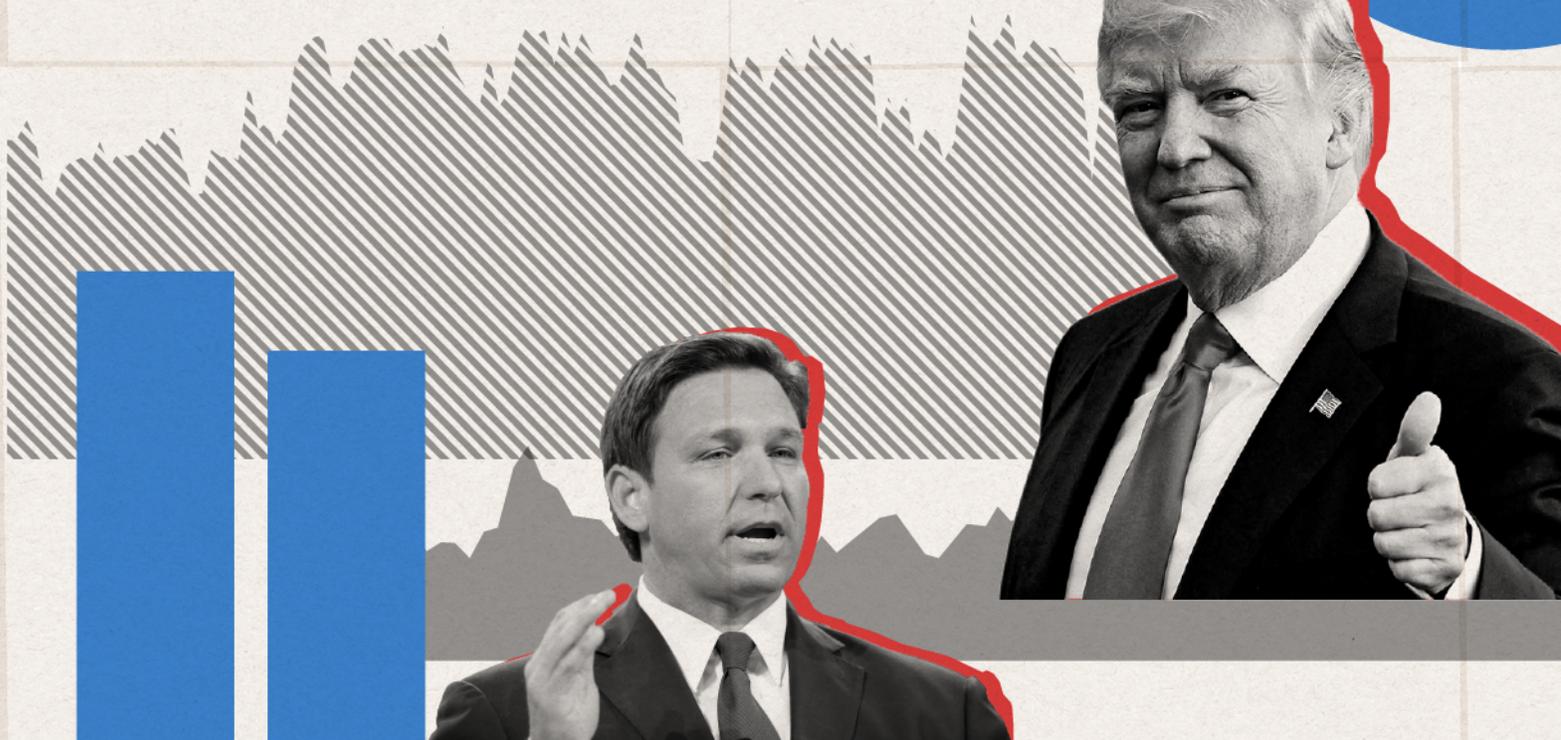
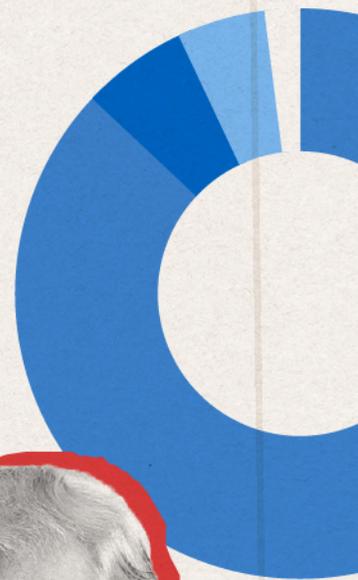




