

Inside Elections

with

Nathan L. Gonzales

Nonpartisan Analysis

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2022 Senate Overview: Advantage GOP

By Nathan L. Gonzales and Jacob Rubashkin

The clock is ticking for Democrats. With seven months to go before Election Day, there's little sign of relief for a country facing myriad challenges, and scant evidence that President Joe Biden's popularity will rebound significantly. Voters are primed to oust the party in power and deliver control of the Senate to Republicans.

Democrats admit: they're facing considerable political headwinds. While Biden's job approval rating nationally is hovering in the low 40s, it's often worse in states hosting battleground Senate races. That's putting Democratic incumbents and candidates into a nearly impossible electoral hole. There are some political challenges that candidate quality and fundraising can't fix.

Democrats have to shift 2022 away from a typical midterm election that's a national referendum on the state of the country under Democratic leadership. Instead, they need voters to choose between two imperfect candidates in a series of individual races. According to history, that's a difficult task.

Meanwhile, the political environment has been doing the hard work for Republicans, keeping Democratic senators within reach in polling while the GOP sorts out a few competitive primaries. Republicans plan to explain how specific Democratic actions contributed to the crises facing the country. Democratic strategists admit the party needs to do a better job acknowledging voters' specific concerns including inflation and the cost of living, rather than trying to sell a massive spending bill.

Biden and Democratic candidates could get a bump from disaffected Democratic voters and some left-leaning independents if the Supreme Court effectively overturns *Roe v. Wade* in the coming months. But that won't attract any Republicans or address the broader economic concerns of independent voters.

While eight races are competitive, the core of the Senate battlefield is five states: Nevada, Georgia, Arizona, Wisconsin, and Pennsylvania. Considering Democratic candidates in the most competitive 2021 races underperformed Biden's 2020 totals by about a dozen points, it's difficult to see how Democrats are going to win in places Biden carried by 2 points or less.

It's possible that Democrats maintain their delicate control of a 50-50 Senate, and it's possible that the dam breaks and Republicans gain five seats. But, currently, the most likely outcome is a net gain of 1-3 seats for Republicans. And the lower end of that range is enough to secure a GOP majority.

Republicans may not knock off all of the vulnerable Democratic senators, and the party could see a race implode in a state they already hold. But there are enough takeover opportunities that Republicans have some room for error. Democrats have none.

2022 Senate Ratings

Toss-up

Cortez Masto (D-Nev.)

Warnock (D-Ga.)

Kelly (D-Ariz.)

Tilt Democratic

Hassan (D-N.H.)

Tilt Republican

PA Open (Toomey, R)

Johnson (R-Wisc.)#

Lean Democratic

Lean Republican

NC Open (Burr, R)

Likely Democratic

Likely Republican

Rubio (R-Fl.)

Solid Democratic

VT Open (Leahy, D)

Bennet (D-Colo.)

Blumenthal (D-Conn.)

Duckworth (D-Ill.)

Murray (D-Wash.)

Padilla (D-Calif.)

Schatz (D-Hawaii)

Schumer (D-N.Y.)

Van Hollen (D-Md.)

Wyden (D-Ore.)

Solid Republican

AL Open (Shelby, R)

MO Open (Blunt, R)

OH Open (Portman, R)

OK Open (Inhofe, R)

Boozman (R-Ark.)

Crapo (R-Idaho)

Grassley (R-Iowa)

Hoeven (R-N.D.)

Kennedy (R-La.)

Lankford (R-Okla.)

Lee (R-Utah)

Moran (R-Kan.)

Murkowski (R-Alaska)

Paul (R-Ky.)

Scott (R-S.C.)

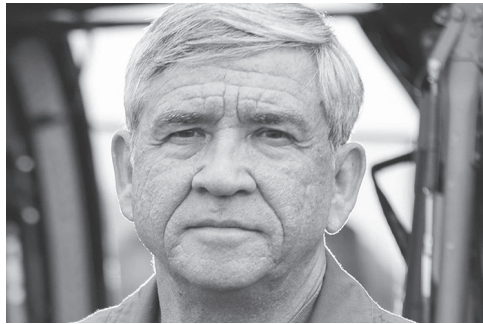
Thune (R-S.D.)

Young (R-Ind.)

moved benefiting Democrats, * moved benefiting Republicans Takeovers in Italics

Alabama. Open; Richard Shelby (R) not seeking re-election. May 24 primary, June 21 runoff (if necessary). Rep. Mo Brooks was hoping to ride Trump’s endorsement to the GOP nomination. But Trump recently rescinded his support, blaming it on Brooks’ “woke” ideology. The congressman tried to prevent the certified presidential results from being ratified on Jan. 6, 2021, and even spoke at Trump’s rally on the Mall that day, but later said the party should move past talk about the 2020 elections. Trump cited those comments in rescinding his endorsement, but they’re six months old already, and it’s clear that Trump was also frustrated with Brooks’ lack of success in the Senate race and concerned that he would get blamed for a loss by his endorsed candidate.

Now, it looks like a two-way race between defense contractor / retired Army officer Mike Durant (who was also an inspiration for the movie *Black Hawk Down*) and former Shelby Chief of Staff / president of the Alabama Business Council Katie Boyd Britt. Durant’s rise has been fueled by more than \$4 million of his own money while Britt has been the strongest fundraiser in the race. She had \$4 million in the bank on Dec. 31, and Shelby also says he’ll use at least \$6 million of his leftover campaign funds to support her. Brooks had \$2 million at the end of the year, and the Club for Growth is sticking by him and will likely attack Britt. But observers of the race see Brooks as a candidate on the decline. A key question is whether Durant can get more than 50 percent in the initial May 24 race and avoid a June 21 runoff. The GOP primary is critical considering Trump won Alabama by 25 points in 2020. Democrats are not expected to compete in the general election. Solid Republican.



Mike Durant

Courtesy Durant Campaign

Emerson College for The Hill, March 25-27 (LVs)(mixed mode) — GOP Primary ballot: Durant 33%, Britt 23%, Brooks 12%, Karla DuPriest 4%, Lillie Boddie 1%, Jake Schafer 1%.

Cygnal (R) for the Alabama Daily News, March 16-17 (LVs)(IVR/text) — GOP Primary ballot: Durant 35%, Britt 28%, Brooks 16%. GOP Primary Runoff: Durant over Britt, 47%-35%; Durant over Brooks, 57%-23%. Britt over Brooks, 51%-28%.

Wiseman Consulting (R) for the Alabama Policy Institute, March 15-17 (LVs) — GOP Primary ballot: Durant 29%, Britt 27%, Brooks 23%.

Alaska. Lisa Murkowski (R) appointed 2002, elected 2004 (49%), 2010 (39% as a write-in), 2016 (44%). June 1 filing deadline. Aug. 16 primary. Murkowski got some welcome news when state Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson, the only Democratic candidate in the race, dropped out. Under Alaska’s new top-four ranked-choice election system, Murkowski’s path to victory against Trump-backed opponent Kelly Tshibaka goes through a coalition of Democrats, unaffiliated voters, and moderate Republicans. The incumbent is disliked by the GOP base, but she’s not beloved by the Democratic base either, so the absence of a viable Democratic alternative is a boost.

