

# Inside Elections

with

Nathan L. Gonzales

Nonpartisan Analysis

JULY 28, 2023

VOLUME 7, NO. 15

This issue brought  
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## 2024 Senate Overview: A Wreck of an Election

By Nathan L. Gonzales, Erin Covey, & Jacob Rubashkin

Be prepared. With Senate candidates delaying their entry into competitive races and key senators withholding their re-election decisions, and the parties set to nominate two unpopular presidential nominees in a rematch no one is excited about, it feels like we're in slow-motion — headed toward a wreck of an election.

We're on course for a collision between untested Republican challengers and Democratic senators facing potentially hostile electorates. Once again, Democrats are confident that their incumbents can buck historical trends that have seen nearly perfect alignment between presidential and Senate outcomes. If President Joe Biden stumbles at the top of the ticket, it will make it very difficult for Democrats to hold the majority. Like in 2022, Senate Democrats will likely have to rely on voters who don't like Biden and might even vote against him. It's possible, but a risky proposition.

In an effort to avoid a replay of 2022's missed opportunity, Republicans are relying on wealthy, but oftentimes unproven, candidates to topple Democrats' fundraising machine. It could work, but some of them will have to navigate primaries without veering too far into the MAGA lane, and some of them could careen into a ditch while receiving the scrutiny of a Senate candidate.

Meanwhile, Trump's appeal is stunted by a growing list of criminal indictments, and questions about Biden's ability to serve a second term could overshadow good news about the economy. While 2024 could be a presidential rematch, both men are in a weaker position than in 2020. A close presidential race is the default, but it's not hard to see the bottom falling out for one side between now and next November.

The Senate battlefield unquestionably favors Republicans. They're playing offense in eight of the nine most competitive states including West Virginia, Montana, Ohio, Arizona, Nevada, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin and Michigan. Texas is the only Democratic takeover opportunity on the battleground at this stage of the cycle. Their next-best chance would be in Florida, which has been shifting away from them and would be expensive to contest.

Even though Republicans have plenty of takeover opportunities, their focus on the best three opportunities limits their room for error. The GOP needs a net gain of two seats for a majority, but they can take control with a gain of one seat if they win the White House, giving the vice president a tie-breaking vote in a 50-50 Senate.

Intentional delays in getting into races could pay off for Republicans because it gives Democrats less time to attack, but if GOP candidates can't raise enough money, stall or stumble, there may not be enough time to get back on track.

## 2024 Senate Ratings

### Toss-Up

Brown (D-Ohio)  
Sinema (I-Ariz.)

Tester (D-Mont.)

### Tilt Democratic

Casey (D-Penn.)  
Rosen (D-Nev.)

### Tilt Republican

*Manchin (D-W.V.)*

### Lean Democratic

MI Open (Stabenow, D)  
Baldwin (D-Wis.)

### Lean Republican

### Likely Democratic

CA Open (Feinstein, D)  
DE Open (Carper, D)  
MD Open (Cardin, D)  
Cantwell (D-Wash.)  
Gillibrand (D-N.Y.)  
Heinrich (D-N.M.)  
Hirono (D-Hawaii)  
Kaine (D-Va.)  
King (I-Maine)  
Klobuchar (D, Minn.)  
Menendez (D-N.J.)  
Murphy (D-Conn.)  
Sander (I-Vt.)  
Warren (D-Mass.)  
Whitehouse (D-R.I.)

### Likely Republican

Cruz (R-Texas)

### Solid Democratic

### Solid Republican

IN Open (Braun, R)  
Barrasso (R-Wyo.)  
Blackburn (R-Tenn.)  
Cramer (R-N.D.)  
Fischer (R-Neb.)  
Hawley (R-Mo.)  
Ricketts (R-Neb.)  
Romney (R-Utah)  
Scott (R-Fla.)  
Wicker (R-Miss.)

Takeovers in *Italics*, # moved benefiting Democrats, \* moved benefiting Republicans

## CALENDAR

<b>Aug. 8</b>	Mississippi Governor Primary
<b>Aug. 10</b>	Louisiana Governor Filing Deadline
<b>Aug. 29</b>	Mississippi Governor Primary Runoff (if necessary)
<b>Oct. 14</b>	Louisiana Governor Primary
<b>Nov. 7</b>	Kentucky and Mississippi General Election

# Report Shorts

**Alabama Redistricting.** Alabama Republicans have passed a new congressional map — but it probably won't hold up in court. Federal judges ordered the state to produce a map that created two majority Black districts, or "something quite close to it." The map signed into law by Republican Gov. Kay Ivey includes one majority Black district and one district that is about 40 percent Black.

**Delaware's At-Large District.** State Treasurer Colleen Davis and state housing authority director Eugene Young both jumped into the open Democratic primary to succeed Rep. Lisa Blunt Rochester, who is running for Senate. Already in the race is state Sen. Sarah McBride. Solid Democratic.

**New Hampshire Governor.** GOP Gov. Chris Sununu is not running for re-election. Manchester Mayor Joyce Craig and Executive Councilor Cinde Warmington are running on the Democratic side while Republicans landed one of their most coveted candidates in former U.S. Sen. Kelly Ayotte. Former state Senate President Chuck Morse is also running for the GOP nomination. Battleground.

**New York's 3rd District.** Retired NYPD detective Mike Sapraine is the third Republican to launch his campaign, after Air Force veteran Kellen Curry and embattled incumbent George Santos. It's still possible Santos leaves office before July of 2024 and there's a special election, in which case party leaders, not voters, will pick their nominees. Toss-up.

**Pennsylvania's 7th District.** Another Republican has announced a campaign to challenge Democratic Rep. Susan Wild, who represents a purple district in Lehigh Valley. State Rep. Ryan Mackenzie has served in the state House since 2012 and briefly ran for this district in 2018. He'll face Air National Guard officer Kevin Dellicker in the GOP primary. Tilt Democratic.

