

JEWISH LAWMAKERS**U.S. Senate**

Barbara Boxer (D-Calif.)
Ben Cardin (D-Md.)
 Norm Coleman (R-Minn.)
 Russell Feingold (D-Wis.)
 Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.)*
 Herb Kohl (D-Wis.)*
 Frank Lautenberg (D-N.J.)
 Carl Levin (D-Mich.)
 Joseph Lieberman (I-Conn.)*
Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.)
 Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.)
 Arlen Specter (R-Pa.)
 Ron Wyden (D-Ore.)

U.S. House of Representatives

Gary Ackerman (D-N.Y.)
 Shelley Berkley (D-Nev.)
 Howard Berman (D-Calif.)
 Eric Cantor, (R-Va.)
Steve Cohen (D-Tenn.)
 Susan Davis (D-Calif.)
 Rahm Emanuel (D-Ill.)
 Eliot Engel (D-N.Y.)
 Bob Filner (D-Calif.)
 Barney Frank (D-Mass.)
Gabrielle Giffords (D-Ariz.)
 Jane Harman (D-Calif.)
Paul Hodes (D-N.H.)
 Steve Israel (D-N.Y.)
Steve Kagen (D-Wis.)
Ron Klein (D-Fla.)
 Tom Lantos (D-Calif.)
 Sander Levin (D-Mich.)
 Nita Lowey (D-N.Y.)
 Jerry Nadler (D-N.Y.)
 Steven Rothman (D-N.J.)
 Jan Schakowsky (D-Ill.)
 Adam Schiff (D-Calif.)
 Allyson Schwartz (D-Pa.)
 Brad Sherman (D-Calif.)
 Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-Fla.)
 Henry Waxman (D-Calif.)
 Anthony Weiner (D-N.Y.)
 Robert Wexler (D-Fla.)
John Yarmuth (D-Ky.)

*Re-elected senators
 New members in bold

Please note: Some races are still undecided.

WORLD REPORT

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Jewish Democrats win big, as candidates and as voters

By RON KAMPEAS

WASHINGTON (JTA) — Jewish Democrats increased their numbers in the U.S. Congress, joining their party in winning the House of Representatives on a wave of public dissatisfaction with the Iraq war and the economy.

At least six Jews were among the new Democrats sweeping into the House. In the Senate, which is still up for grabs, Jewish senators increased their numbers from 11 to 13 — a record high.

U.S. Rep. Bernie Sanders of Vermont, an independent who votes with Democrats, and U.S. Rep. Ben Cardin, a Democrat running in Maryland, added to the incumbent minyan plus one.

Sen. Joseph Lieberman retained his seat after a bruising battle that followed his loss in the Democratic primary and his run as an independent. The pro-Israel community played a key role in his victory.

Pro-Israel donors were not so successful in Pennsylvania, where Republican Sen. Rick Santorum lost his re-election bid — and most of the Pennsylvania Jewish vote — to his Democratic opponent, Bob Casey.

Indeed, the traditional Jewish affinity for Democrats appeared reinforced by a CNN exit poll showing support from 87 percent of Jewish voters nationwide. Only 12 percent favored Republicans. The poll canvassed fewer than 300 Jewish voters, a sample usually considered too small to be determinative.

If accurate, those returns — the highest favoring Democrats in 14 years — appeared to repudiate a barrage of pre-election Republican Jewish Coalition ads saying Demo-

cratic support for Israel was eroding.

In gubernatorial races, there were three Jewish winners, including Democrat Eliot Spitzer of New York, making him the first Jewish governor in decades. Gov. Ed Rendell, Democrat in Pennsylvania, and Gov. Linda Lingle, a Republican in Hawaii, also won their re-election bids.

Sen. Herb Kohl (D-Wis.) and Sen. Dianne Feinstein (D-Calif.) also won their re-election bids.

All but one of the Jews elected or re-elected to the House and to the Senate on Tuesday were Democrats or pledged to vote with the Democrats.

U.S. Rep. Eric Cantor, the Republican from Virginia, remains the only Jewish Republican in the House.

In Connecticut, Lieberman's defeat of his Democratic opponent, Ned Lamont, marked a major political comeback.

