Positive notes for Democrats

November 8, 2018

From a partisan perspective, I was very disappointed by the losses Tuesday for three dynamic new leaders: Beto O'Rourke, Stacey Abrams (Georgia) and Andrew Gillum (Florida). While I also was troubled by the increased polarization documented on Tuesday, I am heartened that we now have checks and balances in Washington, thus restoring the Madisonian model of government.

As someone who studies political communication, I find interesting that the Democrats picked up seven governorships; this portends positively for redistricting and the 2020 elections, since Republicans need most of those states to hold on to the presidency. As Max Boot observed: "The election results restore some of my faith in our democracy, but the battle is far from over. To paraphrase Winston Churchill: This is not the end of Trumpism. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning.

Democrat members of the House of Representatives should heed the warning being made by many political analysts: It will be a huge mistake if they focus disproportionately on investigating the president rather than also putting forward constructive legislation (on health care, infrastructure, etc.) with the potential to help Americans and frame a positive message for Democrats going forward.

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