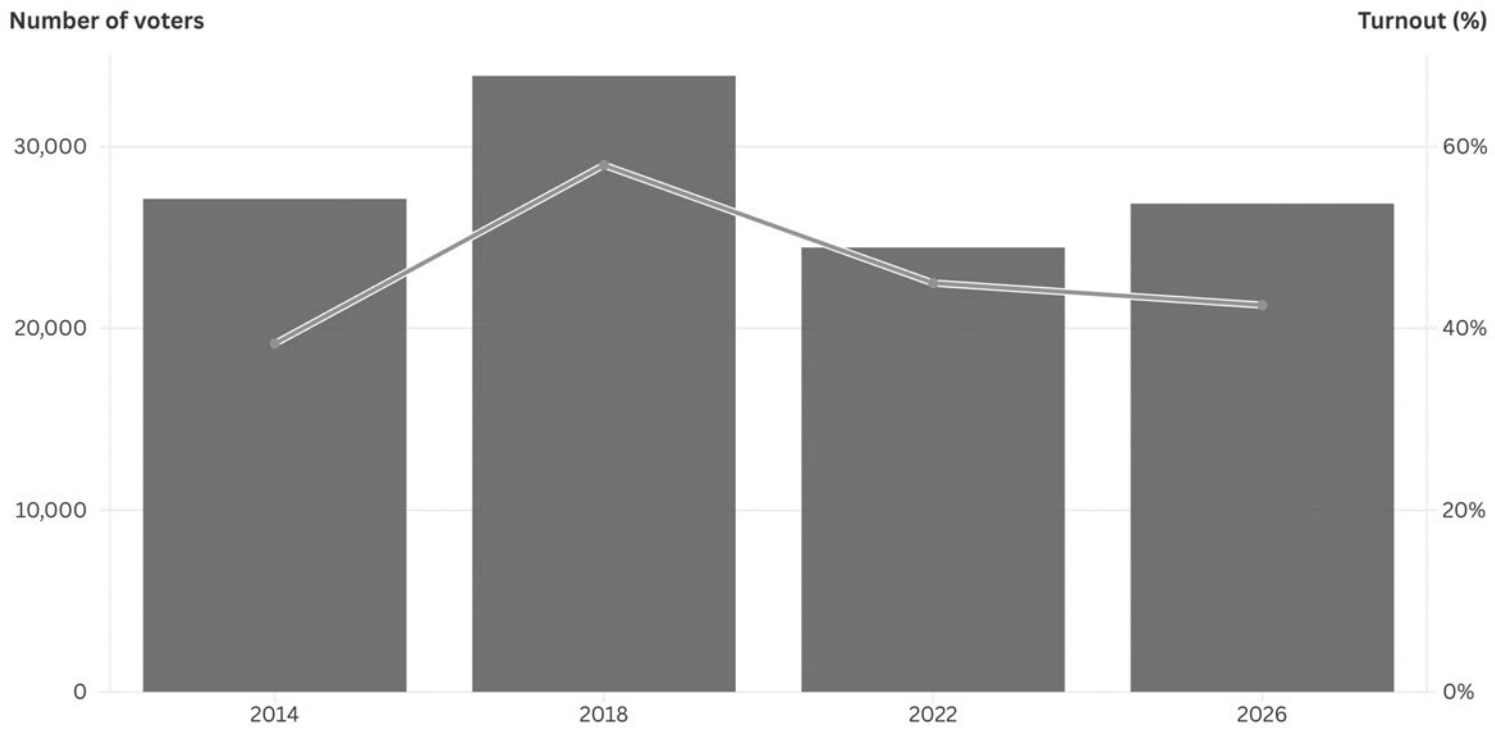
NEWS

"Friday night I'm going nowhere."
BABYLON DAVID GRAY

Slightly fewer New Haven voters turned out in last week's midterms

BY NELLIE KENNEY AND ADRIANA PETRIZZO
STAFF REPORTER AND DATA EDITOR

Percent turnout and number of voters in New Haven midterm elections, 2014-26



ADRIANA PETRIZZO / DATA EDITOR

On the ballot were Gov. Ned Lamont SOM '80 and Rep. Rosa DeLauro, both of whom increased their vote share in the city. New Haven elected only Democrats to the state legislature, which will house the fewest Republican senators it has had since 1876.

