



50 State

# AG POWER PLAY

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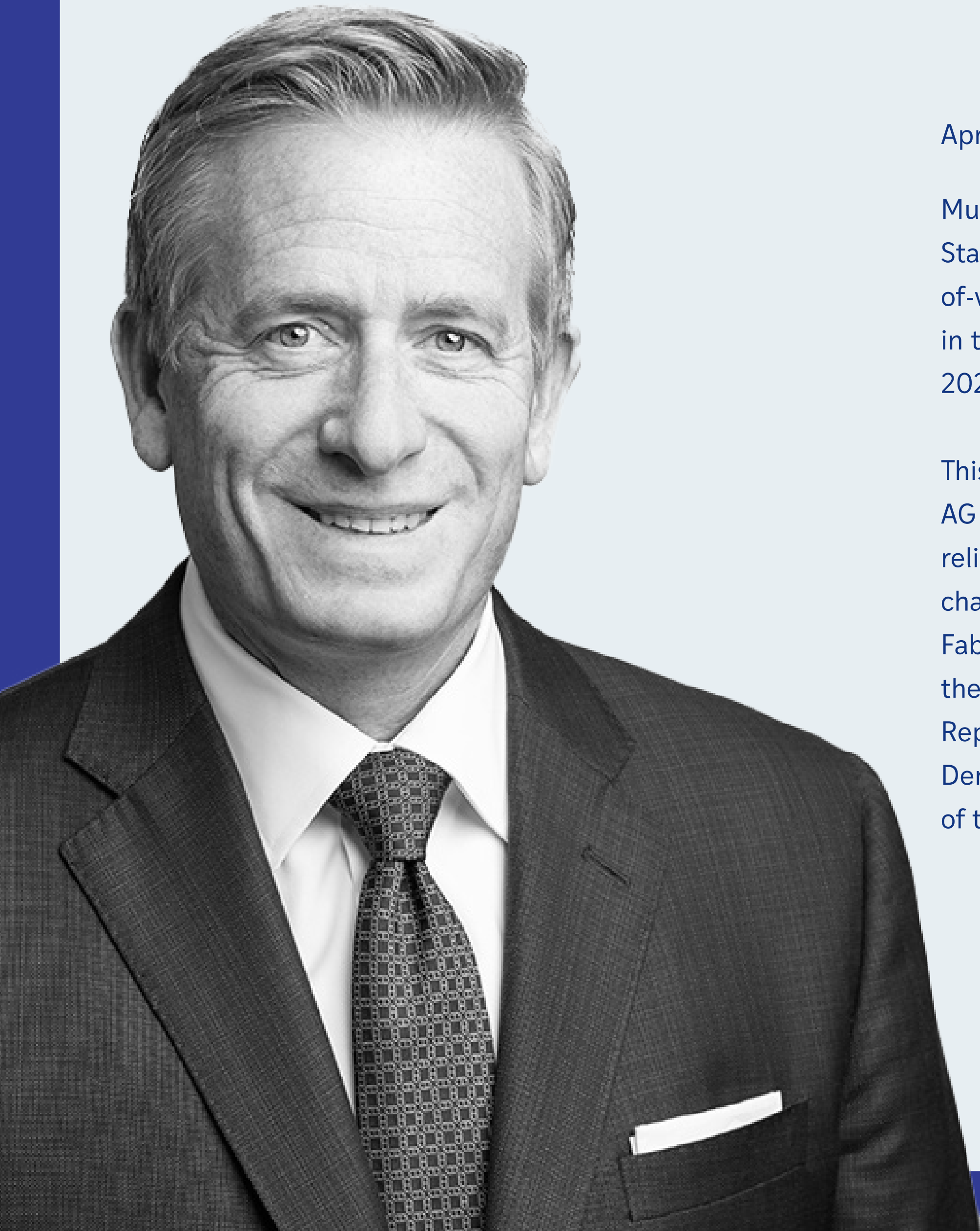
**NORTH DAKOTA**

