

# Presidential Race Is Too Close to Call

## Ohio Looms Large; Republicans Appear Likely to Retain Control of House and Senate

### NATIONAL RESULTS



Rep. Anne Northup up in Kentucky

### The House

Republicans ousted two longtime Texas Democrats and appeared likely to hold—or even extend—their 24-seat majority, but Democrats were poised for some victories. Page A17



Barack Obama wins in Illinois

### The Senate

Republicans picked up two southern Senate seats, strengthening the GOP's prospects of maintaining, or even enlarging, its majority. Page A17



Joe Manchin wins in West Virginia

### Governors

Former White House budget director Mitchell E. Daniels Jr. beat the Democratic incumbent to become the first Republican governor of Indiana since 1989. Page A17

### LOCAL RESULTS



Sen. Mikulski earns a fourth term

### Maryland

Kerry took the state's 10 electoral votes; Barbara Mikulski was victorious; and Maryland's House incumbents swept to easy victories. Pages A30, A31



Rep. James Moran wins

### Virginia

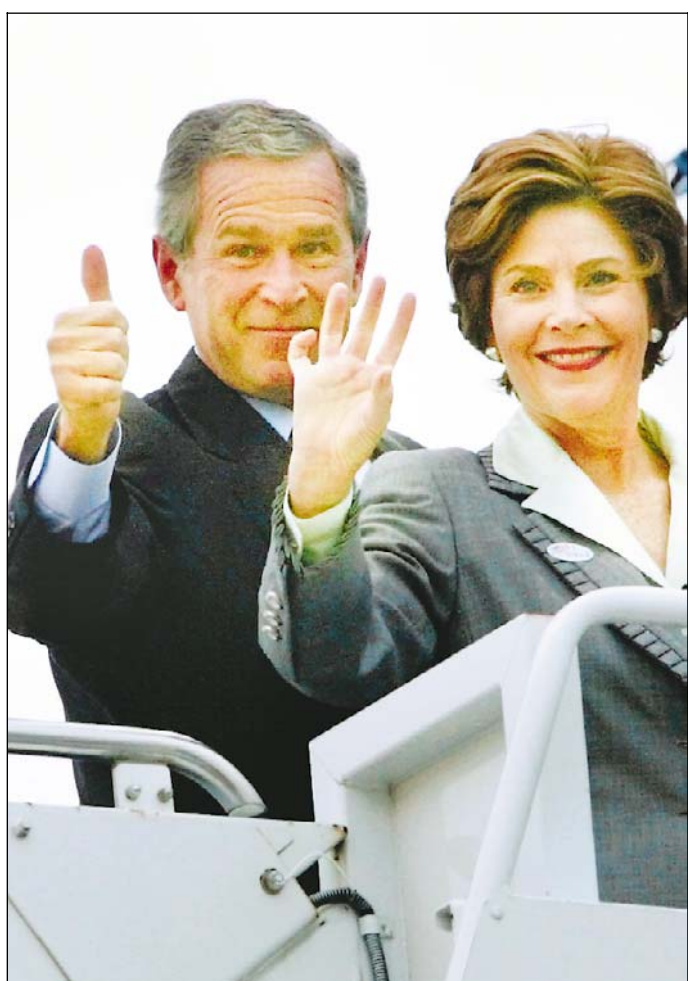
Bush had an easy victory over Kerry, and Rep. Moran and other congressional incumbents won reelection. Page A32



