

NASFAA's "Off The Cuff" – Episode 87 Transcript

Allie Bidwell: Hi everyone, welcome to another edition of "Off The Cuff," I'm Allie Bidwell, one of our *Today's News* reporters.

Stephen Payne: I'm Stephen Payne, with NASFAA's policy team.

Megan Coval: I'm Megan Coval with NASFAA's policy team.

Allie Bidwell: We just had a big election on Tuesday, the midterm elections, seemed to maybe get a little more hype than you normally do for a midterm election. People were saying that this was going to be a blue wave, what do you guys think? Any surprises? Anything unexpected?

Megan Coval: I think it was a record number of voters.

Allie Bidwell: Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Megan Coval: Across the country, so it was hyped up a lot but also people came out and I think like blue splash.

Stephen Payne: That's a good way to say it. I haven't heard that, I like that.

Allie Bidwell: Not a blue wave-

Megan Coval: Blue splash.

Allie Bidwell: Blue splash?

Stephen Payne: Yeah. I think, I feel like I'm such a political nerd in some ways that I always love watching election returns and all of that, and I have for so long. And it's interesting when they become like when the midterms become such a big thing. I felt like-

Allie Bidwell: Yeah

Stephen Payne: And obviously with voter turnout being so high, but it just seemed like everyone was talking about the midterms, everyone was posting 'I voted'-

Allie Bidwell: Right

Stephen Payne: Them with their 'I voted' stickers everywhere, people were really into it.

Allie Bidwell: See? People value stickers.

Megan Coval: Yes. Stephen, you weren't here last week, but we had big conversation about the 'I voted' sticker.

Stephen Payne: Oh.

Megan Coval: Allie and I liked it, and Justin was sorta like 'what's the point'?

Stephen Payne: But I think, I mean at the end of the day, it was a good night for Democrats. But I don't think, it wasn't this huge major event. But I mean, taking back the house is real and it's a really big deal. And so even though the Senate didn't go quite the same way, and it was really interesting because the maps were very different.

Megan Coval: Yeah.

Allie Bidwell: Yeah.

Stephen Payne: Like you had Republicans losing in the House who were in districts Hillary won, and then you had Republicans challenging in Democrats in the Senate in states that Trump won. So the maps were really different, so it's not quite far to be like 'well it's a great night over here but a failure over here'. It was just a really terrible map.

Allie Bidwell: It probably went about as expected, right, because no one was really expecting the Senate to flip.

Megan Coval: Right, yeah that was pretty, I mean the tightest race there, I think the race that had the most attention was in Texas. Of course with Senator Cruz and Beto O'Rourke and that ended up being pretty close.

Allie Bidwell: Pretty close in the end, yeah.

Megan Coval: 48-52 I think. But Senator Cruz prevailed.

Stephen Payne: Yeah, it's interesting. There were some, I think that may have been one of those races that was really hyped up that maybe the chances weren't super great, but it was a close race.

Megan Coval: For Texas.

Stephen Payne: Yeah, exactly.

Allie Bidwell: So with Democrats in control of the House now, we talked about this a little bit last week. But what are we looking at in terms of things for higher Ed, like HEA, you and I both went to an event yesterday where we talked about this a little bit.

Stephen Payne: Yeah, well I'll just start off and say that specifically what the election results mean on the committee itself, which is important, obviously the personalities on the committee shaped the legislation. There are currently twenty two Republican members on the committee, and seven of those are not returning. And so that's Rokita, Barletta, Messer, Brat, Louis, Garrett, and Handel, Karen Handel. That was a close race, it was just called this morning in Georgia. They all either lost reelection or retired or went for another office and didn't get it, so that's a pretty significant number. Which means fifteen Republicans are returning, and then on the Democratic side, fifteen are returning as well. Two are not returning, Jared Polis, who is the new governor elect of Colorado, and then Carol Shea Porter of New Hampshire who decided not to run for reelection. So by and large, a bunch of Democrats come back, a lot of Republicans are not on the Committee. So yeah, that's sort of the makeup of it, and then getting to the policy of it, what do you guys think about HEA?