Tshibaka’s allies know she’ll be outspent heavily. And not just by Murkowski, who had \$6.2 million in the bank on Dec. 31 compared to Tshibaka’s \$633,000, but by Murkowski’s deep-pocketed allies at the McConnell-aligned NRSC and Senate Leadership Fund. But they are confident that Tshibaka begins with a large enough base of support among Republicans that it will be difficult for Murkowski to catch up even with ranked choice voting. This wouldn’t be the first jam Murkowski wriggled her way out of, and it’s a race worth watching. Unless a credible Democrat such as Mark Begich jumps in the race, it’s hard to see Democrats making a play here (2020 Senate nominee Al Gross is running in the special election to succeed the late Rep. Don Young). So the seat is likely to remain in GOP hands. But in a closely divided Senate, what kind of Republican wins it still will make a difference. Solid Republican.

Cygnal (R) for Tshibaka Campaign, March 14-16 (LVs)(mixed mode) — Ranked choice simulation: Tshibaka (R) over Murkowski (R), 51% - 49%.

Arizona. Mark Kelly (D) elected 2020 special election (51%). April 4 filing deadline. Aug. 2 primary. GOP Gov. Doug Ducey’s decision to stay out of the race could be considered a win for Trump (who hates the governor for not overturning Biden’s 2020 win in Arizona), but has made things more complicated for Republicans. Now there’s a crowded primary. State Attorney General Mark Brnovich (\$768,000 in the bank on Dec. 31), former Thiel Capital COO Blake Masters (\$1.8 million) and wealthy solar energy CEO Jim Lamon (\$5.9 million) are the top contenders for the nomination. Retired U.S. Air Force Major General / former state Adjutant General Michael McGuire (\$225,000) and state Corporation Commissioner Justin Olson (\$191,000) are running as well.

There’s still nearly four months left before the primary. Brnovich started as the frontrunner because of higher name I.D., but Masters and Lamon have been making up ground with heavy ad buys. Lamon spent \$8 million of his own money through the end of the year, and is ramping up to spend

Continued on page 3

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Continued from page 2

millions more. Trump hasn't endorsed yet but could still get involved. It won't be for Brnovich, against whom Trump also has a grudge after 2020.

Any of the top Republicans can defeat Kelly in the right environment, but the nominee will need help. Kelly had \$18.6 million in the bank on Dec. 31 and is one of Democrats' strongest incumbents and fundraisers. And GOP outside groups will have to bear the costly burden of attacking Kelly on TV in the months before Republicans choose their nominee to make sure the senator doesn't have the opportunity to define himself. With Biden struggling nationwide and in battleground states, it will be tough for Democrats to recreate his 2020 victory. The president might be digging a hole that's simply too deep for Democrats to climb out of. Toss-up.

Fabrizio Lee & Associates (R) for Saving Arizona (pro-Masters), March 13-14 (LVs) — GOP Primary ballot: Masters 16%, Brnovich 14%, Lamon 14%, McGuire 5%, Olson 1%.

col/efficient (R), Feb. 6-8 (LVs)(text/IVR) — GOP Primary: Brnovich 17%, Lamon 13%, Masters 12%, McGuire 3%, Olson 1%.

Arkansas. John Boozman (R) elected 2010 (58%), 2016 (60%). May 24 primary. June 21 runoff (if necessary). Boozman has been in Congress for 20 years and his laid-back demeanor doesn't mirror the aggressive and agitated GOP electorate. That makes him potentially vulnerable in the primary. Former Arkansas Razorbacks football star / Army veteran Jake Bequette is running and has potential, but he hasn't yet proven his path to victory to entice key conservative outside groups such as the Club for Growth into the race. Arkansas Patriots Fund, a super PAC funded by Dick Uihlein, has been active for Bequette with approaching a million dollars in TV advertising. But Boozman had a significant financial lead over Bequette at the end of the year (\$3.5 million to \$411,000), has Trump's endorsement, and is currently on TV with an ad featuring an endorsement from fellow Arkansas Sen. Tom Cotton. Gun shop / firing range owner Jan Morgan had just \$60,000 in the bank on Dec. 31.



Jake Bequette

Courtesy Bequette Campaign

Trump won Arkansas by 28 points in 2020, so the primary is the most important and interesting race. Democrats don't have a candidate who had more than \$10,000 in their campaign account at the end of the year. Solid Republican.

California. Alex Padilla (D) appointed Jan. 2021. June 7 primary. Padilla will actually run in two concurrent elections, one to serve out the remainder of now-Vice President Kamala Harris's term from November 2022 to January 2023, and one for a full term of his own. Neither race will be competitive as Republicans failed to put forward any credible candidate (though several dozen people have filed to appear on the ballot). Solid Democratic.

Colorado. Michael Bennet (D) appointed 2009, elected 2010 (48%), 2016 (50%). June 28 primary. Colorado isn't on the battlefield yet, but Republicans are keeping an eye on the Centennial State in case

a wave develops. GOP strategists believe the state's leftward shift in recent years is more a reaction to Trump than anything else, and also that Bennet is a weak incumbent.

At the same time, the primary field is full of unknown and undefined candidates. Construction company CEO Jim O'Dea made a big splash

Continued on page 4

2022 House Ratings

Due to delays in the redistricting process, ratings are incomplete. New ratings and states will be added on a rolling basis as final maps are approved in each state.

Toss-Up (8D, 7R)

CA 22 (Valadao, R)	NC13 (Open, R)
CA 27 (Garcia, R)	NJ7 (Malinowski, D)
CA 45 (Steel, R)	NM 2 (Herrell, R)
CO 8 (Open, New)	NY 11 (Malliotakis, R)
IA 3 (Axne, D)	PA 7 (Wild, D)
KS 3 (Davids, D)	PA 8 (Cartwright, D)
ME 2 (Golden, D)	VA 2 (Luria, D)
MI 3 (Meijer, R)	WA 8 (Schrier, D)

Tilt Democratic (6D)

IL17 (Open; Bustos, D)
MI 7 (Slotkin, D)
MI 8 (Kildee, D)
MN 2 (Craig, DFL)
PA 17 (Open; Lamb, D)
VA 7 (Spanberger, D)

Tilt Republican (3D)

AZ 6 (Open; Kirkpatrick, D)
MI 10 (Open; Levin, D)
TX 15 (Open; V. Gonzalez, D)

Lean Democratic (3D, 2R)

IL13 (Open; Davis, R)
IL14 (Underwood, D)
NC 1 (Open; Butterfield, D)
NV 3 (S. Lee, D)
NY 1 (Open; Zeldin, R)

Lean Republican (2D, 3R)

AZ 1 (Schweikert, R)
AZ 2 (O'Halleran, D)
MD 1 (Harris, R)
NE 2 (Bacon, R)
WI 3 (Open; Kind, D)

Likely Democratic (17D, 1R)

AZ 4 (Stanton, D)
CA 13 (Open; Harder, D)
CA 47 (Porter, D)
CA 49 (Levin, D)
CO 7 (Open; Perlmutter, D)
CT 5 (Hayes, D)
IL6 (Newman, D/Casten, D)
NC 6 (Manning, D)
NC 14 (Open, New)
NM 3 (Leger Fernandez, D)
NV 1 (Titus, D)
NV 4 (Horsford, D)
NY 4 (Open; Rice, D)
NY 18 (S. P. Maloney, D)
NY 19 (Delgado, D)
NY 22 (Open; Katko, R)
OR 4 (Open; DeFazio, D)
OR 5 (Schrader, D)
OR 6 (Open, New)
TX 28 (Cuellar, D)