**OHIO**

**OKLAHOMA**

**RHODE ISLAND**

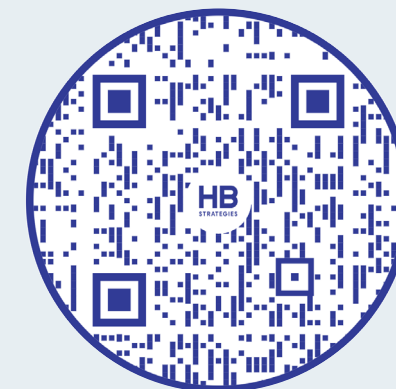




April 17, 2025

Multistate litigation against the White House has fundamentally reshaped the regulatory landscape since January 20th. State Attorneys General have established their ability to transform national policy, as the ongoing constitutional tug-of-war between the Judicial and Executive branches continues to intensify. With billions in federal funding hanging in the balance, our AG Power Play series from the HB Strategies 50 State Team is analyzing the 30 State AG races in 2025-2026, this week focusing on New York, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, and Rhode Island.

This group of states proves that gubernatorial political decisions set the tone of down-ballot elections. New York's AG Letitia James (D) will likely seek a third term to avoid a hotly contested gubernatorial primary. Meanwhile, in reliably Republican North Dakota, AG Drew Wrigley (R) is positioned for re-election with commanding margins. Ohio characterizes a political ripple effect as term-limited AG Dave Yost (R) runs for governor, and State Auditor Keith Faber declares for the open AG seat. Oklahoma mirrors this pattern as first-term AG Gentner Drummond (R) pursues the governor's mansion, creating competitive Republican primaries to likely determine the next AG in this deeply Republican state. In Rhode Island, term-limited AG Peter Neronha (D) is weighing gubernatorial ambitions, leaving a Democrat primary that will virtually guarantee the next AG. These key races, and all 30 this cycle, are advance indicators of the regulatory environment that organizations must navigate in the coming years.



A stylized, handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Andy Blunt".

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER  
EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN

# NEW YORK

Attorney General Letitia James (D) has gained national notoriety with her relentless prosecutions of President Trump. It is clear she would like to move to a higher office, but it is unlikely such an opportunity will present itself in 2026.

Gov. Kathy Hochul (D) is seeking re-election, but it appears she may already have two Democratic opponents. Lt. Governor Antonio Delgado (D), a man that the Governor herself appointed to his statewide position, has already announced that he will not join Ms. Hochul on the 2026 Democratic ticket. It is expected that Mr. Delgado, also a former Congressman, will launch a primary challenge to the Governor. A second Democratic challenger could be US Rep. Ritchie Torres (D-Bronx). He has indicated that such a move is a possibility, but Delgado probably injecting himself into the race could make Torres' victory chances even slimmer.

The Democratic intrigue surrounding the Governor suggests that AG James will most likely run for re-election to a third term. While her victory margin dropped seven percentage points from her first election to her second – an unusual circumstance as incumbents in down ballot offices tend to get stronger in their re-election bids – she is still solid enough to win her party primary, and if so Ms. James will be favored to win a general election in strongly Democratic New York. Considering the controversy that surrounds AG James' tenure in office, it is likely that Republicans will attempt to field a stronger candidate and back the eventual nominee to a greater degree than in past statewide elections.

The showing of 2022 GOP gubernatorial nominee Lee Zeldin, now President Trump's EPA Administrator (losing to Hochul 52.7 – 46.3%), and Mr. Trump's net 11 percentage point improvement over his 2020 NY finish (the best improvement factor of any state) suggests that the Republicans may be in position to draw greater financial and vote support to provide some nominees a fighting chance to win a statewide race. Whether a Republican candidate can reach the 50% mark, however, is still very much in doubt.

The NY 2026 elections could prove more competitive and interesting than we have seen in past elections, thus AG James may have to work harder to secure a third term. Though her victory margin could be smaller than in the past, New York's partisan vote history still makes it probable that she will still win the ensuing general election irrespective of who the Republicans may nominate.

Previous Five Attorneys General: 5 Democrats

Previous Five AGs Advancing to Governor or Senator: 2; Andrew Cuomo (D) and Eliot Spitzer (D) were both elected Governor and both resigned due to personal scandal

Trump 2024 %: Lost New York with 42.7% to Kamala Harris' 55.1%

Presidential History: New York has voted for the Democratic presidential nominee in 11 of the past 13 elections.

Last time voting for a Republican presidential nominee: 1984: Ronald Reagan

New York Primary: Likely June 23, 2026

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## INCUMBENT: Letitia James (D)

FIRST ELECTED: 2018

VICTORY PERCENTAGE: 60%

RE-ELECTED 2022: 53.1%

OUTLOOK:

**AG James is eligible to run for a third term and is likely to do so.**



# NORTH DAKOTA

North Dakota is one of the most Republican states in the country when voting at the presidential level but has over time split its votes for statewide office. Currently, however, the state has an all-Republican slate of officials.

