

## Officials Say 67 Pct Of Neb. Voters Cast Ballots

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Officials estimate that 67 percent of Nebraska's voters participated in Tuesday's election. That means voter turnout fell short of the 71 percent that Secretary of State John Gale predicted beforehand. The Nebraska turnout was smaller than the 71 percent that voted in 2008, but close to the 68 percent turnout the state recorded in the 2004 presidential election. Voter turnout was highest in Hitchcock County where 87 percent of the eligible voters cast ballots. Several other counties all reported turnout figures above 75 percent. The lowest voter turnout in the state was in Thurston County where just 47 percent voted. Secretary of State John Gale says a couple state Legislative races and one race for Southeast Community College's Board may be close enough to qualify for automatic recounts.

## Canadian Firm Optimistic About Oil Pipeline

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — The Canadian company that wants to build another oil pipeline to carry crude oil to Gulf Coast refineries remains optimistic about the project after President Barack Obama won re-election. TransCanada spokesman Shawn Howard says the company believes Obama will eventually approve the Keystone XL project once it reaches his desk next year because it will deliver oil from a friendly country. But Howard says TransCanada is focused on finalizing the pipeline's new route through Nebraska. State regulators will hold a public hearing on it Dec. 4. Pipeline opponent Jane Kleeb of Bold Nebraska says her group continues to oppose the project and plans to try to persuade Obama and Nebraska officials to reject it. Environmental groups worry the pipeline could contaminate underground water supplies and increase air pollution around refineries.

## Man Arrested For Pulling Gun On Trooper

REDFIELD (AP) — A Spink County man wanted for aggravated assault in connection with an incident involving a South Dakota Highway Patrol trooper is in the custody of the local Sheriff. The Highway Patrol and Spink County Sheriff's Office took 46-year-old Randall Jungwirth into custody shortly after 12 p.m. on Wednesday after he was located in an abandoned trailer on a farm near Ashton. Spink County States Attorney Vic Fischbach had said earlier that Jungwirth was sought on a charge of aggravated assault after allegedly pulling a shotgun on a trooper who was checking on a stopped vehicle on a county road on Monday evening. The Spink County Sheriff's Office says it is unclear when Jungwirth will appear in court. He is in the Spink County Jail.

## Police: S.D. Shooting Apparent Murder-Suicide

RAPID CITY (AP) — Police are calling the deaths of a man and woman in Rapid City a murder-suicide. Police say officers responded to a call Tuesday night for a report of a possible shooting at the apartment of 58-year-old Brad Swanson and 55-year-old Deb Olmacher. A caller reported that a man inside the residence had a gun, and had killed his girlfriend. Authorities say officers made contact with Swanson, who told police that he had killed his girlfriend and refused to cooperate further. Officers later entered the apartment and found the couple dead from gunshot wounds.

## 4 Mich. Men Killed In 2-Vehicle Crash In S.D.

MELLETTE (AP) — Four Michigan men have died and a fifth received life-threatening injuries in a two-vehicle crash in northeast South Dakota. The South Dakota Highway Patrol says the Michigan men were traveling east on Highway 20 near Mellette Wednesday morning about 5: 40 a.m. when the vehicle driven by 71-year-old Wesley Allen Frasard failed to stop and was struck by a southbound semi-truck. Killed were Frasard, 68-year-old Ledger John Frasard Jr., 77-year-old William Edward Petrocy, all of St. Clair Shores, Mich., and 69-year-old Nikolaos Andreopoulos, of New Baltimore, Mich. Fifty-two-year-old Thomas Edward Thorngate, of St. Clair Shores, was taken to an Aberdeen hospital with life-threatening injuries. The driver of the truck, 50-year-old Doug Elmer Carnahan, of Botineau, N.D., received minor injuries.

## Chase Fails To Snare South Dakota Escapee

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A man who escaped federal custody in September is still on the run after an unsuccessful law enforcement pursuit in Rapid City. Police say 26-year-old Eric Ladeaux led U.S. marshals, South Dakota Highway Patrol troopers and city police on a chase Monday night before crashing his vehicle and fleeing on foot. No one was hurt in the crash that involved another vehicle. The *Rapid City Journal* reports that Ladeaux escaped in September from a minimum-security building in Rapid City where he was on supervised release for a weapons crime. The weapons crime was tied to an earlier aggravated assault conviction.



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# S.D. Voters Reject Governor's Top Initiatives

BY CHET BROKAW  
Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS — While Republican Gov. Dennis Daugaard wasn't up for re-election this year, a series of ballot measures amounted to a performance review, and voters didn't give him as high of marks as he might have hoped. Three of the seven ballot measures dealt with legislation and a constitutional amendment that Daugaard put forward. A fourth proposal to raise the state sales tax to provide more money for schools and health care came in response to his budget cuts. Voters rejected all but Daugaard's proposed state constitutional amendment requiring a balanced budget. He tried to put a positive spin on the results, saying their most important action was rejecting the sales tax increase, which he had opposed. He said he would work with lawmakers to try to get some compromise versions of his other initiatives passed. Elizabeth Smith, who teaches political science at the University of South Dakota, said that could be tougher now because the election results might make state lawmakers leery about revisiting those issues. "I think when voters produce such a resounding 'no,' it takes a little wind out of the sails of that kind of proposal," Smith said. "I think it's going to be a lot harder for him to convince the Legislature to go down those roads again." Still, Bob Burns, a retired South Dakota State University political science professor, doubted



