

Gubernatorial Elections, Campaign Costs and Winning Governors

By Thad Beyle

Governors remain in the forefront of activity in the 21st century. While the governorship was not the stepping stone to the White House for President Barack Obama—as it was for the country’s two previous presidents, Democratic Gov. Bill Clinton from Arkansas (1993–2001) and Republican Gov. George W. Bush from Texas (2001–09)—governors continue to be in the middle of addressing the problems facing the country’s weak economy. The demands on governors to propose state budgets and then keep them in balance have increased greatly during the current recession as severe revenue shortfalls have hit the states. This has placed severe limits on states’ abilities to address the many growing needs of people trying to live through tough times. Politically, this has led to fallout from unhappy voters as they vent their anger and frustration toward leaders on election days.

2011 Gubernatorial Politics

The three Southern states—Kentucky, Louisiana and Mississippi—which traditionally hold gubernatorial elections in the year before a presidential election, had a fourth state—West Virginia—join them in 2011. West Virginia held a special election to decide who would succeed Gov. Joe Manchin, who nominated himself to fill the U.S. Senate seat vacated after the death of Robert Bird in late 2010. State Senate President Earl Ray Tomblin, who had been serving as interim governor, defeated Republican Bill Maloney by a 2.3 point margin.

This margin compares poorly with the margins in the three Southern races. In Louisiana, incumbent Gov. Bobby Jindal won a second term by a 47.9 point margin, while in Kentucky, incumbent Gov. Steven Beshear won his second term by a 20 point margin. The new Mississippi governor, Phil Bryant, won his first term by 22 points. The political makeup following the 2011 elections was no different than the makeup following the 2010 elections, with 29 Republicans, 20 Democrats and one Independent serving as governors.

Gubernatorial Elections

As seen in Table A, incumbents were eligible to seek another term in 437 of the 576 gubernatorial contests held between 1970 and 2011 (75.9 percent). In those contests, 341 incumbents sought re-election (78 percent), and 259 of them succeeded (75.9 percent). Those who were defeated were more likely to lose in the general election than in their own party primary by a 3-to-1 ratio. In 2010, Nevada Gov. Jim Gibbons was defeated in the Republican

primary, the third such loss since the 2000 election, and the 21st since 1970.

Democratic candidates held a winning edge in 308 of the 576 elections (53.5 percent) held between 1970 and 2011. In 222 of these races (38.5 percent), the results led to a party shift. But these party shifts have evened out over the years so that neither of the two major parties has an edge in the past four decades of gubernatorial elections.

Between 1970 and 1992, Democrats won 200 of the 324 races for governor (62 percent). Then, from 1993 to 2003, Republicans leveled the playing field by winning 85 of the 145 races for governor (59 percent). From 2004 to 2011, there has been a virtual tie in which party has won the 106 governor’s races, with Republicans winning 54 (51 percent), Democrats winning 51 (48 percent), and an Independent winning a single race (1 percent).

Another factor in determining how many governors have served in the states is the number of newly elected governors who are new to the office as compared to those who are returning after complying with constitutional term limits or after holding other positions. Of new governors taking office over a decade, states dropped from a rate of 2.3 new governors per state in the 1950s to 1.9 in the 1970s and to 1.1 in the 1980s. In the 1990s, the rate began to move up a bit to 1.4 new governors per state. In the first decade of the 21st century, many new faces filled governor’s mansions. From 2000–2009 alone, new governors were elected in 61 of the 118 elections (51.7 percent). Nine new governors succeeded to office upon the incumbent vacating the office from

Table A: Gubernatorial Elections: 1970–2011

Year	Number of races	Democratic winner		Number of incumbent governors						Lost			
		Number	Percent	Eligible to run		Actually ran		Won		Number	Percent	In primary	In general election
				Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent				
1970	35	22	63	29	83	24	83	16	64	8	36	1 (a)	7 (b)
1971	3	3	100	0	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
1972	18	11	61	15	83	11	73	7	64	4	36	2 (c)	2 (d)
1973	2	1	50	1	50	1	100	...	...	1	100	1 (e)	...
1974	35	27 (f)	77	29	83	22	76	17	77	5	24	1 (g)	4 (h)
1975	3	3	100	2	66	2	100	2	100	...	...	...	...
1976	14	9	64	12	86	8	67	5	63	3	33	1 (i)	2(j)
1977	2	1	50	1	50	1	100	1	100	...	...	...	...
1978	36	21	58	29	81	23	79	16	73	7	30	2 (k)	5 (l)
1979	3	2	67	0	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
1980	13	6	46	12	92	12	100	7	58	5	42	2 (m)	3 (n)
1981	2	1	50	0	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
1982	36	27	75	33	92	25	76	19	76	6	24	1 (o)	5 (p)
1983	3	3	100	1	33	1	100	...	...	1	100	1 (q)	...
1984	13	5	38	9	69	6	67	4	67	2	33	...	2 (r)
1985	2	1	50	1	50	1	100	1	100	...	...	...	...
1986	36	19	53	24	67	18	75	15	83	3	18	1 (s)	2 (t)
1987	3	3	100	2	67	1	50	...	...	1	100	1 (u)	...
1988	12	5	42	9	75	9	100	8	89	1	11	...	1 (v)
1989	2	2	100	0	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
1990	36	19 (w)	53	33	92	23	70	17	74	6	26	...	6 (x)
1991	3	2	67	2	67	2	100	...	...	2	100	1 (y)	1 (z)
1992	12	8	67	9	75	4	44	4	100	...	...	...	...
1993	2	0	0	1	50	1	100	...	...	1	100	...	1 (aa)
1994	36	11 (bb)	31	30	83	23	77	17	74	6	26	2 (cc)	4 (dd)
1995	3	1	33	2	67	1	50	1	100	...	...	...	...
1996	11	7	64	9	82	7	78	7	100	...	...	...	...
1997	2	0	0	1	50	1	100	1	100	...	...	...	...
1998	36	11 (ee)	31	27	75	25	93	23	92	2	8	...	2 (ff)
1999	3	2	67	2	67	2	100	2	100	...	...	...	...
2000	11	8	73	7	88	6	86	5	83	1	17	...	1 (gg)
2001	2	2	100	0	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
2002	36	14	39	22	61	16	73	12	75	4	25	...	4 (hh)
2003	4 (ii)	1	25	2	50	2	100	...	...	2	100	...	2 (jj)
2004	11	6	55	11	100	8	73	4	50	4	50	2 (kk)	2 (ll)
2005	2	2	100	1	50	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
2006	36	20	56	31	86	27	87	25	93	2	7	1 (mm)	1 (nn)
2007	3	1	33	3	100	2	67	1	50	1	50	...	1 (oo)
2008	11	7	64	9	82	8	89	8	100	...	...	...	...
2009	2	0	0	1	50	1	100	...	...	1	100	...	1 (pp)
2010	37	13	35	22	60	14	64	11	79	3	21	1 (qq)	2 (rr)
2011	4	2	50	3	75	3	100	3	100	0	0	0	0
Totals:													
Number	576	308		437		341		259		82		21	61
Percent	100	53.5		75.9		78.0		75.9		24.0		25.6	74.4