# Midterms: A Look Into The Conversation Around The Red Wave That Wasn't

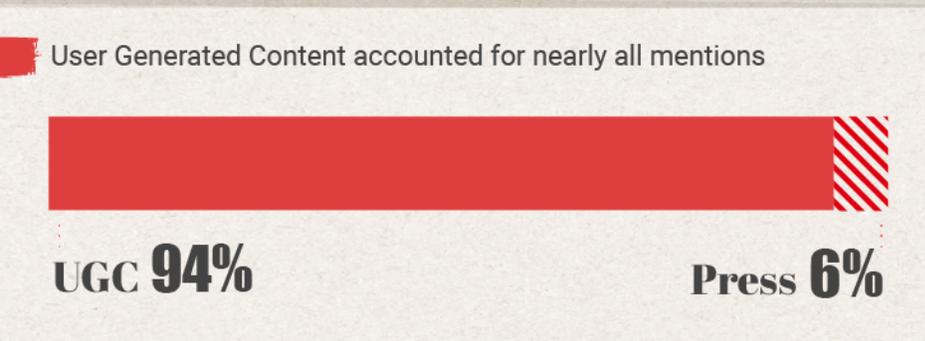
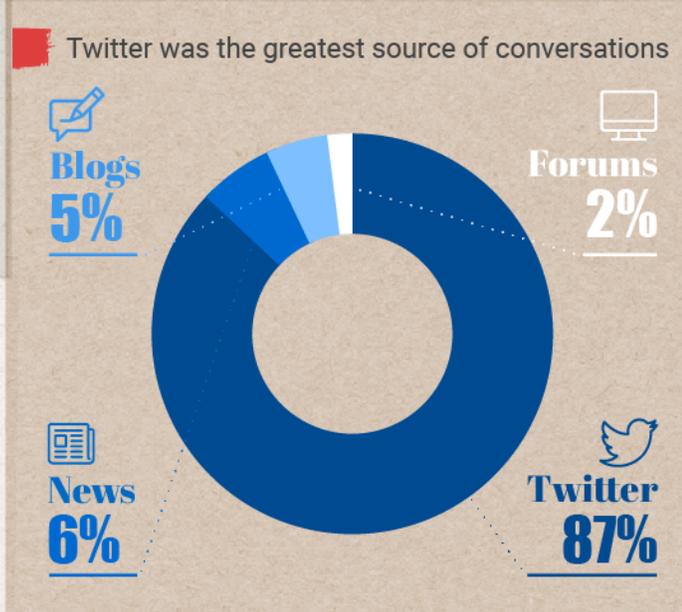
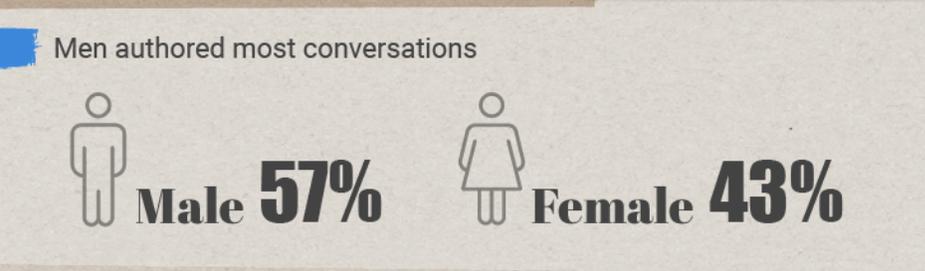