Likely Republican (7R, 2D)

CA 3 (Open; McClintock, R)
CA 40 (Kim, R)
CA 41 (Calvert, R)
CO 3 (Boebert, R)
GA6 (Open; McBeth, D)
IA 1 (Miller-Meeks, R)
IA 2 (Hinson, R)
MT 1 (Open, New)
PA 1 (Fitzpatrick, R)
TN 5 (Open; Cooper, D)

	GOP	DEM
Solid	150	161
Likely/Lean/Tilt	18	31
Total	168	192
Toss-up		16
Not yet finalized		59
Needed for majority		218

moved benefiting Democrats, * moved benefiting Republicans Takeovers in Italics

Continued from page 3

by raising half a million dollars and contributing another \$525,000 out of his own pocket, and is the only candidate advertising on TV, albeit with a small buy over several months. Former Fort Collins city councilman Gino Campana also chipped in \$500,000 to his own campaign and reported \$784,000 in the bank on Dec. 31. Eli Bremer, the 2008 Olympic pentathlete/former El Paso County Republican chairman, has struggled to keep pace and entered 2022 with just \$178,000. Talk show host Deborah Flora had \$271,000 on Dec. 31 and state Rep. Ron Hanks, who marched on the Capitol on Jan. 6, had a measly \$13,000. O'Dea is running in a more pragmatic lane, and may need conservative voters to fracture between the other candidates in order to win.

Bennet had \$4.7 million in the bank on Dec. 31 and has won tough races in unfavorable national environments before, and Colorado really has gotten more Democratic. Republicans are also struggling to put up a fight against popular Democratic Gov. Jared Polis in the state's other marquee race. Solid Democratic.

Connecticut. Richard Blumenthal (D) elected 2010 (55%), 2016 (63%). June 7 filing deadline. Aug. 9 primary. Republicans finally have a credible candidate in former state House minority leader Themis Klarides, who dropped her campaign for governor to challenge Blumenthal instead. But GOP strategists still aren't talking about this race as being on the battlefield. If that changes it means things have gotten even worse for Democrats nationally. Solid Democratic.

Florida. Marco Rubio (R) elected 2010 (49%), 2016 (52%). June 17 filing deadline. Aug. 23 primary. Not much has shifted in the Sunshine State. Rep. Val Demings faces only cursory opposition for the Democratic nomination, from former Rep. Alan Grayson and Miami City Commissioner Ken Russell, and continues to raise money hand-over-fist. She had \$8.1 million in the bank on Dec. 31, but is also spending big; over the last three months of 2021 she brought in \$7.2 million but spent \$5 million.

In the likely general election matchup against Rubio (\$10.6 million in the bank) Demings starts out behind, according to public and private polling, but she's also not well-known outside of the Orlando area, which she represents in Congress and where she was a police chief. Democrats hope her financial muscle will help her boost her standing statewide.

Democrats don't consider this a top-tier race like Wisconsin and Pennsylvania, and Republicans are bullish on Rubio, especially given how strongly South Florida moved toward Trump in 2020 and the cost of advertising in the state. Florida's overall trend toward Republicans — Democrats could only win one statewide office in a great national environment in 2018 — makes this a tough race under any circumstances. Trying to oust an incumbent with an unpopular Democratic president in the White House is a tougher sell still. Florida always has close elections but this race stays at Likely Republican.

University of North Florida, Feb. 7-20 (RVs)(live caller) — General Election ballot: Rubio over Demings, 46% - 34%.

Mason-Dixon Polling & Strategy, Feb. 7-10 (RVs)(live caller) — General Election ballot: Rubio over Demings, 49% - 42%.

Suffolk Univ., Jan. 26-29 (LVs)(live caller) — General Election ballot: Rubio over Demings, 49%-41%.

Georgia. Raphael Warnock (D) elected 2020/Jan. 5, 2021 runoff (51%). May 24 primary, June 21 runoff (if necessary). The senator

remains on a collision course with former football star Herschel Walker in what will be one of the closest and most expensive races in the country. Warnock is better defined and better known than his other colleagues up for re-election this cycle because he is fresh off his initial 2021 runoff victory. But considering Biden won Georgia by the narrowest



Tom Williams/CQ Roll Call

Raphael Warnock

of margins in 2020 and is considerably less popular now than he was more than a year ago, Warnock has a difficult task ahead. The senator had \$23 million in the bank on Dec. 31.

Walker had \$5.4 million on hand at the end of the year,

but shouldn't have trouble raising millions more. He also starts the race with high name ID and goodwill from being a former Heisman Trophy-winning running back for the Univ. of Georgia Bulldogs, even though that was 40 years ago. State Agriculture Commissioner Gary Black (\$919,000), Atlanta businessman Kelvin King (\$331,000) and banking executive/former Navy Seal Latham Saddler (\$1.7 million) are also running but Walker has Trump's support and is the prohibitive favorite in the primary.

Walker has some significant vulnerabilities that haven't hindered him yet in a primary but could still be general election liabilities. There are jarring allegations of abuse from his ex-wife, his spotty post-football record in business, and as a first-time candidate he could make verbal gaffes or stumbles on the trail and in debates. Republicans say his plain-spokenness is an asset and that Walker gets to be the outsider against Warnock, similar to how Warnock enjoyed being the outsider last cycle. Now Warnock has a voting record to defend.

Both sides agree that the general election starts close and will likely end close. The polarization of the state, including a sizable Black population, raises the electoral floor for Warnock and Walker. Even though Democrats enjoyed tremendous success in Georgia last cycle, recreating that dynamic with an unpopular Democratic president will be difficult. Warnock could run a great, well-funded campaign and still lose because of the national political environment. Toss-up.

Blueprint Polling (D), March 2-8 (LVs)(mixed mode) — General Election ballot: Walker over Warnock, 49% - 45%.

Fox News, March 2-6 (LVs)(live caller) — GOP Primary Ballot: Walker 66%, Black 8%, King 3%, Saddler 2%.

Insider Advantage (R) for Fox5 Atlanta, Feb. 28-March 1 (LVs) — GOP Primary Ballot: Walker 63%, Black 6%, King 4%, Saddler 3%.

Hawaii. Brian Schatz (D) appointed 2012, elected 2014 (70%), 2016 (74%). June 7 filing deadline. Aug. 13 primary. GOP state Rep. Bob McDermott is running and will try to be the first Republican to win a Hawaii senate seat since 1970. Barring something drastic, he won't be. Solid Democratic.

Idaho. Mike Crapo (R) elected 1998 (70%), 2004 (99%), 2010 (71%), 2016 (66%). May 17 primary. After Army veteran Jeremy Gilbert ended his longshot bid against Crapo in the primary, it doesn't look like the incumbent

Continued on page 5

Continued from page 4

has much to worry about. Trump is trying to oust the Republican governor but has endorsed Crapo for this race. Solid Republican.

