



Iowa Research Online  
The University of Iowa's Institutional Repository

---

Department of Political Science Publications

---

7-1-2003

## The 2002 Iowa House and Senate Elections: The More Things Change...

David P. Redlawsk  
*University of Iowa*

Arthur Sanders

---

Copyright © 2003 American Political Science Association. Used by permission. <http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayJournal?jid=PSC>

*PS: Political Science & Politics*, 36:3 (2003) pp. 208-212. DOI: 10.1017.S1049096503002610

Hosted by [Iowa Research Online](http://Iowa Research Online). For more information please contact: [lib-ir@uiowa.edu](mailto:lib-ir@uiowa.edu).

## **The 2002 Iowa House and Senate Elections: The More Things Change . . .**

David P. Redlawsk, *University of Iowa*

Arthur Sanders, *Drake University*

Iowans are long-accustomed to reveling in the nation's spotlight during the quadrennial presidential nominating caucuses. Off-year elections, though, are usually boring, quiet affairs with incumbents routinely piling up large margins. But due to a confluence of events—redistricting, the first Democratic gubernatorial reelection campaign in a generation, the reelection campaign of Iowa's Democratic U.S. Senator, and a closely divided state government—Iowa became the most competitive state in the country in 2002. Four of Iowa's five House seats were in play, and both Senator Harkin and Governor Vilsack faced challengers. In a very real way, Iowa was the hottest of hot spots in campaign 2002. So what happened? By some accounts, nothing, as every incumbent won. By other accounts, it was wall-to-wall politics, inundating citizens with television, mail, and telephone calls until many voters pleaded "please stop!" In this paper, we describe the events on the ground, in the air, and throughout this 2002 center of the political universe.