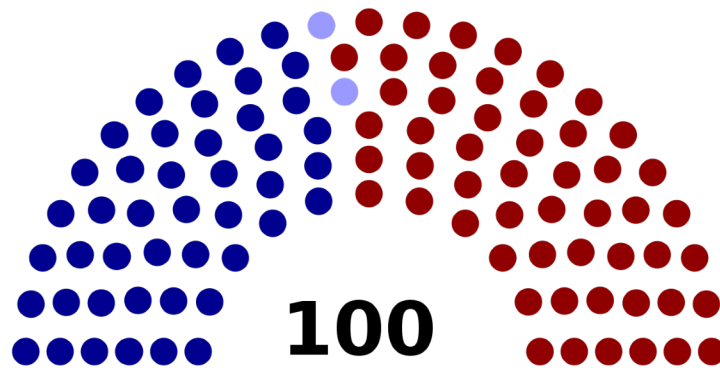


Down Ballot 2020:

Flip the Senate



Because the Senate will be key to enabling or checking

what the President can and cannot do

regardless of who wins the White House

25 October 2020

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Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide readers with sufficient information to make informed decisions about which Democratic Senate candidates to support, either financially or otherwise.

Pages 3 - 19 provide a high-level view and aggregates of various factors used to assess the races.

Pages 20 – 39 discuss individual races.

Pages 40 – 57 are appendices that describe and explain various assessment factors.

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Executive Summary

- *We are back to being **cautiously** optimistic the Democrats can flip the Senate:*
 - Nate Silver's 538 raised Dems' chances of flipping the Senate from 72% to 73%;
 - The Economist give Dems a 74% chance of flipping the Senate;
 - Cook Political Report calls Democrats a clear favorite to take control of Senate; and
 - Alan Abramowitz, at UVA Center for Politics, favors Dems to win Senate
- Despite all that, some of the key the races have gotten noticeably more competitive in the past week or so.
- In the most likely scenario based on current polling (i.e., Biden wins, Jones (D-AL) loses), Dems need a net gain four seats to flip it . But if Joe Biden loses, Dems will need five seats. Hence, ***the target needs to be five seats.***
- There are about ***12 Republican seats in some level of play***, some more competitive than others, but almost all moving in the right direction:
 - Colorado is extremely competitive at this point
 - Arizona is very competitive
 - Maine is moderately competitive
 - Iowa and North Carolina are borderline competitive
- Furthermore, other seats are almost competitive, and the fluid nature of the other seats is costing the Republican establishment a lot of money to play defense. This is money that cannot be used to defend the aforementioned seats.
- Again, there is reason to be optimistic, but it's not a given.

The biggest danger at this point is complacency.

Races of Interest

The following 13 Senate races are the races of interest in this report:

- Alaska
- Arizona
- Colorado
- Georgia – Regular
- Georgia – Special
- Iowa
- Kansas
- Maine
- Michigan (Dem incumbent)
- Montana
- North Carolina
- South Carolina
- Texas

These 13 races were culled from a larger list of 15 races that Democratic Senate leadership and Republican Senate leadership have funded this year (see Appendix A for details on this outside funding). Two of the 15 races that the respective leadership groups have funded were dropped: Minnesota and Kentucky.

Minnesota was dropped because – after a consideration of all factors – it was deemed a safe seat for Democrats. Kentucky was dropped because – after a consideration of all factors – it was deemed a safe seat for Republicans.

Of the 13 races of interest, one is of special interest: Georgia Special Election. This race has an individual discussion.

The remaining races are presented with reference to the following assessment factors (see Appendix A for a more detailed discussion):

- Polling (p .7)
- Outside Spending (p. 13)
- Individual Fundraising (p. 15)
- Pundit Forecasts (p. 17)
- Miscellaneous (pp. 21 – 41)

Recommendations for Donations and Support

The overall Senate race has turned into something of a street brawl, and it difficult to clearly determine the best races to support. Here are two options for donating.

Option 1: At this point the races have tightened to the point that it is difficult for an average donor to really understand all the variables in play and make the best choice for donations. That being the case, the recommended option is to donate to those who really understand the big picture and the ground game. The two primary entities are:

- Democratic Senate Campaign Committee (DSCC): <https://www.dsc.org/>
- Senate Majority PAC: <https://www.senatemajority.com/>

The first is directly controlled by Senate Democratic leadership, and the second has very close ties to Senate Democratic leadership.

Option 2: A second option is to donate to individual races. Act Blue’s “Retake the Senate 2020” allows the choice of either having a donation divided evenly between all relevant Senate races, or weighing some races more heavily than other.

- Act Blue: <https://secure.actblue.com/donate/retakesenate2020>

In looking at all the assessment factors on pages 7, 12, 15, and 18 (see Appendix A for detailed descriptions), the following races seem to make the most sense for donating money at this point:

Georgia Special	p. 37	Rev. Raphael Warnock
Iowa	p. 26	Theresa Greenfield
Michigan	p. 30	Sen. Gary Peters
Montana	p. 31	Gov. Steve Bullock
North Carolina	p. 32	Cal Cunningham

Polling

A narrative has developed in the past four years that the 2016 polls were wrong, and that we cannot trust the 2020 polls.

Please read Appendix B, which discusses this. Or, you can watch this short video that also discusses the issue:

<https://digg.com/video/were-the-polls-all-wrong-in-2016-and-can-we-trust-them-in-2020>

In short, the polls were much more accurate than the narrative implies, and to the extent there were issues, these issues have been addressed by most pollsters. That is not to say the polls are totally accurate predictors, but they are pretty good and much better than they were in 2016.

As we enter the final weeks before the election, two things are happening:

- More polls are being taken
- Some races are tightening

Because more polls are being taken, we will see more outliers. Approximately one in 20 polls (5%) can be expected to have bad samples. This is normal. The lesson is: *do not take any one poll too seriously.*

Also, as the races tighten, it is important to keep an eye on the context. If a Senate race is tightening, look at what's happening in the Presidential race. Look at the history of that Senate race. There are some notes at the end of this section that discuss these things.

Because we are so close to the election, this report is now only focusing on October polls, and comparing the most recent week of polls to the previous October polls.

Please note: The decision to compare this past week to the first 17 days of October was arbitrary. It was not based on any known best practice. It simply seemed reasonable. There are any number of ways these numbers can be analyzed. Some will make Dems appear better off, and some will make Dems

appear worse off. *So do not take Table 3 as any sort of definitive snapshot of the races.*

Appendix C contains a list of all polls taken in October.

This report uses weighted averages. If you do not understand weighted averages, please look at Appendix D, which explains them.

The Table 1, below, is an overview of all polls taken from 1 – 17 October of the races of interest (Alaska has far too few polls to matter, and the Georgia Special election has some special considerations and is treated separately on page 39).

	Dem	GOP	Average Difference	No. of Polls
Arizona	49.9	42.3	7.6	14
Colorado	50.3	40.3	10.0	7
Georgia - Reg	45.0	45.4	-0.4	7
Iowa	47.3	44.4	2.9	5
Kansas	42.4	44.8	NA	0
Maine	45.9	41.1	4.8	2
Michigan	47.8	42.0	5.8	16
Montana	45.9	49.4	-3.6	3
North Carolina	47.1	42.2	4.9	15
South Carolina	43.3	46.4	-3.1	5
Texas	42.3	47.7	-5.5	6

Table 1: Weighted Averages of October 1 -17 Polls

Column 1 lists the state. Column 2 is the weighted average for the Democratic candidate across these October polls. Column 3 is the weighted average for the Republican candidate across the same October polls. Column 4 is the difference, and column 5 is the number of polls used.

As can be seen, Democrats in Arizona and Colorado are well ahead of their opponents, while the Democratic candidate in Texas is seriously lagging.

Table 2, on the next page, shows the same information for the past week (18 – 24 October), with the addition of Column 6, which shows the date of the latest poll.