Lamont is a cable TV magnate who used anti-Iraq war sentiment to best Lieberman in the Democratic primary. Lieberman backed the Iraq war, but it was his solid pro-Israel record and iconic status as the first Jew to feature on a viable presidential ticket in 2000 that drew strong support from segments of the pro-Israel community.

Lieberman garnered about \$2 million from Jewish and pro-Israel supporters.

David Greenfield, the executive director of the Sephardic Community Federation in Brooklyn, was one of many Jews from the Northeast who came out to support Lieberman on Election Day.

"The moral, emotional and financial support Lieberman had from the Jewish community helped him come through this election," Greenfield said at the Lieberman victory party in Con-

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necticut on Tuesday night. "As far as the American Jewish community is concerned, he is a hero."

Still, he was not universally supported among Connecticut Jews. According to one exit poll, Lieberman garnered 63 percent of the Jewish vote to Lamont's 36 percent.

Pro-Israel money was also a factor in Rhode Island, where Sen. Lincoln Chafee, the Republican chairman of the Senate's Middle East subcommittee, was projected to lose to Sheldon Whitehouse.

Chafee was a tough critic of Israel's settlement policy, and blocked the nomination of John Bolton — who is very friendly to Israel — as ambassador to the United Nations to protest a planned settlement expansion. Pro-Israel contributors boosted Whitehouse's bid.

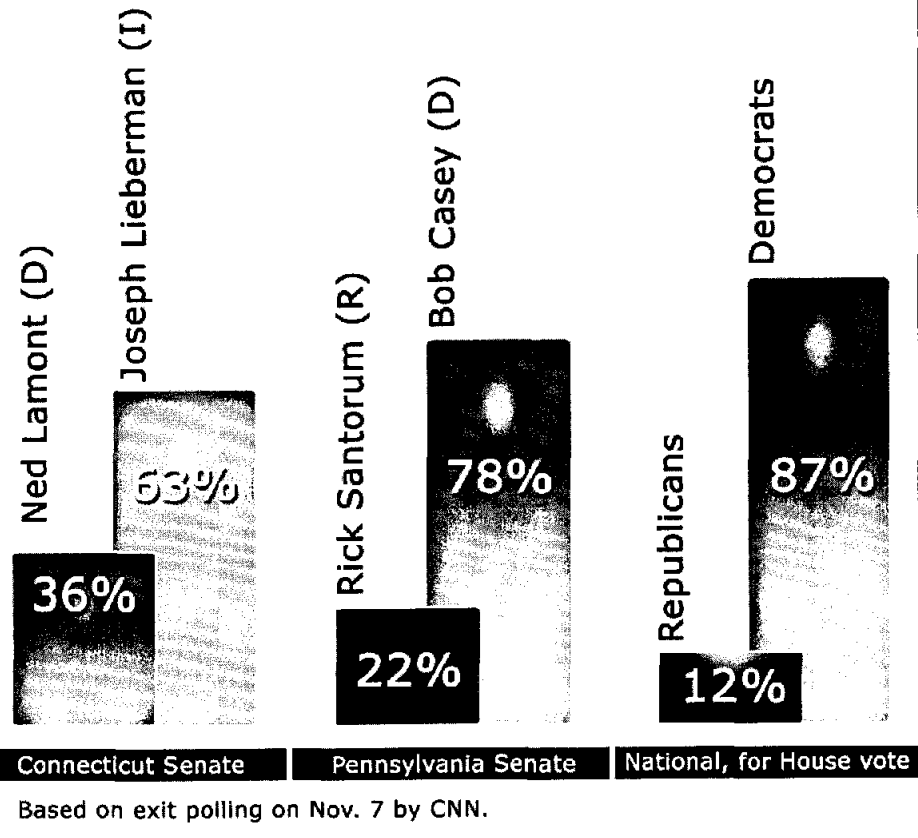
They also helped Brad Ellsworth, a Democrat, defeat U.S. Rep. John Hostettler (R-Ind.). Hostettler was a social conservative who was cool on Israel.

However, Jewish donors who made Israel their primary consideration failed in Pennsylvania, where Santorum lost to Casey, the state treasurer.