Megan Coval: So we've seen some reports already that right now, ranking member Bobby Scott, presumably Chairman Bobby Scott, the new Congress has said that he wants to work in a bipartisan fashion so I think that's a good sign. Whether or not that actually happens, we'll see. But also I think, I know I say this a lot in my federal updates, but the good thing is that I feel like HEA is sort of next in the queue in terms of big pieces of legislation since K-12 and ESSA have been already cleared. Yeah I think it's just a matter of if they're willing to engage Republicans or if Republicans are willing to engage them back. I do think that even though the Prosper Act and the Aim Higher Act were very different in a lot of ways, we have this great chart that we work from that shows there are places where there is similarity, past simplification, getting rid of origination fees, a focus on risk sharing, so maybe a smaller HEA package. Working with the Senate. I don't feel all doom and gloom about it.

Allie Bidwell: Yeah, and one thing that was pointed out yesterday, Stephen and I both tuned into a panel at the American Enterprise Institute, and one of their fellows there, Jason Delisle, was saying that it's hard to tell right now where things might go, because the Democrats when they released the Aim Higher Act, they know it's not going anywhere. So he said 'you swing for the fences' and go as extreme as you want. Whereas now, with a divided Congress, you might be forced to find more compromises and work more bipartisanship.

Stephen Payne: Yeah, I was just going to say, I think that knowing that it's a divided Congress, that like the Democrats have the House, the Republicans have the Senate, and built a little bit more into their majority just slightly, means that you know in the back of your mind you're going to have to come to the table to negotiate. Whereas I felt like in last session, the Prosper Act was a very conservative piece of legislation, but Republicans controlled the White House, the House, and the Senate.

Allie Bidwell: And it still didn't go anywhere.

Stephen Payne: So, well yeah, that's a big point. But if you're Republicans, you're like 'why not do exactly what we might want to do' and be as conservative as possible because the only issue is it's probably not going get through the Senate, but we also have the White House, and you control everything. So now there's a sense that, if you're going to do anything, you're going to have to negotiate. So, I think that-

Megan Coval: Like if you want to be productive, you have to be realistic in that sense.

Stephen Payne: And right now I feel like there's this bipartisan-sense, but that could evaporate. Or things could happen. I don't know, I think the challenges with the Aim Higher Act, is that it has such a big price tag. And so they were swinging for the fences a lot, I agree with that, and they did a lot of things in there. But the question would just be how to pay for it. And so I think that's where the differences will ultimately come from because I think there's some interest in revising the tax cuts that were just made, and so is that a non-starter for Republicans or are there places where they are willing to compromise a little bit on the cost, or are Democrats willing to give up a few things, and so a lot of unanswered questions.

Megan Coval: Yeah and I feel like at the end of the day too, regardless of who's in power at all, it all sort of falls back to the structure that we have. The House, whenever either side is in power I think this happens, there's talk about working in a bipartisan fashion, but the truth is, you don't have to over there. Because you just need a simple majority in the Senate, it was designed that way. That was the goal, was sixty votes that you have to. So I think that sometimes there are high goals of doing that in the House, and then when the rubber meets the road, you know 'well, I just need my party' really.

Allie Bidwell: Senatorial saucer.

Stephen Payne: (laughs)

Megan Coval: Senatorial saucer. Cool in the Senatorial saucer.

Stephen Payne: Well and it's almost like in some ways with that dynamic, you're sort of negotiating against yourself if you water it down. Which is why I think like Prosper Act was so conservative because if you can get it to pass, which they ultimately couldn't, but if you could get it to pass, then as you're negotiating, you're like 'well here's where we are' and then wherever the Senate lands, and then when you put them together, it was ultimately I think how ESEA was reauthorized. That was a pretty conservative Republican bill, and the Senate was more moderate, though I think the bill mostly ended up being the Senate bill.

