

# Inside Elections

with  
**Nathan L. Gonzales**  
Nonpartisan Analysis

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## 2022 Senate Ratings

### BATTLEGROUND

#### Democratic-Held (4)

Cortez Masto (D-Nev.)  
Hassan (D-N.H.)  
Kelly (D-Ariz.)  
Warnock (D-Ga.)

#### Republican-Held (4)

NC Open (Burr, R)  
PA Open (Toomey, R)  
Johnson (R-Wisc.)  
Rubio (R-Fl.)

#### Solid Democratic (10)

Bennet (D-Colo.)  
Blumenthal (D-Conn.)  
Duckworth (D-Ill.)  
Leahy (D-Vt.)  
Murray (D-Wash.)  
Padilla (D-Calif.)  
Schatz (D-Hawaii)  
Schumer (D-N.Y.)  
Van Hollen (D-Md.)  
Wyden (D-Ore.)

#### Solid Republican (16)

AL Open (Shelby, R)  
MO Open (Blunt, R)  
OH Open (Portman, 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.)

## CALENDAR

<b>Oct. 26</b>	World Series Begins
<b>Nov. 2</b>	Virginia & New Jersey Gubernatorial Elections
<b>Nov. 2</b>	Ohio's 11th & 15th Special General Elections
<b>Nov. 2</b>	Florida's 20th District Special Election Primary
<b>Dec. 13</b>	Texas Candidate Filing Deadline
<b>Dec. 17</b>	North Carolina Candidate Filing Deadline
<b>Jan. 11</b>	Florida's 20th District Special General Election
<b>Feb. 13</b>	Super Bowl LVI

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## 2022 Senate Overview: Firewall on Fire

By Nathan L. Gonzales & Jacob Rubashkin

With an evenly divided Senate, control of the chamber has been at risk since the beginning of the cycle. But even though the initial 2022 battleground is evenly divided as well, President Joe Biden's slumping job rating is fueling GOP hopes of regaining control.

Biden's standing has changed significantly in the last three months. On July 1, in our last Senate Overview issue, Biden's job rating stood at 53 percent approve/43 percent disapprove, according to the FiveThirtyEight average. As of Thursday, Biden's job rating was underwater at 45 percent approve/49 percent disapprove under the weight of the withdrawal from Afghanistan, inflation, and lingering coronavirus-related issues.

That drop is significant considering midterm elections are typically a referendum on the president's performance. And if voters don't like the job he's doing, they can't vote against him because he's not on the ballot. So they often take it out on candidates from his party. Democrats have no margin for error as Republicans need to gain just a single Senate seat in 2022 for a majority.

Historically, the president's party loses at least two Senate seats, on average, in midterm elections. But the net results can be dependent on the specific class of seats up in that particular cycle. For example, 2018 was a good year for Democrats yet Republicans gained two Senate seats because more of the competitive states had a natural Republican lean.

Democrats are hoping for the same dynamic next year, considering Biden won six of the eight states hosting a battleground Senate race in 2022. But Biden's diminished standing has muted that partisan advantage, at least temporarily.

While the national political environment is important, the fight for the Senate is ultimately a collection of individual races. There's bipartisan consensus on the seven initial battleground states including Democrats defending Arizona, Georgia, Nevada, and New Hampshire and Republicans defending North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. Florida, where GOP Sen. Marco Rubio is running for re-election, is the agreed-upon eighth race teetering on the edge of the battlefield.

For Republicans there's some tension between potentially expanding that battleground into Colorado or Washington state while the strength of their candidates is still murky in some key states, including Arizona and Pennsylvania.

Meanwhile, pressure is mounting on Democrats. History and the current political environment favor a Republican takeover of the House, leaving the Senate as a firewall against full GOP control of Capitol Hill. And that firewall has some visible cracks with Biden's poor standing and Democrats inability to govern in a way that inspires confidence from independent voters.