	Dem	GOP	Average Difference	No. of Polls	Most Recent Poll
Arizona	49.0	43.6	5.4	8	21-Oct
Colorado	50.0	42.0	8.0	1	20-Oct
Georgia - Reg	44.2	45.9	-1.7	4	20-Oct
Iowa	46.6	46.0	0.6	5	21-Oct
Kansas	42.4	44.8	-2.3	2	20-Oct
Maine					
Michigan	48.8	43.0	5.8	9	20-Oct
Montana	46.5	48.7	-2.2	3	20-Oct
North Carolina	46.8	43.7	3.2	7	21-Oct
South Carolina	47.0	45.0	2.0	1	20-Oct
Texas	41.5	47.2	-5.7	4	20-Oct

Table 2: Weighted Averages of October 18 - 24 Polls

Of note, Maine has had no polls since early-October, which is unusual considering the importance of that particular Senate race.

Table 3, on the next page, compares the difference in differences. That is to say, it compares column 4 in the first table (1 -17 October) to column 4 in second table (the past week) and notes the changes. This is a coarse indicator of the direction and momentum of the race.

	Average Difference: Oct 1 - 17	Average Difference: This Week	Change
Arizona	7.6	5.4	-2.2
Colorado	10.0	8.0	-2.0
Georgia - Reg	-0.4	-1.7	-1.4
Iowa	2.9	0.6	-2.3
Kansas	NA	-2.3	NA
Maine	4.8	NA	NA
Michigan	5.8	5.8	0.0
Montana	-3.6	-2.2	1.4
North Carolina	4.9	3.2	-1.7
South Carolina	-3.1	2.0	5.1
Texas	-5.5	-5.7	-0.2

Table 3: The Difference in Differences

Notes:

- Alaska has too few polls to say anything meaningful about.
- Arizona's race has definitely tightened. But it has tightened for Biden/Trump, too, where the difference in weighted averages has gone from 3.8% to 2.7% this month. Also, one recent poll was arguably an outlier; it had Martha McSally (R) well above her historic range for no apparent reason. In the absence of that poll this race remains near its previous norm. In short, although the -2.2% change is troublesome, it is not anything to stay awake at night worrying about.
- Colorado is polling very well. The recent tightening brought it back to its historic norm.
- Georgia Regular is tightening in the wrong direction. Presidential polling shows a very tight race, also, with Biden having assumed a lead over Trump on 01 October, and maintaining that narrow leading throughout the month.

- Iowa is tightening in the wrong direction. Theresa Greenfield (D) still leads, but by a much, much smaller margin than before. Biden and Trump have been going back and forth with the lead all month. This is a true tossup.
- Kansas has only just started seeing October polls.
- As stated above, Maine has a strange lack of polls. This is an important race, and it is curious why there have been no polls since 6 October.
- Michigan is doing OK, with no changes in either direction.
- Montana is lagging overall, but is changing in the right direction. But Montana has too few polls to draw any firm conclusions.
- North Carolina has tightened significantly. Although there may be an inclination to blame Cal Cunningham's (D) sexual indiscretions, there is another factor to consider.

Cal Cunningham's overall poll ratings have not dropped; in fact, they have gone up. In September Cunningham's weighted average was 47.0%, in the first part of October it was 46.9%, and this past week it was 47.3%, which is above his September numbers.

What has happened is that Tillis's (R) poll numbers have gone up slightly more than Cunningham's. In September Tillis's weighted average was 41.3%, in the first part of October it was 41.7%, and this past week it shot up to 44.3%. Part of this may have been due to the fact that Tillis was in a COVID quarantine for almost two weeks, and just recently re-emerged.

That said, the Biden/Trump polling has improved in North Carolina during October, and it is a bit troubling to see the disconnect between the Senate campaign and the Presidential campaign.

- Although South Carolina appears to have made a big positive change in the last week, that is only one poll, and one poll is not enough for anyone to hang their hat on.

On the other hand, the relatively bad numbers in early-October may not be as bad as they seem. The high numbers for Lindsey Graham in the first part of the month were due mainly to one poll, which gave him a decisive lead. All the other polls going back to early August have Graham and Harrison running neck-in-neck (as does the most recent poll).

- Texas is seriously lagging, but not to the point where anyone should give up hope.

Outside Spending

Outside spending refers to spending done by committees directly controlled by the Senate Majority Leader and Senate Minority leader, or by PACs that are very closely affiliated with each.

The following two news items appeared this week related to this section:

Parties' late spending on Senate races shows GOP's jeopardy -
<https://apnews.com/article/election-2020-virus-outbreak-senate-elections-arizona-kansas-372fbc29b1a6d4541ff474f6b2ea1ac1>

Big GOP donors step up to help fight Democratic Senate tsunami -
<https://www.politico.com/news/2020/10/23/gop-super-pac-senate-fundraising-431638>

Within that context, Table 4, below, shows exactly where the outside spending went during the past week:

Democrats		Republicans	
State	Priority	State	Priority
IA	\$11,343,356	NC	\$7,543,219
NC	\$8,381,995	IA	\$6,686,380
MI	\$7,120,285	MI	\$6,479,012
GA-R	\$7,046,216	GA-R	\$5,881,749
MT	\$5,048,234	MT	\$4,782,521
ME	\$4,313,214	SC	\$3,918,662
TX	\$4,158,236	AZ	\$3,174,167
AZ	\$3,195,294	KS	\$3,041,548
SC	\$1,491,548	ME	\$2,364,097
CO	\$529,981	AK	\$1,480,015
GA-SP	\$70	CO	\$1,378,762
		MS	\$2,176
Totals	\$52,628,429		\$46,732,308

Table 4: Outside Spending for the Week of 18 – 24 October

It is easy to see that the Senate leaders of both parties consider Iowa, North Carolina, and Michigan to be their top three priorities. Georgia Regular and Montana account for priorities 4 and 5. After that things become muddled.

Individual Fundraising

As noted in the last report, Democratic candidates did extremely well in third quarter fundraising. Table 7, below, shows the unofficially reported numbers (note, the Federal Election Commission only shows fundraising totals, not quarterly increments).

All figures are in millions of dollars.

	Dem	GOP
AK	9.0	1.6
AZ	38.7	23.0
CO	22.6	7.8
GA-R	21.3	5.5
IA	28.7	7.2
KS	13.5	2.9
ME	39.9	8.3
MI	14.0	14.0
MT	26.9	11.5
NC	28.3	6.6
SC	57.0	28.0
TX	13.5	7.2

Table 5: Q3 Individual Fundraising

On one level, this looks absolutely fantastic. Keep in mind two things, however:

1. Much of this money came from out-of-state and through Act Blue. It does not necessarily reflect state constituent sentiments.
2. Turning money into votes is not a given.

That said, the table does show a certain lack of enthusiasm among Republican donors.

Table 8, below, may be more germane for this report. This table shows not only Q3 fundraising totals, but cash on hand as of the 14 October FEC filing.

	Raised in Q3		On Hand 10/14	
	Dem	GOP	Dem	GOP
AK	9.0	1.6	3.0	2.1
AZ	38.7	23.0	11.0	9.1
CO	22.6	7.8	4.1	4.2
GA-R	21.3	5.5	4.1	5.8
IA	28.7	7.2	3.8	2.5
KS	13.5	2.9	4.8	1.4
ME	39.9	8.3	20.6	4.4
MI	14.0	14.0	3.9	6.2
MT	26.9	11.5	4.0	1.8
NC	28.3	6.6	0.9	3.5
SC	57.0	28.0	3.5	7.3
TX	13.5	7.2	6.9	3.8

Table 6: Cash on Hand as of 14 October

Democrats in some races are still doing well regarding cash on hand: Alaska, Arizona, Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Montana, and Texas stand out.

Other Democrats are behind their opponents: Georgia Regular, Michigan, North Carolina, and South Carolina stand out.

Only Colorado is relatively even.

Pundit Forecasts

Table 9, below, is an aggregation of various pundit forecasts for the Senate races (see Appendix F for a description of the first three pundits). This week “The Economist” forecasts have been added.