**Rhode Island's 1st District Special.** Lt. Gov. Sabina Matos, the polling frontrunner in the crowded primary to replace Rep. David Cicilline, is embroiled in a scandal over charges she submitted fake signatures to get on the ballot. Looking to take advantage are former state Rep. Aaron Regunberg, who was just endorsed by Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, and former White House aide Gabe Amo. All three candidates are running TV ads ahead of the Sept. 5 primary. Solid Democratic. **IE**

## 2024 House Ratings

### Toss-Up (4D, 8R)

CA 13 (Duarte, R)	NY 3 (Santos, R)
CA 27 (Garcia, R)	NY 4 (D'Esposito, R)
CO 8 (Caraveo, D)	NY 17 (Lawler, R)
MI 7 (Open; Slotkin, D)	NY 22 (Williams, R)
NJ 7 (Kean Jr., R)	OR 5 (DeRemer, R)
NM 2 (Vasquez, D)	WA 3 (Perez, D)

### Tilt Democratic (3D)

CA 47 (Open; Porter, D)
PA 7 (Wild, D)
PA 8 (Cartwright, D)

### Tilt Republican (7R)

AZ 1 (Schweikert, R)
AZ 6 (Ciscomani, R)
CA 22 (Valadao, R)
IA 3 (Nunn, R)
MI 10 (James, R)
NY 19 (Molinaro, R)
VA 2 (Kiggans, R)

### Lean Democratic (14D)

AK AL (Peltola, D)
CT 5 (Hayes, D)
IL 17 (Sorensen, D)
ME 2 (Golden, D)
MI 3 (Scholten, D)
MN 2 (Craig, DFL)
NV 1 (Titus, D)
NV 3 (Lee, D)
NH 1 (Pappas, D)
NY 18 (Ryan, D)
OR 6 (Salinas, D)
PA 17 (Deluzio, D)
VA 7 (Spanberger, D)
WA 8 (Schrier, D)

### Lean Republican (6R)

CA 41 (Calvert, R)
CA 45 (Steel, R)
CO 3 (Boebert, R)
NE 2 (Bacon, R)
NY 1 (LaLota, R)
TX 15 (De La Cruz, R)

	GOP	DEM
Solid	172	168
Likely/Lean/Tilt	25	29
Total	197	197
Toss-up	12	
Ohio/North Carolina	29	
Needed for majority	218	

### Likely Democratic (12D)

CA 49 (Levin, D)	MI 8 (Kildee, D)
FL 9 (Soto, D)	NV 4 (Horsford, D)
FL 23 (Moskowitz, D)	NH 2 (Kuster, D)
IN 1 (Mrvan, D)	TX 28 (Cuellar, D)
KS 3 (Davids, D)	TX 34 (Gonzalez, D)
MD 6 (Open; Trone, D)	VA 10 (Wexton, D)

### Likely Republican (12R)

CA 3 (Kiley, R)	MT 1 (Zinke, R)
CA 40 (Kim, R)	PA 1 (Fitzpatrick, R)
FL 13 (Luna, R)	PA 10 (Perry, R)
FL 27 (Salazar, R)	SC 1 (Mace, R)
IA 1 (Miller-Meeks, R)	WI 1 (Steil, R)
IA 2 (Hinson, R)	WI 3 (Van Orden, R)

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**Arizona.** **Kyrsten Sinema (I) elected 2018 as a Democrat (50%). Filing deadline April 8.** The state of the Arizona Senate race has remained static for the past several months. This is largely due to the indecision of two potential candidates: Sinema, and 2022 GOP gubernatorial nominee Kari Lake.

The senator has remained mum about her re-election plans, and her fundraising provides mixed signals. Sinema raised \$1.3 million in the second quarter of the year — a fairly weak quarter for a senator running for re-election — but her campaign has continued to spend on digital fundraising, and she had nearly \$11 million in the bank at the end of June. In the meantime, her colleagues in the U.S. Senate and the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee are staying neutral. Some Democrats are worried about provoking Sinema while they still need her vote to confirm judges, and are avoiding taking sides until the senator makes a 2024 decision.

Rep. Ruben Gallego, the presumptive Democratic nominee, has continued to outraise Sinema and build his war chest. His campaign raised \$3 million in the second quarter and ended June with nearly \$4 million on hand.

The Republican primary has been frozen for months. Lake is seriously considering running, and has met with the National Republican Senatorial Committee, but she's also on the hypothetical shortlist of potential vice presidential candidates if Donald Trump becomes the presidential nominee. Currently, she's traveling the country promoting her new book.

Lake would be the presumptive frontrunner in a GOP primary, and if she decides not to run, several other Republicans are waiting in the wings, including 2022 Senate nominee Blake Masters and 2020 attorney general nominee Abe Hamadeh. Jim Lamon, a wealthy solar energy executive who ran for Senate last cycle, is also on the list of potential candidates. Pinal County Sheriff Mark Lamb is the only Republican who's announced a campaign, and his fundraising has been lackluster (just \$600,000 in the second quarter). More moderate Republicans such as former Gov. Doug Ducey and 2022 gubernatorial candidate Karrin Taylor Robson have ruled out Senate campaigns, and it's increasingly likely that Republicans will nominate Lake, or someone else from the MAGA wing of the party.

If Sinema runs, the three-way race will be competitive. According to conventional wisdom, Sinema should draw more support away from Gallego, but early polling shows that she's fairly unpopular across the board. A nonpartisan poll from Noble Predictive Insights (conducted in mid-July) showed 32 percent of Democrats viewed her favorably, while 41 percent of independents and 42 percent of Republicans viewed her favorably. And in a two-way race between Gallego and a Republican, it's not clear who would be better positioned to win Arizona's independent voters. Toss-up.