See footnotes on the next page.

2000 to 2009.¹ So, during the first few years of the previous decade, 70 new governors were sworn into office, continuing the 1.4 rate per state.

In the 2010 and 2011 elections, considerable turnover among governors continued. In 2010, 26 new governors were elected in 37 races, and two other new governors succeeded to the office upon the resignation of the incumbent to take over as one of the state's new U.S. senators.² In 2011, one new governor was elected in one of the four races

—Mississippi's Phil Bryant. As noted earlier, in a 2011 special election, West Virginia's successor Gov. Earl Ray Tomlin was required to win the voters' approval to fill out former Gov. Joe Manchin's remaining term, which he did by a narrow margin. And in the two other elections in 2011, both incumbents won their second terms.³ In sum, in the 41 governor's elections in 2010–11, 27 new governors were elected (65.9 percent), while 14 incumbent governors won another term (34 percent).

Table A: Gubernatorial Elections: 1970–2011, Footnotes

Source: The Council of State Governments, *The Book of the States, 2011*, (Lexington, KY: The Council of State Governments, 2011), 128, updated.

Key:

- (a) Albert Brewer, D-Ala.
- (b) Keith Miller, R-Alaska; Winthrop Rockefeller, R-Ark.; Claude Kirk, R-Fla.; Don Samuelson, R-Idaho; Norbert Tieman, R-Neb.; Dewey Bartlett, R-Okla.; Frank Farrar, R-S.D.
- (c) Walter Peterson, R-N.H.; Preston Smith, D-Texas.
- (d) Russell Peterson, R-Del.; Richard Ogilvie, R-Ill.
- (e) William Cahill, R-N.J.
- (f) One independent candidate won: James Longley of Maine.
- (g) David Hall, D-Okla.
- (h) John Vanderhoof, R-Colo.; Francis Sargent, R-Mass.; Malcolm Wilson, R-N.Y.; John Gilligan, D-Ohio.
- (i) Dan Walker, D-Ill.
- (j) Sherman Tribbitt, D-Del.; Christopher ‘Kit’ Bond, R-Mo.
- (k) Michael Dukakis, D-Mass.; Dolph Briscoe, D-Texas.
- (l) Robert F. Bennett, R-Kan.; Rudolph G. Perpich, D-Minn.; Meldrim Thompson, R-N.H.; Robert Straub, D-Ore.; Martin J. Schreiber, D-Wis.
- (m) Thomas L. Judge, D-Mont.; Dixy Lee Ray, D-Wash.
- (n) Bill Clinton, D-Ark.; Joseph P. Teasdale, D-Mo.; Arthur A. Link, D-N.D.
- (o) Edward J. King, D-Mass.
- (p) Frank D. White, R-Ark.; Charles Thone, R-Neb.; Robert F. List, R-Nev.; Hugh J. Gallen, D-N.H.; William P. Clements, R-Texas.
- (q) David Treen, R-La.
- (r) Allen I. Olson, R-N.D.; John D. Spellman, R-Wash.
- (s) Bill Sheffield, D-Alaska.
- (t) Mark White, D-Texas; Anthony S. Earl, D-Wis.
- (u) Edwin Edwards, D-La.
- (v) Arch A. Moore, R-W.Va.

(w) Two Independent candidates won: Walter Hickel (Alaska) and Lowell Weiker (Conn.). Both were former statewide Republican office holders.

(x) Bob Martinez, R-Fla.; Mike Hayden, R-Kan.; James Blanchard, D-Mich.; Rudy Perpich, DFL-Minn.; Kay Orr, R-Neb.; Edward DiPrete, R-R.I.

(y) Buddy Roemer, R-La.

(z) Ray Mabus, D-Miss.

(aa) James Florio, D-N.J.

(bb) One Independent candidate won: Angus King of Maine.

(cc) Bruce Sundlun, D-R.I.; Walter Dean Miller, R-S.D.

(dd) James E. Folsom, Jr., D-Ala.; Bruce King, D-N.M.; Mario Cuomo, D-N.Y.; Ann Richards, D-Texas.

(ee) Two Independent candidates won: Angus King of Maine and Jesse Ventura of Minnesota.

(ff) Fob James, R-Ala.; David Beasley, R-S.C.

(gg) Cecil Underwood, R-W.Va.

(hh) Don Siegelman, D-Ala.; Roy Barnes, D-Ga.; Jim Hodges, D-S.C.; and Scott McCallum, R-Wis.

(ii) The California recall election and replacement vote of 2003 is included in the 2003 election totals and as a general election for the last column.

(jj) Gray Davis, D-Calif., Ronnie Musgrove, D-Miss.

(kk) Bob Holden, D-Mo.; Olene Walker, R-Utah, lost in the primary convention.

(ll) Joe Kernan, D-Ind.; Craig Benson, R-N.H.

(mm) Frank Murkowski, R-Alaska.

(nn) Robert Ehrlich, R-Md.

(oo) Ernie Fletcher, R-Ky.

(pp) Jon Corzine, D-N.J.

(qq) Jim Gibbons, R-Nev.

(rr) Chet Culver, D-Iowa; Ted Strickland, D-Ohio.

