

OPINION

OUR VIEW

Consider factors in voter turnout

Minnesotans are recognized long and far for their passion at the polls.

Since 1950, according to news reports, Minnesota voters have only twice failed to attain at least a 50 percent voter turnout.

Statewide, we slipped a bit compared to other years, with a 51.3 percent voter turnout in last week's election.

That makes Minnesota sixth-highest in the nation for voter turnout.

But we need not despair. Koochiching County voters have reason to be proud: Locally, Koochiching County voters turned out at a much higher rate, unofficially at 75 percent.

County Auditor/Treasurer Bob Peterson said the Koochiching County rate was slightly up from the last non-presidential election year in 2010, when it was closer to 70 percent.

There were slightly more voters registered for the November elections than the primary elections in August, which Peterson said was the result of a number of factors. Those ranged from students returning to Rainy River Community College to an increased interest in local races.

But Minnesota's voter turnout slip shouldn't be

ignored.

Clearly, the fact this election did not feature a race for United States president played a role. Voters in these kinds of elections, known as midterm elections, regularly show less interest and aren't expected to turn out at the same rate as presidential elections.

But just what caused this year's drop in voter turnout statewide isn't clear. Perhaps some time and effort should be spent on considering the factors that contributed to the lower turnout should this occur again.

Some reports suggest many Minnesotans, likewise many Americans, have lost faith in government and that may translate to losing interest in the elections that send Mr. Smith to Washington, or in this case St. Paul. Some reports wonder if candidate advertisements which feature more reasons to vote against someone rather than for someone are keeping people away from the voting booth.

Whatever the cause, we hope this is a one-time only statewide drop. The 2016 elections, campaigns for which have which apparently begun, will push passionate Minnesotans again to the polls.



GUEST COLUMN

The American public gets smart

So Jonathan Gruber thinks the American people are stupid, does he?

Gruber is a complete nobody to most Americans, but his face should be on a Most Wanted poster in every Post Office.

He was one of the chief architects and cheerleaders for ObamaCare, aka the fraudulent Affordable Care Act that Republicans should be working overtime right now to repeal, not fix or reform.

Gruber exploded into the news cycle this week because of some things he said publicly last year about how Democrats were able to slip ObamaCare past the trusting citizenry.

In appearances in Philadelphia and St. Louis in 2013, Gruber was caught on video admitting ObamaCare passed because its architects deliberately made its funding mechanism confusing and took advantage of the “stupid” American public.

Gruber openly — and shamelessly — described the methods he and the administration's co-conspirators in Congress used.

“This bill was written



in a tortured way to make sure CBO did not score the mandate as taxes,” he admitted.

“Lack of transparency is a huge political advantage. And basically, call it the ‘stupidity of the American voter’ or whatever, but basically that was really, really critical to getting the thing to pass.”

Of course, this is exactly what conservatives have been charging for years — that ObamaCare was a liberal Big Government con game.

Gruber tried to get off the hook, claiming his comments were “off the cuff.” But as he was appearing on MSNBC to apologize for his foolish honesty, a second video surfaced from 2013 in which he also called the

public stupid.

Now on one point, I'll agree with Gruber.

The American public — or at least a majority of American voters — was real stupid in 2008 and especially in 2012 when it put Obama in charge of the world's most important country for eight years.

But the public can't be blamed for ObamaCare, which was all false promises and lies.

Thanks to the deceit of Democrats in Washington and the soft coverage of the Obama health plan by the friendly liberal media, ObamaCare became law before anyone knew what was really in it or what it would really cost.

But once the American public was presented with the bill for ObamaCare, they weren't so “stupid” anymore.

As they began to understand how awful Obama's healthcare reform was, and how badly they were lied to, they got pretty smart real fast.

They began throwing out the Democrat bums in the House and Senate who passed ObamaCare. Last Tuesday's election results were proof that Americans aren't as stupid as the liberals who lie to them

think.

When they get the truth from their government and the media, Americans show they're a lot brighter than dishonest technocrats like Gruber.

Now it's up to Republicans to provide the kind of leadership the country needs to recover from the Obama Recession.

The GOP has less than two years to prove to the American people it's qualified and deserving of taking control of Washington.

It better get its internal act together, unclog the Reid law-jam in the Senate and rise to the challenge — starting yesterday.

If Republicans do it right, the American people will show how smart they really are by putting a conservative in the White House in 2016.

Reagan is the son of President Ronald Reagan, a political consultant, and the author of “The New Reagan Revolution” (St. Martin's Press). His column is distributed exclusively by Cagle Cartoons newspaper syndicate. For info on using columns contact Sales at sales@cagle.com.

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