

poll takers had projected a close election and were on target as the November 8, 1960 result could not be called until the next day. In 10 states the popular vote margin between the two candidates was less than 10,000 votes. The difference in popular vote totals was a miniscule .17 percent (34,221,344 to 34,106,671) but Kennedy managed slim margins in enough states to collect 303 electoral votes to 219 for Nixon. It was the closest election in the twentieth century and political pundits have conjectured any number of combinations which could have changed the result.¹⁶

Maryland was not one of the close states in the 1960 election as Kennedy attracted 53.61 percent of the vote riding a large and decisive Democratic majority (88,047) in Baltimore to victory as the Democrats appeal to urbanites and minorities was clearly evidenced. In addition, Kennedy captured seven of the 23 Maryland counties representing the most suburban and rural counties voting for a Democratic presidential candidate since Roosevelt's initial victory in 1932. The results in Maryland were undeniably aided by a return to normalcy in state politics. The popular Republican Governor McKeldin could not run for re-election in 1958 and was succeeded by J. Millard Tawes who led a Democratic sweep of the statewide offices. In addition, all seven Congressmen elected in the off year election of 1958 were Democrats. Only Republican Senator Butler survived the return of the Democrats who had been unified by the work and leadership of Governor Tawes by the 1960 presidential election.¹⁷

1960 ELECTION SUMMARY

Candidate (Party)	Popular Vote		Electoral Vote	
	Md.	U.S.	Md.	U.S.
John F. Kennedy (D)	565,808	34,221,344	9	303
Richard M. Nixon (R)	489,538	34,106,671		219
Harry F. Byrd		116,248		15

1964

The assassination of President Kennedy on November 22, 1963 left an indelible mark on the American electorate. For the first time in over 60 years an American President had died from an act of violence.¹⁸ Vice President Johnson assumed his responsibilities quickly and won Congressional approval of major pieces of legislation previously sought by the Kennedy administration.¹⁹ The 1964 elections arrived before the shock of the Kennedy assassination had cleared the public consciousness.

The Democrats were not in a combative mood and presidential primaries were conducted without substantial interest. Unpledged delegations received the most votes with President Johnson's name on the ballot in eight states, none of which were seriously contested. The only sign of disunity was the efforts of Alabama Governor George C.