The New Governors

During the 2008–11 gubernatorial elections and resignations, new governors took several routes to office. Twenty-one had previously held an elective office. These include:

- Eight lieutenant governors: Alaska Gov. Sean Parnell, North Dakota Gov. Jack Dalrymple, South Dakota Gov. Dennis Daugaard and Utah Gov. Gary Herbert, all Republicans; and Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn, Kentucky Gov. Steve Beshear (who served as lieutenant governor from 1983 to 87), New York Gov. David Paterson and North Carolina Gov. Beverly Perdue, all Democrats;
- Five attorneys general: California Gov. Jerry Brown (who also served as governor from 1975 to 83), Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon and New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo—all Democrats; and Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Corbett and Virginia Gov. Robert McDonald—both Republicans;
- Two former governors in addition to Jerry Brown: Oregon Gov. John Kitzhaber, a Democrat, elected in 1994 and 1998, and Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad, a Republican, elected in 1982, 1986, 1990 and 1994;

- One secretary of state: Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer, a Republican, who succeeded to office upon the resignation of Gov. Janet Napolitano in 2009;
- Three U.S. senators: Kansas Gov. Sam Brownback, a Republican; Minnesota Gov. Mark Dayton, a Democrat; and Rhode Island Gov. Lincoln Chafee, an Independent;
- One state treasurer: Delaware Gov. Jack Markell, Democrat.

Fourteen new governors had previously held elected or appointed sub-state offices. These include:

- Five former members of Congress: Hawaii Gov. Neil Abercrombie, a Democrat; and Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal, Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal, Ohio Gov. John Kasich and Oklahoma Gov. Mary Fallin, all Republicans;
- Four mayors or former mayors: Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper, Denver, and Connecticut Gov. Dannel Malloy, Stamford—both Democrats; and Maine Gov. Paul LePage, Waterville, and Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam, Knoxville—both Republicans;

GOVERNORS

- Three state legislators: South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley, a Republican state representative; and Vermont Gov. Peter Shumlin and West Virginia Gov. Earl Ray Tomlin, both Democratic state senate presidents;
- Two county officials: New Mexico Gov. Susana Martinez, district attorney, and Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker, county CEO—both Republicans.

Six new governors followed a unique path to the governorship:

- Three former federal attorneys or judges: New Jersey Gov. Christopher Christie, a former U.S. attorney; Nevada Gov. Brian Sandoval, a former federal district court judge; and Wyoming Gov. Matt Mead, a former U.S. attorney, all Republicans;
- Two businessmen: Florida Gov. Rick Scott, a health care company executive, and Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder, a venture capitalist in computers, both Republicans;
- One doctor: Alabama Gov. Robert Bentley, a dermatologist, Republican.

Two of these new governors have a family heritage tied to the office, as their fathers also had served as the state's top executive. New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo is the son of former Gov. Mario Cuomo, elected in 1982, 1986 and 1990. Rhode Island Gov. Lincoln Chafee is the son of former Gov. John Chafee, who was elected in 1962, 1964 and 1966.

In the 466 gubernatorial races between 1977 and 2011—the last political step taken prior to this election—among the candidates were 117 lieutenant governors (33 won), 102 attorneys general (29 won), 35 secretaries of state (eight won), 29 state treasurers (eight won), and 18 state auditors or comptrollers (three won). Looking at these numbers from a bettor's point of view, the odds of a lieutenant governor becoming governor stand at 3.55-to-1, an attorney general at 3.5-to-1; a secretary of state at 4.38-to-1; a state treasurer at 4.1-to-1; and a state auditor or comptroller stands at 6-to-1.

One other unique aspect about the current governors is that six women will be serving in 2012—the same number as were serving in 2010 and 2011. Three of these women were elected in 2010 to their first term,⁴ while three others will continue terms they won or succeeded to earlier.⁵ Six other women were major party candidates in the 2010 races, but they were not able to win.⁶

Women are becoming more of a part of the gubernatorial scene from 2004 to 2011. Twenty-nine

women ran for governor either as incumbents seeking another term or as a major party candidate, with 14 of them winning (48 percent).

Cost of Gubernatorial Elections

Table B presents data on the total cost of gubernatorial elections from 1977 to 2011 and reveals two very clear patterns. First is the rhythm of gubernatorial elections in each four-year cycle. In the odd year following a presidential election year, only two states hold their elections. In the mid-year between presidential elections, 36 states hold their elections. In the year before a presidential election, only three states hold their elections. And during a presidential election year, 13—now 11 states—hold their elections, as Arkansas and Rhode Island both switched to a four-year term for the governor in 1986 and 1994 respectively.

The second pattern is the consistent growth in the amounts of money spent in gubernatorial elections over the four-decade period, with only a few drops between comparable years in the cycles. These drops usually were tied to relatively uncontested races when an incumbent was successful in his or her re-election bid.

- The recent drop in the amount of money spent between the 2005 and 2009 races could have signaled the impact of the Great Recession on how much money was available for these elections. Other reasons could account for this slight drop. In 2005, both elections were open seat races in which Democrats won. In 2009, one election was an open seat race and the other saw an incumbent lose in a bid for a second term; Republicans won both races.
- The changes in the amount of money spent in the most recent mid-presidential term races is also interesting. In 2002, the total amount spent was slightly more than \$841 million. In 2006, the total amount spent was down to \$727.7 million. Then in 2010, it rose up to more than \$920 million!

A major part of these ups and downs is tied to the number of incumbents running and the number of open seat races. In 2002, 16 incumbents ran and 12 won; the other 20 elections were open seat races. In 2006, 31 incumbents ran and 25 won; the other five were open seat races. And in 2010, 14 incumbents ran for another term and 11 won; 23 were open seat races. Other reasons may be tied to some of the specific races.

