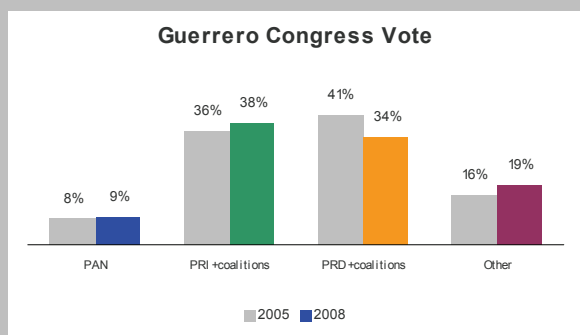
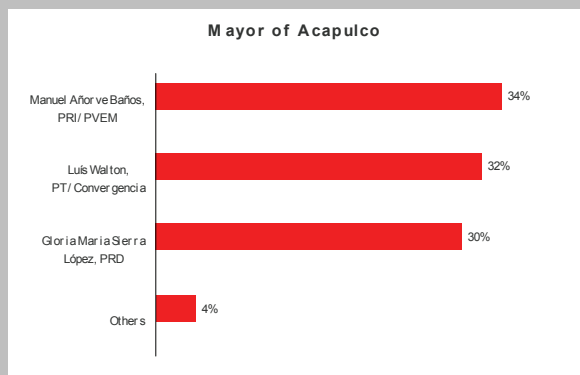


Alan Stoga, President
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Elections

PRD stumbles in Guerrero

Elections in Guerrero produced major setbacks for a split PRD, based on preliminary vote counts with 90%+ of the voting stations counted. The PRI candidate for mayor of Acapulco, **Manuel Añorve Baños**, appears to have triumphed over the official PRD candidate (backed by PRD leader **Jesús Ortega** and Governor **Zeferino Torreblanca**) and the candidate of a PT/Convergencia coalition (backed by **AMLO**). Across the state, the PRD seemed set to win only 24 mayorships, compared to 45 in 2005. The PRI (including coalitions with the PV) won in 45 towns, up from 33 last election. In the state congress, the PRD looked to win 13 of the 28 direct election seats (down from 18) while the PRI also captured 13 (up from 9). (www.prep-guerrero.com.mx)



Key Dates

10/19: Coahuila elections

11/9: Hidalgo elections

11/14: Deadline for budget approval

Late Dec.: Minimum wage announcement for 2009

3/8/09: Mexico State elections

7/5/09: National congressional, 6 gubernatorial, and 4 other local elections.

President proposes decriminalizing possession of small quantities of drugs

President **Felipe Calderón** sent a draft law to Congress to decriminalize individual possession of small amounts of drugs while increasing penalties for trafficking; the new law also provides resources for treating addicts. The President quoted a recent national survey that showed that in the last 6 years, the number of addicts in Mexico has increased 51% and the number of first-time users is rising rapidly. Columnist **Jorge Zepeda Patterson** called the initiative "important," but notes that former **President Fox** first backed and then vetoed similar legislation in the face of behind the scenes opposition from the U.S. (Universal 10/2, 5)

Oaxaca teachers, APPO join strike in Morelos

With banners reading, "Morelos be patient, Oaxaca is rising," a 3,000 person delegation from Oaxaca marched to join the teachers strike in Morelos that started in August to protest the Alliance for Quality Education reforms. The Oaxacans include both members of the teachers union and the **APPO anarchists** who paralyzed the state in 2006. As the strike deepens, the government of PAN Governor **Marco Adame** started broadcasting classes for secondary students and, together with school parents, opened 54 alternative schools. Noted columnist **Ezra Shabot**, "The resistance from the teachers ... is really a resistance to losing the privileges obtained during the corporatist era of the PRI.... The Alliance is not a magical solution to the backwardness of the country, but it represents the beginning of a long road that will allow Mexico to have the elements to form and educate children capable of ascending the social scale." (Reforma 10/3)

Supreme Court rules in favor of 2007 electoral reform

The Supreme Court ruled 6-4 that the constitutional provisions of the 2007 electoral reform, or any other constitutional amendment, could not be litigated before the Supreme Court. Individuals and civic organizations have been challenging the provision that amended article 41 of the constitution in order to prohibit anyone but political parties from buying political ads on radio or TV. The suits argued that the provision violates the freedom of expression guaranteed in article 6 of the Constitution. "No tribunal ... can declare that the Constitution is unconstitutional," said Supreme Court President **Guillermo Ortiz Mayagoitia**. However, the Court also ordered lower courts to reconsider 27 suits that challenged the legislative process for approving the reform, rather than its content. (Reforma 10/3)

PAN and PRI seek to protect campaigns from drug money

PAN President **Germán Martínez** proposed to the Federal Electoral Institute (IFE) a 10-point program designed to prevent drug money from infiltrating political campaigns—starting with the 2009 midterm elections. The proposal would, among other measures, oblige candidates and pre-candidates to provide financial declarations and bank account information to the authorities and empower the national intelligence agency **Cisen** to investigate campaign financing. PRIistas in Congress immediately voiced support. New IFE President **Leonardo Valdés** asserted that the IFE's new fiscal powers will help keep drug money out of the 2009 electoral process, but welcomed the possible involvement of the Cisen. However, the president of the Federal Electoral Tribunal, **Alejandro Luna Ramos**, said that involving the Cisen directly in the electoral process would be "an immense setback for the democratic life of the country." (Reforma 9/28, 10/4, Universal 10/1-2)