

# OPINION

OUR VIEW

## Split but not divided

With the midterm elections over, it's time for local, state and federal officials to consider the past and make plans for the future.

Clearly, those plans must include working together for the good of the people.

With some change can come some good.

Republicans gained control of the U.S. Senate, and had already controlled the U.S. House. In Minnesota, the election brought the House back into the control of the Republicans. That means the control of the Minnesota Senate and the House is again split.

We use the term split, rather than divided, intentionally. While Congress and the Legislature are no longer held by Democrats, it doesn't mean these important bodies must be divided on issues that we all agree are important. As the saying goes, divided we fall.

Creating jobs and stabilizing the economy should be viewed as among the top needs of the state and nation by everyone, regardless of party affiliation.

With the gains made

by Republicans comes an obligation to do better than those who have gone before. The midterm elections are a reminder to democrats the status quo is not good enough.

Certainly, party affiliation may play a role in the ideas of how to create jobs and stabilize the economy. Some may call for tax increases, while others may call for tax cuts, among other ideas.

But we truly believe only through compromise and an effort to keep from making promises for future elections can we move forward together.

Our nation's democracy is founded on the belief that we can all have our opinions, but we must come together in compromise to meet the needs of the constituency.

Split government at the state and national levels doesn't have to mean a shutdown or showdown. Instead, we hope it means all opinions will be heard, respected and vetted.

With the best of each side trickling down to develop a firm and stable base of resolution that meets the needs of most, and can be tolerated by the extremes on each side.



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

## No matter the outcome, your vote counts

**To the editor,**

Dear friends and supporters of my run for Koochiching County District 1 commissioner:

The voting is over and we lost in our bid for sweeping change. Congratulations to Wade Pavleck for his very decisive victory. It is my hope that Commissioner Pavleck will consider some of the common sense ideas that our campaign stood for and that some one out of three of his constituents voted for.

Koochiching County has lost many private jobs in the last 20 years. This past year alone tiny Ranier has lost some

40 jobs at Northland Tackle, five jobs at the now defunct east side of our resort and will lose about 10 more with the upcoming Livingston Custom Brokerage permanent layoff. This is a typical trend in many rural areas.

Our biggest growth in jobs has been in government mostly at the federal level. While the community has welcomed and encouraged that substitution for growth, in no way will it ever match what we once had here. The reality is that the competition is so fierce between the thousands of county's like ours, that

to hit a home run in the private sector is near impossible. There are no magic wands or strategies or economic developers that can change that fact.

I challenge people to look at the millions local government has spent over the last 20 years trying to attract jobs and tell me I'm wrong. To spend millions on a few peat jobs or any others that haven't materialized yet just doesn't make sense. I and many others believe our best bet is to pare expenses in the hopes that some home grown entrepreneur(s) that already love(s) the area can find it affordable enough to invent, create or manufacture some widget or product that people all over the state/country/world find they can't live without or just want to have it.

Government will not be the creator behind these jobs or even the incubator. For this area to flourish government needs to become much less restrictive, much more transparent and much more affordable. Democracy is a great thing if it is not described as "two wolves and a sheep voting on what to have for lunch."

**Barry "Woody" Woods**  
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