Table B: Total Cost of Gubernatorial Elections: 1977–2011 (in thousands of dollars)

Year	Number of races	Total campaign costs			Campaign spending by party					
		Actual \$		Average cost per state (2010\$)	Democrats		Republicans		Others	
		2010\$ (a)			Amount	Percent	Amount	Percent	Amount	Percent
1977	2	12,312	43,505	21,753	7,051	57.3	5,261	42.7	0	0.0
1978	36	102,392	336,651	9,351	51,495	48.3	46,985	44.1	8,063	7.6
1979	3	32,744	96,876	32,292	24,546	75.0	8,197	25.0	0	0.0
1980	13	35,634	92,797	7,138	25,159	70.6	10,451	29.3	23	0.1
1981	2	24,648	58,132	29,066	12,725	51.6	11,923	48.4	0	0.0
1982	36	181,832	404,071	11,224	88,850	48.9	92,114	50.7	867	0.5
1983	3	39,966	86,134	28,711	23,804	72.3	9,076	27.6	41	0.1
1984	13	47,156	97,430	7,495	24,374	51.7	19,796	42.0	2,985	6.3
1985	2	18,859	37,568	18,784	11,532	61.2	7,326	38.9	0	0.0
1986	36	270,605	529,560	14,710	149,863	55.4	116,271	43.0	4,471	1.6
1987	3	40,212	75,872	25,291	35,786	89.0	4,426	11.0	0	0.0
1988	12 (b)	52,208	94,580	7,882	25,229	48.3	26,479	50.7	501	1.0
1989	2	47,902	82,875	41,438	16,468	34.4	31,435	65.6	0	0.0
1990	36	345,493	567,312	15,759	186,060	53.9	154,681	44.8	4,751	1.4
1991	3	34,564	64,432	18,144	24,737	71.6	9,821	28.4	6	0.0
1992	12	60,278	92,168	7,681	31,106	51.6	28,311	47.0	861	1.4
1993	2	36,195	53,702	26,851	15,663	43.3	20,282	56.0	251	0.7
1994	36	417,873	604,737	16,798	194,209	46.5	210,044	50.3	13,620	3.3
1995	3	35,693	50,272	16,757	20,268	56.8	15,406	43.2	18	0.0
1996	11 (c)	68,610	93,858	8,533	32,048	46.7	36,416	53.1	142	0.2
1997	2	44,823	59,924	29,962	22,530	50.3	21,432	47.8	861	1.9
1998	36	470,326	618,850	17,190	218,136	46.7	231,983	49.7	17,089	3.7
1999	3	16,276	20,947	6,982	8,226	50.5	7,987	49.1	64	0.4
2000	11	97,098	120,919	10,993	51,403	52.9	45,173	46.5	522	0.5
2001	2	70,400	85,230	42,615	35,202	50.0	34,977	49.7	221	0.3
2002	36	841,427	1,002,893	27,858	412,831	49.1	342,835	40.8	85,750	10.2
2003	4 (d)	69,939	81,514	27,171	45,969	51.6	42,609	47.9	400	0.5
2004	11	112,625	127,838	11,622	58,766	52.0	54,253	48.0	74	0.0
2005	2	131,996	145,051	72,525	65,284	49.5	66,556	50.4	156	0.1
2006	36	727,552	773,991	21,500	384,196	52.8	328,250	45.1	15,035	2.1
2007	3	93,803	97,104	32,368	33,353	35.6	60,418	64.4	31	0.0
2008	11	118,912	118,438	10,767	62,083	52.2	56,584	47.6	306	0.3
2009	2	92,911	92,911	46,455	61,111	57.3	43,877	41.2	1,632	1.5
2010	37	920,735	920,735	24,885	334,814	36.4	563,688	61.2	22,233	2.4
2011	4	40,934	(e)	10,234	19,692,029	48.1	21,045,580	51.4	194,637	0.5

Source: Thad Beyle.

Key:

(a) Developed from the Table, "Historical Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U)," Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor. Each year's actual expenditures are converted to the 2010 value of the dollar to control for the effect of inflation over the period.

(b) As of the 1986 election, Arkansas switched to a four-year term for the governor, hence the drop from 13 to 12 for this off-year.

(c) As of the 1994 election, Rhode Island switched to a four-year term for the governor, hence the drop from 12 to 11 for this off-year.

(d) California held a special recall and replacement election in which the voters agreed to recall Gov. Gray Davis (D) from the office he was reelected to in 2002, and replace him with Arnold Schwarzenegger (R).

(e) The 2011\$ were not converted into equivalent 2010\$. In the next edition of *The Book of the States*, dollars spent will be converted into equivalent 2012\$.

Table C shows the costs of elections from 2007 through 2010. The range in cost of these races is considerable: From the high-cost 2010 race in California (\$219,802,866 in 2010 dollars), to the low-cost 2008 race in Missouri (\$1,192,038). Both races were for an open seat and the winner posed a shift from a Republican to a Democratic governor.

The most money spent by the winning candidates in these elections were in Texas (just over \$41 million in 2010 dollars) by Gov. Rick Perry in 2010; in California (\$36.03 million) by newly elected Gov. Jerry Brown in 2010; in Michigan (\$36.3 million) by newly elected Gov. Rick Snyder in 2010; in Indiana (\$28 million) by Gov. Mitch Daniels win-