The Peace Garden State is also one of three domains – Pennsylvania and Oregon being the other two – that splits election years for constitutional offices. This year, Attorney General, Secretary of State, State Agriculture Commissioner, and State Tax Commissioner are on the ballot.

In 2024, elections were held for Governor, Lt. Governor, State Treasurer, State Auditor, State Insurance Commissioner, and State Superintendent of Public Instruction. North Dakota is also an at-large congressional state. The state does not have an in-cycle US Senate race in the 2026 election cycle.

First-term Attorney General Drew Wrigley, who served as US Attorney for North Dakota under the George W. Bush and in the first Donald Trump Administration, will be on the ballot for a second term. Mr. Wrigley also was appointed Lt. Governor in 2010 and won election to the post in 2012. At this point, no one in either party has yet come forward to challenge him for re-election as AG.

The incumbent is expected to have an easy ride for re-election against minimal opposition.

Previous Five Attorneys General: 3 Republicans; 2 Democrats

Previous Five AGs Advancing to Governor or Senator: 1; Heidi Heitkamp (D) was elected US Senator

Trump 2024 %: Carried North Dakota with 67.0% to Kamala Harris' 30.5%

Presidential History: North Dakota has voted for the Republican presidential nominee in 15 consecutive elections.

Last time voting for a Democratic presidential nominee: 1964: Lyndon Johnson

North Dakota Primary: Likely June 16, 2026

## INCUMBENT: Drew Wrigley (R)

FIRST ELECTED: 2022

VICTORY PERCENTAGE: 70.9%

### OUTLOOK:

**AG Wrigley is eligible to run for a second term and is likely to do so.**



The 2026 Ohio elections will be interesting because we will see what can be termed as a “wild card” year in Buckeye State politics. Gov. Mike DeWine (R) is term-limited, Lt. Gov. Jon Husted (R) was appointed to the US Senate to replace Vice President J.D. Vance, former Ohio State University head football coach and ex-Youngstown State University president Jim Tressel was appointed to replace Husted, and all other constitutional officers are term-limited in their current position.

Just because the statewide officers have reached their service limit does not mean they won’t be running for office. The Attorney General, Dave Yost (R), is seeking the Governorship. The State Treasurer is running for Secretary of State, the Secretary of State announced for State Auditor, and the State Auditor, Keith Faber (R), jumped into the open AG race.

The Democrats also have an announced Attorney General candidate. Former state Representative Elliot Forhan has already declared his candidacy. It is certain that we will see competitive primaries in both parties.

With a competitive Governor’s race, a special election for Senate, and the wild card constitutional office campaigns, the Ohio campaign cycle will become intense and multi-faceted. It is likely a Governor’s race featuring either AG Yost or former presidential candidate Vivek Ramaswamy potentially facing former US Senator Sherrod Brown for the Democrats will be the turnout driver.

Once the field gels in all contested statewide campaigns, we will gain a better sense of how the election cycle will unfold. Until then, it is fair to say that Ohio will be one of the 2026 electoral states attracting the most national political attention.

Previous Five Attorneys General: 3 Democrats; 2 Republicans

Previous Five AGs Advancing to Higher Office: 2; Gov. Mike DeWine (R) is the state’s current Governor; Richard Cordray (D) was appointed to head the US Consumer Financial Protection Bureau

Trump 2024 %: Carried Ohio with 55.1% to Kamala Harris’ 43.9%

Presidential History: Ohio has voted for the Republican presidential nominee in 8 of the past 13 elections.

Last time voting for a Democratic presidential nominee: 2012: Barack Obama

Ohio Primary: Possibly March 4 or 18, 2026 assuming the state legislature does not re-schedule the primary back to their traditional early May slot

## INCUMBENT: Dave Yost (R)

FIRST ELECTED: 2018

VICTORY PERCENTAGE: 52.2%

RE-ELECTED 2022: 60.1%

### OUTLOOK:

**AG Yost is ineligible to run for a third term, but is a candidate in the open Governor’s race, vying for the opportunity to succeed Gov. Mike DeWine.**



# OKLAHOMA

The 2026 state Attorney General's race will be open because first-term incumbent AG Gentner Drummond is running for Governor. Mr. Drummond began campaigning early, attempting to gain an advantage over his eventual Republican gubernatorial opponents. Therefore, he is already running media advertising to better familiarize himself with the GOP primary electorate. Other potential candidates include Speaker Charles McCall (R) and State Superintendent Ryan Walters (R).

