

Community Comment

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Elections Have Consequences

We've had a month to accept the results of another presidential election. Agree or not, President Obama easily won a second term. He won the popular vote by a significant --but not huge -- margin. But he won the Electoral College vote by a very big margin. We could argue all day about why he won, but the fact is, he did. He said many times what he would do to tackle the deficit that we face. He also talked about spending money to repair and rebuild infrastructure. The Republican candidate had different proposals and made his case. He lost. It is way past time to get on with the business of governing.

Politics is the art of compromise. Most people who choose to serve understand this. They realize that government is not a business. Government requires groups of people that represent different parts of the country, different socio-economic groups, and different personal backgrounds and education and philosophy, to come together in good faith and work out a compromise on how to resolve various issues. After an election, there are winners and losers. Since issues have been addressed during the election process, we have a pretty good idea of the will of the people. It seems to me that President Obama made it clear what he would do about the economy. The Democrats in the Senate gained seats and enhance their majority. Democrats gained seats in the House but the Republicans still have the majority. I hear pundits say nothing has changed. That is simply not true.

The presidential election gave the nation a confirmation of the direction of the country. Elections are our best poll of how people feel about various issues and whether or not we should change course. The President won and we have that answer.

So, why is it so difficult to get an agreement from the Republicans in the House? I guess denial is the answer. The election made it clear who won the debate. It is clear that most of us want to see real discussion, give and take, and compromise on the big issues. But we also have a clear indication that the President's approach is the choice. The Republican leader of the future will be the person that understands that reality and compromises with that in mind. Elections have consequences, this one is over, govern well and wait for your next opportunity to make your case. We've seen the power shift back and forth for the last two centuries and the future will be no different. "Just Say No" didn't work with drugs and it won't work with governing.

Like the country as a whole, we are divided people when it comes to politics, even in local races. Look at the Eureka City Council race between Linda Atkins and Joe Bonino. They don't get much closer than that. Congrats to Linda and her win; keep in mind how close this was. And to Joe; I've known him

for a long time. I thank him for throwing his hat in the ring. He is smart and honest and would be a good addition to any council.

Thanks to all who ran for elective office. It is not easy. And thanks to all who voted. We had better numbers than I expected.

This has been Sam Pennisi for Community Comment.