**California. Open; Dianne Feinstein (D) not seeking re-election. Filing deadline Dec. 8.** The top tier of this race consists of Reps. Adam Schiff, Katie Porter, and Barbara Lee, all Democrats competing for a spot in the general election in the fall. Silicon Valley entrepreneur Lexi Reese is hoping to crack into that echelon but begins the race unknown and



Ruben Gallego

Tom Williams/CQ Roll Call

will probably have to open up her wallet to increase her name ID. Schiff is the top Senate fundraiser in the country and had \$29.8 million in the bank on June 30, nearly triple Porter's war chest (\$10.4 million); Lee trails significantly, with \$1.4 million, and an allied super PAC is trying to raise \$10 million to close the gap.

The race is difficult to handicap because of California's all-party primary system in which candidates from all parties run on the same primary ballot, and the top two vote-getters advance to the general election. So there's uncertainty about how many tickets to the general election are available for the Democratic candidates. If Republicans can consolidate behind one candidate, that person would have a clear shot at making the general election, but if the GOP fractures among a handful of contenders, then two Democrats could make the general election. Several Democratic operatives watching the race said that Schiff will likely secure one spot in the general election, given his fundraising advantage and support from the state's political establishment. Who gets the other spot — Porter, Lee, Reese, or a Republican — will determine how this race plays out. Solid Democratic.

*Public Policy Institute of California, June 7-29 (LVs)(online panel) — All-party primary ballot: Porter (D) 19%, Schiff (D) 16%, Lee (D) 13%, Early (R) 7%, Bradley (R) 6%, Sarah Liew (R) 5%, Jonathan Reiss (R) 4%, Frank Ferreira (I) 3%, Fepbrina Keivaulqe (I) 2%, Joshua Bocanegra (D) 2%, Danny Fabricant (R) 2%, Roxanne Lawler (R) 2%, Raji Rab (D) 2%, Jessica Resendez (D) 2%, Akinyemi Agbede (D) 1%, Jehu Hand (R) 1%, Jacob Farnos (D) 1%, Jeremy Fennell (D) 1%, Denice Gary-Pandol (R) 1%, Denard Ingram (D) 1%.*

*Emerson College for Inside California Politics, June 4-7 (RVs)(mixed mode) — All-party primary ballot: Schiff (D) 15%, Porter (D) 14%, Lee (D) 6%, Bradley (R) 4%, Early (R) 3%, Resendez (D) 3%, Douglas Pierce (D) 2%, Rab (D) 1%, Gary-Pandol (R) 1%, Reiss (R) 1%, Lawler (R) 1%, Ferreira (I) 1%.*

**Connecticut. Chris Murphy (D) elected 2012 (55%), 2018 (60%). Filing deadline June 11.** Murphy has no announced opponents, and is sitting on \$6.7 million in his campaign account as of June 30. Solid Democratic.

**Delaware. Open; Tom Carper (D) not seeking re-election. Filing deadline July 9.** Carper is calling it a career after four terms in the Senate, two terms as governor, and 10 years in the House. His successor is almost certain to be Rep. Lisa Blunt Rochester, who entered the race with Carper's endorsement and has cleared the Democratic primary field. State Treasurer Colleen Davis had made noise about running but will seek Blunt Rochester's open House seat instead. Solid Democratic.

**Florida. Rick Scott (R) elected 2018 (50%). Filing deadline July 22.** Democrats believe that the right candidate could put the Sunshine State on the Senate battleground map. But it's not yet clear who that candidate will be.

Phil Ehr, a Navy veteran who ran against Rep. Matt Gaetz in 2020, announced a campaign in July, but Democratic strategists don't consider him a top-tier candidate. (Ehr also ran against Gaetz in 2018 but lost the Democratic primary.) Former Rep. Debbie Mucarsel-Powell, who represented a purple seat in South Florida, is still seriously considering running and has been recruited by Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer. Regaining lost ground in South Florida is crucial to Democrats' path to victory — which is why some Democrats see Mucarsel-Powell, an Ecuadorian immigrant who previously represented the region for two years before she lost re-election in 2020, as their strongest

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option. Democratic sources believe there's a good chance the former congresswoman will run.

Other potential Democratic candidates include State House Democratic Leader Fentrice Driskell and Brevard County School Board member Jennifer Jenkins. Former Rep. Alan Grayson, a liberal firebrand with a spotty past, has also filed to run.

Scott has insisted that he plans to run for re-election, though the *New*

*York Times* reported in June that he was still weighing a presidential campaign. If he doesn't run, Rep. Mike Waltz is on the list of Republicans hoping to succeed him. In response to the *Times* story, Scott's spokesperson reiterated that the

senator was running for re-election. Scott ended the second quarter with nearly \$3 million in his campaign account and can self-fund if necessary.

The onus is still on Democrats to prove that the Florida Senate race will be competitive, after the state has lurched to the right over the past few cycles. Democrats expect that the 2024 electorate will be more balanced than it was in 2022, when Gov. Ron DeSantis won re-election by nearly 20 points. And the Biden campaign still plans to invest in the state. But until Democrats have a formidable candidate, the Senate race remains Solid Republican.

*Change Research (D) for Ehr, June 27-29 (LVs)(online)— General election ballot: Scott over Ehr, 43% - 38%.*

**Hawaii.** **Mazie Hirono (D) elected 2012 (63%), 2018 (71%). Filing deadline June 4.** No Republicans have even bothered to file against Hirono, and the progressive senator isn't expected to face competition from her left either. Solid Democratic.