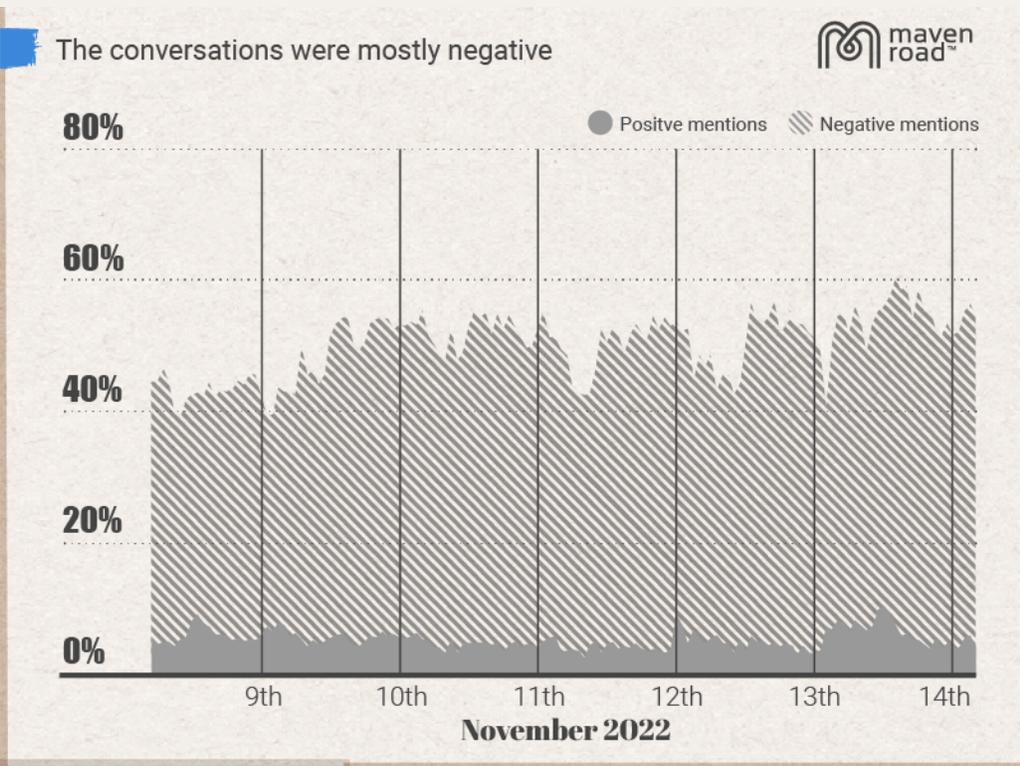
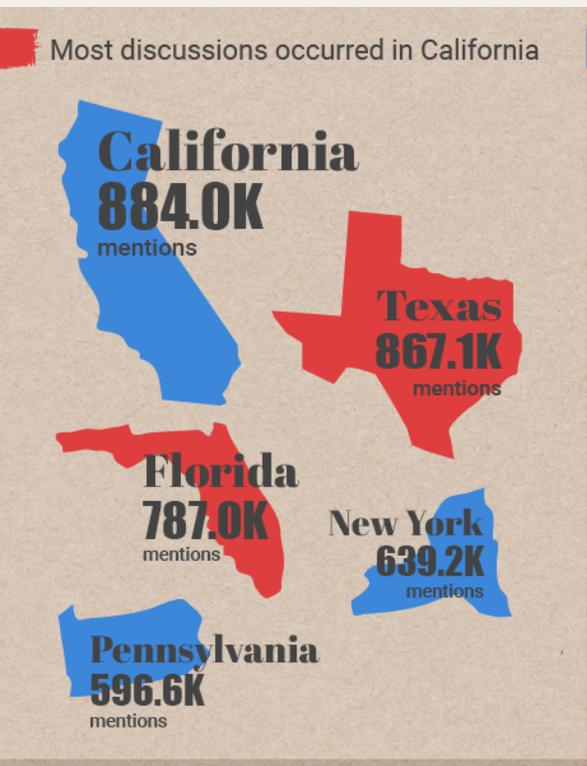
**A SOCIAL LISTENING ANALYSIS  
ON THE 2022 UNITED STATES  
ELECTIONS**



