

State, U.S. lawmakers ponder the Trump presidency

By James Mattone/Daily News Correspondent

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Rep. David Linsky, D-Natick, sat at his desk, with a framed photo of himself and President Barack Obama placed facing outward and to the left of his nameplate.

Asked how the Democratic Party could be blindsided by a Trump win in Tuesday's election, Linsky, without missing a beat, answered:

“We Democrats have some very serious soul searching to do.”

Linsky was one of 127 out of 200 state legislators who ran unopposed in this year's election, but he still kept tabs on the national numbers.

His assessment? The Democratic Party lost a large group nationally in this election, even as 61 percent of Massachusetts voters chose Hillary Clinton.

“What I take out of this election, is that we have lost our ability to understand the concerns of blue-collar workers and rural Americans in particular. President-elect Trump did a superb job connecting with people who are different than the people in Massachusetts, in that we have to realize that those of us who live in Massachusetts live in a great state, but it is very different than the rest of the country, and we are in kind of a bubble here,” he said.

Other lawmakers had varying theories about Trump's surprise victory.

Rep. Chris Walsh, D-Framingham, blamed the early Wednesday morning shock on polls which did not reflect the actual election at all.

“I don't think it is a unique situation. I remember Mitt Romney getting totally blindsided by his loss, so I think this happened because polling after all is a sampling, and you have to know where you are polling to in order to be accurate,” said Walsh.

For Walsh another interpretation: both major parties are in the midst of a changing demographic they don't understand.

“I think that both the Democratic and Republican parties are in real flux right now,” he said. “You had very many Republicans not even voting for their candidate. And likewise, I think the Democrats suffered from the same thing, and you saw that with the difference between the Bernie Sanders campaign and the Clinton campaign.”

Whatever the reasons for the outcome, some legislators called for cooperation after a particularly acrimonious campaign.

Sen. Richard Ross, R-Wrentham, in a statement sent to the MetroWest Daily News urged newly elected officials to find common ground in not only the national level, but in the local and state level.

“The people of Massachusetts and the United States have spoken. It is imperative that all state and federal elected officials work together to unify the nation and work in the best interests of all Americans,” Ross’s statement read. “I look forward to working with my colleagues, both old and new, to face the many challenges before us.”

In a statement to the general media, U.S. Rep. Joseph Kennedy, D-4th, addressed Hillary Clinton voters as the nation adjusts to the prospect of a Trump presidency.

“For those of us who fell short, we wake up this morning with disappointment and uncertainty,” he said. “But we also wake up grateful. For the service of Secretary Hillary Clinton, whose career is a testament to the fact that trailblazing does not come easily or go quickly. For the countless American families and communities who rallied by her side for a fairer, kinder world. And for the opportunity this country gives each of us today -- to pick ourselves up, fight better, listen harder, and do more.”

U.S. Sen. Elizabeth Warren posted on her official Facebook that it was “no secret” that she did not want Trump to win. However she said she is confident that the federal government can work together to do what is best for the country.

“President-elect Trump promised to rebuild our economy for working people, and I offer to put aside our differences and work with him on that task,” she wrote. When he takes the oath of office as the leader of our democracy and the leader of all Americans, it is my sincere hope that he will fulfill that role with respect and concern for every single person in this country, no matter who they are, where they come from, what they believe, or whom they love,”

Linsky said while there is hope that President-elect Trump fulfills that role of being the president of all Americans, he offered reassurances that the Massachusetts Legislature will keep all citizens safe, and will especially “stand to protect” minority and the LGTBQ communities.

He offered the example of Massachusetts’ decision to open marriage to same-sex couples in the face of federal and national opposition, noting it was based on the state Constitution.

“If you remember the language in the Goodridge decision (the court case that upheld same-sex marriage rights), it was based on not the interpretation of the United States Constitution, but on the Massachusetts Constitution and its Declaration of Rights, in that the SJC here, and I believe the state Legislature, would utilize the Massachusetts Constitution to its full extent to make sure that all members of Massachusetts are treated equally.”



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