

Written by Kathy

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By Kathy Wray Coleman, associate publisher, editor

CLEVELAND, Ohio – With the Nov. 8 general election under a week away, including midterm elections relative to seats up for grabs in congress and in the U.S. Senate, some Democrats seeking statewide office in Ohio, including for governor, secretary of state and state attorney general, have made Cleveland and Cuyahoga County a campaign stumping ground, largely because Cuyahoga County, the second largest of Ohio's 88 counties, is a Democratic stronghold, and it is roughly 29 percent Black.

"We have organized canvasses to get out the vote," said state Rep Juanita Brent, a Cleveland Democrat and vice chairwoman of the Cuyahoga County Democratic Party.

Also on the ballot in Ohio are state legislative seats, judgeships, congressional and local races, some ballot issues, and even a controversial [recall effort of East Cleveland's mayor](#) and its vice president of city council.

A majority Black major American city of some 383,000 people led by new mayor Justin M Bibb, a 35-year-old Black Democrat who won election last year, Cleveland is Ohio's second largest city, behind the capital city of Columbus, which has nearly a million people and sits in Franklin County, the state's largest county and also a Democratic stronghold.

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Since Republican John Kasich, now a CNN commentator, ousted then Democratic governor Ted Strickland from the governor's mansion in a contentious 2010 election, Democrats in Ohio have not won a statewide office other than less than a handful of seats on the largely Republican Ohio Supreme Court, and the reelections of Sen Sherrod Brown, a senior member of the U.S. Senate and a former Ohio attorney general. Former Dayton mayor Nan Whaley, the Democratic nominee for governor who hopes to unseat Republican nominee Gov Mike DeWine, a former U.S. senator, has been through greater Cleveland at least eight times in the last few months with stops at abortion rallies in Shaker Hts, Medina and Willoughby, and just this week campaign events in Cleveland, including an event in Little Italy hosted by Cleveland City Council President Blaine Griffin and a gathering for some statewide office candidates on the city's near west side at the Forest City Brewery.

The Forest City Brewery event drew U.S. Sen Sherrod Brown of Cleveland, Ohio's most prominent Democrat and other elect Dems such as state Sen Nickie Antonio of Lakewood, 11th Congressional District Congresswoman Shontel Brown, who is a Warrensville Hts Democrat whose largely Black congressional district includes Cleveland and several of its eastern suburbs of Cuyahoga County, and Cuyahoga County Councilwoman Cheryl Stephens, a former Cleveland Hts mayor whom Whaley chose as her lieutenant governor running mate.

State Rep Jeff Crossman of Parma was there too, and is running as the Democratic nominee for Ohio attorney general and he been all over the county campaigning for office. So was Cincinnati Councilwoman Chelsea Clark, a Black woman and the Democratic nominee for Ohio secretary of state who faces Frank LaRose in November, LaRose a Republican and the current secretary of state.

Ohio has been in the national news in recent months as Congressman Tim Ryan, a Youngtown area Democrat in congress for some two decades and Trump-endorsed Republican candidate J.D. Vance fight it out neck and neck for the U.S. Senate seat being vacated by the upcoming retirement of Republican U.S. Sen Rob Portman of Cincinnati. Democrats currently have a razor thin majority in the U.S. Senate as U.S. seat races in Ohio, Pennsylvania and Georgia remain key, and while the Democrats are expected to retain control of the Senate they are simultaneously preparing to hand control of the U.S. House of Representative to Republicans following expected midterm defeats via next week's election.

Ryan has courted Cuyahoga County voters too, including a rally with union members at the UAW Hall in Cleveland on Oct 27. He will rally in Cleveland next week as former president

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Donald Trump comes back to Ohio to campaign for J.D. Vance and some other Republican candidates on the November ballot.

The most closely watched race in Ohio is the U.S. Senate race between Ryan and Vance followed by a battle to replace age limited Ohio Supreme Court Chief Justice Maureen O'Connor, Justices Sharon Kennedy, a Republican, and Jennifer Brunner, a Democrat, running for that seat.

A Republican and the court's first female chief justice, an elected position, O'Connor's seat is one of three seats up for grabs this year on the seven-member largely Republican and majority female court. The other two seats open on the court are those of Republican Justices Patrick Fischer and Patrick DeWine, Gov. DeWine's son, the younger DeWine facing First District Court of Appeals Judge Marilyn Zayas and Fischer facing 10th District Court of Appeals Terri Jamison, both of them Democrats. Tuesday's election will determine if Republicans will continue to dominate Ohio's hugest court.

Judge Jamison is Black, and she, like Justice Brunner, a former Franklin County 10th District Court of Appeals judge who sat on the bench where Jamison now sits, has courted Cuyahoga County voters, Jamison appearing regularly at area events, including an event earlier this year at Olivet Institutional Baptist Church on the city's largely Black east side that Congressman Ryan also attended and that featured U.S. Sen. Cory Booker of New Jersey as the keynote speaker.

**By Kathy Wray Coleman, associate publisher, editor-in-chief (Coleman is a former biology teacher and a seasoned Black journalist, and an investigative, legal, scientific, and political reporter who trained for 17 years at the Call and Post Newspaper in Cleveland, Ohio.**

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We interviewed former president Barack Obama one-on-one when he was campaigning for president. As to the Obama interview,

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