**Indiana.** **Open; Mike Braun (R) running for governor. Filing deadline Feb. 9.** Rep. Jim Banks has cleared the GOP primary field and is on a glide path to winning the Republican nomination. No other credible Republican candidates have announced campaigns, and Banks has secured endorsements from Trump, the National Republican Senatorial Committee, and 15 Republican senators (along with a long list of local elected officials). He had \$2.5 million in his campaign account on June 30.

The general election isn't likely to be competitive either. A few Democrats, Indianapolis City-County councilor Keith Potts and former state Rep. Marc Carmichael, have recently announced campaigns. But the eventual nominee will be the underdog in this comfortably Republican state. Solid Republican.

**Maine.** **Angus King (I) elected 2012 (53%), 2018 (54%). Filing deadline March 15.** King told a local reporter he was running again, though he also said that wasn't an "official announcement." But Democratic strategists expect the independent former governor to seek a third term. While a Democratic candidate will appear on the ballot, that won't be a major hurdle for King, who won majorities in his previous two three-way contests. Now that Maine uses ranked-choice voting,

there's even less concern about a Republican taking advantage of a split liberal vote. Solid Democratic/Independent.

**Maryland.** **Open; Ben Cardin (D) not seeking re-election. Filing deadline Jan. 19.** The picture in Maryland got a little clearer when progressive hero Rep. Jamie Raskin opted out of running to succeed Cardin. That leaves 6th District Rep. David Trone and Prince George's County Executive Angela Alsobrooks as the top contenders for the Democratic nomination. Alsobrooks is racking up lots of in-state endorsements in her quest to become Maryland's first Black senator — and only the third Black woman to ever serve in the Senate — while Trone recently concluded a \$5 million paid media push focused in the Baltimore area, where he is largely unknown. Some Democratic strategists believe Baltimore is where the election will be decided between the congressman (whose base is in Western Maryland) and Alsobrooks (who is expected to run strong in Prince George's and the inner DC suburbs).

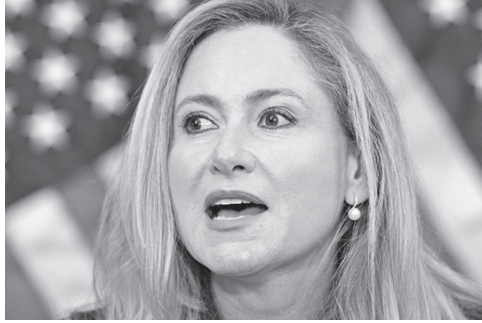
Trone is wealthy and is largely self-funding his bid, while Alsobrooks has put together a credible fundraising operation and reported \$1.3 million in the bank at the end of June. Montgomery County Councilman Will Jawando is also running and raised a notable \$525,000 in his first two months, but isn't in the same tier as Alsobrooks and Trone. Earlier in the summer, there was some scuttlebutt about Baltimore Orioles COO John Angelos running as either a Democrat or an independent. And state Del. Jon Cardin, the outgoing senator's son, is publicly musing about launching a bid as well. The only Republican who could make this race interesting is former Gov. Larry Hogan, but he doesn't appear interested. Solid Democratic.

**Massachusetts.** **Elizabeth Warren (D) elected 2012 (54%), 2018 (60%). Filing deadline May 28.** Someone is testing the waters for a primary challenge to Warren, according to screenshots of a polling questionnaire shared online. The poll hinted that the potential candidate did not have prior elected experience but had "experience creating jobs and housing for Massachusetts residents." Warren had \$3.3 million in campaign funds on June 30 and support from the biggest names in state Democratic politics. She also received a shout-out from former White House chief of staff Ron Klain on Twitter. Solid Democratic.

**Michigan.** **Open; Debbie Stabenow (D) not seeking re-election. Filing deadline April 23.** Without the incumbent on the ballot, Republicans have a better opportunity to flip the Senate seat. But so far, the GOP has struggled to find a strong candidate.

The 2022 cycle was devastating for Michigan Republicans, and their state party has been mired in bitter infighting (one recent committee meeting descended into a violent brawl). Meanwhile, Republican leaders are still hunting for a candidate who can win a GOP primary without alienating more moderate voters in the general election. Former Rep. Peter Meijer could accomplish the latter task but might not be able to win a primary after voting to impeach Trump in 2021 (which could also be a liability in the general election if some Trump supporters refuse to vote for him). New York Stock Exchange vice chairman John Tuttle and former Rep. Mike Rogers are also considering running. Rogers, a former chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, had initially toyed with a presidential campaign, but now has an eye on the Senate race. Tuttle, whose roots are in Michigan but currently works in Manhattan, is considered "a strong potential recruit" by NRSC Chairman Steve Daines.

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Debbie Mucarsel-Powell

Tom Williams/CQ Roll Call

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Michigan State Board of Education member Nikki Snyder also filed to run, but Republican strategists don't see her as a top-tier candidate.

Democratic Rep. Elissa Slotkin remains the frontrunner in the Democratic primary, though she might have a more competitive primary now that *The Good Doctor* actor Hill Harper has announced a campaign. Harper could draw support from more progressive Democrats who are skeptical of Slotkin's moderate record; the congresswoman recently faced criticism for voting for an amendment that would ban unapproved



Mike Rogers

Tom Williams/CQ Roll Call  
flags, including Pride flags, on military bases. Harper isn't a total outsider — he has ties to local Detroit political leaders and has been involved with local nonprofits — but a *Daily Beast* report raised questions about how long Harper

had actually lived in the state. State Board of Education member Pamela Pugh and former state Rep. Leslie Love are also running.

There's a potential for messy primaries to erupt on both sides, and plenty of time for the field to evolve before the August primary. At this point, Democrats have the edge in Michigan. Lean Democratic.