Allie Bidwell: What do we think about the Senate side? Didn't we hear for a while that the Senate was going to put out their reauthorization bill by Easter last year? And then it was by the end of summer? Or something like that?

Megan Coval: I mean, we really haven't heard a whole lot from the Senate on this front, but I do think having the same leadership, Senator Alexander and ranking member Murray, I do think they have a good history of working together and I think there are some things they need to kind of work out between themselves. But I don't think that insurmountable, and in a way, I think maybe having them go first or sort of kick it off, and then Senator Murray can kind of reach across chambers to the House-

Stephen Payne: I think a few things. This was brought up at AEI, and I didn't even realize it. But Senator Alexander, based on Republican conference rules, the next session is his last as a chairman unless he would get a waiver.

Allie Bidwell: I did not know that either.

Megan Coval: Oh, I didn't even think that- yeah

Stephen Payne: He'd be termed out. So, they were saying that, and this is a great point, but that it provides him a lot of motivation. If you think about it. Former university president, former secretary of education, former governor who's done a lot of work in higher ed, this is his last shot in this next session. And I think that is huge, and maybe one of the biggest non-policy related factors in all this conversation that may play out in a big way. And may get folks to the table. I also think that the, Megan alluded to it briefly, but on the relationship between Senator Alexander and Senator Murray and I think the DeVos confirmation-

Megan Coval: Yeah, put strain on that.

Stephen Payne: Folks have said on both sides that put a strain on the relationship. But now, the Democrats have the House, a lot of oversight of the department can be done over there.

Allie Bidwell: Over there.

Stephen Payne: Over on the House side. And so it's not like you're the only backstop in the Senate, or your trying to provide oversight or do other things, that sort of piece of it may be accomplished over there.

Megan Coval: Yeah, lots of oversight in her future. Hearings and yup, all over but-

Stephen Payne: And we'll see. Any thoughts on whether DeVos sticks around? I know there's already been one cabinet change with Attorney General Sessions resigning yesterday.

Allie Bidwell: Yeah, supposedly there was supposed to be some mass exodus from the cabinet, after the election. So-

Megan Coval: I don't know.

Megan Coval: She would've been one of the more consistent people.

Allie Bidwell: I feel like if she was going to go, she would have already gone.

Stephen Payne: Yeah.

Allie Bidwell: Like she's here to stay I think.

Stephen Payne: It'll be interesting.

Megan Coval: Yeah, maybe after maybe if he gets second term, I could see her leaving.

Allie Bidwell: Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Stephen Payne: Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Megan Coval: You know, after the first one, but I think her heels are dug in. I think we'll see a lot more of her (laughs) perhaps behind the-

Stephen Payne: Yeah and that could be a motivation-

Megan Coval: Behind the witness stand.

Stephen Payne: To stay or go too. Depending on how all of that goes. One other thing I wanted to say about HEA, was in terms of the issues themselves, sort of winners and losers.

Allie Bidwell: Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Stephen Payne: And this was brought up at this AEI event, was one of the big losers perhaps in all the policy conversations with the election results, was those who support keeping the ban on student level data. Because Chairwoman Foxx has been probably the strongest advocate in Congress to keep that ban in place.

Allie Bidwell: Right.

Megan Coval: Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Stephen Payne: And since she will now be the ranking member, and on the House side a we mentioned the minority doesn't have a huge role to play in these conversations, that Senator Alexander hasn't been as passionate in the same way that Virginia Foxx has on this issue and so that could be a place where if Republicans are in the driver's seat on the Senate side, but not the House side, that we could see that bipartisan issue-

Allie Bidwell: Right, because it's not clear cut along party lines. And they did also mention at this AEI event that as that gets a little bit more attention, it could cause some

disagreement among Democrats too. The idea of providing this Education Department in particular, with a lot more data.