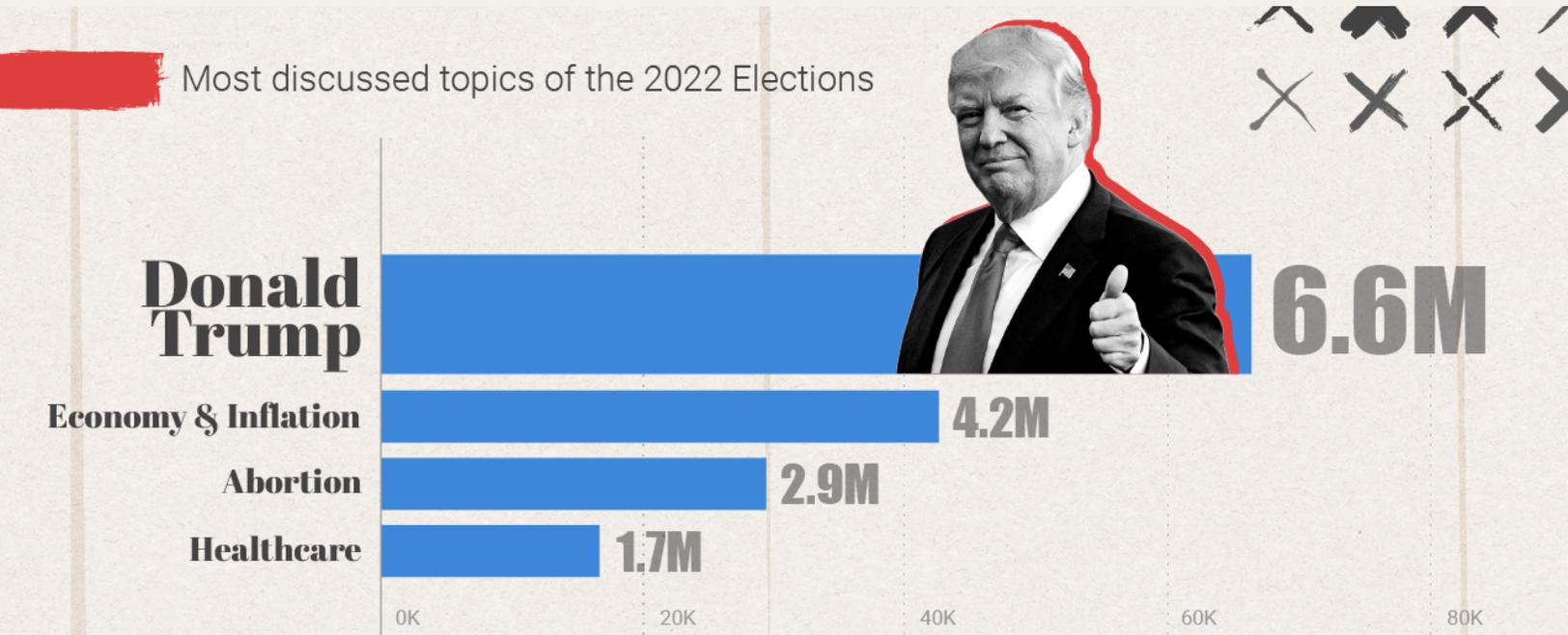
# A Midterms' "red wave" did not materialize, even across online conversations

