recent years for Magaziner and Raimondo, former Central Falls mayor **James A. Diossa** (D) (54.0%) defeated **James L. Lathrop** (R) (45.8%), also somewhat closer than expected.

For US House in the 1st district, incumbent **David N. Cicilline** (D) (63.6%) faced no meaningful opposition from **Allen R. Waters** (R) (36.2%).

All three statewide bond referenda (new facilities at the URI Narragansett Bay Campus, Pre-K through grade 12 public school facilities, and “environmental and recreational” projects for the “green economy”) were approved by strong margins.

Issuance of licenses for new cannabis-related businesses was on the local ballot in 31 of the 39 cities and towns in RI, approved in 25 and rejected in six. Voters rejected cannabis businesses in a few relatively wealthy or rural municipalities: Barrington, East Greenwich, Jamestown, Little Compton, Scituate, and Smithfield. Voters authorized new cannabis businesses in most places: Bristol, Burrillville, Charlestown, Coventry, Cumberland, East Providence, Glocester, Hopkinton, Johnston, Lincoln, Middletown, Narragansett, New Shoreham (Block Island), Newport, North Kingstown, North Providence, North Smithfield, Richmond, South Kingstown, Tiverton, Warren, West Greenwich, West Warwick, Westerly, and Woonsocket. Because the new act only allows municipalities to opt out if they have not already licensed cannabis-related businesses in the past, eight cities and towns did not vote on bans: Central Falls, Cranston, Exeter, Foster, Pawtucket, Portsmouth, Providence, and Warwick.

Full RI election results are available at www.ri.gov/election/results/2022/general_election on the web.