

NBC's *Today*

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7:01:18 a.m. [TEASE]

19 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Breaking Overnight; Sending a Message]

SAVANNAH GUTHRIE: Breaking overnight. Sending a message. Voters in San Francisco oust the city's progressive district attorney, under fire for rising crime.

CHESA BOUDIN (D): They were given opportunity to voice their frustration and outrage and they took that opportunity.

GUTHRIE: Straight ahead, what it means for Democrats in key races nationwide.

(...)

7:11:48 a.m.

2 minutes and 58 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: Progressive D.A. Ousted in San Francisco]

GUTHRIE: Now to overnight, results from a high-profile recall election. Residents in San Francisco voting overwhelmingly to oust the city's progressive district attorney after a heated campaign that put crime, police reform and public safety in the spotlight. NBC's Jacob Ward is in San Francisco with the election results. Jake, good morning.

JACOB WARD: Savannah good morning. San Francisco pioneered all sorts of cutting edge criminal justice reforms under its progressive prosecutor Chsea Boudin, but now after an expensive recall campaign and rising crime rates here and across the country, he's been tossed out of his job and the nation is watching.

CROWD: Recall Chesa! Recall Chesa!

WARD: The progressive reforms that helped elect San Francisco's district attorney, Chesa Boudin, in 2019 may have caused those same voters to toss him out of office last night.

BOUDIN: People are right to be frustrated. There's so much room for improvement. People should hold all of us to a higher standard.

CROWD: Chesa! Chesa!

WARD: Boudin won off his promise to fight inequality in the justice system with alternatives to prison, pushing against what he calls mass incarceration. The successful recall vote halfway into his four year term was not a surprise. Polls leading up to the election showed voters we are

driven by the reception of a city in decline. Homelessness and drug addiction rampant and crime is up. Homicides and assaults are up 11 percent this year. There's been a wave of recent hate crimes and auto thefts touched every neighborhood.

*WASHINGTON POST* SENIOR NATIONAL CORRESPONDENT SCOTT WILSON: Lot of progressives are so wed to what they believe in, [SCREEN WIPE] that they won't listen to what actual people are telling them.

WARD: Lifelong liberal Adam Wesnick is one of them.

ADAM WESNICK: I was — my God, I've been robbed on Mission Street. I was jumped on 6th Street.

WARD: The owner of this San Francisco sandwich shop says the DA's politics are no match for crime in his city.

WESNICK: The ideology that's happening now is a little bit dangerous for the residents.

WARD: Boudin says the recall is a political tactic.

BOUDIN: The right-wing billionaires outspent us three-to-one. They exploited it in an environment in which people are appropriately upset and they created an electoral dynamic where we were literally shadow boxing.

WARD: But for Wesnick, things feel out of control.

WESNICK: The top cop has failed.

WARD: With this recall, DAs in other cities nationwide are now on alert. Supporters of Boudin say that unwinding nearly 50 years of tough-on-crime traditions was never going to be easy or politically popular. But even those who voted him into office have told us that they feel he simply was not doing enough to fight crime in this city. And now, progressive prosecutors in other cities like Los Angeles and Chicago, who are facing the possibility of a recall there, are going to be very closely watching the results here. Savannah?

GUTHRIE: Absolutely, Jake. Thank you very much.