Santorum's solid pro-Israel record earned him \$2 million in contributions, but his rock-hard conservatism on social issues like abortion and gay marriage drove Jews to Casey, who drew more Jewish money overall. One exit poll suggested Casey also drew more than 80 percent of the Jewish vote.

Of the at least 25 new Democrats set to serve in the 110th Congress, six will be Jewish. That brings to 30 the total number of Jewish representatives. The six Jewish

The Jewish vote for the 110th Congress



pickups included three state legislators who ascended to Congress: Gabrielle Giffords, in Arizona, handily won a Tucson-area seat vacated by a Republican; Ron Klein in Florida ousted longtime Republican incumbent Clay Shaw; and Steve Cohen in Tennessee won the Memphis seat vacated by Harold Ford.

The other three Jewish winners are: Paul Hodes of New Hampshire, John Yarmuth of Kentucky and Steve Kagen of Wisconsin.

Questions of Jewishness often played a quirky role in the race. There was U.S. Rep. Katherine Harris (R-Fla.) the unsuccessful candidate for U.S. Senate who said she was a "wannabe" Jew. And there was U.S. Sen. George Allen (R-Va.) who said he didn't wannabe any kind of Jew. Allen, whose race is still a toss-up, at first denied and then acknowledged his mother's Jewishness — quickly adding, however, that he favored pork chops and ham sandwiches.

In a year in which candidates ran and voters voted overwhelmingly on national issues, Jewish voters and candidates were no different.

"This vote is a referendum on the Iraq war," said Lisa Sockett, a part-time law professor and mother of two from Arlington, Va.

She said Iraq and Republican opposition to gay marriage informed her vote for Jim Webb, a Democrat running against Allen.

One constant among Jewish candidates and those close to the Jewish community was health care: It was a central issue for Giffords in Arizona; Kagen, a doctor, in Wisconsin; and John Sarbanes, a health care lawyer and Democrat who won Cardin's old seat in Maryland.

"Any time you have a community that makes part of its culture reaching out to the less fortunate, the health care issue will be front and center," said Sarbanes, whose wife and children are Jewish and who belongs to a Baltimore-area synagogue.

"You're reaching out to people who don't have health insurance."

(JTA staff writer Ben Harris contributed reporting from Connecticut.)

This vote is a referendum on the Iraq war.
Lisa Sockett
 Voter

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Lieberman keeps Senate seat

By BEN HARRIS

HARTFORD (JTA) — If at first you don't succeed, his campaign motto could have been, try, try again.

Ousted by his party in a stunning primary defeat in August, Sen. Joseph Lieberman ran as an independent Tuesday and defeated Democratic challenger Ned Lamont in one of the nation's most closely watched U.S. Senate races, stemming a rising tide of dissatisfaction with the Bush administration over the war in Iraq.

Lieberman, who supported the war, won by a comfortable 11-point margin. The third candidate, Republican Alan Schlesinger, failed to attract much support.

The Jewish vote, which was widely believed to hinge on whether support for Israel was a voter's principle issue, went to Lieberman, as had significant financial support from pro-Israel factors across the country. A CNN exit poll of 114 Jewish voters found that 63 percent supported Lieberman on Tuesday, a slight increase from the 61 percent that voted for him in the primary.

It was below the overwhelming Jewish support Lieberman enjoyed in past elections — yet it was enough for Lieberman to overcome the primary debacle and retain his Senate seat.

"Dear friends, this year's campaign, to say the obvious, was a long journey on which you, my dear supporters, and I were tested like never before," Lieberman said at his election night celebration in Hartford. "But we never wavered in our beliefs or in our purpose. And we never gave up, did we? For that I am full of gratitude."

With his wife Hadassah at his side, Lieberman thanked God, "from whom all blessings follow," and called for a bipartisan strategy to bring U.S. troops home from Iraq as victors.

Some Jews from around the country came to Connecticut in the days before the election to volunteer for Lieberman's campaign, in particular to stand at polling stations to help voters locate Lieberman's name on the bottom line of the ballot.

"I think the moral, emotional and financial support he had from the Jewish community helped him come through this election," David Greenfield, the executive director of the Sephardic Community

Federation, a public policy group in Brooklyn, told JTA at the victory celebration in Hartford.