*Mitchell Research & Communications for MIRS, July 11-13 (LVs)(SMS/Web)*— General election ballot: Slotkin over Meijer, 41% - 28%; Slotkin over Rogers, 44% - 38%.

**Minnesota.** Amy Klobuchar (DFL) elected 2006 (58%), 2012 (65%), 2018 (60%). Filing deadline June 4. Republicans blame lackluster candidates for their struggles against Klobuchar in previous cycles. But they've yet to recruit a candidate who could make this race competitive. Biden should win the state at the presidential level (he won it by 7 points in 2020 after Hillary Clinton won it by just 1.5 points in 2016), and Klobuchar has a record of running ahead of other Democrats in the state. At the end of June, she had \$3.4 million in her campaign account. Solid Democratic.

**Mississippi.** Roger Wicker (R) appointed 2007, elected 2008 special (55%), 2012 (57%), 2018 (59%). Filing deadline March 1. Some Democratic operatives would be interested in Mississippi if Brandon Presley, the party's nominee for governor, pulls off an upset against Gov. Tate Reeves this fall. If that happens, the Senate race might attract a candidate more credible than Navy veteran and attorney Ty Pinkins, who reported just \$7,900 in the bank on June 30. Wicker had \$4.2 million. Solid Republican.

**Missouri.** Josh Hawley (R) elected 2018 (51%). Filing deadline March 26. Marine veteran Lucas Kunce is hoping that his second U.S. Senate campaign will be more successful than his first, when he lost the Democratic primary to brewery heiress/nurse Trudy Busch Valentine. But once again, Kunce faces competition for the Democratic nomination. St. Louis County Prosecutor Wesley Bell announced his Senate campaign in early June, securing endorsements from several local political leaders including Ferguson Mayor Ella Jones, who rescinded her endorsement of Kunce to back Bell. Kunce, meanwhile, has the endorsement of key labor

groups, including the AFL-CIO. The Marine veteran has a head start in fundraising, and ended the second quarter with \$1.2 million on hand. Bell, who had three weeks to fundraise, had \$135,000 on hand. State Sen. Karla May also announced a campaign in mid-July.

The incumbent senator had \$4.5 million in his campaign account and outraised Kunce this quarter, \$1.6 million to \$1.2 million. Regardless of what happens in the Democratic primary, Hawley will be the clear favorite. Solid Republican.

**Montana.** Jon Tester (D) elected 2006 (49%), 2012 (49%), 2018 (50%). Filing deadline March 11. Republican leadership in Washington, DC successfully recruited Navy SEAL veteran Tim Sheehy into this race. Sheehy, who had a decorated military career before founding several successful aviation technology companies, already has backing from Daines, Gov. Greg Gianforte, 1st District Rep. Ryan Zinke, and a host of U.S. senators.

But Sheehy probably won't have the primary field to himself. 2nd District Rep. Matt Rosendale, the party's nominee in 2018, is likely to run as well. Sheehy is wealthy and could have a massive financial advantage over Rosendale, who reported just \$1.5 million in campaign funds on June 30, meaning Rosendale may need significant support from his allies at the Club for Growth — but the Club has recently sounded cooler on him and more open to Sheehy. The looming primary has the potential to turn messy, with Rosendale already calling Sheehy a puppet of Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, and Sheehy's allies questioning Rosendale's ability to win a general election.

Tester, meanwhile, is stockpiling cash; the seven-fingered farmer had \$10.5 million in his war chest on June 30 — already half of what he raised the entire 2018 cycle — and he and his allies are eager to attack either potential opponent as wealthy out-of-staters. Read an in-depth look at this race in the July 14 issue of *Inside Elections*. Toss-up.

**Nebraska.** Deb Fischer (R) elected 2012 (58%), 2018 (58%). Filing deadline Feb. 15. Fischer should sail to re-election next November. Democrats haven't won a Senate election in Nebraska since 2006. Solid Republican.

**Nebraska Special.** Pete Ricketts (R) appointed 2023. Filing deadline Feb. 15. Charles Herbster, who lost the 2022 GOP gubernatorial primary, has publicly mulled challenging Ricketts in the GOP primary but has yet to make a decision. Ricketts, the former governor of Nebraska, has only one primary challenger at the moment (who has yet to file with the FEC). Solid Republican.

**Nevada.** Jacky Rosen (D) elected 2018 (50%). Filing deadline March 15. Across a tranche of battleground states — Wisconsin, Michigan, and Arizona — Republicans are still in the recruitment stage (and their prized recruit in Pennsylvania, David McCormick, hasn't announced a campaign yet). But Republicans do have a credible candidate in Nevada, which featured the closest Senate race in the country last cycle.

Army veteran Sam Brown announced his campaign at the beginning of July. In 2022, Brown was the insurgent candidate running against establishment-backed former state Attorney General Adam Laxalt, but now the retired captain has the full weight of the GOP behind him. Daines quickly endorsed Brown after his announcement, as did Sens. John Barrasso and Marsha Blackburn and Americans for Prosperity

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Action, a group backed by the Koch brothers. In the first week of the race, his campaign said it raised \$400,000.

But Brown doesn't have the primary to himself. Former state Rep. Jim Marchant, the GOP nominee for Secretary of State last cycle, is also running. Marchant is best known for spreading conspiracy theories about the 2020 election, and lost to now-Secretary of State Francisco Aguilar by 2 points. Though his statewide run has boosted his name ID, his fundraising has been dismal so far — he had just \$43,000 in his campaign account at the end of June. Former Ambassador to Iceland Jeffrey Ross Gunter, who served under Trump, plans to announce a campaign in early August, according to NBC News. While in the post, he faced criticism for requesting to carry a gun in Iceland and attempting to stay in California during the pandemic.