Table C: Cost of Gubernatorial Campaigns, Most Recent Elections, 2007–2011

State	Year	Winner	Point margin	Total campaign expenditures				
				All candidates (2010\$)	Cost per vote (2010\$)	Winner		
						Spent (2010\$)	Percent of all expenditures	Vote percent
Alabama.....	2010	R#	+15.7	\$28,924,325	\$19.36	\$8,306,741	28.7%	57.6%
Alaska.....	2010	R★	+21.4	2,781,674	10.86	513,698	18.5	59.1
Arizona.....	2010	R★	+11.86	7,828,002	4.53	1,820,004	23.3	54.3
Arkansas.....	2010	D★	+30.79	6,044,112	7.74	5,425,861	89.8	64.4
California.....	2010	D#	+12.9	219,802,866	21.77	36,305,490	16.5	53.8
Colorado.....	2010	D#	+14.67	9,483,214	5.30	3,921,135	41.4	51.1
Connecticut.....	2010	D#	+0.56	34,056,201	29.72	8,763,028	25.7	49.5
Delaware.....	2008	D#	+35.5	10,410,137	26.34	8,080,186	77.6	67.5
Florida.....	2010	R#	+1.15	22,199,829	4.14	2,310,269	10.4	48.9
Georgia.....	2010	R#	+10	27,831,419	10.80	8,340,566	30.0	53.0
Hawaii.....	2010	D#	+17.1	11,887,573	31.07	4,601,607	38.7	58.2
Idaho.....	2010	R★	+26.2	3,208,692	7.09	1,797,892	56.0	59.1
Illinois.....	2010	D★	+0.85	32,813,221	8.80	2,007,401	6.1	46.8
Indiana.....	2008	R★	+17.8	36,632,483	13.55	28,062,109	76.6	57.8
Iowa.....	2010	R★★★	+9.6	17,658,265	15.77	8,505,180	48.2	52.9
Kansas.....	2010	R#	+31.1	3,376,623	4.03	2,684,620	79.5	63.3
Kentucky.....	2011	D★★★	+20.4	15,060,810	18.08	12,013,516	79.8	55.7
Louisiana.....	2011	R★	+47.9	6,615,023	6.46	6,559,054	99.2	65.8
Maine.....	2010	R#	+1.7	12,903,339	22.53	1,205,924	9.4	38.1
Maryland.....	2010	D★	+12.45	18,503,072	9.96	10,904,491	58.9	56.2
Massachusetts.....	2010	D★	+6.4	17,647,433	7.68	4,601,357	26.1	48.4
Michigan.....	2010	R#	+18.2	47,346,738	14.68	36,292,790	76.7	58.1
Minnesota.....	2010	D#	+0.42	16,536,147	7.85	4,743,437	28.7	46.6
Mississippi.....	2011	R#	+21.9	8,801,588	9.85	6,317,982	71.8	61.0
Missouri.....	2008	D#	+18.9	1,192,038	0.41	856,117	71.8	58.4
Montana.....	2008	D★	+33.0	1,542,312	3.17	794,052	51.5	65.5
Nebraska.....	2010	R★	+47.8	1,389,992	2.85	1,085,847	78.2	73.9
Nevada.....	2010	R★★	+11.75	9,869,684	13.77	4,333,271	43.9	53.4
New Hampshire.....	2010	D★	+7.6	1,979,841	4.34	1,027,383	51.9	52.6
New Jersey.....	2009	R★★★	+3.6	54,159,909	22.35	16,879,130	31.2	48.5
New Mexico.....	2010	R#	+6.8	16,848,747	28.00	6,746,981	40.0	53.3
New York.....	2010	D#	+25.85	38,253,647	7.33	23,259,271	60.8	61.6
North Carolina.....	2008	D#	+3.3	36,617,448	8.58	15,991,217	43.7	50.3
North Dakota.....	2008	R★	+50.9	2,199,415	6.97	1,855,161	84.4	74.4
Ohio.....	2010	R★★★	+2	31,873,437	8.27	16,217,299	50.9	49.0
Oklahoma.....	2010	R#	+20.9	10,607,876	10.25	4,055,657	38.2	60.5
Oregon.....	2010	D#	+1.53	19,220,048	13.22	7,400,541	38.5	49.3
Pennsylvania.....	2010	R#	+9	67,880,692	17.02	24,240,005	35.7	54.5
Rhode Island.....	2010	IN#	+2.5	6,165,600	18.01	2,484,238	40.3	36.1
South Carolina.....	2010	R#	+4.46	12,420,771	9.24	3,943,130	31.8	51.4
South Dakota.....	2010	R#	+23.02	4,710,454	14.86	1,915,733	40.7	61.5
Tennessee.....	2010	R#	+31.9	23,841,630	14.89	16,651,661	69.8	65.0
Texas.....	2010	R#	+12.68	97,399,214	19.56	41,022,276	42.1	55.0
Utah.....	2010	R★	+32.43	4,695,884	7.90	2,578,015	54.9	64.2
Vermont.....	2010	D★	+1.8	4,359,884	18.00	1,433,984	32.9	49.5
Virginia.....	2009	R#	+17.35	54,193,343	27.30	24,173,238	44.6	58.6
Washington.....	2008	D★	+5.5	25,607,830	8.53	13,833,235	54.0	53.2
West Virginia.....	2011 (a)	D★	+2.33	10,458,277	34.74	4,156,910	39.7	49.5
Wisconsin.....	2010	R#	+5.77	24,484,825	11.33	9,769,516	39.9	52.3
Wyoming.....	2010	R#	+42.8	3,911,115	20.75	1,923,177	49.2	65.7

Source: Thad Beyle, www.unc.edu/~beyle.

Note: All dollar figures are in equivalent 2010\$. Using the 2010 CPI-U Index which was 2.18 of the 1982–84 Index = 1.00, the actual 2007 expenditures were based on a 207.3 CPI-U index value or .9509 of the 2010\$ index, the 2008 expenditures were based on a 215.3 CPI-U index value or .9876 of the 2010\$ index, the 2009 expenditures were based on a 214.5 CPI-U index value or 0.984 of the 2010\$ index, and the 2010 expenditures were the exact dollars spent in that election year. Then the actual expenditures of each state's governor's race were divided by the .9 value for that year to get the equivalent 2010\$ value of those expenditures.

Key:

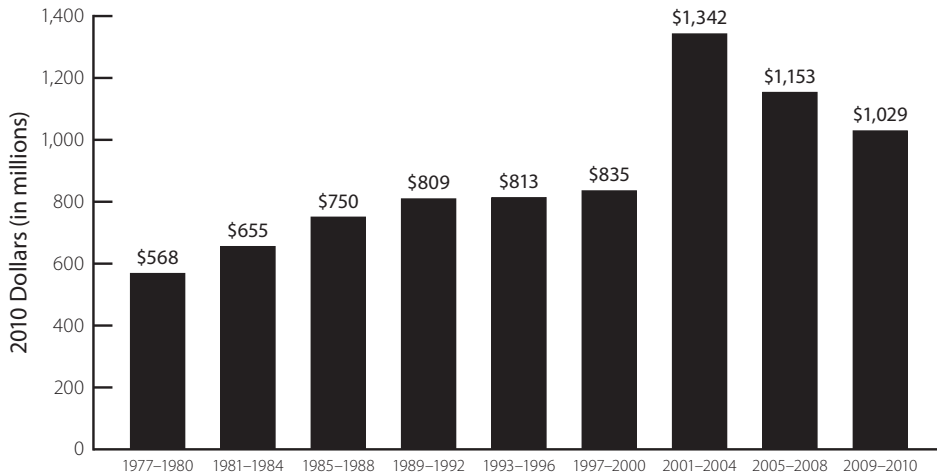
D — Democrat I — Independent R — Republican

— Open seat ★ — Incumbent ran and won.

