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STORY 3 OF 5 · SEATS · 3D · MIDTERMS 2026

THE BLUE WAVE

Democrats took every Republican seat Trump won by less than ten points, and a few the tide should never have reached. Most of those few were in states that had just redrawn their maps to add Republican seats.

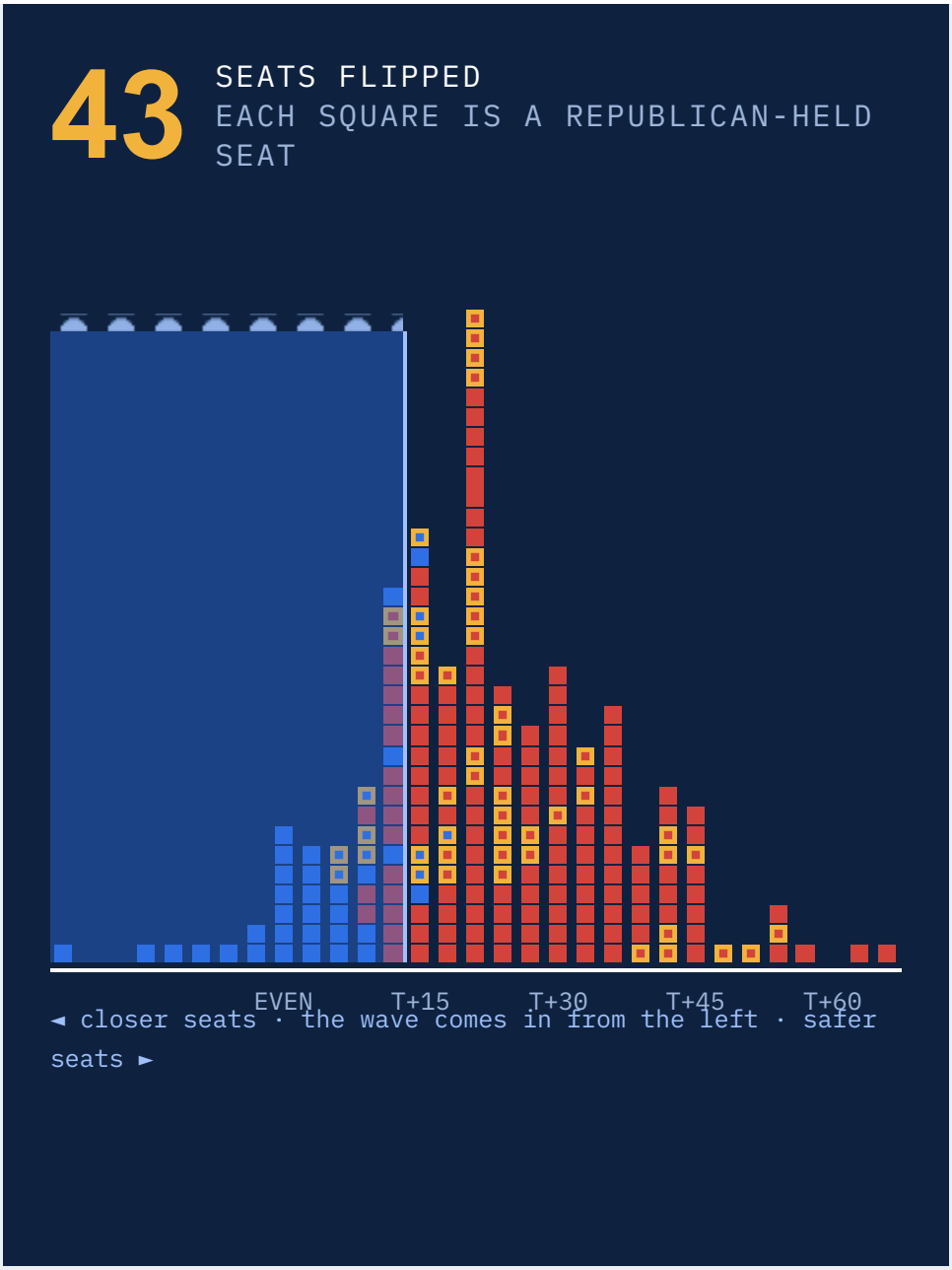
By the politic.design data desk · 5 Nov 2026, updated 6 Nov 2026 · Preliminary counts

OPEN DATA PDF Markdown JSON

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The story in one picture. Every unit is a real thing; the caption under each scene says what.

Line up the 220 Republican-held districts by how much Trump won them by in 2024, on the lines used this year, and the result reads like a tide chart. The national swing since 2024 is about 15 points, which on a uniform swing puts 54 Republican seats under water. Democrats have taken all 28 that Trump won by less than ten points (or that Harris carried), 7 of the 26 he won by 10 to 14, and none of the safer seats except eight.

The seats that beat the tide are the story. Of the eight flips in districts Trump won by 15 or more, six are in North Carolina and Texas, both of which

redrew their maps in 2025 to add Republican seats: North Carolina's 6th, 9th, 13th and 14th, and Texas's 15th and 23rd. Spreading Republican voters thinly across more seats leaves each with a smaller cushion, so a big enough wave goes over all of them at once. Across the four states that redrew for the GOP (Texas, North Carolina, Ohio and Missouri), Democrats made 11 of their 43 gains.

