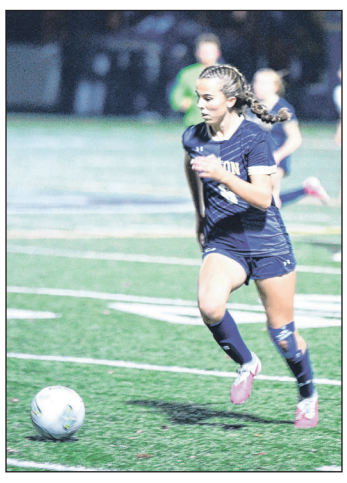
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The Columbian

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Rough election night for Wash. GOP

Latest election results favor Dems in Legislature

By JAKE GOLDSTEIN-STREET and JERRY CORNFIELD
Washington State Standard

Buoyant Democrats were on course Tuesday to strengthen their grip on power in the Washington House.

But the caucus is poised to lose its longest-serving member, and a series of intraparty battles could unseat incumbents in both legislative chambers. Meanwhile several incumbent Republicans are staving off stiff challenges. Numerous races deserve a close eye through the week as votes continue to be counted.

Democrats are seeking to widen their majorities in Olympia. They already run the show with a 59-39 majority in the House and 30-19 in the Senate. But this election will help them inch closer to a two-thirds supermajority, at least in the lower chamber. All 98 House seats and 24 of the 49 Senate positions were on the ballot this year.

The magic number for the Democrats to get a two-thirds supermajority of 66 seats in the House is seven pickups from Republicans.

And Democratic political consultant Dean Nielsen expects his party to flip at least seven state House seats.

"What should I wear for the funeral for the Washington State Republican Party?" he said in a text message.

On the other side, state Republican Party Chair Jim Walsh sees the Democrats picking up a couple, but falling short of the seven they'd need.

Statewide, more than 2 million ballots have been counted. More will be tallied in the coming days, so results could change.

Democratic pickups?

House Democrats fancy a sweep in Southwest Washing-

REPUBLICANS, Page A2

Community Planning loses 'a font of knowledge'



Photos by **TAYLOR BALKOM**/The Columbian

Community Planning Director Oliver Orjiako sits at his desk for a portrait Friday at the Clark County Public Service Center. Orjiako retired after working in the county's Community Planning department for 37 years.

Before retiring Friday, Orjiako worked for Clark County since 1989

By SHARI PHIEL
The Columbian

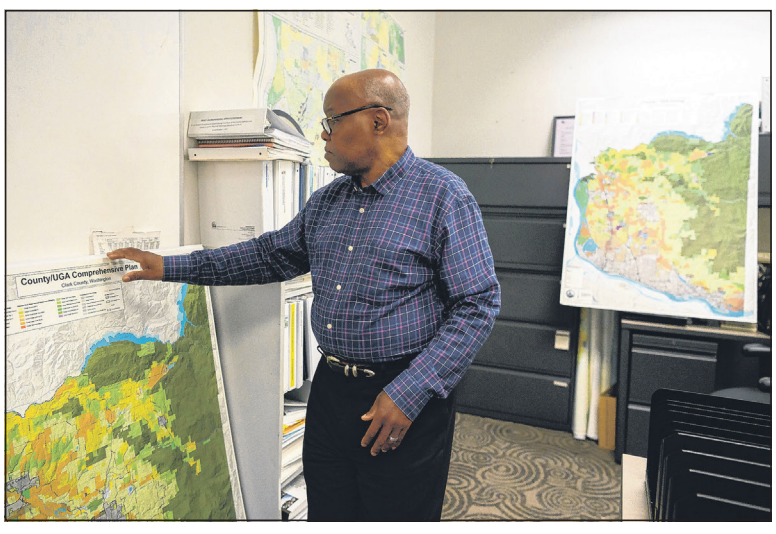
Clark County bid farewell to one of its longest-serving employees Friday with the retirement of Oliver Orjiako, who has worked for the county since 1989. Orjiako has served as director of Community Planning for the past 15 years.

"He's a font of knowledge. He's a wise man that a lot of people have sought counsel from, particularly his peers and elected officials," community planner Jose Alvarez said during a retirement party last Thursday. "He's been a great mentor to us."



Community Planning Director Oliver Orjiako holds a plaque awarded to him in 2016.

Originally from Nigeria, the most populous country in Africa, Orjiako moved to the United States in the 1980s to study architecture. He lived briefly on the Northeast Coast before the cold, damp weather sent him looking for warmer climate.



Community Planning Director Oliver Orjiako looks through maps of Clark County on Friday at the Clark County Public Service Center.

"I had a family friend that studied at the University of Oregon as an architect … so I did come to visit him. I fell in love in with the Pacific Northwest," he said.

Orjiako chose to attend Portland State University, where he received his bachelor's degree and later a master's degree in urban and regional planning, followed by a doctorate in urban studies

ORJIAKO, Page A2

Blue wave becomes tsunami

Voters across spectrum reject Trump, his policies

By GREGORY KORTE
Bloomberg News

U.S. voters handed Democrats control of Congress in midterm elections on Tuesday, delivering a stunning repudiation of President Donald Trump.

Democrats flipped long-held Republican seats in North Carolina and South Carolina, Texas and Kansas, among other places. They captured governor's offices in Texas and Georgia. In Iowa, which Trump won by 13 points in 2024, Democrat Josh Turek won handily. Republicans barely eked out victories in races that had been expected to be blowouts.

Of all the races called so far, Democrats suffered no losses where they were expected to win. In a closely watched Ohio House race where they were down, NBC now projects the Democratic incumbent, Marcy Kaptur, will be reelected.

The results mark an extraordinary reversal from just a few months ago, when the Senate was considered out of reach for Democrats. As the night progressed, the predicted blue wave became a tsunami, with Democrats winning or ahead in 25 House races that had leaned Republican.

As of Wednesday morning, Democrats had won at least 228 House seats, well above the 218 needed for a majority. Republicans won in 139 districts, with 68 still to be called. NBC News projected Democrats could wind up with 258 seats to Republicans 177, an 81-seat majority, and well above the 214 seats they hold in the current House.

In the Senate, the Democrats will now hold at least 54 seats, with just Alaska and Mississippi still unresolved. Currently, Demo-

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ELECTION 2026

Dem-backed state Supreme Court candidates ahead

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Danny Westneat: It was a blue '100-year flood'

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