★★ — Incumbent ran and lost in party primary.

★★★ — Incumbent ran and lost in general election.

(a) The 2011 election was a special election called for under West Virginia law. The law requires a governor who succeeds to office upon the resignation of a previously elected governor to get the vote of the people in order for the successor to continue to fill out the term. In Nov. 2010, Gov. Joe Manchin was elected to U.S. Congress and then-Senate President/Lt. Gov. Earl Ray Tomblin succeeded to the office of governor.

Figure A: Gubernatorial Elections Expenditures (by millions)

Source: Thad Beyle.

Note: The annual CPI-U index was used to determine the equivalent 2010\$ for each of the prior years. The 2010 CPI-U = 2.18 and each prior year's expenditures were divided by the percent that year's CPI-U was of the 2010 CPI-U.

ning a second term in 2008; in Pennsylvania (\$24.24 million) by newly elected Tom Corbett in 2010; in Virginia (\$24.17 million) by newly elected Gov. Robert McDonnell in 2009; and in New York (\$23.6 million) by newly elected Gov. Andrew Cuomo in 2010. The most money spent by a losing candidate was in California (\$154 million) by the Republican candidate, former ebay CEO Meg Whitman, in 2010.

The least money spent by winning candidates in these elections was in Alaska (\$513,698) by Gov. Sean Parnell who won a full term in 2010 after succeeding former Gov. Sarah Palin; in Montana (\$794,052) by Gov. Brian Schweitzer winning his second term in 2008; in Missouri (\$856,117) by newly elected Gov. Jay Nixon in 2008; in New Hampshire (\$1.03 million) by Gov. John Lynch winning a fourth term in 2010; in Nebraska (\$1.08 million) by Gov. Dave Heineman winning his second full term in 2010; and in Maine (\$1.2 million) by newly elected Gov. Paul LePage in 2010.

But looking at the amount of money spent per general election vote shows a slightly different picture. In 2007, the most expensive races per general election vote occurred in Louisiana at \$33.60 per

vote, and in Kentucky at \$33.02 per vote. The Louisiana race was for an open seat, while the Kentucky race saw an incumbent defeated in the general election. The least expensive races per vote in 2008 were held in Missouri at 41 cents per vote, and in Utah at 97 cents per vote. The Missouri race was for an open seat, while in the Utah race, an incumbent won his second term.

In Figure A, by converting the actual dollars spent each year into equivalent 2010 dollars, the cost of these elections has generally increased over time. The actual dollars spent between 1977 and 2010 totaled \$5.744 billion. When converted into equivalent 2010 dollars, the total was \$7.954 billion. The starkness of the changes over this 34-year period can be demonstrated by comparing the amounts spent in the first four years involved (1977-80) with the amount spent in the last four years (2007-10). In the earlier 1977-80 cycle, those in the 54 races spent \$567,758,192. In the latest 2007-10 cycle, those in the 53 races spent \$1,248,141,978—an increase of \$680,391,786, or 1.198 percent. Clearly, money really counts for a lot in gubernatorial politics.

Table D: Women Governors in the States

Governor	State	Year elected or succeeded to office	How woman became governor	Tenure of service	Previous offices held	Last elected position held before governorship
Phase I—From initial statehood to adoption of the 19th Amendment to U.S. Constitution (1920)						
No women elected or served as governor						
Phase II—Wives of former governors elected governor, 1924–1966						
Nellie Tayloe Ross (D)	Wyoming	1924	E	1/1925–1/1927	F	...
Miriam “Ma” Ferguson (D)	Texas	1924	E	1/1925–1/1927 1/1933–1/1935	F	...
Lurleen Wallace (D)	Alabama	1966	E	1/1967–5/1968	F	...
Phase III—Women who became governor on their own merit, 1970 to date						
Ella Grasso (D)	Connecticut	1974	E	1/1975–12/1980	SH, SOS, (a)	(a)
Dixy Lee Ray (D)	Washington	1976	E	1/1977–1/1981	(b)	...
Vesta M. Roy (R)	New Hampshire	1982	S (c)	12/1982–1/1983	(d)	(d)
Martha Layne Collins (D)	Kentucky	1983	E	12/1983–12/1987	(e), LG	LG
Madeleine M. Kunin (D)	Vermont	1984	E	1/1985–1/1991	SH, LG	LG
Kay A. Orr (R)	Nebraska	1986	E	1/1987–1/1991	T	T
Rose Mofford (D)	Arizona	1988	S (f)	4/1988–1/1991	SOS	SOS
Joan Finney (D)	Kansas	1990	E	1/1991–1/1995	T	T
Barbara Roberts (D)	Oregon	1990	E	1/1991–1/1995	(g), C, SH, SOS	SOS
Ann Richards (D)	Texas	1990	E	1/1991–1/1995	C, T	T
Christy Whitman (R)	New Jersey	1993	E	1/1994–1/2001	(h)	(h)
Jeanne Shaheen (D)	New Hampshire	1996	E	1/1997–1/2003	(d)	(d)
Jane Dee Hull (R)	Arizona	1997	S (i)	9/1997–1/2003	(j), SOS	SOS
Nancy P. Hollister (R)	Ohio	1998	S (k)	12/1998–1/1999	LG	LG
Ruth Ann Minner (D)	Delaware	2000	E	1/2001–1/2009	SH, SS, LG	LG
Judy Martz (R)	Montana	2000	E	1/2001–1/2005	LG	LG
Sila Calderón (Pop D)	Puerto Rico	2000	E	1/2001–1/2005	M	M
Jane Swift (R)	Massachusetts	2001	S (l)	4/2001–1/2003	SS, LG	LG
Janet Napolitano (D)	Arizona	2002	E	1/2003–1/2009	(m), AG	AG
Linda Lingle (R)	Hawaii	2002	E	12/2002–12/2010	C, M (n)	M
Kathleen Sebelius (D)	Kansas	2002	E	1/2003–4/2009	SH, (o)	(o)
Jennifer Granholm (D)	Michigan	2002	E	1/2003–1/2011	(p), AG	AG
Olene Walker (R)	Utah	2003	S (q)	11/2003–1/2005	SH, LG	LG
Kathleen Blanco (D)	Louisiana	2003	E	1/2004–1/2008	SH, LG	LG
M. Jodi Rell (R)	Connecticut	2004	S (r)	7/2004–1/2011	SH, LG	LG
Christine Gregoire (D)	Washington	2004	E	1/2005–	AG	AG
Sarah Palin (R)	Alaska	2006	E	1/2007–7/2009	M (s)	M
Beverly Perdue (D)	North Carolina	2008	E	1/2009–	SH, SS, LG	LG
Jan Brewer (R)	Arizona	2009	S (t)	1/2009–	C, SH, SS, SOS	SOS
Susana Martinez (R)	New Mexico	2010	E	1/2011–	(u)	(u)
Mary Fallin (R)	Oklahoma	2010	E	1/2011–	(a)	(a)
Nikki Haley (R)	South Carolina	2010	E	1/2011–	SH	SH