Greenfield said Jewish support for Lieberman was "astronomically higher" nationally than it was in Connecticut, where Lieberman failed to carry several predominantly Jewish districts in the primary. He recaptured several key Jewish districts in Tuesday's election, such as West Hartford.

"I think as far as the American Jewish community is concerned, he is a hero," Greenfield said.

Lieberman also benefitted from the largesse of Israel supporters nationwide. He was expected to earn as much as \$2 million from pro-Israel donors, about one-tenth of his total projected war chest.

Lieberman's Jewish supporters cited a range of reasons for their loyalty despite traditional Jewish affinity for the Democratic Party, including Lieberman's support for Israel, their pride in the success of a fellow Jew and Lieberman's reputed integrity.

"I'm a liberal Jew," said Harry Feder of Riverdale, N.Y., who spent three days in Connecticut before the election working for Lieberman. "We recognize that Joe has been the leader among the Senate when it comes to Israel, when it comes to Jewish issues. He is the lightning rod that other senators look to test out support for Israel."

Yet Lieberman's support for the war in Iraq nearly cost him his Senate seat, and did cost him his party's support. Upset by Lamont in August, Lieberman decided to stay in the race hoping that his message would appeal to enough Connecticut voters in the general election.

Emphasizing his reputation as a centrist willing to buck the party line, a theme that has been a hallmark of his campaign, Lieberman told his supporters Tuesday night, "I promise you I will go to Washington beholden to no political group, but only to the people of Connecticut and to my conscience."

In electing him to a fourth term, Connecticut voters "chose progress over partisanship, problem solving over polarization and the mainstream over the extreme," he said.

Voter turnout was reportedly high in an election that drew national attention, both for the spectacle of a three-term incumbent and former vice presidential nominee struggling for re-election against a political novice, and as a battleground in the wider war over Iraq.

"Lieberman was able to vindicate a political science theory by demonstrating that the centrist — the person who is closest to the ideological center of the electorate — can prevail," said Donald Green, a professor of political science at Yale University. "The country remains ideologically divided, and a candidate like Lieberman, who is a rare figure in the center of the ideological

spectrum, is able to prevail when an entire electorate is participating and not shackled by party ties."

Lieberman's decision to stay in the race after the primary loss posed a dilemma for Democrats in a year when many hoped public disaffection with the Bush administration would

return them to power in one or both houses of Congress.

Though some offered tepid support for Lamont, or stayed out of the race altogether, others actively campaigned on his behalf, including Lieberman's longtime Senate colleague, Christopher Dodd (D-Conn.).

Lieberman said he was "disappointed" with Dodd because of their friendship, but as the election drew closer and Lieberman's victory looked increasingly certain, both sides expressed confidence their differences could be overcome.

"We're all grown-ups. We're professionals," Lieberman told reporters in New Haven on Tuesday morning. "We've got to work together."

Lieberman repeatedly has promised that he would support Senate Democrats if re-elected, and observers expect the party will welcome him.

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Lieberman was able to vindicate a political science theory by demonstrating that the centrist ... can prevail.

Donald Green

Political science professor, Yale University

NEWS IN BRIEF

NORTH AMERICA

Pelosi slated for speaker

Rep. Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.), who is close to national Jewish leaders, is set to become speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives. Democrats won the House in Tuesday's midterm congressional elections, which would make House party leader Pelosi the first woman to assume the mantle of speaker, second in line to the presidency. Pelosi has strong ties to a number of Jewish groups, including the American Israel Public Affairs Committee; she is a close friend of Amy Friedkin, a past AIPAC president.

Rumsfeld and Israel

U.S. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, who cited Israeli security as one of the main aims of U.S. policy in the Middle East, stepped down.

President Bush announced the resignation Wednesday, a day after Democrats won control of at least one house of Congress.

Rumsfeld, like other members of the Bush administration, cited threats to Israel among other reasons for pursuing the Iraq war and containing Iran. But he cut off the U.S. strategic dialogue with Israel for three years until December 2005 because of Israel's sale of military equipment to China.

Robert Gates, President Bush's nominee for secretary of defense, is in the "realist" camp that advised against war in Iraq.

Gates served as CIA director under Bush's father and was close then to the elder Bush's secretary of state, James Baker, and national security adviser, Brent Scowcroft.