	Cook	Sabato	Gonzales	538	Economist
AK	Lean	Lean	Likely	20%	26%
AZ	Lean	Lean	Tilt	78%	86%
CO	Lean	Likely	Lean	83%	94%
GA-R	Toss Up	Lean	Tilt	29%	49%
GA-Sp	Toss Up	Lean	Lean	54%	48%
IA	Toss Up	Lean	Toss Up	56%	62%
KS	Lean	Lean	Tilt	25%	26%
ME	Toss Up	Lean	Tilt	63%	77%
MI	Lean	Lean	Lean	79%	93%
MT	Toss Up	Lean	Toss Up	32%	32%
NC	Toss Up	Toss Up	Tilt	64%	77%
SC	Toss Up	Lean	Tilt	23%	40%
TX	Lean	Likely	Lean	13%	18%

Table 7: Pundit Forecasts

Of the 13 states listed, Arizona, Colorado, and Michigan seem poised to be considered “in the bag” (although remember that Michigan is already a blue state).

Maine is moving towards being in the bag.

Iowa and North Carolina are clearly in the Toss Up.

Georgia Special seems to have some degree of play, although that race has some special considerations discussed separately.

Georgia Regular, Montana, and South Carolina all seem to be on the reddish side of the ledger, but none too far over to preclude a change.

At the far Red end, Alaska and Texas seem out of reach. That said, media headlines from both states indicate that surprises could be in store, and they should not be written off entirely.

There were no changes in forecasts from Cook, Sabato, or Gonzales this week. Nate Silver’s 538, however, does show changes (because it is strictly quantitative). Table 8, on the next page, shows the changes between last week and this week.

	538 Last Week	538 This Week	Change
AK	20%	21%	+1
AZ	79%	78%	-1
CO	80%	83%	+3
GA-R	27%	29%	+2
GA-Sp	49%	53%	+4
IA	52%	56%	+4
KS	27%	26%	-1
ME	62%	63%	+1
MI	78%	79%	+1
MT	31%	32%	+1
NC	66%	64%	-2
SC	22%	23%	+1
TX	13%	13%	--

Table 8: Changes in 538 Forecasts

In general, these numbers look good.

- Arizona dropped a point, but the Democrats are doing well there.
- Kansas dropped a point, but that is a long shot anyway.
- North Carolina dropped two points, and that is troublesome.

But for the most part, the numbers indicate the country to moving towards blue.

States of Interest

Alaska

Candidates

Independent Challenger: Al Gross – Orthopedic surgeon and commercial fisherman – Native-born Alaskan – First-time politician.

Website: <https://dralgrossak.com>

Wikipedia Page: None

GOP Incumbent: Dan Sullivan – Native of Ohio – First-term Senator. Served as Alaska Attorney General for several years.

Assessment and Commentary

- No significant changes since last week.
- Alaska is notoriously difficult to poll due to the vast distances and dispersed population. With only three electoral votes, the state is not being followed too closely in general, and the Senate race even less so.
- The anecdotal evidence suggests that Al Gross (I) is generating enthusiasm and is a contender.
- Gross reported raising over \$9 million in Q3, which for Alaska is huge. As someone said, that's enough to register every salmon to vote. And comparatively speaking, his cash on hand is good. His cash advantage is still strong.
- An analysis of outside spending indicates neither Chuck Schumer nor Mitch McConnell are giving this race much priority, although other outside groups are pouring money in.
- The pundits all – to various degrees – look at Alaska as going red.
- Global warming is starting to take a toll in Alaska, and the environment is of particular concern. A recently-revealed secret recording of mining executives discussing complicity with Senator Dan Sullivan (R) is apparently causing significant ripples.
- Alaskans take pride in being independent, and Al Gross could just pull this off. Stranger things have happened.

Recent Alaska News

In Alaska, a controversy over an embattled mine has tightened the Senate race - <https://insideclimatenews.org/news/16102020/alaska-senate-race-election-2020-dan-sullivan-al-gross>

Al Gross is hoping to ride Alaska's independent streak to the Senate - <https://www.vox.com/platform/amp/21495403/alaska-senate-sullivan-gross-2020>

Arizona

Candidates

Dem Challenger: Mark Kelly - Former Naval aviator, with combat experience in the first Gulf War. Retired as a Captain (O-6). Former astronaut. Married to former-U.S. Representative Gabby Giffords. No political experience.

Website: <https://markkelly.com/>

Wikipedia Page: [Mark Kelly](#)

GOP Incumbent: Martha McSally - Former U.S. Air Force officer. Flew combat missions and commanded a fighter squadron. Retired as a Colonel (O-6). Served as U.S. representative from 2015 – 2019. Ran for Senate and lost. Was appointed to this seat when John McCain died.

Assessment and Commentary

- Arizona is close to being in the bag, but the race is clearly tightening.
- It is among the most heavily-pollled states, and all of the polls but one since early-summer show Mark Kelly (D) significantly ahead of incumbent Martha McSally (R).
- An analysis of outside funding suggests that Senate leaders Chuck Schumer and Mitch McConnell both think this seat is going to flip. Relatively speaking, they are not giving this race much in the way of outside spending.
- The Q3 fundraising reports indicate Kelly far outpaced McSally, and maintains a decent lead in cash on hand.
- All of the pundits rate this better than a Toss Up for Dems.
- Arizona has slowly been turning bluer as retirees from blue states move there, and there is a general – but muted – expectation that this seat will flip along with some critical seats in the state legislature.

Recent Arizona News

The Senate battle between Martha McSally and Mark Kelly shows just how much Arizona is changing - <https://www.cnbc.com/amp/2020/10/21/arizona-senate-race-mark-kelly-martha-mcsally.html>

Colorado

Candidates

Dem Challenger: John Hickenlooper - Former Colorado Governor (2011 – 2019), geologist, and business owner. Entered 2020 Democratic Presidential primaries, but dropped out.

Website: <https://hickenlooper.com/>

Wikipedia Page: [John Hickenlooper](#)

GOP Incumbent: Cory Gardner – First-term Senator. Member of Colorado House of Representatives (2005 – 2011) and then U.S. Representative (2011 – 2015).

Assessment and Commentary

- Colorado is probably closer to being in the bag than any of the other competitive states.
- Although polling has been sparse, former Governor John Hickenlooper (D) has consistently been comfortably ahead of incumbent Cory Gardner (R).
- An analysis of outside funding suggests that Senate leaders Chuck Schumer and Mitch McConnell both think this seat is going to flip. Republican outside groups have indicated they will no longer fund Gardner.
- Hickenlooper far outpaced Gardner in Q3 fundraising.
- All of the pundits rate this better than a Toss Up for Dems.
- This is a very blue state at every level.

Recent Colorado News

For many Colorado voters, climate is personal and pushing them at the polls - <https://www.cpr.org/2020/10/20/for-many-colorado-voters-climate-is-personal-and-pushing-them-at-the-polls/>

Georgia - Regular

Candidates

Dem Incumbent: Jon Ossoff – Investigative journalist – Ran for House seat in Georgia’s 6th Congressional district in 2017 and narrowly lost with 48.7% of the vote.

Campaign website: <https://electjon.com/>

Wikipedia Page: [Jon Ossoff](#)

GOP Challenger: David Perdue – First-term Senator – Former businessman

Assessment and Commentary

- This is a tough race for a Democrat, although Ossoff seems to be slowly but steadily moving forward.
- Polling has been steady in Georgia, with 13 polls in October and six in the past week. Ossoff has been trailing Perdue, but he has narrowed the gap considerably in recent polls.
- An analysis of outside funding suggests that both Senate Democratic and Republican leadership are very interested in this race. Both had it prioritized as race #5 in their spending this past week.
- Ossoff far outpaced Perdue in fundraising, although he is currently lagging slightly in cash on hand. Since the 15 October FEC report, however, Perdue appears to have made a major error in publicly mispronouncing Kamal Harris’s name on purpose. This resulted in a giant influx of cash for Ossoff (see “Recent Georgia News” on the next page).
- The pundits generally rate this as staying red, although both Cook and The Economist rate it a Toss Up.
- Like Virginia, Democrats hope for a purpling of Georgia, and it may be happening: this week Biden is just ahead of Trump, 49.7% to 46.6%. Ossoff is closing the gap in polls, and if Raphael Warnock can bring out the vote in the Georgia Special election, this race might actually go blue. But at this point it’s a bit of a longshot.