Stephen Payne: And probably with a lot of these higher educations backing up little bit, thinking broadly, haven't been... folks aren't as dug in on all of them, and I think the common person around the country, and we can talk a little bit about what role education played in this election, but it wasn't like how House candidates were running on repealing the ban.

Allie Bidwell: Right (laughs)

Stephen Payne: On the student unit record or-

Megan Coval: Or award notification.

Stephen Payne: Right, award notifications.

Megan Coval: No, side bar, we have to tell this story. We have a new public policy position on award notifications, which is basically codifying what's in our code of conduct. And we were really excited because there was a member in the House who basically wrote a bill that just mirrored what we wants. And they were gung-ho about it, and moving fast on it, and wanting to get it out before the election, and then all of a sudden, it was like we didn't hear from them, we got the language just right, and then we found out this person got defeated. Representative Young from Iowa.

Stephen Payne: Whomp-whomp.

Megan Coval: So now we try to, but that language is there.

Stephen Payne: (laughs)

Megan Coval: Somewhere, written. So the question is, can we get it but-

Megan Coval: It's in the universe, yeah.

Megan Coval: But that's a really good example of how just like electoral politics too can influence the work that we're doing.

Allie Bidwell: So, like you mentioned Stephen, education broadly in this election did it play any role? Did it play some role, was it like a state level thing?

Stephen Payne: Well, one thing I'll say is that Politico in their morning education newsletter the other day, included results of a Politico morning consult poll about priority issues. This was before the election. And just 6% of voters said education issues are the top set of issues on their mind as they go into these elections. Education

was ranked above only one issue, and that was energy issues. Which registered just 4% of those polled.

Megan Coval: That kinda surprises me. The energy one, not the education unfortunately.

Stephen Payne: Education trails economics, security, health care, seniors, and women's issues, and is tied with 'other'.

Megan Coval: Oh, okay.

Stephen Payne: (laughs)

Allie Bidwell: That's like about where it usually is though right?

Megan Coval: Yeah.

Stephen Payne: Yeah.

Allie Bidwell: It typically doesn't rank very high when it comes to elections.

Stephen Payne: Right

Megan Coval: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Stephen Payne: Particularly federal ones, though. There were some states where some of the elections you could point to education a little bit more. And two Democratic governor races, so in Kansas, the Republican governor there lost his reelection bid, a lot of folks were saying a lot of the conversation was around education funding because the governor had cut pretty significantly education programs. And then in Wisconsin, Scott Walker, a Republican, lost reelection and a lot of the big issues in Wisconsin over the last, it feels like we've been tracking Wisconsin and Scott Walker in all these recalls-

Megan Coval: A long time.

Stephen Payne: And reelections. But some of the big issues there have been on education, and the teacher's unions have been very active in Wisconsin on attempting to recall Scott Walker or ensure that he doesn't win reelection, thus far who was very successful until now and lost reelection season.

Allie Bidwell: And even the night of Tuesday night, I remember watching CNN I think and there was a panel speaking there and someone was saying, I think they called Scott Walker a zombie, like he just cannot go down. And then he did. But that just goes to show expectations when it comes to elections. There are some surprises, and polls are not always the best indicator as we've seen.

Stephen Payne: Yeah, the polls are always ... we had a decent sense though this year. Generally it looked like Democrats were gonna take the House, Republicans would keep the Senate. But if you go into the individual races, things were a little bit off.

Megan Coval: Yeah.

Allie Bidwell: Yeah.

Stephen Payne: Where it looked like folks were a little further ahead, but the big picture was accurate. Whereas in 2016, the small picture in a lot of races was inaccurate and the big picture was inaccurate.

Megan Coval: Its hard. It's obviously a science. I was just saying to Nick, my husband, he's not in politics at all, but there are ... it's kinda a reminder that people go to school just to study polling and statistics, and that's like a sub-field of political science. So you think poll and you think okay straw poll, but it's very much a science, and I think obviously they were more accurate than they were in 2016. I just have mixed opinions on polling. Because I think it's always kinda interesting and exciting to see who you thinks gonna win, or if it shifts over time, but also I feel like it's kind of a democracy killer. Because if you are somebody who is thinking about voting, but then you're like 'well my candidate, doesn't stand a chance, and it's raining today, I'm not gonna go out' so I feel like especially for the West coast.