Defying analysts' predictions and Republican expectations, a widely anticipated "red wave" did not occur in the 2022 Midterm Elections. Democratic candidates retained control over the Senate and made a net gain in the gubernatorial elections. The GOP gained control of the House by a narrower margin than expected.

Maven Road performed a Social Listening analysis to understand online discussions around the Midterms across Twitter, News, Blogs, and Forums, from November 8th to November 13th, 2022. **The Midterms garnered 20.3M worldwide mentions during this period, of which 8.4M (41.3%) came from the US.** This study identifies the candidates, results and topics users engaged with the most, to get a pulse on the current political conversations on social media.



# “Trump” was the most discussed topic of the Midterms



Although he wasn't on the ballot, **Donald Trump** was the most recurring topic of the Midterms, garnering more than 6.6M mentions across social platforms, or over 30.0% of overall conversations.

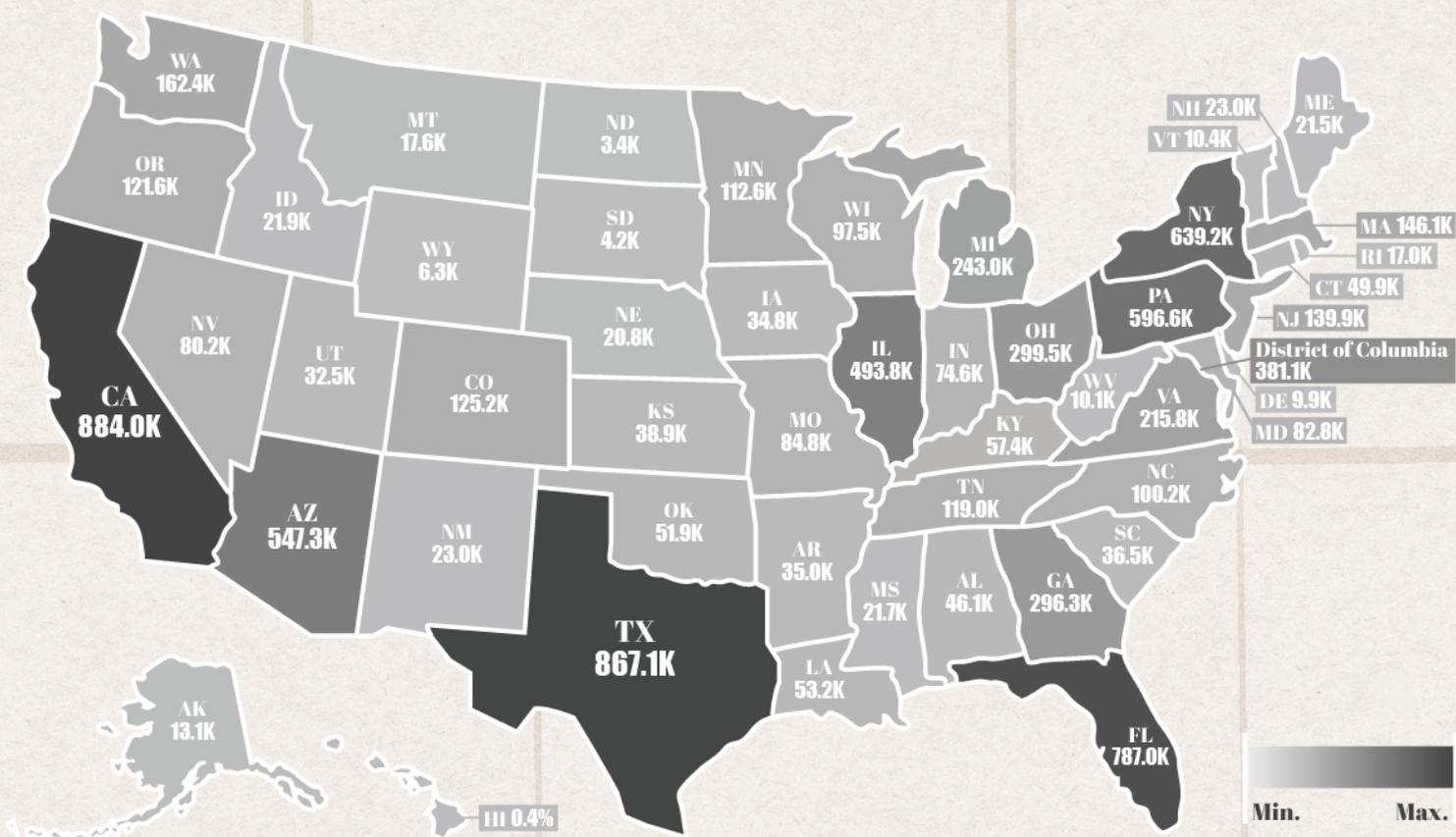
Twitter users commented on low-performing [candidates](#) backed by the former US President, with some stating that this [led to the victory](#) of many Democratic candidates across the country. Negativity also stemmed from user criticism related to [Trump and his views](#).

The second most mentioned topic was **Inflation**, an issue Republican candidates centered their campaigns on. The topic accounted for 20.8% of overall discussions, mainly from users [commenting](#) on the current administration's handling of the Economy, and by users [pointing out](#) the Republicans' lack of a clear plan.

Users were also vocal about **Abortion** in what was the first election since Roe v. Wade was overturned by the US Supreme Court. The topic garnered more than 2.9M mentions, with discussions centering on the importance of [defending Abortion](#) rights and often [highlighting](#) Americans' majority pro-choice stance.

# Gubernatorial races in California, Florida and Texas drove significant conversations

Mentions by State



With 39 governorships up for election this year, online discussions about the Midterms were highly driven by the **gubernatorial races**, which generated over 2.0 million mentions.