(continued on next page)

Recent Georgia News

'Kamala' becomes a rally call against GOP Senator in Georgia -

<https://wnyt.com/politics/kamala-becomes-a-rally-call-against-gop-senator-in-georgia/5900595/?cat=661>

Iowa

Candidates

Dem Challenger: Teresa Greenfield - President of a Des Moines-based commercial real-estate firm. Ran for Iowa 3rd Congressional district in 2018, but was disqualified before the primary for not having a sufficient number of signatures on the ballot petition.

Website: <https://greenfieldforiowa.com/>

Wikipedia Page: None

GOP Incumbent: Joni Ernst – First-term Senator. Served in Iowa National Guard (1993 – 2015), and retired at a Lieutenant Colonel (0-5). Served in Iowa State Senate from 2011 – 2014.

Assessment and Commentary

- Iowa is a true battleground state for the Senate.
- The polls had shown Theresa Greenfield (D) consistently ahead of incumbent Joni Ernst (R), and getting slightly better over time, but the lead started reversing recently.
- An analysis of outside spending indicates that Senate leaders Schumer and McConnell consider this either #1 or #2 in importance.
- Greenfield far outpaced Ernst in Q3 fundraising, and has a comfortable lead in cash on hand.
- Two of the pundits rate this race a Toss Up, and one rates it Lean Blue.
- Iowa has a history of a strong Democratic electorate. That was upset during the red wave of 2010, and for the past 10 years the state has had a definite red tinge. A lot has been going on below the surface, however, and many expect a definite change of political orientation this cycle.

Recent Iowa News

The Iowa Senate race wasn't supposed to be this close-

<https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2020/10/iowa-senate-race-joni-ernst-theresa-greenfield.html>

Kansas

Candidates

Democratic Candidate: Barbara Bollier – Surgeon – Former Republican – Kansas state politician

Website: <https://bollierforkansas.com>

Wikipedia Page: [Barbara Bollier](#)

GOP Candidate: Roger Marshall – Obstetrician – U.S. representative (one term)

Assessment and Commentary

- There are a lot of headlines about this race, but few hard numbers.
- Polling has been sparse, but all polls since early September show the candidates more or less tied, with Barbara Bollier slightly trailing Roger Marshall.
- An analysis of outside spending suggests Chuck Schumer and Mitch McConnell are not terribly concerned, although the GOP did send \$3 million to help.
- Based on available numbers, Bollier appears to be doing much better in fundraising than Marshall. In Q2, she raised more money than any candidate for any federal, state, or local office has ever raised in any quarter in the entire history of Kansas.
- The pundits are calling this for the GOP right now, although only slightly. Gonzales Recnetly changed the race from Lean Red to Tilt Red.
- On the surface, Dems face a challenge in that Kansas has not elected a Democratic Senator in almost 100 years. But the recent behavior of the Republican Party has caused something of a backlash in Kansas. The Democratic nominee, Barbara Bollier, is a former Republican who switched parties several years ago. She could appeal to the enough disenchantd Republicans to pull this off.

Recent Kansas News

Not a fair fight: In Kansas, GOP frustrated as money rolls in for Democrat and Senate race tightens - https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/senate-trump-kansas-republicans/2020/10/21/bfecd048-1286-11eb-ad6f-36c93e6e94fb_story.html

Maine

Candidates

Dem Challenger: Sara Gideon - State of Maine Speaker of the House. First elected in 2012 to represent Maine's District 48. Elected Speaker of the House in 2018.

Website: <https://saragideon.com/>

Wikipedia Page: [Sarah Gideon](#)

GOP Incumbent: Susan Collins – Four-term incumbent. First elected to Senate in 1996.

Assessment and Commentary

- Maine is slightly bluer than a Toss Up, but with no polls since early-October, it is difficult to assess how things are going.
- Although polling has been moderate, but Sara Gideon (D) has shown a consistent meaningful lead on incumbent Senator Susan Collins (R). A shortage of October polls is hampering any current assessments.
- An analysis of outside spending suggests that although Senate leaders Schumer and McConnell view this race as important, neither one has it in the middle of their crosshairs.
- Gideon crushed Collins in Q3 fundraising, and currently has a large advantage in cash on hand.
- The general opinion of the pundits favors Dems, with all but one rating Maine better than a Toss Up.
- Collins has a long history in Maine, and many staunch supporters. Nonetheless, Maine is essentially blue, and this may be her last hurrah.
- Recent court rulings allowing ranked choice voting (RCV) are seen as favorable to Dems.

Recent Maine News

- Nothing significant to report

Michigan

Candidates

Dem Incumbent: Gary Peters – First-term Senator – Former U.S. Representative (2009 – 2013) – 10 years as Naval Reserve officer – 22 years as an investment adviser.

Campaign website: <https://petersformichigan.com/>
Wikipedia Page: [Gary Peters](#)

GOP Challenger: John James – West Point graduate – Eight years of Army service – Businessman – no prior political experience, but considered a rising Republican star.

Assessment and Commentary

- Michigan should, in theory, stay blue, but GOP challenger John James (R) saw a surge in polling last month that caused angst as the spread narrowed.
- All October show Gary Peters (D) has regained his lead, with a weighted average of 5.8% over James. Not great, but outside the margin of errors.
- An analysis of outside spending suggests that Senate leaders Schumer and McConnell view this race as important.
- Peters and James tied each other in Q3 fundraising, and James currently has more cash on hand than Peters.
- The pundits are favoring Dems.
- Michigan bears watching, although it seems relatively safe at this point.

Recent Michigan News

Nothing significant to report

Montana

Candidates

Dem Challenger: Steve Bullock - Currently serving second term as Governor, but is term-limited. Former state Attorney General. Chaired the National Governor's Association.

Website: <https://stevebullock.com/>

Wikipedia Page: [Steve Bullock](#)

GOP Incumbent: Steve Daines – First-term Senator. U.S. Representative for one term.

Assessment and Commentary:

- Montana, from an objective point of view, is slightly below Toss Up status. There are qualitative factors, however, that make it competitive.
- Polling has been incredibly sparse, and what little there has been shows Gov. Steve Bullock (D) lagging incumbent Sen. Steve Daines (R) (although the lead has been narrowed in the past week).
- An analysis of outside funding indicates the two Senate leaders consider this race to be fifth in priority.
- Bullock crushed Daines in Q3 fundraising, and he is currently showing a significant cash on hand advantage.
- Only two of the pundits rate this race as good as a Toss Up.
- **Of note:** Steve Bullock is a popular two-term Governor who has the state's bully pulpit. Furthermore, Montana has a rich history of electing Democratic Senators while it continues to support Republican Presidents. These factors may help overcome the slightly grim story told by the numbers.

Recent Montana News

Montana's Senate race was supposed to be easy for Republicans. It's a dead heat - <https://www.vox.com/21508336/montanas-senate-race-steve-bullock-daines>

North Carolina

Candidates

Dem Challenger: Cal Cunningham - Army Reserve JAG officer (Bronze Star recipient). North Carolina State Senator from the 23rd district from 2001 to 2003. Ran for U.S. Senate seat in 2010 but was defeated in a runoff.

Website: <https://www.calfornc.com/>

Wikipedia Page: [Cal Cunningham](#)

GOP Incumbent: Thom Tillis – First-term Senator. Served in the North Carolina House of Representatives from 2006 – 2104. Was elected Speaker in 2011.

Assessment and Commentary

- North Carolina was on a definite track to be competitive before revelations of Cal Cunningham's (D) extramarital dalliances popped in late-September.
- Recent polls show a tightening of this race. Although Cunningham's support has risen, Tillis's support had risen slightly more.
- An analysis of outside spending suggests that Senate leaders Schumer and McConnell consider this race to be extremely important, along with Iowa.
- Cunningham crushed Tillis in Q3 fundraising, but his current cash on hand is seriously less than Tillis's.
- The pundits are generally favoring Dems, and on the optimistic side, 538 has maintained a steady forecast of 64% - 65% through all the extramarital drama.
- This race appears to have dropped from leaning Dem to being a tossup.

