

Historic victory

ELECTORAL COLLEGE

Obama 338

142

270 NEEDED TO WIN

Obama elected nation's first African-American president in a romp McCain falters on GOP terrain; Democrats increase clout in Congress



JASON REED/REUTERS

President-elect Barack Obama, his daughters Sasha and Malia, and wife Michelle waved to supporters last night in Chicago's Grant Park.

By Scott Helman
and Michael Kranish
GLOBE STAFF

CHICAGO — Senator Barack Obama of Illinois was elected the 44th president of the United States and the nation's first black commander in chief yesterday, his triumph ushering in an era of profound political and social realignment in America.

Obama's decisive victory over Republican John McCain is a landmark in the country's 232-year history, especially for the millions of African-Americans around the country energized and inspired by his improbable candidacy. It gives Democrats control of Congress and the White House for the first time in 16 years and it led to impromptu celebrations around the country.

Making good on his promise to draw his own electoral map, Obama captured Virginia, which last voted for a Democrat in 1964, and he beat McCain in key battleground states, including Colorado, Florida, New Hampshire, Ohio, and Pennsylvania, while holding on to Democratic-leaning states. He won in part on the support of new voters, African-Americans, and Hispanics, and as of early today he had 338 electoral votes, far more than the 270 needed to win the presidency, while McCain had 142.

In a grand celebration on a balmy fall night in Chicago's Grant Park, 240,000 supporters gathered to toast the president-elect. When the networks called the race shortly after 10 p.m. local time, tears flowed, flashbulbs

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New era beginning for party in power

By Susan Milligan
GLOBE STAFF

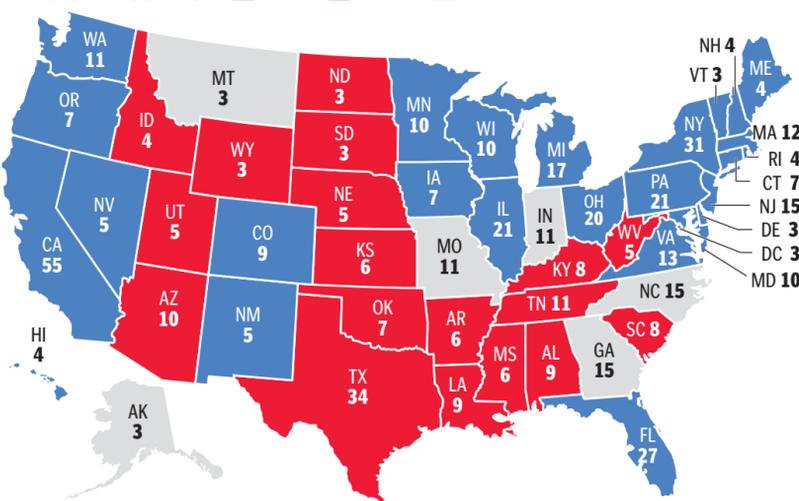
WASHINGTON — Democrats increased their ranks in Congress last night, picking up seats from the Canadian to the Mexican borders and ushering in a new era of Democratic power in Washington the party has not seen since the 1960s.

In a heavy blow to the GOP, Democrats collected several high-profile Senate seats, ousting veteran Republican lawmaker John Sununu in New Hampshire and replacing him with former governor Jeanne Shaheen. New Mexico and Colorado sent two Democratic brothers to the Senate, with Mark Udall taking the Colorado seat and Tom Udall winning the race in New Mexico.

In Virginia, Mark Warner easily defeated James Gilmore, his GOP opponent, capping a stunning Democratic showing in the Old Dominion State, which also voted for Barack Obama — the first time since 1964 that a Democratic presi-

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ELECTORAL COLLEGE ■ Obama ■ McCain ■ Not decided



Election 2008



JIM WATSON/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

John McCain said he gave his all, while aides said his trouble began when he declared the teetering economy sound. **A14.**



MARK WILSON/GLOBE STAFF

Lines were long at polling places across the nation, but Obama's prodigious field organization helped keep problems to a minimum. **A16.**



SAUL LOEB/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Emotions ran high in Chicago as tens of thousands poured into Grant Park from near and far for Obama's acceptance speech. **A13.**

Massachusetts voters rejected a repeal of the state income tax, decriminalized possession of small amounts of marijuana, and approved a ban on greyhound racing. **B1.**

Senator John F. Kerry easily won reelection to a fifth term, fending off a challenge by Republican Jeffrey K. Beatty. **B9.**

Sonia Chang-Díaz captured the seat long held by state Senator Dianne Wilkerson, who left the race after being arrested on bribery charges. **B9.**

Coverage, **A12-17, B1, B6-10.**

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NEWS ANALYSIS

Shift in tone will bring a watershed for nation

By Peter Canellos
GLOBE STAFF

CHICAGO — The people who crowded Grant Park last night, straining for a glimpse of President-elect Barack Obama, were aroused by a lot of passionate issues — war, jobs, race — and yet they insisted that no single goal, nothing that could be written out and measured, defined their expectations for the next administration.

"It's everything," said a tearful Teri McClain of Seattle.

"It's having a president with a world view that most Americans can believe in," declared Chris Godfrey of Des Moines, Iowa.

And yet Obama's clear-cut vic-

tory, bolstered by strong majorities of his own party in both houses of Congress, can be read as a mandate for some very specific policy changes that could, by themselves, have momentous impact. Withdrawal from Iraq. Renewal of the six-decade quest for national health insurance. The launch of a major government-funded quest for renewable energy.

Beyond the policies, Obama's election will stand forever amid the great milestones of America's racial history, the end of a torturous progression from emancipation to the civil rights movement to the election of the first black

ANALYSIS, Page A13

Among blacks, joy and tears at journey's end

By Michael Levenson
GLOBE STAFF

Sixty-six-year-old Jake Coakley picked cotton as a boy in Beaufort, S.C., just as his father and grandfather did before him. So yesterday, as he stood amid a throng of people hugging, high-fiving, and even weeping outside a Roxbury polling place, he wanted to underscore the significance of the day.

"This," he said to a little boy, patting his head and staring deeply into his eyes, "is history."

At another polling station blocks away, Charles Robinson recalled the racial epithets shouted at him as a student at South Boston High School during the

busing crisis of the 1970s.

In St. Petersburg, Fla., Ron Dock spoke of the day he learned that the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. had been shot. Dock was 18, he said, crouching in a rice paddy in Vietnam, preparing for a firefight. In Alexandria, Va., 83-year-old Flossie Parks recalled turning 21 and being forced to pay a \$3 poll tax for the right to vote.

Millions of black voters across the country turned out to help elect Barack Obama the first African-American president yesterday, and as they did, they reflected not just on the course of a historic campaign, but on the history of a nation.

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