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**Alabama. Open; Richard Shelby, R, not seeking re-election.** Jan. 28 filing deadline. May 24 primary, July 26 runoff (if necessary). The GOP primary is the real contest in the Yellowhammer State, which Trump won by 25 points last November. At the moment there are four major candidates in the race: 5th District Rep. Mo Brooks, former Shelby Chief of Staff/president of the Alabama Business Council Katie Boyd Britt, 2018 2nd District candidate Jessica Taylor, and former Ambassador to Slovenia Lynda Blanchard. Brooks, the conservative firebrand and Jan. 6 Stop the Steal rally speaker, has to be considered the frontrunner. He has endorsements from former President Trump, the Club for Growth, and the Senate Conservatives Fund. And unlike in his last run for Senate in 2017, DC Republicans are not going out of their way to stop him.

Britt has the support of the outgoing Shelby and made a big fundraising splash when she pulled in \$2 million in her first month. She also drew a sexist remark from the former president, who dismissed her as an “assistant.” She’s running as an old-school business friendly Republican, but it’s not clear if that’s where the state’s GOP primary electorate is looking for in a nominee. Blanchard has significant personal wealth and already loaned her campaign \$5 million, but took a hit when she couldn’t land an endorsement from Trump and recently started publicly musing about dropping out and running for governor instead.

Alabama uses a runoff system for its primary, so if no candidate receives 50 percent of the vote, the top two vote-getters face off at a later date. Right now, it looks like Brooks will at least win a runoff spot, and has a path to winning outright. Solid Republican.

*Public Opinion Strategies (R) for Conservatives for Clean Energy and Conservatives for a Clean Energy Future, Aug. 24-Sept. 2 (LVs) — GOP Primary ballot: Brooks 41%, Britt 11%, Taylor 7%, Blanchard 3%.*

*Cygnal (R) for Alabama Daily News, Aug. 17-18 (LVs) (mixed mode) — GOP Primary ballot: Brooks 41%, Britt 18%, Taylor 3%, Blanchard 2%.*

**Alaska. Lisa Murkowski (R) appointed 2002, elected 2004 (49%), 2010 (39% as a write-in), 2016 (44%). June 1 filing deadline. Aug. 16 primary.** The Last Frontier could be the only real proxy fight between Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell and former President Trump next year. Even as McConnell has warmed to Trump-backed primary candidates in Alabama, North Carolina, and Georgia, he remains steadfastly behind Murkowski, while Trump has endorsed former Alaska Department of Administration commissioner Kelly Tshibaka.

Murkowski, who only recently filed for re-election, should benefit from the new voting system Alaska voters approved last fall. Instead of traditional primaries, all candidates will run in an all-party primary, and the top four vote-getters will progress to the general election, which is then decided by ranked-choice voting. This spares Murkowski from

## Candidate Conversation



### Tina Ramirez (R)

Virginia’s 7th District —  
Rating: To Be Determined  
After Redistricting

**Interview Date:** Sept. 24, 2021

**Date of Birth:** Oct. 6, 1978; San Bernardino, Calif.

**Education:** Vanguard Univ. (Bachelor’s 1999, Master’s in Education 2000); Univ. of Essex (Master’s in Human Rights 2004)

**Elected Office:** None; 7th District candidate (2020)

**Current Outlook:** Ramirez is a top contender for the GOP nomination to take on Democratic Rep. Abigail Spanberger. Ramirez ran in 2020 and lost a close race to establishment favorite Nick Freitas at the district Republican nominating convention. Virginia has not finalized the new congressional lines, but this central Virginia seat is expected to continue to be one of the most competitive in the country.