Though Brown's fundraising and early endorsements make him the frontrunner at this point, his primary opponents could force him to run to the right. During the 2022 GOP primary Brown accused Laxalt of flip-flopping on his response to 2020 election results.

Brown could now face similar attacks from Marchant.

Rosen, who had \$7.5 million on hand at the end of

June, is preparing for a competitive race. Nevada has trended slightly in Republicans' favor over the past few years — it was the only state where Republicans picked up a governor's seat in 2022, and Biden won the state by a slightly smaller margin (2.39 points) than Clinton's (2.42 points). The Silver State is almost guaranteed to feature another close Senate next year. Tilt Democratic.

**New Jersey. Bob Menendez (D) appointed 2006, elected 2006 (53%), 2012 (58%), 2018 (54%). Filing deadline March 25.** Menendez's only major primary challenger, Roselle Park Mayor Joe Signorello, dropped out of the race to run for the House instead. None of the state's up-and-comers have shown any interest in running against Menendez (who had \$7.8 million in the bank on June 30), but the senior senator could still be vulnerable if he has to face federal corruption charges again (the *New York Times* reported he is under investigation). Six years ago, an unknown, unfunded primary challenger won 38 percent of the vote against Menendez after the senator's first corruption case resulted in a mistrial. The most notable Republican candidate is Daniel Cruz, a former local school board member who won 17 percent of the vote in a GOP state Senate primary in 2021. Solid Democratic.

**New Mexico. Martin Heinrich (D) elected 2012 (51%), 2018 (54%). Filing deadline Feb. 6.** There was a brief period of speculation that Heinrich might forgo a third term in order to focus on a gubernatorial bid in 2026, but the Democrat put all that to rest by announcing his campaign, raising \$1.5 million from April through June, and reporting \$2.9 million in the bank on June 30. Republicans don't have a candidate to run against him and haven't won a Senate race since 2002. Solid Democratic.



Sam Brown

Bill Clark/CQ Roll Call

**New York. Kirsten Gillibrand (D) appointed 2009, elected 2010 (63%), 2012 (72%), 2018 (67%). Filing deadline April.** In a state with as many ambitious Democrats as New York, there's going to be noise about a primary challenger to Gillibrand. But high-profile progressive favorites such as Reps. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and Jamaal Bowman have ruled it out, and former Gov. Andrew Cuomo looks unlikely to run either. Gillibrand's only announced challenger in the primary is Army veteran and former Cuomo staffer William Schweitzer, who has raised less than \$5,000. Republicans had a great year in New York last year but now are focused on holding onto six congressional seats in Democratic territory. 2022 gubernatorial nominee Lee Zeldin floated a Senate bid earlier this year but hasn't said anything about it since. Solid Democratic.

**North Dakota. Kevin Cramer (R) election 2018 (55%). Filing deadline April 8.** If Gov. Doug Burgum's presidential campaign catches fire, there's a chance he'll forgo a third term as chief executive. Then Cramer might take a look at running for governor, opening up his Senate seat. But that's a lot of ifs. Solid Republican.

**Ohio. Sherrod Brown (D) elected 2006 (56%), 2012 (51%), 2018 (53%). Filing deadline Dec. 20.** Republicans are clamoring for a chance to take on Brown, the last remaining Democrat elected to statewide office in Ohio. But the GOP first needs to get through a competitive primary. Now that Secretary of State Frank LaRose has announced, a three-way race is shaping up between LaRose and 2022 candidates Matt Dolan and Bernie Moreno. And unlike in several other Senate battleground races, the NRSC is staying out of the primary, as most Republicans believe all three candidates would be strong nominees in a general election.

Dolan, a state senator, is incredibly wealthy — his family owns the Cleveland Guardians baseball team, and he's already loaned his campaign \$4 million. He did surprisingly well in the 2022 GOP primary (when he spent \$10 million of his own money), coming in third place with 23 percent despite being the only candidate who criticized Trump's false claims about election fraud. But Dolan will need to find a way to raise his ceiling in a three-way primary, and his positions on Trump and abortion will make that a difficult task.

Moreno, a businessman from Cleveland, also has the ability to self-fund, though he's not quite as wealthy as Dolan. His 2022 Senate campaign was short-lived, and he dropped out before the GOP primary. But this time around, he's the most likely of the three candidates to win Trump's endorsement, and he's already picked up an endorsement from Ohio Sen. J.D. Vance.

LaRose was the last to announce his campaign, and while he doesn't have the ability to self-fund a campaign like his opponents, he does start the race with the edge in name ID. LaRose occupies a lane somewhere in between Moreno and Dolan — he did not endorse Trump in 2020, but announced shortly after his campaign launch that was endorsing Trump's 2024 campaign. Now that he's in the race, LaRose's challenge will be proving that he can compete with Moreno and Dolan's fundraising. Dolan ended the quarter with \$3.9 million in his campaign account, while Moreno had \$1.5 million on hand — however, Moreno hasn't spent any of his own money on the race, and outraised Dolan last quarter.

The Buckeye State has only drifted further to the right since 2018, the last time Brown was up for re-election, and both parties are preparing for an expensive fight. During the second quarter of the year, Brown raised \$5 million, the second highest amount of any senator up for re-election

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(Montana's Jon Tester raised \$5.1 million) and finished June with \$8.7 million in the bank. Toss-up.