A week after Democrats swept New Haven's midterm elections, the city's Registrar of Voters Office released data showing a continued downward trend in midterm turnout.

Last week's elections saw widespread wins for Democrats in Connecticut and across the country. Democratic Gov. Ned Lamont SOM '80 won reelection by a margin of around 19 points — the widest margin in a Connecticut gubernatorial race in 20 years. Democratic Rep. Rosa DeLauro was reelected to a 19th term in Congress. And New Haven sent only Democrats to the Connecticut state legislature.

Turnout dropped from approximately 45 percent in the 2022 midterm elections to approximately 42.6 percent in 2026. The 2022 figure also marked a decline — 57.5 percent of New Haven's registered voters cast their ballots during the midterm elections in 2018.

Although the proportion of registered voters who cast their ballots dropped, the number of people who voted in the city in 2026 was about 2,400 more than in 2022. The number of eligible voters swelled by nearly 10,000 between the two elections, per documents from the Connecticut Secretary of State's Office.

Ward 1, home to Yale's Old Campus and eight of its residential colleges, saw the lowest turnout of any of the city's 30 wards, with just 26.59 percent of registered voters casting ballots last Tuesday. The ward, which is sometimes referred to as the "Yale ward," saw the city's lowest turnout during last year's municipal election as well — around 10.9 percent of eligible voters.

Ward 22, which includes Yale's Benjamin Franklin, Pauli Murray, Morse, Ezra Stiles, Silliman and Timothy Dwight colleges as well as the Dixwell neighborhood, saw turnout around 40 percent, while western New Haven's Ward 25 and Ward 26 saw the city's highest turnout, with approximately 60 percent each.

Southeastern New Haven's Ward 18 also saw turnout of around 60 percent. The ward was one of five New Haven wards whose ballot boasted a contested election for the state's House of Representatives, in addition to races for constitutional state offices and DeLauro's seat in Congress.

Wards 11, 12, 13, 17 and 18 voted overwhelmingly to elect Wildaliz Bermúdez, the director of the New Haven Fair Rent Commission, to represent eastern New Haven's District 97 in the state legislature. Bermúdez's opponent, perennial candidate Anthony Acri, was the only Republican to run for a seat representing New Haven in the state legislature this year.

Bermúdez defeated Acri in all of the district's wards. The margin was closest in Ward 18, which has long been New Haven's purplest ward. 61.7 percent of voters in the ward backed Bermúdez, a slightly lower percentage than the 62.8 percent who voted for Lamont.

The District 97 seat is currently filled by Rep. Alphonse Paolillo Jr., who ran for state Senate this year after longtime New Haven state senator and State Senate President Pro Tempore Martin Looney announced in May that he would step down.

Paolillo, a Democrat, defeated Worker's Voice Party candidate Rosa Pepper-Macias to take the state Senate seat. He will join a chamber that is set to be the bluest it has ever been, with 33 Democratic senators alongside only three GOP members — the lowest number since 1876, when three out of 21 total senators were Republican.

The midterms thinned Republican numbers in both houses of the state legislature. Republicans lost over a dozen seats to Democrats in the state House, and there are set to be over four times as many Democrats in the House as Republicans this coming session.

Paolillo was on the ballot in 15 of New Haven's 30 wards.

While voters turned out in historic numbers for Democrats in elections across the country, the share of votes for Lamont and DeLauro stayed mostly stable compared to the last time each of them were up for reelection.

For both candidates, the most dramatic shift among voters was in Fair Haven's Ward 15, where Lamont gained around 10 percent more of the vote and DeLauro gained around 8 percent more. Support for Lamont dropped the most in Newhallville's Ward 20, by about 1 percent. Support for DeLauro dropped the most in Edgewood's Ward 24, by a little under 8 percent.