**Evaluation:** Last cycle, Ramirez was cast aside for Freitas, who came up short in one of the few top races Republicans didn’t win. Women were a big part of House Republicans overperforming expectations in 2020, but Ramirez wasn’t one of them. That’s part of her case to Republicans now— that she’s a political outsider who can make up the difference. As a former teacher and former Capitol Hill aide who runs her own international religious freedom non-profit, Ramirez has an attractive resume. She’s also a Hispanic woman and single mom of a biracial daughter who can deftly apply her personal and professional experiences to current events and policy positions. Ramirez, who has more foreign policy experience than typical candidates, is more of a mainstream conservative Republican who isn’t overly focused on Trump. In fact her introductory campaign literature doesn’t even mention the former president, although she declined to agree that the 2020 elections were free and fair. Ramirez still has to get through the primary and we’ll see if her fundraising repels other contenders and helps her gain the confidence of party insiders. Ramirez could be an example of how it sometimes takes multiple attempts to break through with a victory.

facing an all-GOP primary electorate angry with her over many high-profile breaks with Trump, including on his second impeachment trial.

But the new system doesn’t guarantee Murkowski’s re-election, especially if a credible Democrat runs as well. A strong Democratic candidate, such as former Sen. Mark Begich or Al Gross, the unaffiliated

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2020 Democratic Senate nominee, could potentially box Murkowski out in the ranked-choice voting process if her initial share of the vote is too low. While Begich has been silent on this race (and could also run for governor, as he did in 2018, or nothing at all) Gross has signalled his interest, as has Anchorage state Sen. Elvi Gray-Jackson.

Even though the race is just beginning, Murkowski looks ready. She had \$2.3 million in the bank on June 30 and is already questioning Tshibaka's residency and validity of her fishing license. Tshibaka, who had \$275,000 at the end of June, has to hope Trump will be engaged in a race that is 4,000 miles from Mar-a-Lago.

The combination of the new voting system, and Alaska's notoriously quirky politics, make this race unpredictable, and it's not out of the question that the NRSC or the McConnell-aligned Senate Leadership Fund could have to spend here to boost Murkowski. While things could develop in an interesting manner, for now this race is Solid Republican.

*Alaska Survey Research (D), July 11-20 (RVs) (online) — First round ballot: Murkowski 36%, Tshibaka 27%, Gray-Jackson 19%, Joe Miller (R/L) 18%. Ranked-choice simulation final round: Murkowski over Tshibaka 55% - 45%.*

*Change Research (D) for 314 Action, May 22-25 (LVs) (online) — First round ballot: Tshibaka 39%, Gross 25%, Murkowski 19%, John Howe (AIP) 4%. Ranked-choice simulation final round: Tshibaka over Gross 54% - 46%.*

**Arizona. Mark Kelly (D) elected 2020 special election (51%). April 4 filing deadline. August 2 primary.** The Grand Canyon State is a key race where former President Donald Trump is at odds with GOP strategists focused on winning back the Senate. GOP strategists want out-going, two-term Gov. Doug Ducey to run. The problem is that Trump hates him because Ducey certified Biden's victory in Arizona. For now, Ducey has shown no interest in running. He can probably afford to wait until next year to make a final decision, but he also probably realizes the difficulty in trying to appeal to primary voters who like Trump more than they like him.

So for now, Republicans are headed for a competitive primary and strategists are building the case that any of their four contenders will put a scare into Kelly. State Attorney General Mark Brnovich (\$398,000 in the bank on June 30), retired U.S. Air Force Major General/former state Adjutant General Michael McGuire (\$401,000), solar energy CEO Jim Lamon (\$1.2 million) and Blake Masters, the COO of investment firm Thiel Capital, are all in the race. Masters is getting outside help from his former boss, billionaire Silicon Valley entrepreneur Peter Thiel, who seeded Saving Arizona PAC with \$10 million to help his friend.

If the primary were held today, Brnovich would probably win based on name identification. But he has a reputation as an underwhelming candidate and fundraiser, as evidenced by his \$600,000 raised in the third quarter (according to *National Journal's Hotline*). Masters might be best-positioned to overtake Brnovich, but is somewhat of a wildcard as a first-time candidate. Masters raised \$1 million in the third quarter, according to *NJ*, but it's not clear how much is personal money. It's also unclear how much Lamon is willing to spend. McGuire has a good reputation in the state but he has to prove he'll run a well-funded campaign.