Illinois. Tammy Duckworth (D) elected 2016 (55%). June 28 primary. Republicans held this seat as recently as 2017 but couldn't coax a credible candidate into challenging Duckworth, with both Reps. Adam Kinzinger and Rodney Davis passing up the opportunity. The top fundraising GOP candidate is Bobby Piton, a QAnon-promoting election conspiracist who had \$63,000 in the bank on Dec. 31, 2021. Also running is 2020 Senate candidate Peggy Hubbard (\$12,000). Duckworth had a \$6.5 million war chest at the end of the year and the partisan lean of the state in her favor. Solid Democratic.

Indiana. Todd Young (R) elected 2016 (52%). May 3 primary. Young hasn't made any missteps and looks like he's cruising to a second term. He doesn't face a primary. Neither does presumptive Democratic nominee Hammond Mayor Tom McDermott, who had just \$50,000 in campaign funds at the end of 2021. Young had \$6.2 million. Solid Republican.

Iowa. Chuck Grassley (R) elected 1980 (54%), 1986 (66%), 1992 (70%), 1998 (68%), 2004 (70%), 2010 (64%), 2016 (60%). June 7 primary. Grassley first came to the Senate when Ronald Reagan was elected president, and the 88-year-old senator is approaching legendary status. But there's been a noticeable decline in his favorability ratings over the decades and the long-time incumbent could be ripe for an upset in a different political environment. First, Democrats have to choose between former Rep. Abby Finkenauer (\$724,000 in the bank on Dec. 31) and 2020 Senate primary runner-up/retired Navy vice admiral Michael Franken (\$321,000). Then they'll have to take on Grassley (\$3.7 million) in a favorable environment for Republicans, in a state that has been trending toward Republicans. Even Democrats are skeptical this race is going to crystalize. Solid Republican.

Cygnal (R) for Iowans for Tax Reform (pro-Grassley), Feb. 20-22 (LVs) (mixed mode) — General Election ballot: Grassley over Finkenauer, 53% - 39%.

Kansas. Jerry Moran (R) elected 2010 (70%), 2016 (62%). June 1 filing deadline. Aug. 2 primary. Moran has Trump's endorsement and Democrats in the Sunflower State are focused on re-electing Gov. Laura Kelly, not on a Senate seat they haven't won in 90 years. Former Kansas City Mayor Mark Holland is the only Democrat running — he had just \$88,000 in the bank on Dec. 31 compared to Moran's \$4.8 million. Solid Republican.

Kentucky. Rand Paul (R) elected 2010 (56%), 2016 (57%). May 17 primary. Former state Rep. Charles Booker has struggled to recreate the magic from his underdog run in the 2020 Democratic primary for Senate, when he rode a wave of national attention and fundraising to a near-upset of establishment favorite Amy McGrath. Booker raised \$2.3 million through the end of 2021, but had just \$411,000 in the bank on Dec. 31, compared to \$7.9 million for Paul. Booker's path to victory rests on his ability to motivate younger voters and voters of color who don't usually turn out, but that takes financial resources. Kentucky voted for Trump by 26 points, and a Democrat hasn't won a Kentucky Senate race since Wendell Ford in 1992. Solid Republican.

Mason-Dixon Polling & Strategy, Jan. 19-22 (RVs) — General Election ballot: Paul over Booker, 55% - 39%.

Louisiana. John Kennedy (R) elected 2016 (60%). July 22 filing deadline. Nov. 8 jungle primary. Dec. 10 runoff (if needed). Kennedy continues to spend money like he's in a serious race — \$2 million over the last three months of 2021 — and had a substantial \$11 million in the bank on Dec. 31. But he shouldn't have much trouble in a good GOP year in a state Trump won by 18 points. Democrats had begun to coalesce around former Navy fighter pilot Luke Mixon last year. But the entry of Gary Chambers, a progressive who placed a close third in the special election for the 2nd District in March 2021, has shaken things up. Chambers' viral videos, in which he smokes a blunt and burns a Confederate flag, have earned him national media attention and will likely boost his fundraising numbers. All candidates will appear on the same ballot in November, and with no Republicans but Kennedy in the race it looks likely the senator will win an outright majority and avoid a December runoff. Solid Republican.

JMC Analytics (R), March 21-23 (LVs)(mixed mode) — All-Party Primary ballot: Kennedy (R) 53%, Chambers (D) 14%, Mixon (D) 7%, Syrita Steib (D) 3%.

Maryland. Chris Van Hollen (D) elected 2016 (61%). July 19 primary. The new year saw renewed hope among Republicans that popular outgoing Gov. Larry Hogan would run against Van Hollen, but Hogan took himself out of contention and the filing deadline has since passed. Several Republicans have filed to run but none are of note. Van Hollen dodges a bullet and this race stays off the battlefield. Solid Democratic.

Missouri. Open; Roy Blunt (R) not seeking re-election. Aug. 2 primary. Both the Republican and Democratic primaries have seen significant developments in the past few weeks. In court filings, GOP frontrunner/former Gov. Eric Greitens was accused of physical and emotional abuse and domestic violence by his ex-wife, Sheena Chestnut



Courtesy Busch Valentine campaign

Rudy Busch Valentine

Greitens. Eric Greitens resigned from his governorship in 2018 after different allegations of sexual assault and blackmail — he denies all of the various charges and claims to have been totally exonerated.

The new accusations have led several other candidates, as well as some GOP senators including Blunt, Josh Hawley, and Senate GOP No. 2 John Thune, to call on Greitens to exit the race. But the likelihood of that happening is low, especially given Greitens' pronounced disdain for the GOP establishment.

It's not immediately clear if this will affect Greitens' standing in the race, either. The previous accusations of sexual assault and blackmail were not enough to keep him from becoming the frontrunner, and GOP leaders in Washington risk playing into his hands if they push too hard to get him out of the race (why Mitch McConnell has not yet called for him to step aside). The first public poll of the race following the revelations found Greitens in second place, behind state Attorney General Eric Schmitt, slipping slightly from his position in the previous Remington Research

Continued on page 6

Continued from page 5

Group poll. Rep. Vicky Hartzler was in a close third. But it also found that 43 percent of GOP voters either did not believe the accusations at all or found them “troubling but not disqualifying” and another 10 percent were not sure. That leaves Greitens a wide path to the nomination in a crowded field. And Trump didn’t help when he tossed Rep. Billy Long some public praise. Long has struggled to gain traction and GOP strategists have been hoping he would drop out so that another candidate could consolidate more of the anti-Greitens vote. But with the prospect of a Trump endorsement still out there, Long looks less likely to exit.

On the Democratic side, the sleepy primary received a jolt when state Sen. Scott Sifton, in the race for more than a year, dropped out the day before the filing deadline and endorsed a candidate who hadn’t even announced yet: Trudy Busch Valentine, a philanthropist and heiress to the Anheuser Busch fortune. Busch Valentine filed later that day. In doing so, Sifton snubbed the other candidate in the race, Marine veteran Lucas Kunce, who has led all candidates in both parties in fundraising. Busch Valentine brings a famous family name (baseball’s

St. Louis Cardinals have been playing in a Busch Stadium since the 1950s) and substantial personal wealth to the race, but getting past Kunce is not a foregone conclusion. The Yale-Mizzou-Columbia-educated antitrust activist is running an unabashedly populist campaign that could match up well against the wealthy Busch Valentine. If Greitens is the nominee, either Busch Valentine or Kunce would be competitive in the general election, though any Republican is still the favorite in Missouri. This race won’t be clear until after the August primary. Solid Republican.