Stephen Payne: Yeah.

Megan Coval: You know, and like exit polls, and I mean, Allie you grew up on the west coast, how demoralizing that by 2:00 or 3:00 in the afternoon, out there, people are calling races here in the East coast, national.

Allie Bidwell: Yeah, I don't know if I would say its demoralizing necessarily.

Megan Coval: No? I just think I would just be, maybe not you, but don't you think a lot of people are like 'why would I go out?'

Stephen Payne: Yeah, I had a friend who lived in Hawaii, who didn't vote yet in the presidential election was like driving to vote and it was declared who won. And that was like-

Allie Bidwell: For a presidential election, yes. But for something like this week's election, living in San Diego, I don't really care who got elected governor of New Hampshire.

Megan Coval: That's a good point, that's more of like a yeah.

Stephen Payne: Yeah, it is funny though when they call the races, I always vote after work, and in Virginia the polls close at 7:00. So I had voted at maybe like 6:45 and I'm like headed back to my apartment, and turn on the TV was like right at 7:00, and they call it for Tim Kaine, and I was like 'I don't think my vote was counted that

fast', it's funny how they do that. But I also think that with the polls too, another issue is that you have a lot of states, particularly in this election, where in a presidential race you wouldn't really bother too much with the polls. Like North Dakota, West Virginia, Montana, but in the Senate, all of those races were really important and really mattered, and I think the polling just isn't quite as ramped up in some of the states as compared to others.

Stephen Payne: In some of the races, they poll once every two months or something, and its like how are you even getting a good sample size. And now I think there's so much change in technology too, with like who are you calling, are you calling landlines, are you calling cell phones, are people picking up. Whereas before, maybe a decade ago ... maybe more than that, you could be pretty reliable by calling landlines.

Megan Coval: Speaking of technology, I feel like this is something that Justin would be saying, so we're channeling Justin who is not here, I was thinking about this as I was going to vote after work too. In a way, in all different precincts like have different ways that people vote and different ways that they count the votes. But I'm sort of surprised that we aren't to a point, or maybe I'll ask when will we get to a point, where you log into a website, you verify that you're you, and you vote. It's amazing to me with everything that's done online right now, that you still have to walk in, I don't know, we pen on a paper ballot, then you insert it, hand insert it into a- right?

Stephen Payne: No I agree 100%, I feel like Christina always says this. Why are we going somewhere, we have all the capability to vote different ways. But it's funny because in Pennsylvania, they seem to be a little more advanced than Virginia, that sounds like Maryland too, but they have the electronic screens and the touch screens and that's how, when I first voted, that's what I used. Then I get to Virginia, and then you're given a pen and you're at like a little table with a divider and you're like 'fill in the mark.'

Megan Coval: It's interesting.

Megan Coval: There's lots of things that I'm sure, like access issues. Like what if people who don't have access to a computer or if it were you know, I'm sure we'll get there. I just don't know.

Stephen Payne: Well then you worry about hacking, right?

Megan Coval: You do, yeah, but I just think of all the other very secure things we do online-

Stephen Payne: Though I guess you could also just fill out other pieces of paper and run them through a machine, right? I think there's always something you could do to-

Megan Coval: Imagine what voter turnout would be, turnout would be high if you could do it online.

Allie Bidwell: I want to talk a little bit, really quickly, about the next elections coming up. You had a countdown, Megan.

Megan Coval: Yes, it's on my desk I'm gonna rip a page off every day. 726 days until the next election, I read something this morning. I mean, that's all gonna start soon, right? We might have like a little reprieve here, but -

Allie Bidwell: Well one thing I saw was, just humorous break, now that the midterm elections are over, and the commercials are done, maybe we will find out who burned down Cheryl's She-Shed.