Both men are known for their opposition to the broad Bush administration goals of democratizing Iraq and the region.

Jewish insiders close to the Bush administration said that Gates was chosen because of his contrast with Rumsfeld.

Groups laud abortion, stem-cell votes

Two Jewish groups applauded the results of two local ballot initiatives in the U.S. elections. Hadassah: The Women's Zionist Organization said in a Wednesday statement that its members "led the charge" to defeat an abortion ban in South Dakota, and that "in Missouri, Hadassah members were likewise instrumental in preserving the right to pursue embryonic stem cell research."

The National Council of Jewish Women also released a statement lauding the abortion ban's defeat as an "enormous victory for the effort to protect Roe v. Wade."

Minnesota Muslim wins

For the first time, a Muslim is set to become a U.S. congressman.

Keith Ellison, a Democrat, easily defeated Alan Fine, a Jewish Republican, in a Minneapolis-area district in Tuesday's 2006 midterm elections.

Ellison earned endorsements from leading Jews in the district and expressed regrets about his ties in the mid-1990s with the Nation of Islam, whose leader has a history of making anti-Semitic comments.

He is due to visit Israel for the first time in the coming weeks as a guest of the Minnesota Jewish community.

MIDDLE EAST

Shelling kills 18 in Gaza

Eighteen Palestinians were killed and dozens wounded in what appeared to be a misdirected Israeli artillery barrage on a northern Gaza Strip town.

Most of the casualties from Wednesday's shelling of Beit Hanoun were women and children, witnesses said.

Original reports were of at least 19 people killed, but this was later amended.

The Palestinian Authority condemned the incident and called for a three-day mourning period. Israeli security sources said initial indications were that artillery fire, directed at areas on the outskirts of Beit Hanoun that had been used by Palestinian terrorists to launch rockets into the Jewish state, had overshot and struck civilian homes.

Defense Minister Amir Peretz ordered Israeli military operations in Gaza scaled back pending an investigation.

Hamas eyes American targets

Hamas called for Palestinian terrorists to attack American as well as Israeli targets.

Hamas' military wing, in a statement issued after an Israeli artillery barrage killed 18 people in the Gaza Strip, said Palestinians should "teach the American enemy harsh lessons" while continuing attacks against the Jewish state.

Previously, Hamas has said its operations were limited to Israeli targets. But Hamas stopped short of resuming suicide bombings in Israel, a tactic it suspended in 2004.

Islamic Jihad, by contrast, said it would carry out suicide bombings.

Commandos kill 5 Palestinians

Israeli commandos killed five Palestinians in a West Bank counterterrorist raid. Four of the dead from Wednesday's operation in Yanoun, a village outside Jenin, were wanted gunmen. Their factional affiliation was not immediately clear. Witnesses said the fifth fatality was a civilian. Security sources said the cell that was struck had been planning a terrorist attack.

Olmert tops 'corrupt' list

Ehud Olmert came first in a survey ranking Israeli government ministers the public considers corrupt.

Forty-two percent of those polled for the survey, which was published Wednesday at the annual Sderot Conference on the Economy, named the Israeli prime minister as the "most corrupt Cabinet member."

He was followed by the minister for strategic threats, Avigdor Lieberman, who took 26 percent, and Defense Minister Amir Peretz, who took 23 percent.

Asked which Cabinet minister they believe has the most integrity, 38 percent of respondents said Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni and 35 percent said Vice Premier Shimon Peres.

WORLD

Czechs lift deadline for Holocaust claims

The Czech lower house of Parliament passed a bill that would indefinitely extend the deadline for Jews seeking the return of Nazi-looted art.

The Wednesday bill abolishes the previous deadline of Dec. 31, 2006, which was set in 2000 under a special law allowing for the return of art taken from Jews by the Nazis now in Czech state collections to claimants of any nationality.

The bill must still be approved by the Senate and signed into law by President Vaclav Klaus to take effect, which observers say should occur relatively soon.

The proposal allows for claims by the original owners of artworks and their heirs in accordance with Czech inheritance laws. Since the law was passed, approximately 20,000 objects in Czech collections have been identified as having been obtained by the Nazis; some 500 have been returned.