The open Attorney General's race will attract a large number of candidates, particularly on the Republican side. Oklahoma is one of the GOP's strongest states in the country so the eventual party nominee will begin the general election campaign with a major advantage.

The last time Oklahomans elected a Democratic Governor (Brad Henry) occurred in 2006. The last Democrat to win a US Senate election was the late David Boren (1990). Oklahoma last voted for a Democratic candidate in 1964 (Lyndon Johnson). Drew Edmondson was the last Democrat to serve as Attorney General, leaving office at the beginning of 2011.

At this point, only former state House Majority Leader Jon Echols (R) has declared his candidacy for Attorney General and is openly campaigning. Others reportedly considering the race are former Attorney General John O'Connor (R), who served from 2021-2023, ex-US Attorney Trent Shores (R), and Oklahoma City attorney Jeff Starling (R). Expect the field to grow substantially in both parties as the election cycle matures, but the eventual Republican nominee will be heavily favored to retain the post for the GOP.

Previous Five Attorneys General: 5 Republicans

Previous Five AGs Advancing to Higher Office: 1; Scott Pruitt (R) was appointed as EPA Administrator in the first Trump Administration

Trump 2024 %: Carried Oklahoma with 66.2% to Kamala Harris' 31.9%

Presidential History: Oklahoma has voted for the Republican presidential nominee in the last 15 consecutive elections.

Last time voting for a Democratic presidential nominee: 1964: Lyndon Johnson

Oklahoma Primary: Likely June 16, 2026      Runoff: Likely August 25, 2026

## INCUMBENT: Gentner Drummond (R)

FIRST ELECTED: 2022

VICTORY PERCENTAGE: 73.8%

### OUTLOOK:

**AG Drummond is eligible to run for a second term, but instead is a candidate in the open Governor's race, vying for the opportunity to succeed term-limited Gov. Kevin Stitt (R).**



# RHODE ISLAND

Whether Attorney General Peter Neronha decides to run for Governor or Lt. Governor is currently unclear, but he cannot stay in his current office. AG Neronha has reached his legal service limit of two terms and therefore is ineligible to run for re-election.

No candidates for either party have yet come forward, which is not surprising since the Rhode Island primary, among the latest in the country, is 18 months away.

At this point, the attention is focused on the Governor's race as incumbent Dan McKee looks to face another difficult Democratic primary challenge. His opponent will likely be the same individual against whom he recorded a three-point win in 2022, former CVS pharmacies CEO Helena Foulkes.

It is also possible that Ms. Foulkes could instead run as an Independent. To further complicate matters, the woman who Mr. McKee replaced in 2021, former Governor and ex-US Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo (D), may return to the state and also enter the race to reclaim her former position.

Therefore, much intrigue exists within Rhode Island Democratic circles for the impending elections. How the heightened political attention affects an open Attorney General's campaign remains to be seen.

The true battle to replace AG Neronha will be determined in the Democratic primary, since Republicans are not a serious factor in the current Rhode Island political picture. Therefore, it is almost 100% certain that the Ocean State's new Attorney General will be determined in the September 2026 Democratic primary.

Previous Five Attorneys General: 4 Democrats; 1 Republican

Previous Five AGs Advancing to Governor or Senator: 1; Sheldon Whitehouse (D) is currently a US Senator

Trump 2024 %: Lost Rhode Island with 41.8% to Kamala Harris' 55.5%

Presidential History: Rhode Island has voted for the Democratic presidential nominee in 12 of the past 13 elections.