Sources: National Governors Association website, www.nga.org, and individual state government websites.

Key:

S — Succeeded to office upon death, resignation or removal of the incumbent governor.

AG — Attorney general

M — Mayor

C — City council or county commission

SH — State House member

E — Elected governor

SOS — Secretary of state

F — Former first lady

SS — State Senate member

LG — Lieutenant governor

T — State treasurer

(a) Congresswoman.

(b) Ray served on the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission from 1972 to 1975 and was chair of the AEC from 1973 to 1975.

(c) Roy as state Senate president succeeded to office upon the death of Gov. Hugh Gallen.

(d) State Senate president.

(e) State Supreme Court clerk.

(f) Mofford as secretary of state became acting governor in February 1988 and governor in April 1988 upon the impeachment and removal of Gov. Evan Mecham.

(g) Local school board member.

(h) Whitman was a former state utilities official.

(i) Hull as secretary of state became acting governor when Gov. Fife Symington resigned. Elected to full term in 1998.

(j) Speaker of the state House.

(k) Hollister as lieutenant governor became governor when Gov. George Voinovich stepped down to serve in the U.S. Senate.

(l) Swift as lieutenant governor succeeded Gov. Paul Celluci who resigned after being appointed ambassador to Canada. Was the first governor to give birth while serving in office.

(m) U.S. attorney.

(n) Lingle was mayor of Maui for two terms, elected in 1990 and 1996.

(o) Insurance commissioner.

(p) Federal prosecutor.

(q) Walker as lieutenant governor succeeded to the governorship upon the resignation of Gov. Mike Leavitt in 2003.

(r) Rell as lieutenant governor succeeded to the governorship upon the resignation of Gov. John Rowland in 2004.

(s) Palin was a two-term Mayor of Wasilla, Alaska, and had unsuccessfully sought the lieutenant governor's office in 2002. In 2008, Palin was nominated to be the vice presidential candidate on the Republican ticket with U.S. Sen. John McCain.

(t) Brewer as secretary of state succeeded to the governorship upon the resignation of Gov. Janet Napolitano in January 2009 after her confirmation as head of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Brewer then won a full term in the 2010 election.

(u) District Attorney—Dona Ana County, N.M.

Table E: 2008–2011 Governors' Race Winners by Party and Margin

<i>Democratic winners</i>				<i>Republican winners</i>				<i>Independent winners</i>			
<i>State</i>	<i>Election Year</i>	<i>Percent of win</i>	<i>Point margin</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Election Year</i>	<i>Percent of win</i>	<i>Point margin</i>	<i>State</i>	<i>Election Year</i>	<i>Percent of win</i>	<i>Point margin</i>
New Hampshire..	2008	70.2%	+42.6	Utah.....	2008	77.7%	+58.0	Rhode Island	2010	36.1%	+2.5
West Virginia.....	2008	69.8	+44.1	Nebraska	2010	74.9	+47.8				
Delaware.....	2008	67.5	+35.5	North Dakota.....	2008	74.4	+50.9				
Montana.....	2008	65.5	+33.0	Louisiana.....	2011	65.8	+47.9				
Arkansas	2010	64.4	+30.8	Wyoming.....	2010	65.7	+42.8				
New York	2010	61.6	+27.0	Utah.....	2010	64.2	+32.4				
Missouri	2008	58.4	+18.9	Kansas	2010	63.3	+31.1				
Hawaii	2010	58.2	+17.1	South Dakota	2010	61.5	+23.0				
Maryland.....	2010	56.2	+14.4	Mississippi.....	2011	61.1	+22.1				
California.....	2010	53.8	+12.9	Oklahoma	2010	60.4	+20.9				
Washington.....	2008	53.2	+6.5	Idaho	2010	59.1	+26.2				
New Hampshire..	2010	52.6	+7.6	Alaska	2010	59.1	+20.9				
North Carolina....	2008	50.3	+1.8	Virginia.....	2009	58.6	+17.4				
Colorado	2010	50.0	+14.6	Michigan	2010	58.1	+18.2				
Vermont	2010	49.5	+1.8	Indiana	2008	57.8	+17.8				
Connecticut	2010	49.5	+0.56	Alabama.....	2010	57.6	+15.7				
West Virginia.....	2011	49.5	+2.3	Kentucky.....	2011	55.1	+19.8				
Oregon	2010	49.3	+1.5	Texas.....	2010	55.0	+12.7				
Massachusetts.....	2010	48.4	+0.85	Pennsylvania.....	2010	54.5	+9.0				
Illinois.....	2010	46.8	+0.8	Arizona	2010	54.3	+11.8				
Minnesota	2010	43.6	+0.42	Vermont	2008	53.4	+31.6				
				Nevada	2010	53.4	+11.8				
				New Mexico.....	2010	53.3	+6.8				
				Georgia	2010	53.0	+10				
				Iowa	2010	52.9	+9.6				
				Wisconsin	2010	52.3	+5.8				
				South Carolina	2010	51.4	+4.4				
				Ohio.....	2010	49.0	+2.0				
				Florida.....	2010	48.9	+1.15				
				New Jersey.....	2009	48.5	+3.6				
				Maine.....	2010	38.1	+1.7				

Source: Thad Beyle.