Recent North Carolina News

Late revelations about Democratic candidate haven't shaken the NC Senate race - <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/2020-election/late-revelations-about-democratic-candidate-haven-t-shaken-n-c-n1244013>

South Carolina

Candidates

Democratic Challenger: Jaime Harrison – South Carolina politician

Website: <https://jaimeharrison.com/>

Wikipedia Page: [Jaime Harrison](#)

GOP Incumbent: Lindsey Graham – Three-term Senator – Chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Assessment and Commentary

- Perhaps the most interesting race of 2020. In theory Sen. Lindsey Graham should be breezing towards re-election in deep red South Carolina, but he is not. Democratic challenger Jaime Harrison is a charismatic newcomer who has captured the imagination of the state and the nation.
- Early-October polls had Harrison and Graham neck-in-neck, with one possible outlier putting Graham significantly ahead. One poll in the past week put Harrison ahead.
- An analysis of outside spending suggests neither Schumer nor McConnell are putting too much emphasis on this race, although one of the GOP organizations sent Graham \$10 million.
- Harrison raised a record-breaking \$57 million in Q3, while Graham did a bit better than half that. Since then, Harrison has passed the \$100 million mark. That said, Graham's mid-October cash on hand was ahead of Harrison's.
- Although the pundits general rate this race slightly reddish, the ratings have slowly been changing from deep red to pink. Cook recently changed the race from Lean Red to a Toss Up. That's huge.
- Harrison has some structural obstacles to overcome in the race in terms of political demographics in South Carolina. But he is holding his own – and then some – in all aspects, and this could be the political upset of the century.

(continued on next page)

Recent South Carolina News

Lou Dobbs is telling South Carolina voters not to vote for Lindsey Graham - <https://twitter.com/JasonSCampbell/status/1319749236251070466>

How South Carolina became one of 2020's most unexpected Senate battlegrounds - <https://www.vox.com/21507560/south-carolina-senate-jaime-harrison-lindsey-graham>

Texas

Candidates

Democratic Challenger: Mary Hegar – Air Force veteran – Deployed three times to Afghanistan as a pilot – Received Distinguished Flying Cross and Purple Heart after being shot down - Ran for a House seat and lost

Website: <https://mjfortexas.com/>

Wikipedia Page: [Mary Hegar](#)

GOP Incumbent: John Cornyn – Three-term Senator

Assessment and Commentary

- Like Mitch McConnell and Lindsey Graham, John Cornyn is a bit of a Republican institution in the Senate, and initially not many thought this challenge would go anywhere. Although not terrifically competitive, it has come up from behind so rapidly as to turn some heads.
- Hegar lags Cornyn in all polls, but not by much, all things considered..
- Outside spending has barely shown this race any interest until now, although this week the Democrats have shown some serious interest in it to the tune of \$4.1 million .
- Hegar outraised Cornyn \$14 million to \$7.2 million in Q3, and had almost double Cornyn’s cash on hand as of mid-October.
- The pundits universally see this as going to Cornyn, although Cook recently changed the race from Likely Red to Lean Red.
- This race feels like déjà vu all over again. When Beto O’Rourke ran against Ted Cruz, the mood was that Dems were finally going to win big in Texas. It’s like that again. And it might happen; Texas is changing. But this is a long shot race. Stranger things have happened, and this could be the race that does it.

(continued on next page)

Recent Texas News

John Cornyn (R), a three-term Senator, is facing his first real challenge from newcomer MJ Hegar - <https://www.vox.com/21519404/texas-senate-race-cornyn-hegar>

Silicon Valley billionaires bankroll \$28 million to help MJ Hegar oust John Cornyn - <https://www.dallasnews.com/news/politics/2020/10/20/silicon-valley-billionaires-bankroll-28m-deluge-to-help-hegar-oust-cornyn-in-texas-senate-contest/>

Special Cases

Georgia Special

Candidates

Democrats: Raphael Warnock, Matt Lieberman, Ed Tarvers

GOP Incumbent: Kelly Loeffler

GOP Challenger: Doug Collins

The special election is to fill the seat of Johnny Isakson (R), who retired in January. The Governor appointed business woman Kelly Loeffler to fill the seat in the interim, and now a real election must occur. *If no one candidate gets above 50% in November, it will go to a runoff between the top two candidates in January.*

The problem is there are 21 candidates running, eight of them Democrats. The strong Democrat is the Reverend Raphael Warnock, who occupies the Reverend Martin Luther King's former position at Atlanta's Ebenezer Baptist Church. He is extremely popular and well-known, and in theory should energize the black vote in Georgia. Warnock is currently polling upward to 49% when matched against specific GOP candidates.

Unfortunately Matt Lieberman (D) – son of former Senator Joe Lieberman – is running, along with former U.S. attorney Ed Tarver.

On the Republican side, there are two strong Republicans: incumbent Kelly Loeffler and Tea Party candidate Doug Collins.

Table 9, on the next page, shows the raw data from recent polls:

Date	Poll	538	Weights	Warnock	Lieb.	Tarver	Kelly	Collins
21-Oct	Landmark	B	3.00	33	0	0	27	24
19-Oct	Sienna / NYTimes	A+	4.25	32	7	2	23	17
19-Oct	Emerson	A+	4.25	27	12	2	20	27
15-Oct	Opinion Insight	A/B	3.50	31	3	1	19	18
12-Oct	Survey USA	A	4.00	30	8	3	26	20
12-Oct	Quinnipiac	B+	3.25	43	5	2	22	20
11-Oct	Data for Progress	B-	2.75	30	10	1	22	22
9-Oct	PPP	B	3.00	41	3	0	24	22
7-Oct	Landmark	B	3.00	36	3	3	26	23
6-Oct	U. of GA	B/C	2.50	28	3	4	22	21

Table 9: October Polls for Georgia Special Election

The weighted averages are:

Warnock	Lieberman	Tarver	Kelly	Collins
30.6	6.1	1.4	22.0	21.5

Cash on hand, based on FEC filings, is shown in Table 10, below (all data in \$ millions):

Candidate	Raised	Spent	On Hand	Date
R. Warnock (D)	\$21,729,915	\$16,211,069	\$5,518,846	10/14
M. Lieberman (D)	\$1,493,149	\$1,288,618	\$204,531	10/14
E. Tarver (D)	\$270,128	\$260,604	\$9,525	10/14
K. Loeffler (R) – Inc.	\$28,206,336	\$22,276,227	\$5,930,109	10/14
D. Collins (R)	\$6,279,126	\$4,812,636	\$1,466,490	10/14

Table 10: Total Cash Raised, Spent, and on Hand

If Democrats could consolidate around Warnock, he could conceivably win in November. But neither Liberman nor Tarver are publicly entertaining the idea of dropping out and putting their support behind Warnock.

And if Lieberman and Tarver were to fall in behind Warnock, it is also conceivable the black community turnout would be high, and enough to push Ossoff over the edge in the regular election.

Appendix A: Assessment Factors

Polling

Polling is the single most important assessment criterion. That said, no single poll is taken too seriously. Rather, polls are grouped with other polls taken during a relatively similar time period, and weighted averages are computed using Nate Silver's 538 poll rating system. Typically current weighted averages are compared to weighted averages from previous time periods to try to infer trends.

Outside Spending

The outside spending considered here is funding from:

1. The Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee;
2. The (Democratic) Senate Majority PAC;
3. The National Republican Senatorial Committee; and
4. The (Republican) Senate Leadership Fund PAC.

These organizations are either tied directly to Senate leadership – i.e., Chuck Schumer and Mitch McConnell – or else have very close associations. It is assumed Schumer, McConnell and associates have access to data and information not available to the average person or news organizations, and in analyzing what races these four organization are supporting – and to what relative level they are allocating funds – some insight is can be inferred regarding what priority Schumer and McConnell are placing on various races.

Individual Fundraising

Individual fundraising is viewed asymmetrically. Much of the individual donations in this election cycle are coming from out of state. The fact that a candidate raises a lot of money does not necessarily mean that the candidate can translate that into votes. Amy McGrath, in Kentucky, is a perfect example of someone who has raised very large amounts of money, yet seriously lags in the polls. On the other hand, if a candidate *cannot* raise

money competitively, that is viewed as an indicator of an underlying lack of support. Martha McSally, in Arizona, is an example of this.

Pundit Forecasts

The four pundits used are:

1. The Cook Political Report;
2. Larry Sabato's Crystal Ball;
3. Inside Elections with Nathan Gonzales; and
4. Nate Silver's 538.

All four are briefly described in Appendix E.