Trafalgar Group (R), March 24-29 (LVs) — GOP Primary ballot: Hartzler 25%, Greitens 24%, Schmitt 22%, Long 8%, Schatz 3%, McCloskey 2%.

Remington Research Group (R) for Missouri Scout, March 22-23 (LVs) — GOP Primary ballot: Schmitt 24%, Greitens 21%, Hartzler 19%, Long 9%, McCloskey 5%, Schatz 3%.

Trafalgar Group (R), March 9-13 (LVs) — General Election ballot: Greitens over Kunce, 46% - 45%. Schmitt over Kunce, 55% - 40%. Hartzler over Kunce, 56% - 39%.

Nevada. Catherine Cortez Masto (D) elected 2016 (47%). June 14 primary. Republicans see Nevada as their top takeover opportunity. Cortez Masto has the benefit of incumbency and a significant financial advantage (\$10.4 million in the bank on Dec. 31 and \$1.2 million in TV ads already aired), and Democrats have a stronger ground game than Republicans in the narrowly divided Silver State. But bad cycles for Democrats can hit Nevada hard, and the party’s struggles with Hispanic and rural voters are troubling in a rural state with a large Hispanic population. Nevada’s unique “none of these candidates” ballot option adds a wrinkle to the race as well; nearly 4 percent of voters selected it in the 2016 race.

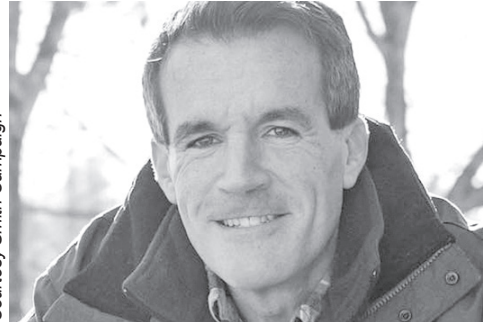
The likely GOP nominee is former state Attorney General Adam Laxalt, who lost the 2018 gubernatorial race and is the grandson of former Gov./former Sen. Paul Laxalt. He faces retired Army Captain Sam Brown in the GOP primary. Brown is a wounded veteran with an inspiring story who is raising good money, though he had significantly less in the bank on Dec. 31 (\$723,000) than Laxalt (\$1.7 million), who has endorsements from Trump and Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell. A recent poll from Laxalt’s allies at the Club for Growth, the first numbers from the primary released publicly, show Laxalt with a healthy lead. Toss-up.

Blueprint Polling (D), March 21-24 (LVs) — General Election ballot: Laxalt over Cortez Masto, 47% - 40%.

WPAi (R) for Club for Growth (pro-Laxalt), March 13-15 (LVs)(live caller) — GOP Primary ballot: Laxalt 57%, Brown 19%, Bill Hockstelder 1%, Sharelle Mendenhall 1%.

OH Predictive Insights (R) for Nevada Independent, Jan. 19-26 (RVs) (online) — General Election ballot: Cortez Masto over Laxalt, 44% - 35%.

New Hampshire. Maggie Hassan (D) elected 2016 (48%). June 10 filing deadline. Sept. 13 primary. Republicans are still trying to gain their footing after popular Gov. Chris Sununu declined to run against Hassan and former Sen. Kelly Ayotte said no as well, depriving the party



Courtesy Smith Campaign

Kevin Smith

of its two best-known potential contenders.

GOP strategists see state Senate President Chuck Morse and Londonderry town manager Kevin Smith as the two most likely nominees, though there’s more buzz around Morse than Smith these days — a

change from earlier in the year. At the moment, it does not look like businessman Bill Binnie or state education commissioner Frank Edelblut will jump in, but libertarian activist and bitcoin promoter Bruce Fenton says he’s running and will self-fund with \$5 million. And retired Army Brigadier General Don Bolduc has been in the race the longest, though he isn’t raising the kind of money he will need to be competitive in the primary — absent an endorsement from Trump.

With a June filing deadline and the latest primary in the nation, this race is shrouded in uncertainty for Republicans. That’s good news for Hassan, who has already aired \$2.7 million in TV advertisements and has another \$8 million booked for the fall. The bad cycle for Democrats and New Hampshire’s demographic makeup makes it an attractive target for Republicans, and Hassan isn’t as popular as her seatmate, Democratic Sen. Jeanne Shaheen. But the GOP’s inability to land a top-tier challenger and the late primary make this race slightly better for Democrats than Georgia, Arizona, or Nevada. Tilt Democratic.

St. Anselm’s College, March 23-24 (RVs) — General Election ballot: Hassan over Bolduc, 44% - 39%. Hassan over Morse, 43% - 36%. Hassan over Smith, 44% - 34%.

New York. Chuck Schumer (D) elected 1998 (55%), 2004 (71%), 2010 (66%), 2016 (70%). April 7 filing deadline. June 28 primary. Empire State Democrats unanimously endorsed Schumer as the party’s nominee at a recent state convention, clearing the way for Schumer to run unopposed in the primary. Former state Assembly candidate Joe Pinion was endorsed by the state GOP as its nominee but 2018 New York City Council candidate Aleksander Mici will petition to force a primary. Neither one is going to beat the Senate majority leader, who had \$36 million in the bank on Dec. 31. Solid Democratic.

North Carolina. Open; Richard Burr (R) not seeking re-election. New primary May 17. Runoff (if necessary) July 26. It’s still a two-man race between former Gov. Pat McCrory and Trump-endorsed Rep. Ted Budd for the GOP nomination. McCrory suffered a setback

Continued on page 7

Continued from page 6

when litigation pushed the primary date from March 8 to May 17 — he likely would have won an earlier race given his initial advantages in fundraising and name ID. Now, he has to fend off Budd, Trump, and their deep-pocketed allies at the Club for Growth for another two months. The Club is committed to spending \$14 million to support Budd. Former Rep. Mark Walker is still in the race after he walked away from a deal to drop down to an open House race. While Walker is not in a position to win, he could siphon away votes from the ideologically similar Budd, to McCrory's advantage. If Budd can't get over the finish line, it will be another sign that Trump's endorsement is not a superweapon in Republican primaries. Author and veteran Marjorie Eastman hasn't been able to break out of the low single digits.

Former state Supreme Court Chief Justice Cheri Beasley is the all-but-certain Democratic nominee, but Biden's misfortunes have caused this race to lose some luster as a pickup opportunity, especially compared to Wisconsin and Pennsylvania. Beasley hasn't excelled as quickly as some strategists would like, so the extra two months before the GOP primary concludes could help her ease into general election mode. Said one Beasley ally: "I wouldn't put her up on a debate stage yet, but we'll get there." Lean Republican.

Vitale & Associates (R) for North Carolina Values Association, March 22-23 (LVs)(live/IVR) — GOP Primary ballot: Budd 32%, McCrory 29%, Walker 12%, Eastman 2%.

Meeting Street Insights (R) for Budd Campaign, Feb. 26-March 1 (LVs)(live caller) — GOP Primary Ballot: McCrory 31%, Budd 25%, Walker 16%, Eastman 4%.