Both wards containing Yale residential colleges cast over 90 percent of their ballots for Lamont and DeLauro in their respective races. Ward 1 was the ward with the highest percentage of support for DeLauro in the city and the third-highest for Lamont.

DeLauro, who has served in the House of Representatives for 35 years, was first elected by a 4.2-point margin in 1990. In 2024, she defeated her closest opponent by 17.8 points, and this year, she won by 25.65 points.

Lamont's challenger, state Sen. Ryan Fazio, received approximately 12.7 percent of New Haven ballots, compared to approximately 40.4 percent of the vote statewide. Fazio received less of the vote share than President Donald Trump did in every single New Haven ward.

New Haven has not sent a Republican candidate to the state legislature since 2001.

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Democrat beats Democrat in special election for Edgewood alder

BY NELLIE KENNEY
STAFF REPORTER

There will soon be two Furlows on the Board of Alders.

Randall Furlow, a member of the city's Democratic Town Committee and a cousin of Board of Alders Majority Leader Richard Furlow, won a special election on Tuesday to represent an Edgewood ward.

Only a week after the midterm elections, residents of Ward 24 headed back to the polls to cast their ballots in the city's third special election this year. Former Alder Evette Hamilton, who had held the seat for 15 years, stepped down in September, setting up the race between Furlow, who is a pastor, and Lindsey Tengatenga, a nonprofit director and fellow Democrat.

"Being able to cross the threshold of this victory, I'm just elated," Furlow said in an interview after the results were announced. He described the last few weeks, during which he campaigned "every single day," as among the "toughest" of his life.

Hamilton was the third alder to resign this year and trigger a special election. In January, former alder and incoming state Rep. Eli Sabin '22 LAW '26 stepped down shortly before he was set to be sworn in, launching a February special election. Ward 7 Alder Christine Kim '99 won that race. In September, Democratic Socialist Maria-Threese Serana triumphed in another special election to represent Ward 9 after former alder Caroline Tanbee Smith '14 SOM '25 stepped down in August.

Although residents had voiced concern that the election's proximity to the midterms might confuse voters, Tuesday's turnout was higher than in either of the other two special elections this year. Furlow received 315 votes, and Tengatenga, received 179 votes. A total of 193 votes were cast in the Ward 7 special election and 211 were cast in Ward 9's.

In an interview on Tuesday evening, Furlow's fellow ward 24 Democratic co-chair Mareika Phillips said both Furlow and Tengatenga had done a "really good job of clarifying for people" when and where the special election was happening.

Now that the election is over, Phillips said, she hopes that "everybody can come together, and we can be one ward fighting for the same things together."

Jennifer Tillman, a realtor and social worker who filed to run for the seat in October and later stepped down to endorse Furlow, echoed that sentiment.

"The universal law is love," Tillman said in an interview after the results were announced. "We don't have to be divided. We want to be united. I hope this can be about coming together."

Furlow said many of his conversations with residents leading up to the election centered on hyperlocal infrastructure like sidewalks. Many also expressed concern about the condition of the city's public schools, he said. New Haven's public schools, a source of perennial agita, have once again come under scrutiny over the dilapidated conditions of their facilities.

The first item on Furlow's agenda as alder will be building a "collective of people in the ward," he said.

"Politics can be very polarizing, and so I have to now find a way to reconnect and reconvene every single body that has been a part of this campaign on either side of it," Furlow said.

An Edgewood Fire Department building hosted Tuesday's polling location. On Tuesday evening, the candidates gathered with their supporters on opposite sides of the station's entrance, greeting voters as they arrived at and left the polls.

Mayor Justin Elicker and several alders crowded into the firehouse to hear the results of the election. Tengatenga and Furlow embraced after the results were announced.

Among the alders present on Tuesday evening was Richard, the other Furlow.

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JIYOO NAM / CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHER

Randall Furlow, a member of the city's Democratic Town Committee, came out on top in the race for Ward 24 Alder. He beat Lindsey Tengatenga, a nonprofit director, by around 30 percentage points in the city's third special election of the year.