- California's Prop 50 map did what it was drawn to do: Democrats took CA-01, CA-06, CA-22, CA-41 and CA-48.
- Senate: Democrats flipped seats in states Trump won by 12 points on average. The last midterm with more than two such flips was 1986.
- Polling miss: final averages had Democrats near D+9; the count is heading to D+12–14. In Texas, Talarico led by 2.6 in the polls and won by 12.

DATA

The Downballot's 2024 presidential results on the 2026 district lines; CBS News's list of flipped seats (5 Nov). At certification: AP results for every race.

KEY FINDING

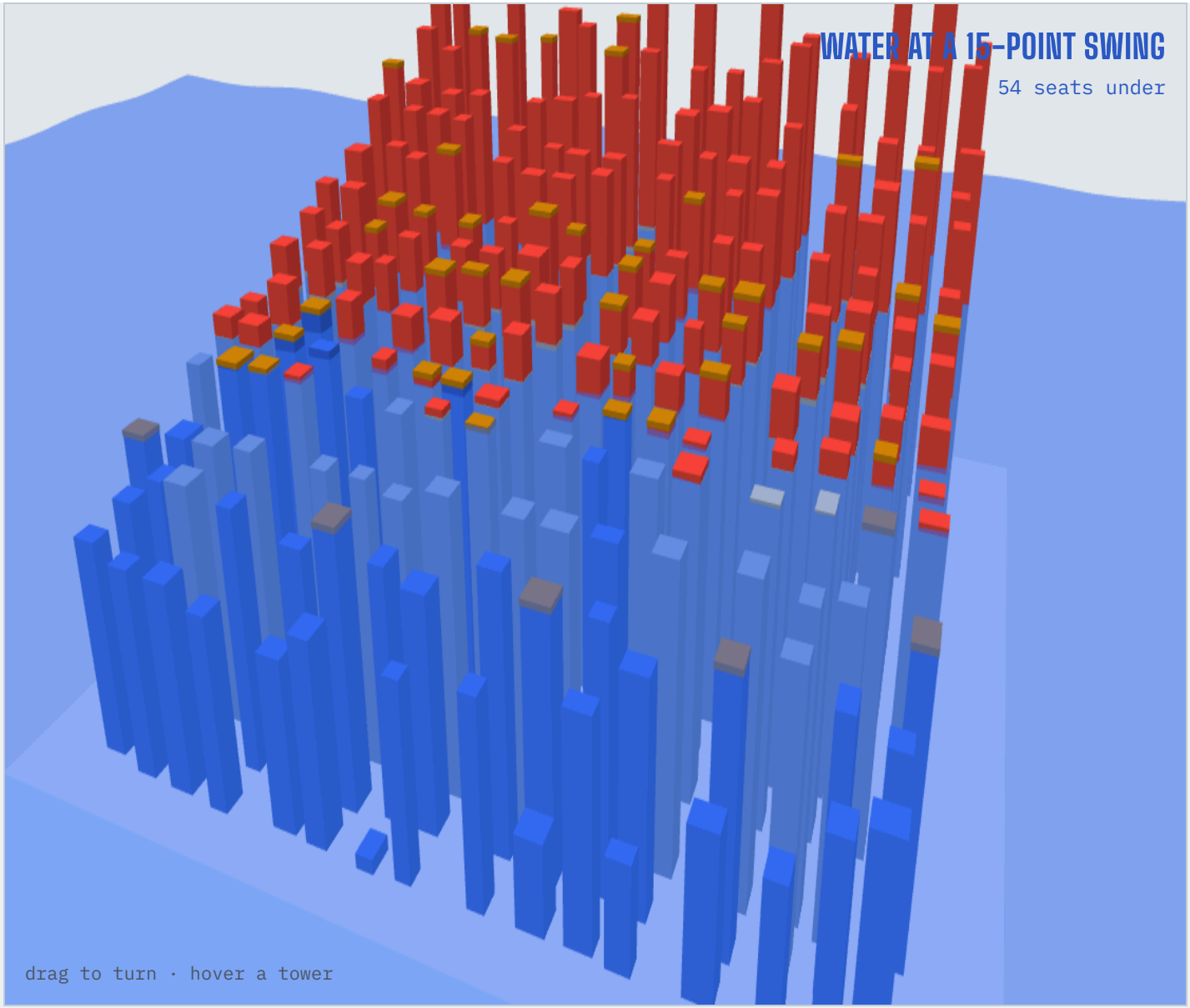
"Democrats flipped all 28 Republican-held seats that Trump won by less than ten points; six of their eight gains beyond Trump+15 came in North Carolina and Texas, which had just redrawn their maps."

A CITY UNDER THE BLUE WAVE

IN SHORT Each tower is a Republican-held House seat. The taller it is, the more Trump won it by in 2024. The sea is the national swing toward Democrats: anything above the water stays Republican red, towers under water are seats that swing could flip, and blue towers are the ones that actually flipped. Amber roofs are states that redrew their maps for the GOP.

NATIONAL SWING FROM 2024

15 pts



Flipped to Democrats Still Republican above the water

Under water, not flipped (held or uncalled) Redrawn map

SEATS UNDER WATER	OF THOSE, FLIPPED	UNDER WATER, NOT FLIPPED	FLIPS ABOVE THE WATER	FLIPS IN REDRAW STATES
54	35	19	8	11 of 43

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Uniform-swing reading: a seat is under water when the national shift since 2024 is bigger than Trump's 2024 margin there. Towers are laid out shortest at the shore, tallest inland; streets and positions are for legibility only. Flips from CBS News's list as of 5 Nov; dozens of races were still uncalled.

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