Democrats are looking for a replay of 2018, when Republicans battled in a late primary between Martha McSally, Kelli Ward, and Joe Arpaio, allowing Democrat Kyrsten Sinema to define herself on television and build a lead before Republicans chose their nominee. That time (and lead) was critical to her general election victory. Kelly raised more than \$100 million last cycle and is on his way again with "close to" \$13 million in the bank on Sept. 30. Even though Biden won the state and Republicans

concede Kelly is one of Democrats' strongest incumbents, Democrats can't take it for granted. A shift in the national environment toward Republicans could help overcome Kelly's likely financial advantage. Battleground.

*OH Predictive Insights, Sept. 7-12 (RVs) (online panel) — General Election Ballot: Kelly over Brnovich 43% - 39%. Kelly over Masters 44% - 35%. Kelly over Lamon 43% - 36%. Kelly over McGuire 44% - 37%. GOP Primary ballot: Brnovich 27%, McGuire 14%, Masters 6%, Lamon 3%.*

*OnMessage Inc. (R) for Advancing Arizona Forward (pro-Brnovich), Sept. 9-11 (LVs) — GOP Primary ballot: Brnovich 41%, Masters 7%, Lamon 5%, McGuire 4%.*

**Arkansas. John Boozman (R) elected 2010 (58%), 2016 (60%). March 1 filing deadline. June 21 primary.** Style matters as much as, if not more than, substance within the Republican Party these days. Boozman is one of the most affable members on the Hill but finds himself with two primary challengers. Gun shop/firing range owner Jan Morgan sends out a lot of emails about Boozman's alleged ideological sins, but her campaign doesn't appear to have gained much traction. She's netting about \$30,000 a quarter and finished June with \$61,000.



John Boozman

(Boozman had \$1.9 million at the same time.) Former Arkansas Razorback football star/military veteran Jake Bequette is also running. The third quarter FEC report (due Oct. 15) will be his first, so we'll see how much support he's able to

show. Sources in the state believe Bequette has a bright future, but it's not clear how he defeats Boozman, who has Trump's endorsement in this race. In the general election, Democrats will be looking to actually have a nominee, which is more than they had in 2020. Solid Republican.

**California. Alex Padilla (D) appointed Jan. 2021. March 11 filing deadline. June 7 primary.** The last three months have been good to Padilla, who already began his race in a strong position. He secured an endorsement from the only Democrat in the state's delegation who hadn't yet backed him, Rep. Ro Khanna, removing the specter of a primary challenge from the well-liked and well-funded Bay Area representative. And Gov. Gavin Newsom's resounding victory in last month's recall election reminded the country that California is still solidly Democratic and should give pause to any Republican looking to run statewide next year.

California uses an all-party primary system in which the top-two vote-getters progress to the general election, regardless of party. Former state Assemblyman/Board of Equalization member Jerome Horton is also running as a Democrat but isn't expected to be a factor. The only Republican of note so far is Elizabeth Heng, a 36-year-old former House of Representatives staffer who lost a 2018 race for California's 16th District. She had just \$48,000 in the bank on June 30 compared to \$4.1 million for the senator. Solid Democratic.

**Colorado. Michael Bennet (D) appointed 2009, elected 2010 (48%), 2016 (50%). March 15 filing deadline. June 28 primary.** The drop in President Biden's job approval ratings has some Republicans eyeing



the Centennial State, which was represented by a Republican in the Senate as recently as this January. But that Republican, Cory Gardner, got clobbered in 2020 despite being considered one of the best GOP candidates in the country. Republicans see Bennet as an unknown and uninspiring figure, but the onetime school superintendent has won two close races in tough national environments, and Colorado seems to be moving away from its swing state status.