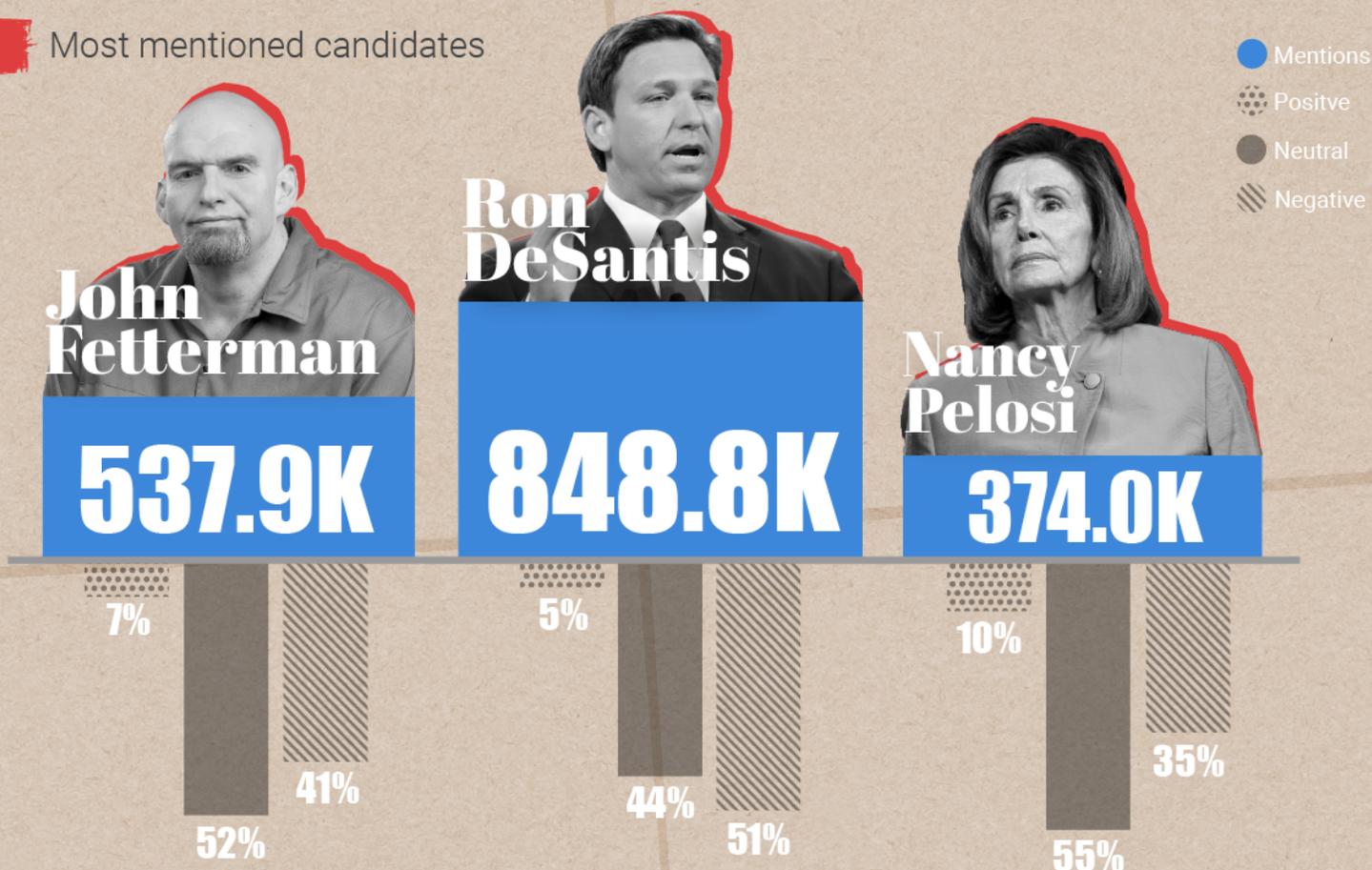
In California, the main topic was incumbent Democratic Governor **Gavin Newsom's** reelection by a landslide victory over Republican Brian Dahle. Most users just shared news of Newsom's win, with some also discussing his potential as a presidential candidate.

Floridians discussing the gubernatorial race in their state, where Ron DeSantis won, shared differing opinions regarding **immigration laws**; some Twitter users supported him while others were critical of his views on these legislations.

Mentions related to the **Senate race** accounted for more than 1 million. The states that had the greatest share of participation were Florida, Pennsylvania and California, where users engaged with posts which highlighted the increase in Gen Z and young Millennials voters and the impact it had in the rise of Democrat winners.

Additionally, online users from Texas, California, and New York were most vocal about House reps, generating 719.4K mentions.

# Ron DeSantis' landslide re-election made him the most mentioned candidate



Florida Governor **Ron DeSantis** won reelection in an unexpected 19-point landslide, with analysts referring to him as the election's biggest winner and the Republican Party's only big win. DeSantis' victory over former representative Charlie Crist was also reflected in the amount of discussions he garnered, accounting for 848.8K mentions, more than any other candidate.