Megan Coval: (laughs)

Stephen Payne: (laughs)

Megan Coval: That's awesome.

Allie Bidwell: Finally, I hope.

Stephen Payne: That's funny.

Allie Bidwell: Who knows.

Megan Coval: Who knows.

Allie Bidwell: One person that I follow on Twitter is Larry Sabato, at the University of Virginia Center for Politics. And he has Larry's Crystal Ball.

Megan Coval: Mm-hmm (affirmative)

Allie Bidwell: And he said, on election night, that if Beto lost he may be tapped for 2020.

Stephen Payne: Yeah saw that.

Megan Coval: Yeah.

Allie Bidwell: He also said that, he had this analysis, this was before the race was called, if he wins Obama only had four years in the Senate but if he loses, there was another guy who lost a Senate race and was elected President two years later, Abraham Lincoln. I just thought that was a fun fact.

Megan Coval: Oh, yeah, yeah.

Megan Coval: Yes, I saw, I know people are thinking about that. Then I also saw something about him potentially going for Senator Cornyn's seat. Did you see that? And there's lot of ... I don't know, who do we think will be the Dem contender?

Stephen Payne: Yeah, I think we're gonna have to set like a under-over and the number of candidates, because I think it's gonna be next level.

Allie Bidwell: From both sides?

Stephen Payne: I don't know, I don't know about that. I'll just talk about the Democrats for now. But I think it's gonna be a huge list and I think we're gonna start probably in the next like ... because people are gonna try to get a slight competitive advantage right, and start announcing. Like why not? Start fundraising, I mean we're lucky, in some ways though I'm not always super thrilled that Iowa and New Hampshire like hold the fate of the presidential election process every single year. But those folks are going to get no rest from election time because it's going to start kicking up there pretty soon.

Megan Coval: I saw something, maybe you guys have seen it and I don't have it in front of me, that they were showing all these women that if the election were today, democratic women that would run against Trump and they would win, like the women would win. Like Kamala Harris, Oprah, I mean so this is obviously a favorability-

Stephen Payne: I saw Michelle Obama, right? Was she on that list?

Megan Coval: Michelle Obama, maybe Amy Klobuchar? But they were saying that there were no men that they felt like could beat Trump.

Allie Bidwell: Kamala Harris, I have like a mental list of theories, she's on my list.

Stephen Payne: Yeah, I definitely think she's gonna run. Elizabeth Warren, Cory Booker-

Allie Bidwell: Do you think Bernie would run again?

Stephen Payne: Maybe. Joe Biden, maybe. Megan, our office-

Megan Coval: Fan favorite.

Stephen Payne: Our office Joe Biden ambassador.

Megan Coval: Yeah, I love Joe Biden.

Stephen Payne: But I mean, ugh, it's gonna be, there's gonna be a lot of people.

Allie Bidwell: This is gonna be like the 2016 elections, there were what? Like four on the Democrats in the beginning? And there was something like 32 Republicans running?

Stephen Payne: Yeah and had those like debates where they would have two debates because there were too many people?

Allie Bidwell: Yeah.

Megan Coval: I forgot all about that.

Stephen Payne: If you were like, I think they had like 12 people on stage, and if you were below a certain cutoff, you would go to the, what they were calling the 'Undercar debate'.

Allie Bidwell: The JV debate.

Stephen Payne: Yeah, the JV debate.

Megan Coval: (laughs)

Allie Bidwell: (laughs)

Stephen Payne: And then you were just at this other debate, debating like the people at the bottom, which is just-

Megan Coval: Trying to claw your way up.

Stephen Payne: Exactly, yeah.

Megan Coval: It's gonna be wild. It's gonna be a wild ride.