Daugaard

the election results would hurt the governor in the long run. An improving economy and budget surplus could allow the governor and Legislature to spend more on schools and health care without the sales tax boost, he said. And the same voters who rejected Daugaard's top initiatives overwhelmingly re-elected a Republican majority in the Legislature to work with him, Burns said. One of the measures voters rejected was Daugaard's plan to give bonuses to top teachers, phase out tenure and recruit candidates for critical teaching jobs. The Legislature approved the proposal earlier this year, but the state's main teachers union, the South Dakota Education Association, collected enough signatures to put the measure on the ballot for a public vote. Daugaard said lawmakers might resurrect at least some parts the plan. At the same time, voters rejected a proposal to raise the state sales tax from 4 percent to 5 percent with half of the extra money going to school districts and half to Medicaid, which provides health care for the state's poor. The teachers union and a health care organization backed that proposal. Daugaard said the failure of the sales tax measure and his education overhaul means voters are satisfied with the current education system. But Sandra Waltman, communications

director for the teachers' union, said voters agree education spending should be increased, but they don't believe in raising the sales tax to do it. "The overall question we need to ask is, how are we going to recruit and retain good teachers?" Waltman said. "I think we all need to sit down and talk about what approaches will work." Daugaard also lost on another signature proposal for a new program providing incentive grants for big construction projects to get companies to expand or move to South Dakota. The grants would have been funded with 22 percent of the receipts from the contractor's excise tax. Democrats had argued the money would be better spent on education. David Owen, president of the South Dakota Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said he and other supporters had a hard time explaining the complicated grant program to voters. But even Democrats who referred the measure to the ballot agree the state needs some kind of incentive program, so a compromise will be sought, he said. Owen also thought voters' rejection of some ballot measures wouldn't hurt Daugaard's clout. While they may disagree with him on some issues, they give him high marks for balancing the budget and guiding state government through the economic downturn, he said. Owen said the question in his mind was whether people who oppose measures passed by the Legislature will continue to refer so many for statewide public votes.

## GOP Still In Control In Neb., But Dems Make Gains

BY GRANT SCHULTE  
Associated Press

LINCOLN, Neb. — Though Republicans easily held onto power in the Nebraska Legislature, it could be more difficult next session to pass measures that are opposed by Democrats after they flipped three seats in Tuesday's elections. Only one Democratic seat was technically lost in the officially nonpartisan Legislature, taken over by 70-year-old former Omaha Sen. Ernie Chambers, an independent who was legendary for his ability to block or at least stall measures that enjoyed widespread conservative support. Chambers, the most experienced lawmaker in state history with 38 years under his belt, was forced out of office four years ago. He defeated incumbent Democrat Brenda Council on Tuesday, who lost after admitting that she used \$63,000 in campaign contributions to feed a gambling addiction. Republican lawmakers have enjoyed a 33-15 advantage in the Legislature, with one Republican-turned-independent. The new balance come January will be 30-17, plus two independents. That could pose a challenge for Republican Gov. Dave Heineman, who has signaled that he again will try to cut taxes and possibly repeal a controversial law that extended prenatal care benefits to illegal immigrants and other low-income women. Heineman campaigned on behalf of at least seven Republican legislative candidates this year, with mixed results. Four of his preferred candidates — Dan Watermeier of Syracuse, Bill Kintner of Papillion, John Murante of Gretna and Wahoo mayor Jerry Johnson — were elected. Three others — Mike Hilgers and Larry Zimmerman of Lincoln, and Richard Carter of Bellevue — lost to Democratic candidates. Kate Bolz, a Democrat who narrowly defeated Zimmerman in Legislative District 29, said she considered herself a moderate who was more interested in focusing on education, the economy and issues important to her south Lincoln district, which has voted Republican in recent years.

"I think people want leaders who are willing to work together," she said. "I heard a lot of pride in our public school system, and wanting to keep it strong. And I think the economy is on

everyone's mind."

At a news conference Wednesday, Heineman said he was glad Chambers was coming back. "I may be one of the few people in this building who would say this," he said in the same breath. "We may agree on only one or two issues out of 10, but we can talk very straightforwardly and very directly about the issues that we care about. Chambers said many laws approved in his absence lacked vigorous debate, which he says identify and spot potential problems and establish a legislative record that the public and courts can review. "I'm going to have to do some cleaning up initially, and reminding people in the Legislature that we have a job to do, not only in passing bills, but letting the public know why we did whatever it is we did," Chambers said. Former Speaker of the Legislature Kermit Brashear, a Republican

who served alongside Chambers, said his former colleague showed a rare mastery of legislative rules in stalling measures he opposed. "He is in my judgment an excellent defensive legislator — and I mean excellent in the best sense of the word," Brashear said. "He studies the legislation. He knows and understands the rules. He doesn't suffer fools. And he is more than articulate." Chambers was well-known publicly for his opposition to the death penalty, enshrining hunting rights in the constitution and other high-profile measures. "He was almost always a player unless he just had no interest at all," Brashear said. "He wasn't controlled by the things that might enter other people's lives, like the need to go earn a living, or go to lunch, or go to supper, or physical tiredness. He loved to take on all comers."

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