None is taken for gospel; they all seem overly cautious as a result of the perceived 2016 election forecast debacles. Nonetheless, they provide a good sanity check to the various headlines.

Miscellaneous

There are a number of miscellaneous factors that go into various assessments. For example, the fact that (a) Democratic candidate Steve Bullock, in Montana, is a current popular two-term Governor, and that (b) Montana has a rich history of sending Democratic Senators to Washington DC along with Republican Presidents, both provide some counterbalance to poll numbers. Or that South Carolina has had an historic 44% ceiling on Democratic votes that would seem to work against Jaime Harrison, regardless of polling or fundraising.

Appendix B: How Polling Has Changed Since 2016

This article was copied and pasted from <https://Electoral-Vote.com>

The popular notion that the polls were way off in 2016 is wrong. If a poll says that "Smith" is ahead of "Jones" 49% to 47% with a margin of error of 4 points, what that means is that the pollster is predicting that there is a 95% chance that Smith will score in the range 45% to 53% and that Jones will come in between 43% and 51%. Victory by Jones, 50% to 44%, would mean the pollster still got it right. In 2016, the national polls had Hillary Clinton winning by 3%. She won by 2.1%, which is close to perfect. The state polls weren't as good. The worst state was Wisconsin. We had Clinton ahead 46% to 41%. She indeed got 46% but Trump got 47%, so he was slightly outside the predicted range of about 37% to 45%. The final predictions for Michigan and Pennsylvania were correct in terms of the ranges predicted.

That said, pollsters are being much more careful this time. In particular, in 2016 they didn't realize how predictive educational level was of how someone (especially men) would vote. Having learned from 2016, pollsters are doing [things differently](#) this year. FiveThirtyEight contacted 21 pollsters, of whom 15 responded (an undreamed of 71% response rate) and learned what has changed this time.

To start with, just about every pollster is now weighting for education in order to have the right number of noncollege whites in the weighted sample. This is a no-brainer given how predictive education is of party preference nowadays. Actually, it always was, only the roles are reversed now. It used to be that college graduates were Republicans and high school graduates were Democrats.

Some pollsters, including Pew and Ipsos, are now weighting education *within* racial groups, making sure they have the right number of white college and noncollege voters and also the right number of Black college and noncollege voters, since different races have different percentages of college attendance.

Lee Miringoff, head of polling at Marist College, said that he is paying more attention to geography. He wants to be sure he has the right number of urban, suburban, and rural voters in his samples. The higher the population density, the more Democratic a location is, so he is careful not to undersample rural areas.

Recruiting respondents has also changed, with random-digit dialing less popular than it was. Pew Research now first contacts potential respondents by sending them a letter, to make them aware that the call later is legitimate. The hope is to raise the dismal response rates. Some pollsters have completely abolished random-digit dialing and are drawing a random sample from lists of registered voters instead. One advantage of this in states that register voters by party and publish the party registration is that the pollster can more accurately get whatever percentage of Democrats, Republicans, and independents it wants.

Another change is far more calls are being made to cell phones. Some statistics show that 96% of Americans own a cell phone. Suffolk University now makes 88% of its calls to cell phones. The downside of this approach is that it raises costs. It is illegal to have a computer call a cell phone, so all these calls have to be made manually, which reduces the number of calls per hour an interviewer can make.

Some pollsters, including Cygnal, PPP, Emerson College, and SurveyUSA are conducting polls by text message. Tom Jensen, PPP's director, said that men and people in urban areas prefer answering polls by text rather than by phone, so the response rates go up when using texts. Jay Leve, SurveyUSA's CEO, said that on any given day, they have four different methodologies in use: live phone interviews, robocalls, online surveys with prerecruited respondents, and text polls. Other pollsters are also moving toward online polling with prerecruited panels. On the minus side, making sure the panels are representative is hard. On the plus side, longitudinal studies are much easier. If Jane Smith is polled online month after month, and in June, July, August, and September she was planning to vote for Donald Trump and in October she switched to Biden, the pollster has detected a real change that is not just due to a bad sample.

It seems unlikely that pollsters will make the same mistakes in 2020 that they made in 2016 (especially concerning education), but there are plenty of new mistakes they can make. Miringoff says that the obsession with education may obscure other problems, like the sudden reliance on listed telephone numbers, which misses people with unlisted numbers, something random-digit dialing is immune to.

The biggest worry that all pollsters have is the effect the pandemic will have on turnout. For example, a voter may say: "I am absolutely, 100% going to vote in

person, even if have to stand in line for 12 hours." This counts as a likely voter. Then on election eve, the local news says that deaths from COVID-19 in his area have tripled in the past week and the voter stays home. How can a pollster correct for this?

Then there is another worry: The polls are perfect but the vote count is not. What happens if large numbers of absentee ballots don't arrive on time due to the mail being (possibly intentionally) slow or are rejected due to signature or witness errors or stray marks on the envelope? What happens if many voters are turned away at the polls because their student ID card is not an acceptable ID in their state and they don't have a gun permit (which is)? What happens if the lines to vote are so long that some voters give up? In short, the polls may give a perfect reflection of how people *wanted* to vote but not how the actual electorate turned out. Then the pollsters will get blamed for something they had no control over.

On the plus side, in 2016, most of the undecideds voted for Trump. The polls couldn't and didn't take that into account. This year the number of undecideds is under 5% and may be even smaller by Election Day, so that factor is minimized. Also, there wasn't enough polling in the Upper Midwest last time. That's not going to happen this time. We currently have 60 polls of Michigan and 53 polls of Wisconsin so we have a pretty good idea of what is going on in those states. So, maybe the polls will nail it completely this time.

Appendix C: October Polls

Shaded areas are early-October polls; unshaded areas are polls considered in the last week.

Arizona

Date	Pollster	538 Ratings and Weights		Kelly		McSally	
22-Oct	Susquehanna	C	2.00	47	94.00	50	100.00
21-Oct	Ipsos	B-	2.75	51	140.25	43	118.25
20-Oct	Morn Consult	B/C	2.50	48	120.00	44	110.00
20-Oct	Rasmussen	C+	2.25	46	103.50	44	99.00
20-Oct	RMG	C+	2.25	46	103.50	44	99.00
19-Oct	Change Rsch	C-	1.75	54	94.50	43	75.25
18-Oct	Data Orbital	A/B	3.50	48	168.00	42	147.00
16-Oct	YouGov	B	3.00	52	156.00	41	123.00
14-Oct	Ipsos	B-	2.75	52	143.00	41	112.75
13-Oct	Monmouth	A+	4.25	52	221.00	42	178.50
11-Oct	Morn Consult	B/C	2.50	49	122.50	41	102.50
9-Oct	Trafalgar	C-	1.75	47	82.25	45	78.75
8-Oct	OH Predictive	B/C	2.50	50	125.00	45	112.50
6-Oct	Latino Decisions	B/C	2.50	47	117.50	42	105.00
7-Oct	Ipsos	B	3.00	51	153.00	41	123.00
5-Oct	Data Orbital	A/B	3.50	49	171.50	44	154.00
5-Oct	Basswood	B/C	2.50	47	117.50	49	122.50
5-Oct	Highground	B/C	2.50	50	125.00	44	110.00
4-Oct	Change Rsch	C-	1.75	51	89.25	43	75.25
3-Oct	Sienna College	A+	4.25	50	212.50	39	165.75
2-Oct	Targoz	C/D	1.50	51	76.50	41	61.50
1-Oct	Morn Consult	B/C	2.50	51	127.50	38	95.00

Colorado

Date	Pollster	538 Ratings and Weights		Hinkenlooper		Gardner	
20-Oct	Morning Cons.	B/C	2.50	50	125.00	42	105.00
16-Oct	RBI Strategies	B/C	2.50	53	132.50	39	97.50
15-Oct	RMG	B/C	2.50	51	127.50	42	105.00
14-Oct	Civiqs	B/C	2.50	53	132.50	42	105.00
13-Oct	Keating	B/C	2.50	51	127.50	41	102.50
11-Oct	Morning Consult	B/C	2.50	50	125.00	40	100.00
9-Oct	YouGov	B	3.00	48	144.00	40	120.00
6-Oct	Survey USA	A	4.00	48	192.00	39	156.00