Ingress Research Group (R) for Awake Carolina (pro-Walker), Feb. 27 (LVs) — GOP Primary Ballot: McCrory 29%, Budd 18%, Walker 11%, Eastman 4%.

North Dakota. John Hoeven (R) elected 2010 (76%), 2016 (78%). April 11 filing deadline. June 14 primary. All is calm in the Peace Garden State for Hoeven, who had \$3 million on hand at the end of the year, Trump's endorsement and no remotely credible Democratic opponents. Solid Republican.

Ohio. Open; Rob Portman (R) not seeking re-election. May 3 primary. The latest hopeful to claim frontrunner status in the crowded GOP primary is investment banker/2018 candidate Mike Gibbons, who has spent nearly \$8 million of his own money on TV ads that have pushed him to the lead in polling, slightly ahead of former state Treasurer/2012 Senate nominee Josh Mandel. But Mandel's allies at the Club for Growth will look to change that with several million dollars in anti-Gibbons ads over the coming weeks. The two also made national headlines for nearly coming to blows at a recent debate.

There's also been no public polling of the race since early in a very eventful March that saw author J.D. Vance and former state party chairwoman Jane Timken turn in well-received debate performances, and the return of Vance's Peter Thiel-funded Super PAC to the airwaves. And state senator/part-owner of the Cleveland Guardians Matt Dolan continues to spend millions of his own money on TV in an attempt to carve out a moderate, post-Trump lane for himself. Car dealership owner Bernie Moreno dropped out in February. Trump still hasn't endorsed a candidate.

On the Democratic side, Rep. Tim Ryan easily won the state party's endorsement, allowing him to access additional resources and infrastructure even though he still faces former Consumer Finance Protection Bureau staffer Morgan Harper in the primary. Ryan launched

a \$400,000 ad buy at the beginning of April — his first of the cycle — with a spot that focuses on China.

Ryan is a credible candidate for Democrats, and he's attempting to follow in the footsteps of Sen. Sherrod Brown, the only Democrat who has won a recent statewide election in Ohio. Trump won here by 8 points and Biden has only gotten less popular since then, so the burden of proof is on Ryan to show he can compete seriously. Those around him hope that outside groups view the Ohio race as a less expensive takeover opportunity than the similarly positioned Florida race. Solid Republican.

Fox News, March 2-6 (LVs)(live caller) — GOP Primary Ballot: Gibbons 22%, Mandel 20%, Vance 11%, Timken 9%, Dolan 7%.

Emerson College for The Hill, Feb. 25-26 (LVs)(mixed mode) — GOP Primary Ballot: Gibbons 22%, Mandel 15%, Vance 8%, Dolan 6%, Timken 6%.

Fabrizio Lee & Associates (R) for Protect Ohio Values (pro-Vance), Feb. 23-24 (LVs)(mixed mode) — GOP Primary Ballot: Gibbons 18%, Mandel 14%, Vance 14%, Timken 12%, Dolan 8%.

Oklahoma. James Lankford (R) elected 2014 special (68%), 2016 (68%). April 15 filing deadline. June 28 primary. State Sen. Nathan Dahm had been running against Lankford but switched over to the special election in the state's other seat, leaving Tulsa pastor Jackson Lahmeyer as Lankford's one notable intra-party opponent. Lahmeyer has support from fringe elements of Trump's orbit including Michael Flynn and Sebastian Gorka. But even if Trump wanted to wade in because of the senator's vote to accept the certified 2020 results (and there's no sign he does), the former president probably cares too much about his win-loss record in primaries to endorse Lahmeyer, who is a decided underdog. Lankford had \$2.8 million in the bank on Dec. 31 and began advertising on TV in February with a \$200,000 buy. Lahmeyer had just \$71,000 at the end of 2021. Solid Republican.

Amber Integrated (R), March 24-27 (LVs)(mixed mode) — GOP Primary ballot: Lankford over Lahmeyer, 63% - 10%.

Oklahoma Special. Open; Jim Inhofe (R), resigning. April 15 filing deadline. June 28 primary. August 23 runoff (if necessary). Inhofe won a resounding re-election just a year and a half ago, but the 87-year-old will step down at the end of 2022. There's already a crowded GOP primary field to succeed him. Rep. Markwayne Mullin, former state House speaker/2014 Senate candidate T.W. Shannon, former Inhofe chief



Bill Clark/CQ Roll Call

Markwayne Mullin

of staff Luke Holland, former Trump NSC staffer Alex Gray, and state Sen. Nathan Dahm are all running. And they could be joined by any number of other ambitious Oklahoma politicians, including former EPA administrator Scott Pruitt, who resigned

in 2018 under the weight of numerous scandals. With a fractured field and a 50 percent threshold to win outright, a runoff between the top two finishers looks likely

Former Rep. Kendra Horn is running for Democrats. She is a credible candidate who won a major upset in her Oklahoma City district in 2018,

Continued on page 8

Continued from page 7

but she couldn't hold on in 2020 despite Trump carrying her district by just 5 points. Trump carried Oklahoma as a whole by 33 points in 2020. Solid Republican.

Amber Integrated (R), March 24-27 (LVs)(mixed mode) — GOP Primary ballot: Mullin 39%, Shannon 14%, Dahm 6%, Holland 2%, Gray 1%.

Oregon. Ron Wyden (D) elected 1996 special (48%), 1998 (61%), 2004 (63%), 2010 (57%), 2016 (56%). May 17 primary. Republican Darin Harbick, who owns several businesses outside of Eugene in Lane County, switched from running for governor to challenging Wyden. He's the only GOP contender to raise more than \$100,000 thus far (though half that came out of his own pocket) and had \$54,000 in the bank on Dec. 31. Also running are Jo Rae Perkins, the Q-Anon promoter who lost to Democratic Sen. Jeff Merkley in 2020 by 17 points (\$13,000); Grant County Commissioner Sam Palmer (\$7,000); and Prineville Mayor Jason

Beebe (\$4,000). With a \$7.2 million war chest at the end of the year and a third-tier field opposing him, Wyden looks set to return to Washington. Solid Democratic.

Pennsylvania. Open; Pat Toomey (R) not seeking re-election.

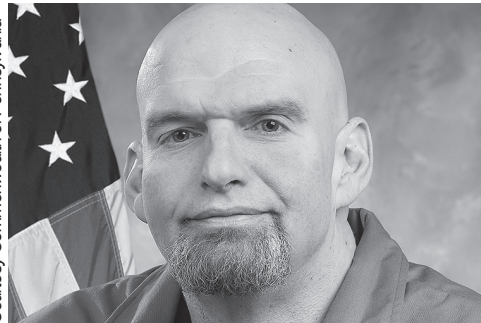
May 17 primary. The GOP primary has become a two-person race between former Bridgewater Hedge Fund CEO David McCormick and celebrity surgeon/talk show host Mehmet Oz. The two wealthy candidates and their deep-pocketed allies have bombarded the state with \$27 million in TV ads over just a few months.