*Suffolk University for USA TODAY, July 9-12 (RVs)(live telephone)— General election ballot: Brown and LaRose tied at 45%; Brown over Dolan, 46% - 43%; Brown over Moreno, 48% - 41%.*

*Causeway Solutions for Leadership for Ohio Fund (pro-LaRose), June 29 (RVs)— GOP primary ballot: LaRose 28%, Dolan 10%, Moreno 5%.*

*East Carolina Univ., June 21-24 (RVs)(mixed mode)— General election ballot: Brown over LaRose, 44% - 42%; Brown over Dolan, 45% - 44%; Brown over Moreno, 46% - 42%.*

**Pennsylvania. Bob Casey, Jr. (D) elected 2006 (59%), 2012 (54%), 2018 (56%). Filing deadline Feb. 2024.** Republicans dodged a massive bullet when state Sen. Doug Mastriano announced that he wouldn't run for Senate after all. Mastriano's 15-point loss to Josh Shapiro in last November's gubernatorial race proved he can't win a general election in Pennsylvania, but he remained popular enough with Republican voters to win a primary and jeopardize the GOP's ability to challenge Casey.

Former hedge fund CEO David McCormick is still widely expected to run for Senate again in 2024, though he isn't likely to announce a campaign till the fall. Despite not having an official campaign, he's already received an endorsement from Americans for Prosperity Action, and his PAC is continuing to raise money (mega donor Jeff Yass just donated \$1 million). Republicans aren't concerned about McCormick's timeline, since he's wealthy enough to self-fund his campaign. Party operatives largely believe that McCormick will be a stronger candidate than Mehmet Oz, who barely defeated McCormick in the 2022 GOP primary after nabbing Trump's endorsement.

Like the rest of his class, Casey has had the advantage of running in election cycles that favored Democrats, and his Republican opponents haven't been particularly formidable. But the three-term senator (who's been elected to statewide office six times in the past 26 years) isn't taking the race for granted. He raised \$4 million in the second quarter and ended June with nearly \$6 million on hand. Though Pennsylvania was a disaster for Republicans last cycle, the party believes they'll perform better in a presidential election year. Tilt Democratic.

**Rhode Island. Sheldon Whitehouse (D) elected 2006 (54%), 2012 (65%), 2018 (61%). Filing deadline June 26.** Whitehouse has one announced Republican challenger, IT professional and former state GOP operative Ray McKay, who had just \$8,300 in the bank on June 30. Former state House Minority Leader/2018 gubernatorial candidate Patricia Morgan also filed to run in the GOP primary but is not a declared candidate. Morgan is controversial within GOP politics and was ousted from her leadership role in 2019. Solid Democratic.

**Tennessee. Marsha Blackburn (R) elected 2018 (55%). Filing deadline April 4.** State Rep. Gloria Johnson, one of the famed "Tennessee Three," is preparing to announce a U.S. Senate campaign in



Gloria Johnson

Courtesy Gloria Johnson

August and has hired campaign staff. Even before she entered the national spotlight by protesting Tennessee Republicans' inaction on gun violence, the legislator had been mulling a challenge to Blackburn. Johnson's profile — and Blackburn's reputation as a conservative firebrand — could open the door to a national Democratic donor base. Johnson won't have the Democratic primary to herself; Marquita Bradshaw, an environmental justice activist who was the Democratic U.S. Senate nominee in 2020 (she lost, 62-35 percent), is running as well.

But Blackburn remains the clear favorite to win reelection, especially in a presidential year when the Republican nominee should win the state by double-digits (Trump won the state by 23 points in 2020). As of June 30, the senator had \$5.5 million in her campaign account. Solid Republican.

**Texas. Ted Cruz (R) elected 2012 (56%), 2018 (51%). Filing deadline Dec. 11.** Democrats aren't giving up on their perennial dream of flipping the Lone Star State — in fact, Cruz appears to be the most vulnerable Republican senator up for re-election in 2024, increasing the odds that national Democratic groups invest in the state.

Rep. Colin Allred, who flipped a Dallas-based congressional seat in 2018, launched his Senate campaign at the beginning of May. The former NFL linebacker and civil rights lawyer was seen as a top recruit who would have the ability to raise the massive amount of money needed to run a Senate race in Texas. In the first two months of his campaign, the congressman raised \$6.2 million (and transferred another \$2.4 million from his House campaign account).

Two months later, state Sen. Roland Gutierrez also launched a campaign, setting up a primary clash that could pull the eventual nominee to the left. Gutierrez, who served in the state House for over a decade before he was elected to the state Senate in 2020, has been a staunch advocate for gun control measures since the Uvalde school shooting (his district stretches west of San Antonio and encompasses Uvalde). Allred remains the frontrunner in the primary, and the preferred candidate of Democrats in D.C. But Gutierrez is a serious opponent, particularly in a state where Hispanic voters make up a large portion of the Democratic primary electorate. If neither candidate wins 50 percent of the vote in the primary, the race would head to a runoff.

Meanwhile, Cruz is preparing for another competitive race that is likely to be even more expensive than his 2018 re-election campaign. The senator raised \$3.4 million in the second quarter and had \$4.8 million in his campaign account (about \$1 million less than Allred, who had \$5.7 million on hand). Though Texas has trended in Democrats' direction over the past three presidential election cycles, the Republican nominee is still expected to win the state, and the Democratic Senate nominee will probably need to outperform Biden by several points. Likely Republican.

*The University of Texas at Tyler, May 10-21 (RVs)(mixed mode)— General election ballot: Cruz over Allred, 42% - 37%.*

**Utah. Mitt Romney (R) elected 2018 (63%). Filing deadline March 21.** State House Speaker Brad Wilson continues to ramp up pressure on Romney with his exploratory bid for Senate, while not officially launching a campaign against the incumbent in a GOP primary. Wilson, who believes Utah should send a "conservative fighter" to the Senate, raised \$1 million through June 30, and loaned himself another \$1.2 million. Romney has not said if he will run again, and has raised barely any money this year — his campaign's biggest receipt came from the sale of his email list to a GOP consulting firm. Romney is personally wealthy

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so fundraising isn't a necessity for him, but it could be a sign that the 2012 GOP presidential nominee is considering leaving the Senate after one eventual term. If he does retire, any number of Republicans could seek to replace him, including former Rep. Jason Chaffetz, state Attorney General Sean Reyes, and state Sen. Mike Kennedy. Solid Republican.