Last time voting for a Republican presidential nominee: 1984: Ronald Reagan

Rhode Island Primary: Likely September 9, 2026

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## INCUMBENT: Peter Neronha (D)

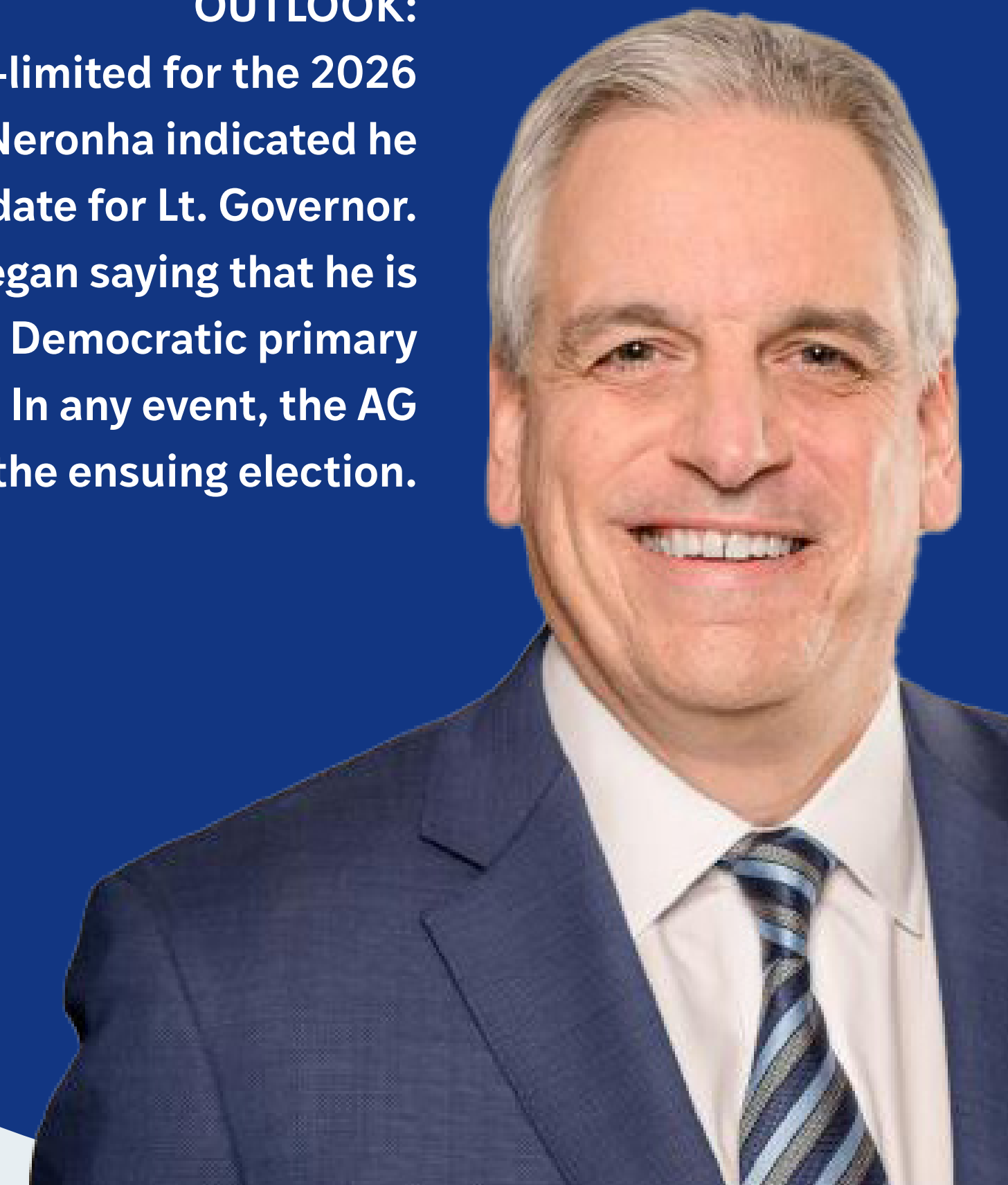
FIRST ELECTED: 2018

VICTORY PERCENTAGE: 79.8%

RE-ELECTED 2022: 61.5%

### OUTLOOK:

**AG Neronha is term-limited for the 2026 election. Originally Mr. Neronha indicated he might become a candidate for Lt. Governor. Recently, however, he began saying that he is considering entering the Democratic primary against Gov. Dan McKee. In any event, the AG position will be open for the ensuing election.**





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## Andy Blunt

*Executive Chairman  
Chief Executive Officer*

As a founding partner, Executive Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of HB Strategies, Andy has helped build a trusted national brand for federal and state lobbying with revenues and a client base to match. While Andy is leading the firm with its remarkable growth trajectory, clients continue to turn to him for help managing a crisis, polishing a brand, and understanding how government works and how to make it work for them. Andy advises top executives in boardrooms across the country and political candidates and elected leaders at all levels of government. He is a trusted advisor nationally whose extensive network of personal relationships is built on his lifelong immersion in politics and public policy. A tireless advocate, Andy has helped companies of all sizes successfully navigate complex legislative and regulatory environments and is consistently recognized as one of Washington’s “Top Lobbyists” by national media.