Overall results by victory point margin: party and region

<i>Point margin</i>	<i>Number of states</i>	<i>Number of Republicans</i>	<i>Number of Democrats</i>	<i>Number of Independents</i>	<i>East</i>	<i>South</i>	<i>Midwest</i>	<i>West</i>
10+ points	33	22	11	0	5	11	6	11
5/-10 points	6	4	2	0	2	0	2	2
0/-5 points	14	5	8	1	6	4	3	1
Totals:	53	31	21	1	13	15	11	14

Source: Thad Beyle.

Table F: New Governors Elected Each 4-Year Period, 1970–2011 (a)

Year	Number of gubernatorial elections	New Governors		Incumbents Running			
		Won	Percent	Number	Won	Lost	Percent Lost
1970	35	19	54	24	16	8	36
1971	3	3	100	...	...	...	...
1972	18	11	61	11	7	4	36
1973	2	2	100	1	...	1	100
1974	35	18	51	22	17	5	24
1975	3	1	33	2	2	...	...
1976	14	9	64	8	5	3	33
1977	2	1	50	1	1	...	...
1978	36	20	56	23	16	7	30
1979	3	3	100	...	...	...	...
1980	13	6	46	12	7	5	42
1981	2	2	100	...	...	...	...
1982	36	17	47	25	19	6	24
1983	3	3	100	1	...	1	100
1984	13	9	69	6	4	2	33
1985	2	1	50	1	1	...	...
1986	36	21	58	18	15	3	18
1987	3	3	100	1	...	1	100
1988	12	4	33	9	8	1	11
1989	2	2	100	...	...	...	...
1990	36	19	53	23	17	6	26
1991	3	3	100	2	...	2	100
1992	12	8	67	4	4	...	...
1993	2	1	50	1	...	1	100
1994	36	19	53	23	17	6	26
1995	3	2	67	1	1	...	...
1996	11	4	36	7	7	...	...
1997	2	1	50	1	1	...	...
1998	36	13	36	25	23	2	8
1999	3	1	33	2	2	...	...
2000	11	6	55	6	5	1	17
2001	2	2	100	...	...	...	...
2002	36	24	67	16	12	4	25
2003 (b)	4	4	100	2	...	2	100
2004	11	7	64	8	4	4	50
2005	2	2	100	...	...	...	...
2006	36	9	25	27	25	2	7
2007	3	2	67	2	1	1	50
2008	11	3	24	8	8	...	...
2009	2	2	100	1	...	1	100
2010	37	26	70	14	11	3	21
2011	4	1	25	3	3	0	0
Totals:	576	316	55	341	259	82	24

Key:

(a) Table A: Gubernatorial Elections: 1970–2010, *The Book of the States, 2011* (Lexington, KY: The Council of State Governments, 2011): 128.

(b) In 2003, there was a recall and replacement election vote in California in which the incumbent Gov. Gray Davis-D was recalled and Republican Arnold Schwarzenegger was elected as his replacement.

The 2009–12 Cycle in Process

We are now three years through the current four-year cycle. In the 43 races held from 2009 to 2011, we saw 29 states elect new governors and five other states gain successor governors (North Dakota Gov. John Hoeven and West Virginia Gov. Joe Manchin were elected to U.S. Senate seats; Kansas Gov. Kathleen Sebelius and Arizona Gov. Janet Napolitano were appointed by President Obama to cabinet

positions; and Illinois Gov. Rod Blagojevich was impeached).

In 2012, 11 states will hold gubernatorial elections.⁷ These seats are now held by eight Democrats and three Republications, but four incumbents—in Indiana, Montana, New Hampshire and Washington—face term limits. So, there will be at least four new governors elected in 2012.

Notes

¹Five of these new governors succeeded governors who resigned upon moving on to a new responsibility before the end of their elected terms: Alaska (2009), Arizona (2009), Kansas (2009), Nebraska (2005), Texas (2000); four others succeeded due to problems the incumbents had and were removed from office in California (2003) and Illinois (2009), or the incumbent governor resigned to avoid efforts to remove them due to certain activities they had performed while governors in New Jersey (2010) and New York (2008).

²In North Dakota, Lt. Gov. Jack Dalrymple-R, succeeded outgoing Gov. John Hoeven-R, who was elected to the U.S. Senate in the 2010 election. In West Virginia, state Senate President Earl Ray Tomlin-D, succeeded outgoing Gov. Joe Manchin-D, who appointed himself to fill the remaining years of deceased Democratic U.S. Senator Robert Byrd's term.

³Steve Beshear-D, in Kentucky and Bobby Jindal-R, in Louisiana.

⁴New Mexico Gov. Susana Martinez, Oklahoma Gov. Mary Fallin and South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley—all Republicans.

⁵Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer-R, succeeded to office in January 2009, North Carolina Gov. Beverly Perdue-D, won in 2008 and Washington Gov. Christine Gregoire-D, won in 2004 and 2008.

⁶In California, Meg Whitman-R; in Florida, Alex Sink-D; in Maine, Libby Mitchell-D; in New Mexico, Diane Denish-D; in Oklahoma, Jari Adkins-D; and in Wyoming, Leslie Petersen-D.

⁷Eleven gubernatorial elections will be held in 2012: Delaware, Indiana, Missouri, Montana, New Hampshire, North Carolina, North Dakota, Utah, Vermont, Washington and West Virginia.

About the Author

Thad Beyle is a professor-emeritus of political science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. A Syracuse University A.B. and A.M., he received his Ph.D. at the University of Illinois. He spent a year in the North Carolina governor's office in the mid-1960s followed by two years with Terry Sanford's "A Study of American States" project at Duke University, and has worked with the National Governors Association in several capacities on gubernatorial transitions.