While Oz entered the race with the highest name I.D., he has struggled to convert familiarity into voter support. And while McCormick was unknown initially, his spending spree has pushed him to the top of the field. Oz is still close behind, but GOP strategists are less bullish on his chances than earlier in the year. And a Trump endorsement for either candidate — McCormick's wife is a former Trump official and he has surrounded himself with Trumpworld associates, while Oz is a personal friend of the former president — could upend things further. Three other candidates, real estate developer Jeff Bartos, former Ambassador to Denmark Carla Sands, and commentator Kathy Barnette, have struggled to break out despite being in the race for longer.

On the Democratic side, Lt. Gov. John Fetterman is still the undisputed polling and fundraising frontrunner, and his two opponents, Rep. Conor Lamb and state Rep. Malcolm Kenyatta, are running out of time to catch him. Both Lamb and Fetterman have been on TV since the beginning of March, each with buys of under \$2 million. Kenyatta has lagged in fundraising and isn't up on TV. Neither of Fetterman's opponents have gone negative on him in paid media yet, particularly

on a 2013 incident in which he chased down an unarmed Black jogger and held him at gunpoint.

Democratic strategists say they would be okay with either Fetterman or Lamb as their nominee, and, unlike in 2016, it doesn't



Courtesy Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

John Fetterman

appear likely that there will be significant outside involvement in the primary. In a tough year for Democrats, flipping a seat in Pennsylvania will be difficult for the party. But both of the likeliest GOP nominees have baggage that Democrats will try to exploit. Tilt Republican.

Fox News, March 2-6 (LVs)(live caller) — GOP Primary Ballot: McCormick 24%, Oz 15%, Bartos 9%, Barnette 9%, Sands 6%.

TargetPoint Consulting (R), Feb. 25-28 (LVs) — GOP Primary Ballot: McCormick 25%, Oz 19%, Sands 11%, Bartos 10%, Barnette 5%.

Impact Research (D) for Penn Progress (pro-Lamb), early February (LVs) — Democratic Primary ballot: Fetterman 47%, Lamb 17%, Kenyatta 7%, Sharif Street 5%, Val Arkoosh 3%.

South Carolina. Tim Scott (R) appointed 2013, elected 2014 special (61%), 2016 (61%). June 14 primary. Scott's \$21.5 million war chest at the end of 2021 puts him in the upper echelon of Senate fundraisers and into the conversation about future presidential

Continued on page 9

2022 Governor Ratings

Toss-up (2D, 1R)

AZ Open (Ducey, R) Evers (D-Wisc.)
Kelly (D-Kan.)

Tilt Democratic (3D) Tilt Republican (1R)

PA Open (Wolf, D) Kemp (R-Ga.)
Whitmer (D-Mich.)
Sisolak (D-Nev.)

Lean Democratic (1D, 2R) Lean Republican

MA Open (Baker, R)
MD Open (Hogan, R)
Mills (D-Maine)

Likely Democratic (2D) Likely Republican (2R)

OR Open (Brown, D) DeSantis (R-Fl.)
Lujan Grisham (D-N.M.) Sununu (R-N.H.)

Solid Democratic (8D) Solid Republican (14R)

HI Open (Ige, D) AR Open (Hutchinson, R)
Newsom (D-Calif.) NE Open (Ricketts, R)
Polis (D-Colo.) Ivey (R-Ala.)
Lamont (D-Conn.) Dunleavy (R-Alaska)
Pritzker (D-Ill.) Little (R-Idaho)
Walz (D-Minn.) Reynolds (R-Iowa)
Hochul (D-N.Y.) Noem (R-S.D.)
McKee (D-R.I.) DeWine (R-Ohio)
Stitt (R-Okla.)
McMaster (R-S.C.)
Lee (R-Tenn.)
Abbott (R-Texas)
Scott (R-Vt.)
Gordon (R-Wyo.)

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

Continued from page 8

contenders. Democratic state Rep. Krystle Matthews hasn't gained any traction and with just \$13,000 in the bank doesn't have the resources to make this a real race. Solid Republican.

South Dakota. John Thune (R) elected 2004 (51%), 2010 (unopposed), 2016 (72%). June 7 primary. Thune ended months of speculation by announcing he would run for a fourth term. Despite promising to back a primary challenge to Thune, Trump has not been active in this race. Thune looks set to coast to re-election and return to DC, where he's a potential successor to Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell. Solid Republican.

Utah. Mike Lee (R) elected 2010 (62%), 2016 (68%). Spring nominating conventions. June 28 primary. Neither of Lee's primary opponents — former state Rep. Becky Edwards and Ally Isom, who was a spokeswoman for Gov. Gary Herbert — have gained much traction in fundraising or the limited public polling. The spring nominating conventions can produce curveball results, like in 2018 when state Rep. Mike Kennedy beat Mitt Romney only to lose the primary to Romney by 43 points, or in 2010, when GOP Sen. Robert Bennett finished third and didn't even make the primary ballot in the race eventually won by Lee.

Former CIA officer/House GOP staffer Evan McMullin, who received 22 percent of the vote in Utah in the 2016 presidential race as an independent candidate, is running as an independent and has picked up endorsements from some of the state's most prominent Democrats, including 2018 Senate nominee/Salt Lake County Mayor Jenny Wilson and former Rep. Ben McAdams.

But former State Department official/2020 2nd District nominee Kael Weston is running as a Democrat. If both he and McMullin are on the ballot, they'll likely split the anti-Lee vote and ensure the incumbent's re-election. So Democrats will have to decide at their state convention whether to withhold the party's nomination entirely, allowing McMullin to run as the *de facto* Democratic nominee without carrying that toxic-in-Utah label. If McMullin is able to clear the field, this race could get interesting, but the burden of proof is still on him to show viability. Solid Republican.



Evan McMullin

Courtesy McMullin Campaign

Dan Jones & Associates for Deseret News/Hinckley Institute of Politics, March 9-21 (RVs) — General Election ballot: Lee over McMullin, 43% - 19%, Weston (D) 11%. GOP Primary ballot: Lee 67%, Edwards 19%, Evan Barlow 6%, Isom 4%, Friedbaum 2%, Brunson 1%, Hamblin 1%.

OH Predictive Insights (R), Feb. 7-14 (RVs)(online panel) — General Election ballot: Lee over McMullin 34% - 24%, Weston (D) 12%. GOP Primary ballot: GOP Primary ballot: Lee 51%, Edwards 5%, Isom 2%, Tyrone Jensen 2%, Brendan Wright 2%.

Vermont. Open; Pat Leahy (D) not seeking re-election. May 26 filing deadline. Aug. 9 primary. Republicans couldn't convince GOP Gov. Phil Scott to run for this open seat. The GOP does have a credible candidate in

former U.S. Attorney Christina Nolan, who was a Trump appointee but like Scott has more liberal positions on social issues, and who would be the first openly gay Republican elected to either chamber of Congress. And it is a cheap state to advertise. But Vermont is so overwhelmingly Democratic and likely Democratic nominee Peter Welch is well-known from his 16 years as an at-large representative. Solid Democratic.

Washington. Patty Murray (D) elected 1992 (54%), 1998 (58%), 2004 (55%), 2010 (52%), 2016 (59%). May 20 filing deadline. Aug. 2 primary. The Evergreen State is still firmly outside the Senate battlefield but is in the conversation about the 2022 cycle. Washington, along with Colorado, is consistently viewed as a key state to watch for if the cycle develops into a legitimate political wave for the GOP. Republicans haven't won a U.S. Senate race in Washington since 1994, Biden just won the state by nearly 20 points in 2020, and Murray finished 2021 with a \$6.9 million to \$1.7 million campaign cash advantage over her Republican opponent. So the path to victory is difficult.

