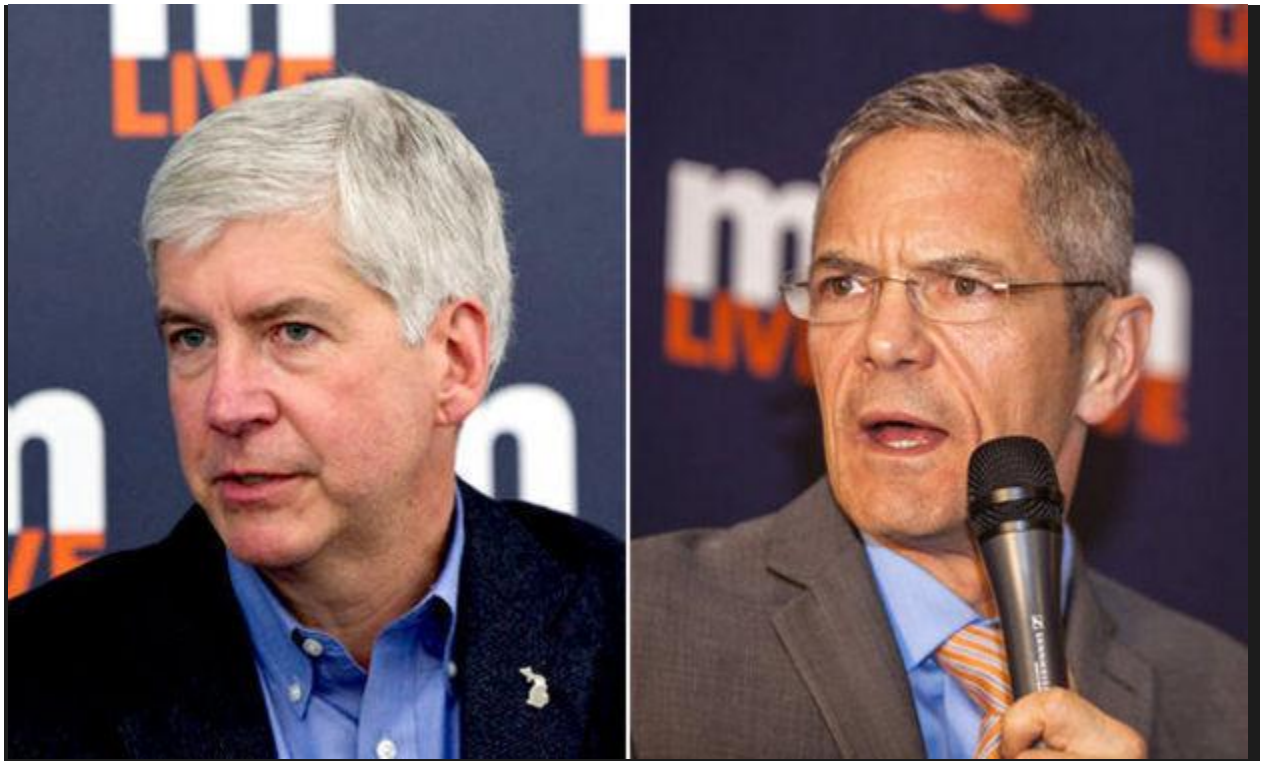
By the numbers: How Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder won re-election, and how Dem efforts fell short



Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder, left, and Democratic challenger Mark Schauer speak at seperate MLive Ballot Bash events in October 2014.
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LANSING, MI — Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder won re-election Tuesday, outperforming recent polls but still winning by a much slimmer margin that he did in 2010.

Democratic challenger Mark Schauer fared better than Lansing Mayor Virg Bernero did four years ago, but efforts by his party to boost absentee and in-person voting fell short of their ambitious goals.

Here's a look at some key numbers in the race:

+4 for Snyder: The governor ended up winning 50.92 percent of the vote to beat Schauer by 4.07 percentage points, down from 2010, when he beat Bernero by 18.21 points. Snyder's margin this year was the slimmest for a successful gubernatorial candidate since 2002, when Jennifer Granholm beat Dick Posthumus by 4.02 percent. It was the narrowest margin for an incumbent since Jim Blanchard lost to John Engler in 1990 by .69 percent.

+2.3 over polls: Stlll, the race wasn't quite as close as the polls suggested. Snyder beat the recent polling average by about 2.3 points on Tuesday. For whatever reason, polls across the country tended to have a Democratic lean this year, according to Nate Silver of **Five Thirty Eight**. Of polls conducted in the last three weeks of the election, Snyder led by 1.9 percent but ended up winning by 4.1 percent. That difference is within the margin of error for most samples.

128,130-vote win: The Michigan Democratic Party spent months talking about its ground game and plans to reach some 950,000 Democrats who didn't vote in the 2010 mid-term. Get a bunch of those folks absentee ballots or out to the polls, and Dems would win, according to chairman Lon Johnson. Schauer actually got about 189,500 more votes than Virg Bernero did in 2010, but he still lost by 128,130 votes.

42.8 percent turnout: Both parties — but especially Democrats — boasted about their get-out-the-vote plans. Turns out, turnout was down. Roughly 3,185,600 voters cast ballots in Tuesday's general election, according to the Michigan Secretary of State's office, about 82,600 fewer than in 2010. Unofficial counts show 42.8 percent of registered voters ended up voting, down from 44.9 percent four years ago. In the most populated counties, turnout was down as well:

• Wayne: Went from 39.2 percent in 2010 to 38.1 percent
• Oakland: Went from 51.1 percent in 2010 to 47 percent
• Macomb: Went from 47 percent in 2010 to 45 percent
• Kent: Went from 46.8 percent in 2010 to 42 percent
• Ingham: Went from 46.4 percent in 2010 to 44.7 percent
• Genesee: Went from 40.3 percent in 2010 to 39.9 percent

767,851 absentee votes: The Dems made a big absentee ballot push but didn't always bring home the bacon. A total of 767,851 voters cast absentee ballots this year, according to Matt Marsden of Revsix Data Systems, up about 11,000 from 2010. Democrats sent out more absentee ballots than Republicans, but they had a harder time getting them back in. Some 98,438 absentee ballots were requested but left on the counter, according to Revisix, with roughly 75 percent of those from registered voters living in the Democratic strongholds of Wayne County and Detroit.

6.82 percent in Detroit: Yeah, Schauer had a Detroit problem. Or, more accurately, Snyder had less of a Detroit problem than he did four years ago. While fewer ballots were cast in Michigan's largest city this year, Snyder received more votes than he did in 2010 and Schauer received fewer than Bernero. Snyder, who has arguably focused on Detroit more than any governor in recent history, won 6.82 percent of the vote in the heavily Democratic city, up from 5.33 percent in 2010.

70 counties for Snyder: Snyder ended up beating Schauer in 70 out of Michigan's 83 counties, with his biggest vote spread coming in Oakland, Kent, Ottawa and Macomb Counties. Schauer still dominated the vote-rich Wayne County and also notched solid vote differentials in Genessee, Washtenaw and Ingham Counties. Combined turnout in those four counties was 39.68 percent , while combined turnout in Snyder's four best counties was 45 percent.

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