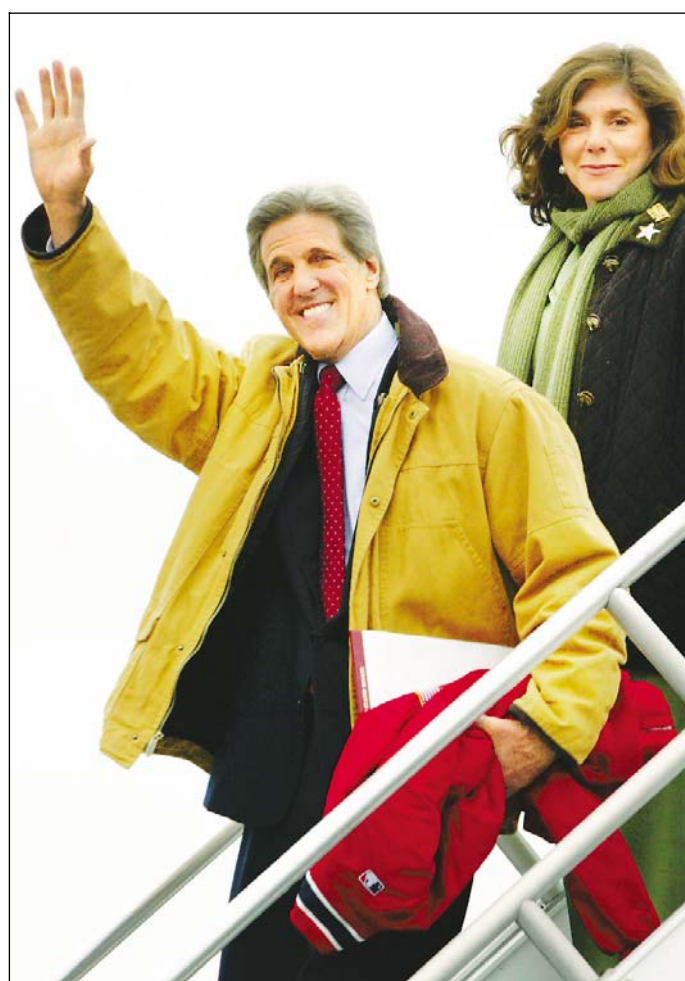
Marion Barry wins council seat

### The District

Kerry wrapped up the District's electoral votes, and former mayor Marion Barry coasted to victory in a D.C. Council race. Page A28



President Bush and first lady Laura Bush board Air Force One in Waco, Tex., after voting near their ranch in Crawford, Tex.



John F. Kerry and his wife, Teresa Heinz Kerry, arrive in Massachusetts. The senator voted in Boston and then went to his Beacon Hill home.

By DAN BALZ  
Washington Post Staff Writer

President Bush and Sen. John F. Kerry carried their vigorous battle for the White House into the early hours this morning, with the president taking an important step toward reelection by capturing the prized battleground of Florida and the candidates fighting over Ohio and a handful of smaller states that will decide the outcome in a contest that echoed the hard-fought election that gave Bush the presidency four years ago.

In an election shaped by terrorism and the war in Iraq and marked by partisan passions that energized loyalists to both candidates, voters turned out in extraordinary numbers nationwide.

Polling places in some battlegrounds stayed open long after their scheduled closings, as officials struggled to handle a surge in turnout that some experts said could match the most recent high-water mark set in 1992—and perhaps exceed it. Despite threats of legal challenges and other disruptions, voting generally appeared to go smoothly in most states.

The pattern of the returns proved to be a virtual rerun of the 2000 election, with many of the states that created such drama in that contest once again keeping the candidates and the American people on edge as they watched returns roll in.

Republicans appeared certain to maintain their majority in the House and the Senate. The GOP picked up open Democratic seats in Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina, while Democrats captured the open Republican seat in Illinois. In the most closely watched race, Senate Democratic Leader Thomas A. Daschle was locked in a tight race with former House member John Thune (R) in South Dakota, and in Pennsylvania, Sen. Arlen Specter (R) was in a battle against Rep. Joseph M. Hoeffel III (D).

With polls closed in every state except Alaska and Hawaii, both Bush and Kerry remained short of the 270 electoral votes needed to win the presidency, as many crucial states were too close to call. But the addition of Florida, the state that produced the 36-day recount in 2000, to Bush's column significantly complicated Kerry's path to victory, making Ohio, a state Bush won in 2000, crucial to the Massachusetts senator's hopes.

With more than half the nation's precincts reporting, Bush was leading the popular vote, winning just over a majority.

There were no surprises in the first states to report. Bush methodically secured his base in the South and border states, capturing his home state of Texas as well as Virginia, Georgia, Alabama, South Carolina, Mississippi, Louisiana, Tennessee, Missouri and Kentucky. He won Indiana and West Virginia, which was a Democratic bastion

### Analysis: The Battlegrounds

## 2000 Vote Echoes, but Moderates Shift

By DAVID S. BRODER  
and RICHARD MORIN  
Washington Post Staff Writers

President Bush and challenger John F. Kerry struggled last night for the crucial edge in a handful of battleground states in an election that reflected the deep-seated social divisions and polarizing effects of Iraq, the economy and the war on terrorism.