Georgia Regular

Date	Pollster	538 Ratings and Weights		Ossoff		Purdue	
21-Oct	Landmark	B	3.00	45	135.00	50	150.00
20-Oct	Morning Consult	B/C	2.50	44	110.00	46	115.00
19-Oct	Sienna / NY Times	A+	4.25	43	182.75	43	182.75
19-Oct	Emerson	A+	4.25	45	191.25	46	195.50
15-Oct	Opinion Insight	A/B	3.50	44	154.00	44	154.00
14-Oct	Garin-Hart-Yang	B/C	2.50	50	125.00	45	112.50
12-Oct	Survey USA	A	4.00	43	172.00	46	184.00
12-Oct	Quinnipiac	B+	3.25	51	165.75	45	146.25
11-Oct	Data for Progress	B-	2.75	44	121.00	43	118.25
11-Oct	Morning Consult	B/C	2.50	42	105.00	46	115.00
9-Oct	PPP	B	3.00	44	132.00	43	129.00
7-Oct	Landmark	B	3.00	46	138.00	48	144.00
6-Oct	U. of GA.	B/C	2.50	41	102.50	49	122.50

Iowa

Date	Pollster	538 Rating and Weight		Greenfield		Ernst	
21-Oct	RMG	B/C	2.50	46	115.00	43	107.50
21-Oct	Emerson	A-	3.75	46	172.50	50	187.50
20-Oct	Sienna/NYT	A+	4.25	44	187.00	45	191.25
19-Oct	Monmouth	A+	4.25	49	208.25	47	199.75
18-Oct	Insider Adv.	B-	2.75	48	132.00	43	118.25
11-Oct	Data for Progress	B-	2.75	47	129.25	43	118.25
9-Oct	YouGov	B	3.00	47	141.00	43	129.00
8-Oct	Opinion Insight	A/B	3.50	44	154.00	45	157.50
6-Oct	Civiqs	B/C	2.50	49	122.50	46	115.00
5-Oct	Quinnipiac	B+	3.25	50	162.50	45	146.25

Maine

Date	Pollster	538 Ratings and Weights		Gideon		Collins	
6-Oct	Pan Atlantic Rsch	B/C	2.50	47	117.50	40	100.00
4-Oct	Critical Insights	C/D	1.50	44	66.00	43	64.50

Michigan

Date	Pollster	538 Rating and Weight		Peters		James	
22-Oct	PPP	B	3.00	52	156.00	43	129.00
20-Oct	Morning Consult	B/C	2.50	48	120.00	42	105.00
20-Oct	Fox News	A+	4.25	49	208.25	41	174.25
20-Oct	Ipsos	B	3.00	50	150.00	45	135.00
19-Oct	EPIC-MRA	B+	3.25	45	146.25	39	126.75
19-Oct	Change Rsch	C-	1.75	51	89.25	46	80.50
18-Oct	Trafalgar	C-	1.75	48	84.00	50	87.50
18-Oct	Data For Pgss	B-	2.75	48	132.00	43	118.25

18-Oct	Mitchell Research	C-	1.75	49	85.75	43	75.25
15-Oct	Trafalgar	C-	1.75	47	82.25	48	84.00
15-Oct	Harris X	C	2.00	50	100.00	43	86.00
12-Oct	EPIC-MRA	B+	3.25	45	146.25	39	126.75
13-Oct	Ipsos	B	3.00	52	156.00	44	132.00
12-Oct	Epic MRA	B+	3.25	45	146.25	39	126.75
11-Oct	Morning Consult	B/C	2.50	49	122.50	40	100.00
11-Oct	Sienna / NY Times	A+	4.25	43	182.75	42	178.50
9-Oct	YouGov	B	3.00	47	141.00	44	132.00
8-Oct	Baldwin Wallace	C/D	1.50	48	72.00	42	63.00
7-Oct	Emerson	A-	3.75	51	191.25	41	153.75
6-Oct	Opinion Rsch	A/B	3.50	49	171.50	41	143.50
6-Oct	Ipsos	B-	2.75	50	137.50	43	118.25
5-Oct	Terrance	B/C	2.50	48	120.00	46	115.00
4-Oct	Change Rsch	C-	1.75	51	89.25	43	75.25
3-Oct	Glengarrif	B/C	2.50	45	112.50	40	100.00
1-Oct	PPP	B	3.00	48	144.00	41	123.00

Montana

Date	Pollster	538 Ratings and Weights		Bullock		Daines	
20-Oct	Strategies 360	B/C	2.50	47	117.50	48	120.00
20-Oct	Sienna/NYT	A+	4.25	46	195.50	49	208.25
18-Oct	RMG	B/C	2.50	47	117.50	49	122.50
10-Oct	PPP	B	3.00	48	144.00	48	144.00
7-Oct	Emerson Coll.	A+	4.25	43	182.75	52	221.00
5-Oct	Data for Progress	B-	2.75	48	132.00	47	129.25

North Carolina

Date	Pollster	538 Ratings and Weights		Cunningham		Tillis	
21-Oct	Rasmussen	C+	2.25	45	101.25	45	101.25
20-Oct	Morning Cons.	B/C	2.50	48	120.00	42	105.00
20-Oct	Ipsos	B-	2.75	47	129.25	47	129.25
19-Oct	Meredith Coll.	B/C	2.50	43	107.50	38	95.00
19-Oct	Change Rsch	C-	1.75	51	89.25	45	78.75
19-Oct	Data for Progress	B-	2.75	46	126.50	42	115.50
18-Oct	East Carolina	B/C	2.50	49	122.50	47	117.50
17-Oct	ABC/WaPo	A+	4.25	49	208.25	47	199.75
14-Oct	Civiqs	B/C	2.50	51	127.50	45	112.50
14-Oct	Emerson	A-	3.75	45	168.75	44	165.00
13-Oct	Sienna / NYTimes	A+	4.25	41	174.25	37	157.25
11-Oct	Susquehanna	C	2.00	46	92.00	44	88.00
13-Oct	Ipsos	B-	2.75	46	126.50	42	115.50
11-Oct	Monmouth	A+	4.25	48	204.00	44	187.00
11-Oct	RMG	B/C	2.50	46	115.00	36	90.00
11-Oct	Morning Consult	B/C	2.50	47	117.50	41	102.50
11-Oct	Survey USA	A	4.00	49	196.00	39	156.00
6-Oct	Ipsos	B-	2.75	47	129.25	42	115.50
5-Oct	Data for Progress	B-	2.75	50	137.50	39	107.25
5-Oct	PPP	B	3.00	48	144.00	42	126.00
4-Oct	Change Rsch	C-	1.75	50	87.50	46	80.50
5-Oct	East Carolina U.	B/C	2.50	46	115.00	47	117.50

South Carolina

Date	Pollster	538 Ratings and Weights		Harrison		Graham	
20-Oct	Morning Cons.	B/C	2.50	47	117.50	45	112.50
16-Oct	Brilliant Corners	NA	0.00	47	0.00	45	0.00
15-Oct	Sienna / NYTimes	A+	4.25	40	170.00	46	195.50
11-Oct	Data for Progress	B-	2.75	47	129.25	46	126.50
11-Oct	Morning Cons.	B/C	2.50	42	105.00	48	120.00
5-Oct	ALG	B/C	2.50	46	115.00	46	115.00

Texas

Date	Pollster	538 Ratings and Weights		Hegar		Cornyn	
20-Oct	Morning Consult	B/C	2.50	41	102.50	46	115.00
19-Oct	Quinnipiac	B+	3.25	43	139.75	49	159.25
19-Oct	Cygnal	A/B	3.50	41	143.50	49	171.50
18-Oct	Data for Progress	B-	2.75	41	112.75	44	121.00
16-Oct	PPP	B	3.00	46	138.00	49	147.00
11-Oct	Morning Consult	B/C	2.50	38	95.00	47	117.50
4-Oct	YouGov	B-	2.75	42	115.50	50	137.50
6-Oct	Pulse Opinion	B/C	2.50	39	97.50	48	120.00
6-Oct	Civiqs	B/C	2.50	46	115.00	47	117.50
5-Oct	Data for Progress	B/C	2.50	42	105.00	45	112.50

Appendix D: 538 Poll Rating and Weighted Averages

This section describes how Nate Silver’s poll ratings are used to compute weighted averages.

