

CBS Mornings

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7:08:42 a.m.

1 minute and 35 seconds

[ON-SCREEN HEADLINE: GOP Candidate Wins Key Tennessee House Election]

GAYLE KING: The push by Democrats to flip a Republican seat in congress fell short in Tennessee. Republican Matt Van Epps won that special election. It was seen as a local referendum on the President's first year in office. Nicole Valdes is in Nashville with all the latest on this story. Nicole, good morning to you.

NICOLE VALDES: Gayle, good morning. A big win for Van Epps last night in a district that has been reliably red for years, but this time around, it was surprisingly competitive. The first time GOP candidate won last night's election only by single digits over Aftyn Behn, a Democratic state representative. This result was much closer than what we saw a year ago when President Trump scored a 22-point victory in this same district. It's the reason Democratic officials say Republicans should be "shaking in their boots" ahead of next year's midterms. The tight margins led to a massive amount of money pouring into both campaigns. In fact, a CBS analysis found at least \$8 million was spent on the race with more than \$6 million donated by outside groups. Now, Van Epps received more than \$1 million from President Trump's super PAC and support for his campaign, of course, surged after getting the President's endorsement back in October. Now, Van Epps last night said that Trump's endorsement "made all the difference." He will, of course, be replacing now retired-Representative Mark Green for the remainder of his term but will have to run for re- election again in the 2026 midterms, Nate.

NATE BURLESON: Nicole, thank you.

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KING: The push by Democrats to flip a Republican seat in Congress fell short in Tennessee. Republican Matt Van Epps won that special election. It was seen as a local referendum on the president's first year in office.

MATT VAN EPPS: Tonight, you sent a message loud and clear. The people of middle Tennessee stand with President Donald J. Trump. [CHEERS AND APPLAUSE]