Former Hawaii Gov. Benjamin Cayetano, the first Filipino-American governor in the United States, lost in his bid for mayor of Honolulu; while Ohio’s Republican Fil-Am congressional bet Marisha Agana met the same fate on Tuesday’s elections.

President Barack Obama won reelection, defeating GOP candidate Mitt Romney in a near-sweep of seven battleground states.

Cayetano, touted as a strong mayoral contender, was defeated by State Representative and former acting Mayor Kirk Caldwell, 53-45, in an election that became a referendum on the city’s construction of a $5 billion rail line, according to the Associated Press.
The former governor appeared to put the blame for his loss on negative campaign ads paid for by Pacific Resource Partnership, which is backed by the state’s largest construction union and contractors, the AP reported.

“Never in my wildest dreams did I even contemplate that an organization like PRP with members that are anonymous would come out and spend $3 million to attack me, my character, my name and my reputation,” Cayetano told supporters.

He said the election “ushered in a new era” in which those with money and influence sway outcomes.

“The vote of the custodian counts as much as the guy who owns the building. And they have manipulated and influenced that,” he said.

AP said Cayetano came out of retirement to run in an effort to stop the train from being built.

He instead said he would expand bus routes and contraflow lanes while building an elevated roadway to alleviate traffic, adding that his transit plan would only cost $1.1 billion.

In Ohio, Fil-Am pediatrician Marisha Agana was clobbered by incumbent Rep. Tim Ryan (D-Niles) for the 13th Congressional District, 70-30.

Ryan is returning to Congress for a sixth term before he even turns 40.

On her Twitter account, Agana said she “will continue the fight.”

“I started this race naive but experience has made me stronger this time! I will continue the fight by participating in government.”
‘Quixotic’

“In the end, Agana’s run as a conservative to represent a very Democratic district turned out to be quixotic,” writes political writer Robert Wang.

“The Filipino-American raised less than $40,000 as of Sept. 30 for her campaign, a mere 4 percent of Ryan’s haul, without any help from the corporate PACs that normally give to Republicans.”

In Virginia, Rep. Robert “Bobby” Scott was reelected to an 11th term representing the state’s 3rd Congressional District.

Scott, an African American who has Filipino-American roots, won decisively against Republican challenger Dean Longo, 81-19.

All 11 incumbent Virginia congressmen were easily reelected Tuesday night.

In Pennsylvania, Fil-Am Democrat Will Sylianteng failed to secure a seat in the State House.

The Fil-Am lawyer, who is originally from southern California, was defeated by incumbent state Rep. Todd Stephens for the 151st District seat, 60-40.

“It was a hard fought race and I thank you all for your support,” wrote Sylianteng.

In California, at least three Fil-Am candidates walked their way to victory.
They are Milpitas City Mayor Jose Esteves, who was reelected for the fifth term; Alameda Vice Mayor Rob Bonta, who managed to clinch a seat in the State Assembly representing the 8th District of California; and incumbent Union City Council Member Jim Navarro, who won reelection.

In Hawaii, seven Fil-Ams won legislative seats.

Lawyer Don Guzman won in the Maui County Council, Kymberly Marcos Pine in the Honolulu City Council, and Gregor Ilagan in the 4th District of Hawaii County Council.

Those who made it to the Hawaii House of Representatives are Democrats Della Au Belatti, (24th district); Rida Cabanilla-Arakawa, (41st district); and Ty Cullen, (39th district).

There were also six Fil-Ams who run unopposed.

They are Henry Aquino (38th district), Romy Cachola (30th district) and Gilbert Keith-Agaran (9th district) for the Hawaii House of Representatives, and Will Espero (19th district), Donna Mercado-Kim (14th district) and Donovan dela Cruz (22nd district) for Hawaii’s Senate.

Close to 40 Fil-Ams ran in this week’s elections.