## Rochelle Mallett

*Executive Vice President  
State Government Affairs*

As Executive Vice President, State Government Affairs, Rochelle manages the firm’s network of state lobbying offices in Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Maryland, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, and Wisconsin. HB Strategies clients benefit from Rochelle’s success in coordinating and fine-tuning legislative and public strategies that are targeted to specific client needs. She achieves significant outcomes through her careful approach to detailed strategies and an extensive national network of public policy and elected leaders - ultimately establishing trusted relationships on behalf of HBS clients. Earlier in her career she served as a legislative aide to U.S. Senator Deb Fischer.



## Dustin Brighton

*Managing Principal*

Dusty is a widely recognized expert in consumer privacy and anti-trust issues representing e-commerce and tech name brands like eBay and Microsoft. He has established a network of trusted relationships and credibility with elected leaders and influencers across the nation on issues such as privacy, net neutrality, and Section 230 liability protections. Dusty has also represented companies as members of industry trade associations and groups such as the National Association of Attorneys General, National Governors Association, and the Democratic and Republican Legislative Campaign Committees.



## Carrie Hackenberger

*Principal*

Carrie is an experienced public policy advocate whose skill in the legislative process guides clients through complex challenges and creates valuable opportunities. She earlier served as Associate Director of the American Petroleum Institute Colorado where she helped lead the organization’s legislative and policy efforts across the state. Carrie was an effective advocate for the state’s oil and natural gas industry whether it was through regulatory proceedings or guiding legislative strategies in the General Assembly.



## Beverly Haydel

*Senior Advisor*

Beverly has more than a decade of experience working in both the private, public and nonprofit sectors. She has particular expertise in project management, coalition building, stakeholder engagement, public outreach, issue advocacy, policy development and legislative strategy. Beverly earlier served as Director of Civic Leadership Initiatives at the Baton Rouge Area Foundation where she managed the Foundation’s long-term projects throughout the greater Baton Rouge area. She began her career at Goldman Sachs as an Investment Banking Analyst based out of the company’s New York City headquarters.



## Maddie McMillian Green

*Deputy General Counsel for Contracting  
Principal*

An experienced attorney and successful advocate, Maddie recently served as Deputy Attorney General for Policy in the Missouri Attorney General’s Office. She advised the Attorney General on policy and legislation as well as developed and managed the office’s outreach initiatives. She previously served as Assistant Attorney General for Special Litigation, handling high-profile litigation at the state and federal level. Maddie began her career in the Missouri Governor’s Office, serving two governors and working closely with the executive cabinet. Maddie earlier served as chief of staff to the First Lady in the Missouri Governor’s Office, where she worked closely with the governor’s policy and legislative teams on issues including foster care, adoption, and child welfare advocacy.

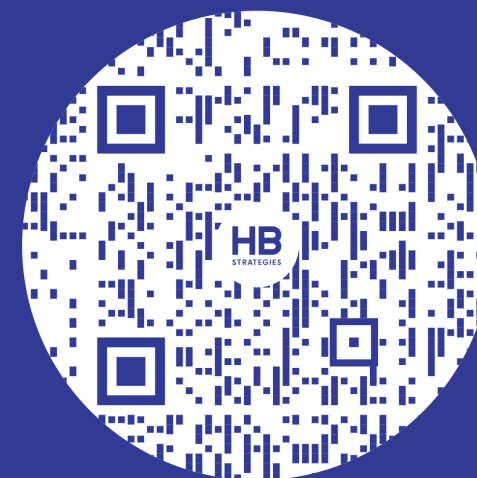


## Bradley Cooper

*Policy Associate*

Bradley assists teams of the federal practice group with research and readiness for client projects. He completed a term as a Fellow with the HB Strategies Federal team in the summer of 2024. Earlier he operated a successful Missouri-based consulting practice. Bradley studied socio-political communication at Missouri State University and was appointed the student representative to the school’s Board of Governors by Missouri Governor Mike Parson.

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