Stephen Payne: And then on the Republican side, I think they will get the wrath of Trump, obviously. IF they run against him, but to be challenged like that, I think it would obviously be someone who feels strongly against Trump to run so I don't think that would scare them away per se but it would be-

Megan Coval: Yeah, especially if it's someone who doesn't have anything to lose, right? If it's somebody who isn't in the Senate, or isn't planning on running again you know, that-

Allie Bidwell: Does anyone come to mind? Like does anyone fit this description?

Megan Coval: I sorta think like Kasich.

Stephen Payne: Yeah, I don't know.

Megan Coval: I don't think he would fair well, but I just think that-

Stephen Payne: I think that the midterms showed in a lot of ways too that Trump does have a lot of strength and, like in the Senate races, where he campaigned pretty heavily for a lot of folks and they came out on top. If it would've been like a huge, resounding blue wave/tsunami, then maybe it would open the door that there's

kinda some blood in the water. But Republicans gained seats in the Senate, so I don't know.

Megan Coval: Yesterday, so President Trump called a press briefing in the White House, not in the Press Room, not in the Press Room, not in the-

Allie Bidwell: Yeah yeah, it was in like the East Room or something.

Megan Coval: East room. And I think to your point, Stephen, there's a big, the president is very focused on loyalty and in that briefing he went through and he named the people that broke from him. Or challenged him. Republicans that broke from him, or challenged him, or critiqued him by name. And most of them lost. And he was basically like 'this is why you lost', you said bad things about me and I don't feel sorry. Its jut interesting because, as a Republican, you'd want more Republicans to be winning, and he was sort of like 'you lost and that's your fault'. So that just goes to your point of whoever would dare challenge him, it'll be over for that person in terms of-

Stephen Payne: Yeah it would get very personal, very fast.

Megan Coval: It would get very personal, very fast. But you know what someone said, and I think this is so true, that Tuesday's election was, as if often, but really was all about Trump. But it was about you went either you liked him, or you went to vote against him. So he played a huge factor, that's always the case in the midterms, but I think the record attendance is even more so because of-

Stephen Payne: Well it wasn't like, here's what the Democratic House is gonna do and they have this big plan, I'm not saying they didn't have a plan, there a lot of different bills and things like that. I don't think it was voting for Democrats as opposed to voting against Trump. And then in the same way, voting for Trump in a lot of states, Indiana, Missouri, Florida, North Dakota-

Megan Coval: But this is just what happened last time we had a big midterm. I mean, President Obama came in, he unified government, 2010 midterms, Republicans came in-

Stephen Payne: Yeah, I read something that was talking about how it's hard to draw a lot of conclusions for 2020 from this. Like 2008 did not predict 2010, where the Republicans took the House, which didn't predict 2012, where Obama won reelection, which didn't predict 2014, where Republicans built on majority in the House and then won the Senate, which didn't necessarily predict 2016 though.

Megan Coval: What did predict 2016?

Allie Bidwell: Yeah.

Stephen Payne: It's kind of in its own little world, but yeah, it's interesting.

Megan Coval: Yup, so, we've got a new lay of the land for higher ed and -

Allie Bidwell: Its exciting.

Megan Coval: Yeah, it is sort of a, no matter what happens, it's sort of a new a jolt of new energy when the new Congress comes in. So we'll be doing a lot with that and getting to know new members and helping you all get to know new members.

Stephen Payne: Yeah and I think that's a great point, Congress will kick off in the new session, right now they're kinda in the lame duck in January, right in the beginning of January, and that's a great opportunity to, if you representative changed or your senator changed or if they didn't change, you just wanna say hi again, it's always good to reach out and establish those relationship early in the session as HEA does happen, this session over the next two years then those relationships will be all the more important.

Allie Bidwell: Yup.

Megan Coval: Yeah.

Allie Bidwell: Well said.

Stephen Payne: Thank you.

Allie Bidwell: Alright, that about does it for today. Thanks everyone for joining us for another edition of "Off The Cuff." Be sure to subscribe, send us your comments, questions, feedback, tell a friend, and until next time.