



It Only Takes One (Vote)!

Talk about a close race! Check out these elections from recent U.S. history which resulted in a tie, and learn how the winner was eventually determined. And remember that your vote could be the one to break a tie - because your one vote matters!

1994

Wyoming House of Representatives

Republican Randall Luthi and independent Larry Call each received 1,941 votes. During a live taping of NBC's Today show, the Secretary of State drew a ping pong ball with Luthi's name out of a cowboy hat to break the tie. ¹

2010

Massachusetts State Legislature

Peter J. Durant was initially thought to have won the election by a single vote. However, a judge ruled to count a previously discarded absentee ballot valid -- resulting in a tie. Durant went on to win a special election 6 months later by 56 votes. ³

2017

Virginia House of Delegates

After a close initial vote count, a recount determined David Yancey beat his opponent by a single vote. However, the Virginia Supreme Court later ruled that a previously excluded ballot was valid -- resulting in a tie. To break the tie, the Chairman of the State Board of Elections picked Yancey's name at random after both candidates' names were put in film canisters and placed in a bowl. ⁵

2006

Alaska House of Representatives Democratic Primary

After a tied race that resulted in a recount, Supreme Court challenge, and ballot dispute, Bryce Edgmon was deemed the winner by a coin toss. The coin used featured a walrus on one side and the seal of Alaska on the other. ²

2015

Mississippi State

Drawing the long straw broke a tied election in Democrat incumbent Blaine Eaton's favor. However, the Republican-controlled House later voted to unseat Eaton in his opponent Mark Tullos' favor. ⁴

¹ "Mayor's race ends in tie". Casper Star Tribune. 6 November 2010.

² "Edgmon wins Alaska House by toss of a coin". Juneau Empire. 26 September 2006.

³ "Judge rules that two tied in House race". Boston Globe. 2 February 2011.

⁴ "House votes for Republican Tullos, unseats Eaton". Clarion Ledger. 20 January 2016.

⁵ "Virginia Republican David Yancey Wins Tie-Breaking Drawing". NPR. 4 January 2018.