But GOP strategists are supremely confident in their likely standard bearer, veterans' advocate/former triage nurse Tiffany Smiley, who they say will be in place to take advantage of the opportunity should it develop. Smiley has an engrossing story of overcoming adversity alongside her husband Scotty, who was blinded in a suicide bombing in Iraq while serving in the Army and went on to become the first active-duty blind Army officer, and a motivational speaker and triathlete. For this race, Smiley has broad party support at the national and local levels. If this race develops into a serious takeover opportunity, then Republicans probably have the majority well in hand. Solid Democratic.

Public Policy Polling (D) for Northwest Progressive Institute (pro-Murray), Feb. 17-18 (LVs)(mixed mode) — General Election ballot: Murray over Smiley, 50% - 41%.

Wisconsin. Ron Johnson (R) elected 2010 (52%), 2016 (50%). June 1 filing deadline. Aug. 9 primary. Despite some vicious political headwinds, Democrats are bullish about their unique chance to knock off Johnson. They believe enough voters have turned on the senator, as Johnson has morphed from conservative businessman and outsider to a more confrontational politician. And GOP strategists admit that Johnson is in for a difficult re-election race.

Democrats are still sorting through their primary. It looks like a two-way race for the nomination between Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes and Milwaukee Bucks executive Alex Lasry, although state Treasurer Sarah Godlewski and Outagamie County Executive Tom Nelson are credible candidates, albeit with more difficult paths to victory. Barnes started the race with higher name I.D., but Lasry has considerable personal money to boost his profile.

After dragging out his decision well into the cycle, Johnson announced he'll seek re-election, backtracking on his original pledge to serve two terms. With a late primary, it will be months before Democrats focus their full attention on Johnson, whose job approval rating is not as high as it once was. But Biden's job rating ain't great either, and the cycle could end up saving the senator. Move from Lean Republican to Tilt Republican.

Impact Research (D) for Barnes campaign, March 16-23 (LVs)(mixed mode) — Democratic Primary ballot: Barnes 38%, Lasry 17%, Godlewski 9%, Nelson 8%.

Marquette Univ., Feb. 23-27 (LVs) — Democratic Primary ballot: Barnes 23%, Lasry 13%, Nelson 5%, Godlewski 3%.

Normington Petts (D) for Lasry campaign, Feb. 23-27 (LVs)(mixed mode) — Democratic Primary ballot: Barnes 35%, Lasry 27%, Godlewski 7%, Nelson 7%.

Rhode Island 2: Republican Reach

By Jacob Rubashkin

Last year, Rhode Island appeared poised to lose its second congressional district due to reapportionment, and Democrats were girding for a primary melee between Reps. David Cicilline and Jim Langevin for the remaining at-large seat.

But thanks to stronger-than-expected census numbers the Ocean State retained both of its seats, and both members looked set to return to Congress without a primary fight.

However, despite having a clear path to re-election, Langevin made the surprise decision to retire from Congress after 11 terms, creating an open seat in a state where such opportunities are rare.

Despite Langevin's retirement, Democrats begin in a strong position to retain their 2-0 advantage in the state's delegation. But if the national environment gets worse for Democrats, Langevin's retirement could open up an opportunity for Republicans.

In redistricting, the slightly underpopulated 2nd District picked up a few precincts from the 1st District but otherwise remains unchanged.

Langevin, the first quadriplegic elected to Congress, surprised observers when he announced in January that he would not seek re-election to the House after 22 years.

The newly open 2nd has attracted several contenders from both parties, with



Joy Fox

ramifications for Rhode Island politics extending beyond just this race.

So far, Democratic candidates include state General Treasurer Seth Magaziner, former Langevin staffer Joy Fox, former deputy assistant secretary of commerce Sarah Morgenthau, and refugee advocate Omar Bah. Former state party chairman Ed Pacheco had been running but dropped out of the race, and former state Rep. David Segal is raising money in a federal account but has not formally entered the race.

Magaziner begins the primary in a strong position. He's been in statewide office since 2014, and had been a top candidate for governor before switching to this race. He's also setting the fundraising pace — his campaign says it raised \$750,000 in the first weeks after he jumped in — and has significant support from organized labor including the Rhode Island AFL-CIO and United Nurses.

But Magaziner lives outside of the district in Providence — he says he will move, and members of Congress aren't required to live in the specific district they represent, just the state — and Fox is looking to exploit that potential vulnerability by emphasizing her own Cranston and Warwick roots. Fox also highlights the historic nature of her run — Rhode Island has only sent one woman to Congress in its 232-year history, and never a Democratic woman. But some of the more progressive candidates in the race could try to tie her to Langevin's past pro-life stances.

Morgenthau comes from one of the most prominent political families in the Northeast, and her mother was an adviser to President Jimmy Carter who unsuccessfully sought this seat in 1988. Sarah brings a wealth of connections to the race from her time as an Obama and Biden

administration official and should be a formidable fundraiser, but will also have to counter perceptions of carpetbagging given that she has



Seth Magaziner

spent much of her career away from Rhode Island — an issue she addresses directly in her announcement video.

Segal and Bah style themselves as more progressive alternatives to the top tier candidates, but it's not clear yet whether

either will have the resources to break out, especially with Magaziner already locking down organized labor. But the Sept. 13 primary is among the latest in the nation, meaning there's plenty of time for the race to develop in different directions.

On the GOP side, the frontrunner is Allan Fung, the former Cranston mayor who was his party's nominee for governor in 2014 and 2018, coming within a few points of winning the first time but losing soundly in the rematch vs. Gov. Gina Raimondo. Fung is popular in Cranston — his wife recently defeated the state House speaker, which even some Democrats cheered — and despite his 2018 loss was reasonably well-liked by voters. He also has a reputation as a moderate in today's GOP, essential for a Republican to be successful in the heavily Democratic state.

Fung is the best possible candidate for Republicans in the 2nd, which is the more Republican-friendly district; Biden would have carried it by 14 points, 54-42 percent, but Hillary Clinton would have carried it by a narrower 47-42 percent margin in 2016. First, Fung will have to make it through a primary against two candidates who may try to run to his right: state Sen. Jessica de la Cruz and former state Rep. Robert Lancia. Cruz is the state Senate minority whip and flipped a Democratic-held seat in 2018; Lancia was the 2020 nominee for the 2nd and has been running since last year. He had just \$67,000 in the bank on Dec. 31.

Given that the district voted for Biden by 14 points, it should be a straightforward hold for Democrats. But the open seat, combined with the possibility of a strong Republican candidate, have Republicans looking at this race as a sleeper. If that happens, Democrats are in for a long election night. It could develop that way, but for now it remains Solid Democratic.

IE

CALENDAR

April 4	Arizona/New Jersey Filing Deadlines
April 5	California's 22nd Special Primary
April 7	New York/Tennessee Filing Deadlines
April 15	1st Fundraising Quarter Reports Due
April 15	Oklahoma Filing Deadline
May 3	Indiana, Ohio Primaries
May 10	Nebraska, West Virginia Primaries