Some users commented and shared news about DeSantis being the Republican hope for the 2024 Presidential Elections and several referenced Donald Trump, commenting that DeSantis might overthrow the former president as the new leader of the GOP. However, most conversations were negative (51.0%) due to engagers also expressing concerns about his potential policies and his similarities to Trump.

In the Senate races, lieutenant governor, and now Pennsylvania Senator-elect **John Fetterman** led the list with more than 537.9K user conversations. These posts highlighted his win against Trump-backed Republican candidate and television presenter, Dr. Mehmet Oz. Despite some users sharing positive reactions to his election, most conversations were negative (41.0%), due to users criticizing the senator.

**Nancy Pelosi** was the most mentioned winner of the House, with over 374.0K discussions across channels. Most conversations were focused on the recent attack against her husband, Paul Pelosi. Authors shared news and provided opinions about the assault; 17.9K mentions were positive due to users expressing their support.

## Trailblazing candidates sparked discussions

Kathy Hochul



92.5K

MENTIONS

Wes Moore



86.6K

MENTIONS

Maura Healey



65.8K

MENTIONS

Maxwell Alejandro Frost



32.4K

MENTIONS



There were more female, black and LGBTQ+ candidates for governorships, state legislatures, and Senate and House seats than in previous years. The campaigns and victories of these trailblazers generated significant attention during the US 2022 Elections.

The most discussed winner among them was Democrat **Kathy Hochul**, who garnered 92.5K mentions. After replacing Andrew Cuomo as governor of New York when he resigned from office in August, 2021, she is now the first woman to be elected. Users highlighted her victory against Republican Lee Zeldin, and discussed their opposing views on crime.

Democrat **Wes Moore** was elected as Maryland's first black governor. The combat veteran and former CEO of The Robin Hood Foundation generated 86.6K mentions. Users stated how his victory over Republican Dan Cox is an example of the low performance that Trump backed during these elections.

With their respective victories, **Maura Healey** of Massachusetts and **Tina Kotek** of Oregon became the first openly lesbian governors. Healey, who is also Massachusetts' first female governor, garnered the most attention, driving 65.8K mentions due to users celebrating her win and praising her campaign messaging.

The first Gen-Z to be elected for the House, **Maxwell Alejandro Frost**, also drove conversations (32.4K mentions). The 25-year-old Democrat defeated Republican Calvin Wimbish, and garnered support for his stance on stricter gun control laws, abortion rights and expanded healthcare.

# Analysis: Were the Midterms a turning point for Trump?



*By Daniela Robinson, Senior Business Analyst at Maven Road*

The fact that former President Donald Trump was the main topic among online conversations about this year's Midterm elections, despite not being on the ballot (and being banned from posting on several social media platforms), speaks to his centrality in current American politics.

The level of online attention Trump still generates, as well as the online presence of his devoted base, should not be underestimated. Yet, there are many indications that he is approaching his next presidential run from a weaker position. Many of the candidates he supported during the Midterms lost, and Republicans underperformed against expectations.

What remains to be seen is whether social media, once a defining factor in his road to the White House in 2016, now becomes the scenario of a larger turning point in his already decreasing public support.

The emergence of Governor Ron DeSantis as the big winner of the Midterms and the most discussed candidate of this election cycle, even above Democrats, might signal what political analysts are perceiving to be the launch of the most viable Republican alternative to Trump for the 2024 elections.

But DeSantis, who hasn't announced his presidential candidacy yet, might have a long road ahead if he wants to enter the Oval Office, as the issues he campaigned on in Florida don't seem to have the same traction nationwide. The widespread online discussions about Abortion Rights that occurred this election cycle is at odds with his stance on banning pregnancy termination after the 15th week, with no exceptions. And the hard-on-immigration rhetoric, while popular among border states, hasn't shown to be a primary concern for the rest of Americans discussing the Midterms on social media, who were more worried with issues like Inflation and the Economy.

Still, in this election cycle DeSantis was considered the Republicans' only big win, while Trump is considered a main factor in several key defeats for the GOP. We will be following closely how the conversation around both continues.

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## **ABOUT MAVEN ROAD**

*Maven Road is a Consumer Intelligence firm that works with companies such as Google, YouTube, IBM, Disney, Accor, McLaren, and Waymo. The company is focused on creating lean, actionable consumer and audience intelligence.*