The basic alignments of the electorate echoed those of 2000, according to exit polls taken yesterday. Men, whites, rural resi-

dents and the religiously observant were backing Bush, while women, minorities, urban dwellers and the less religious were going for Kerry. Among Kerry's best hopes last night was an apparent breakthrough among young voters.

The close battlegrounds were those that the rivals had targeted for their most intensive campaigning and organizational efforts. New Hampshire was the lone unknown in the Northeast last night after Pennsylvania fell into line with its Democratic neighbors. Left to tip the balance were

Ohio, Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa in the Midwest, Nevada and New Mexico in the Southwest, and the tourist havens of Florida and Hawaii.

With Bush running as an incumbent who had triggered and endured four years of political battles, and with Ralph Nader less of a factor than he had been in 2000, the ideological alignments were more evident than they had been four years ago. About eight in 10 self-described conservatives supported

See BATTLEGROUNDS, A20, Col. 1

See ELECTION, A19, Col. 1

### Voting

## Little Trouble, Despite Heavy Traffic at Polls

By DAN EGGEN and JO BECKER  
Washington Post Staff Writers

Dire warnings of chaos at ballot boxes, fueled by weeks of legal battles and political skirmishing, largely evaporated yesterday as voting proceeded with relatively few problems and only limited disputes at polling places nationwide.

But lawyers from both parties continued to prepare potential legal strategies as the race remained tight in pivotal battleground states last night.

Election officials and partisan observers reported scattered problems with malfunctioning voting machines, ballot shortages and allegations of dirty tricks in some states. But the main challenge for poll workers throughout the day turned out to be managing the large crowds of voters, who lined up in record numbers in many areas to cast ballots in the hotly contested presidential race.

Voting experts and officials in both parties cautioned last night that serious disputes could still arise. During the contested 2000 race between President Bush and Al Gore, for example, widespread balloting problems in Florida did not emerge as a focus of debate until late into election night.

Party attorneys were also keeping a close eye last night on the record number of provisional ballots cast in many states, which were used for voters whose names did not appear on official rolls and which could not be reviewed or counted until after Election Day. Election officials said the number of such ballots could be high enough to play a decisive factor in the closest states, although precise numbers were not available late last night.

Absentee ballots, which were among the disputed issues in 2000, could also play a role in any fights this year. Florida Secretary of State Glenda E. Hood, noting that absentee ballots may not be completely tallied until tomorrow, said Broward County and Miami-Dade County each received more than 90,000 requests for



In a scene that was repeated across the area, throngs of Fairfax County voters wait in lines to sign in at Colvin Run Elementary School in Vienna.

### In the Washington Region

## Determined Voters Line Up to Be Counted

By MONTE REEL and NANCY TREJOS  
Washington Post Staff Writers

The red and blue paint felt dry even before the first vote was cast. The pollsters had given Maryland and the District to Sen. John F. Kerry, and they said Virginia belonged to President Bush. These weren't battlegrounds; they were foregone conclusions.

But if the outcome seemed so clear going in, then why did so many voters bother to flock to area polling places yesterday and endure huge lines, sometimes for two hours or more?

In the District, more than 30 people slept on a sidewalk outside one Ward 8 precinct to be among the first to vote. In Fairfax, lines of voters snaked through the halls of Greenbriar West Elementary School during what

was supposed to be the slow period of mid-morning. In New Carrollton, one voter compared the long wait to standing in line for a ride at Disney World.

Across the country, the huge get-out-the-vote effort delivered an epic day at the polls. A record number of registered voters produced long lines everywhere, and passion for politics was the order of the day. New voters, minority voters and, especially, young voters all turned out in large numbers, evidence of an energized electorate.

Voters said they were driven to the polls by the issues that resonated in the presidential campaign and by the belief that a single vote could count in a country divided.

"It's almost palpable, the attention, anticipation and the interest," said Scott Mlynec, 31, a portfolio manager at Fifth Third Bank

in Cincinnati. "People you would never expect to talk about politics are paying attention."

Officials in Maryland, Virginia and the District said they expected final figures to show a near-record turnout. "I have never seen it this busy at this precinct, and I have been voting here for 40 years," said Bob MacKinnon, 75, who voted at Charles Carroll Middle School in Prince George's County.

Although some local races and issues helped lure voters to the polls, the presidential race was clearly the big draw. Few in the lines were ready to accept that their votes meant less because the electoral college votes were not highly contested. They talked of high stakes and of civic duties. They listed

See REGION, A34, Col. 1

See VOTING, A21, Col. 1