**Vermont.** **Bernie Sanders (I) elected 2006 (65%), 2012 (71%), 2018 (67%). Filing deadline May 30.** Sanders hasn't made an official announcement about 2024, but the democratic socialist has never struggled to win re-election. If he runs and wins, he'd be 89 by the end of his next term. Solid Democratic.

**Virginia.** **Tim Kaine (D) elected 2012 (53%), 2018 (57%). Filing deadline April 11.** The Republican field expanded with the entrance of Navy veteran Hung Cao, who ran for Congress in the 10th District last year. Scott Parkinson, a former vice president at the anti-tax Club for Growth, is the other notable candidate in the race and had \$335,000 in the bank on June 30. Kaine, a popular former governor who had \$6.3 million, will be tough to beat no matter who the GOP nominee is, especially with Virginia no longer serving as a presidential battleground. The state could get another look from operatives in both parties if Republicans blow the doors off in local elections this fall. Solid Democratic.

**Washington.** **Maria Cantwell (D) elected 2000 (49%), 2006 (57%), 2012 (60%), 2018 (58%). Filing deadline May 17.** The state's top-two primary system helps insulate Cantwell from any Democratic challengers, and she's likely to face a Republican in the general election.

Raul Garcia, a physician from Yakima who ran for governor in 2020, is Cantwell's only serious GOP opponent right now. Garcia was initially running in the open governor's race but switched to the Senate race after former Rep. Dave Reichert entered the gubernatorial contest. Though Garcia's 2020 run for governor drew support from several prominent Republicans (including former Sen. Slade Gorton and former Gov. Dan Evans), Garcia only won 5 percent of the GOP primary vote.

Even if Garcia claims a spot in the general election, he'll have an uphill battle against Cantwell, who has \$3 million in her campaign account and is personally wealthy. The race to replace outgoing Gov. Jay Inslee is more likely to become competitive. Solid Democratic.

**West Virginia.** **Joe Manchin (D) elected 2010 special (53%), 2012 (61%), 2018 (49.6%). Filing deadline Jan. 26.** Democrats' hopes of keeping this seat hinge on Manchin running for re-election. But the senator is still flirting with a third-party presidential bid under the No Labels banner, even traveling to New Hampshire to hold an event with the group. He says a decision on a run for the White House won't come until "next year," which indicates a public announcement on his future in the Senate is probably a long way off as well. He did step up his fundraising, raising \$1.3 million in the second quarter after pulling in just \$237,000 in the first three months of the year. And he reported a formidable \$10.8 million in the bank on June 30.

On the Republican side, Gov. Jim Justice continues to have a significant polling lead over Rep. Alex Mooney. Justice raised a little over \$900,000 in his first few months in the race, and even though he was once West Virginia's wealthiest man, he appears unlikely to self-fund this bid. Mooney raised just half that, but reported \$1.5 million in the bank on June 30. More importantly for the Freedom Caucus member looking to pull off an upset, the anti-tax Club for Growth reiterated its support for Mooney and announced it had raised \$13.6 million it intends to deploy against Justice before the primary. Justice has a checkered business record and a long list of legal troubles the Club will look to exploit, but the governor's allies believe Justice's negatives are already baked into the race. Even if Mooney is the nominee, Republicans think they will beat Manchin, given the extreme partisan lean of the state — though they might have to spend more money defeating Manchin if Justice is not the nominee.

With the GOP nominee for president likely to carry the state by close to 40 points, Manchin is in the fight of his life. Justice, a popular incumbent governor, would be the strongest challenger he's ever faced. And West Virginia has shifted significantly to the right since 2012, when Manchin last ran in a presidential year. If he runs, he'll have a puncher's chance — especially if the GOP primary turns brutal. But for now, this race begins at Tilt Republican.

*East Carolina Univ., May 22-23 (RVs)(IVR/online) — General election ballot: Justice over Manchin, 54%-22%; Mooney over Manchin, 41%-40%.*

**Wisconsin.** **Tammy Baldwin (D) elected 2012 (51%), 2018 (55%). Filing deadline June 1.** Republicans are waiting for their field to develop after top recruit Rep. Mike Gallagher passed on a run. Among the potential candidates are Rep. Tom Tiffany, real estate developer/2012 Senate candidate Eric Hovde, and former staffing company CEO Scott Mayer. But none sound particularly enthusiastic about running. Former Milwaukee Sheriff David Clarke is a wild-card; Democrats released a poll showing him dominating the GOP primary and believe his controversial record would make him an easy opponent for Baldwin. The presidential race should be close in Wisconsin, and that means the Senate race will probably be competitive, too. But Baldwin begins with \$5.5 million in the bank and a massive head start over an unformed GOP field. Lean Democratic.

*Public Policy Polling (D), June 5-6 (LVs) — GOP primary ballot: Clarke 40%, Gallagher 20%, Tiffany 10%, Hovde 3%.*

**Wyoming.** **John Barrasso (R) appointed 2007, elected 2008 special (73%), 2012 (76%), 2018 (67%). Filing deadline May 31.** Barrasso is expected to run for re-election, though he hasn't made a formal announcement yet. He raised \$1.5 million in the second fundraising quarter and shouldn't face serious competition from his right or left. Solid Republican.

### Podcast Episode 3

Nathan, Erin, and Jacob discuss fundraising and the impact of campaign finances on presidential, House, and Senate races and take an early look at the growing batch of House rematches. The Inside Elections Podcast is sponsored by George Washington University's Graduate School of Political Management.



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