Nate Silver is a fairly highly-regarded data analytics person, and he maintains a website called 538.

538 has a wealth of data and analysis on politics (as well as sports and a few other topics). Among other things, 538 keep a running track of Senate polls. Here is a link to the Arizona Senate polls:

[538 Arizona Senate Polls](#)

For each poll, 538 lists the dates of the poll, the pollster, and the type of polls (e.g., registered voters (RV) vs likely voters (LV)). It also assigns a letter grade ranging from A+ at the upper end to D- at the lower end.

Seven recent Arizona polls look like this:

Dates	Grade	Pollster	Size	Type	Kelly	McSally
15-22 Sep	B-	Data for Progress	481	LV	47	38
17-19 Sep	B/C	Hart Research	400	LV	55	43
18-20 Sep	C-	Change Research	262	LV	51	43
15-20 Sep	A+	ABC News/WaPo	579	LV	49	48
15-20 Sep	A+	ABC News/WaPo	701	RV	50	45
11-17 Sep	B-	Ipsos	565	LV	50	41
11-20 Sep	B/C	Morning Consult	907	LV	49	40
14-16 Sep		Fabrizio, Lee & Assoc.	800	LV	48	46

To compute weighted averages, college-type grade numbers are assigned to the various letter grades to get weights:

A+	A	A-	A/B	B+	B	B-	B/C	C+	C	C-	C/D	D+	D	D-	
4.25	4.00	3.75	3.50	3.25	3.00	2.75	2.50	2.25	2.00	1.75	1.50	1.25	1.00	0.75	0.00

Notice that in the case of no letter grade, a 0.00 weight is given.

1. The list is reduced to just likely voters, and then each poll result (gray columns) is multiplied by its associated poll weight (blue column) to get weighted products (yellow columns):

Dates	Grade	Weight	Pollster	Size	Type	Kelly		McSally	
15-22 Sep	B-	2.75	Data for Progress	481	LV	47	129.25	38	104.50
17-19 Sep	B/C	2.50	Hart Research	400	LV	55	137.50	43	107.50
18-20 Sep	C-	1.75	Change Research	262	LV	51	89.25	43	75.25
15-20 Sep	A+	4.25	ABC News/WaPo	579	LV	49	208.25	48	204.00
11-17 Sep	B-	2.75	Ipsos	565	LV	50	137.50	41	112.75
11-20 Sep	B/C	2.50	Morning Consult	907	LV	49	122.50	40	100.00
14-16 Sep		0.00	Fabrizio, Lee & Assoc.	800	LV	48	0.00	46	0.00

2. The weights and the weighted products are added (sums in blue and yellow, respectively):

Dates	Grade	Weight	Pollster	Size	Type	Kelly		McSally	
15-22 Sep	B-	2.75	Data for Progress	481	LV	47	129.25	38	104.50
17-19 Sep	B/C	2.50	Hart Research	400	LV	55	137.50	43	107.50
18-20 Sep	C-	1.75	Change Research	262	LV	51	89.25	43	75.25
15-20 Sep	A+	4.25	ABC News/WaPo	579	LV	49	208.25	48	204.00
11-17 Sep	B-	2.75	Ipsos	565	LV	50	137.50	41	112.75
11-20 Sep	B/C	2.50	Morning Consult	907	LV	49	122.50	40	100.00
14-16 Sep		0.00	Fabrizio, Lee & Assoc.	800	LV	48	0.00	46	0.00
		16.5					824.25		704.00

3. The sums of the weighted products are divided by the sum of the weights to get the weighted averages (in green):

Dates	Grade	Weight	Pollster	Size	Type	Kelly		McSally	
15-22 Sep	B-	2.75	Data for Progress	481	LV	47	129.25	38	104.50
17-19 Sep	B/C	2.50	Hart Research	400	LV	55	137.50	43	107.50
18-20 Sep	C-	1.75	Change Research	262	LV	51	89.25	43	75.25
15-20 Sep	A+	4.25	ABC News/WaPo	579	LV	49	208.25	48	204.00
11-17 Sep	B-	2.75	Ipsos	565	LV	50	137.50	41	112.75
11-20 Sep	B/C	2.50	Morning Consult	907	LV	49	122.50	40	100.00
14-16 Sep		0.00	Fabrizio, Lee & Assoc.	800	LV	48	0.00	46	0.00
		16.5					824.25		704.00
							49.9		42.7

As you can see, the poll of 14-16 September has no bearing on the weighted averages because 538 did not rate the poll.

So the weighted averages of the these six 538-rated polls in Arizona are:

- Kelly: 49.9
- McCally: 42.7

Appendix E: Pundit Backgrounds and Descriptions

This information was mainly pulled from the organizations' web sites and Wikipedia.

Cook Political Report

The Cook Political Report is a Washington DC-based political newsletter founded by Charlie Cook in 1984. The publication is billed as "an independent, nonpartisan newsletter that analyzes elections and campaigns for the US House of Representatives, US Senate, Governors and President as well as American political trends."

According to *The Cook Political Report's* website, subscribers include "lobbyists, trade associations, corporations, labor unions, Members of Congress, political action committees and interest groups across the political spectrum." The newsletter also provides a limited amount of free information on its website for non-subscribers.

All Senate contests are rated, regardless of competitiveness on a seven-point scale; Solid Democrat, Likely Democrat, Lean Democrat, Toss-Up, Lean Republican, Likely Republican, and Solid Republican.

Larry Sabato's Crystal Ball

Sabato's Crystal Ball is a Charlottesville-based political newsletter run by the University of Virginia Center for Politics. The publication describes itself as "a comprehensive, nonpartisan political analysis and handicapping newsletter" that reports on presidential elections and every congressional and gubernatorial election. The *Crystal Ball's* race ratings are based on electoral history, polling, candidate quality, modeling, and reporting.

Sabato's Crystal Ball was established in 2002. Larry J. Sabato is the founder and director of the University of Virginia Center for Politics. He has been a guest on TV programs on Fox, CNN, and MSNBC, among others. He is the author and editor of over 24 books on U.S. politics.

Nathan Gonzales – Inside Elections

Inside Elections is a Washington DC-based political newsletter. The publication describes itself as providing "nonpartisan analysis of campaigns for Senate, House, governor and president" using quantitative and qualitative data and without endorsing candidates.

Nathan Gonzales is Editor & Publisher of Inside Elections, which provides nonpartisan analysis of campaigns for Senate, House, governor and president. He was an editor, analyst, and writer for The Rothenberg Political Report for more than 13 years before taking over the company in 2015.

Appendix F: Ranked Choice Voting Primer

Ballotpedia describes rank choice voting as follows:

1. Voters rank the candidates for a given office by preference on their ballots.
2. If a candidate wins an outright majority of first-preference votes (i.e., 50 percent plus one), he or she will be declared the winner.
3. If, on the other hand, no candidates win an outright majority of first-preference votes, the candidate with the fewest first-preference votes is eliminated.
4. All first-preference votes for the failed candidate are eliminated, lifting the second-preference choices indicated on those ballots.
5. A new tally is conducted to determine whether any candidate has won an outright majority of the adjusted voters.
6. The process is repeated until a candidate wins a majority of votes cast.

Imagine that five ballots were cast for three parties: Democrats, Republicans, and Greens.

Rank	Ballot 1	Ballot 2	Ballot 3	Ballot 4	Ballot 5
1	Democrat	Democrat	Republican	Republican	Green
2	Republican	Green	Green	Green	Democrat
3	Green	Republican	Democrat	Democrat	Republican

In the first round, Democrats and Republicans are tied with two first-preference votes each, and the Green Party has the fewest – i.e., one – first preference votes. So it is eliminated, and the second-preference vote on that ballot moves up.

Rank	Ballot 1	Ballot 2	Ballot 3	Ballot 4	Ballot 5
1	Democrat	Democrat	Republican	Republican	Democrat
2	Republican	Green	Green	Green	Republican
3	Green	Republican	Democrat	Democrat	

Now the Democratic candidate has three votes, and the Republican candidate has two votes. So the Democratic candidate wins.