The top GOP candidate is 2008 Olympic pentathlete/former El Paso County Republican Chairman Eli Bremer, but it's not clear if he will put together a well-funded, top-tier operation. His third quarter FEC report, due Oct. 15, will be his first of the campaign. Construction company CEO Joe O'Dea just jumped into the race. State Rep./2010 California 1st District GOP nominee Ron Hanks, who attended the Jan. 6 "Stop the Steal" rally on the National Mall and marched on the Capitol (though he says he didn't enter) is also running. Bennet had \$2.3 million in the bank at the end of June and the lean of the state is in his favor. Republicans contend the state is more anti-Trump than anti-Republican. If Democrats start getting worried about this seat, it's a sign they're in for a bumpy midterm. Until then, it remains Solid Democratic.

*co/efficient (R) for Eli Bremer Campaign, Sept. 9-12 (LVs) (mixed mode) — General Election ballot: Bennet over Bremer 40% - 32%.*

**Connecticut. Richard Blumenthal (D) elected 2010 (55%), 2016 (63%). June 7 filing deadline. Aug. 9 primary.** The senior senator from the Nutmeg State made headlines for his line of questioning at a Senate hearing on Facebook, and that's about as much attention as has been paid to anyone involved in this race. The only two declared GOP candidates are Robert Hyde, the lobbyist and Marine veteran who threatened the safety of then-Ambassador to Ukraine Marie Yovanovitch in text messages to a Rudy Giuliani associate, and John Flynn, who doesn't appear to have filed with the FEC since November. Blumenthal had \$6 million in the bank halfway through the year, and is running in a state Biden carried by 20 points last fall. Solid Democratic.

**Florida. Marco Rubio (R) elected 2010 (49%), 2016 (52%). June 17 filing deadline. Aug. 23 primary.** Partisan strategists agree that Florida teetering on the edge of the battleground as the eighth most competitive Senate race in the country, at this stage of the cycle. While the Sunshine State consistently produces close races, Republicans have won nearly all of them in recent cycles. It's up to Democrats to prove how they are going to win. Democrats believe the first step is getting a candidate who can raise big money to compete in a very expensive state to advertise. That's why Democrats put the full-court press on Orlando-area Rep. Val Demings. As a Black woman with a law enforcement background (she was police chief in Orlando), Democrats believe she's the type of candidate who can raise national money and compete in key communities in Florida. Several other Democrats, including former Rep. Alan Grayson and Miami city commissioner Ken Russell, are running as well, but are not expected to be competitive in the primary. Demings had a big first fundraising quarter and finished June with \$3.1 million in the bank.

Democrats can't wait to take on Rubio until after the August primary. The senator already had \$6.2 million in the bank on June 30 and gets to run for re-election in a state where Republicans have won all but one statewide contest since 2012. It's also one of the few places where Trump improved on his margin between 2016 and 2020, buoyed by newfound strength among Hispanic voters. But the state is still evenly divided and

always plays host to close elections regardless of political environment. If Democrats can pull this race into the top tier of legitimate pickup opportunities, that would bode well for their chances to maintain control of the Senate. Both parties are going to end up spending a lot of money here. Battleground.

*VCreek/AMG (R) for Americas PAC, Sept. 23-27 (LVs) (live caller) — General Election ballot: Rubio over Demings 42% - 38%. Rubio over Grayson 44% - 32%.*

*Redfield & Wilton, Aug. 20-24 (RVs) — General Election ballot: Rubio over Demings 46% - 34%. Rubio over Grayson 46% - 33%.*

*Political Matrix/The Listener Group (R), Aug. 14-18 (LVs) — General Election ballot: Rubio over Demings 55% - 45%.*

*Change Research (D) for Future Majority, Aug. 14-17 (LVs) — General Election ballot: Rubio over Demings 47% - 44%.*

**Georgia. Raphael Warnock (D) elected 2020/Jan. 5, 2021 runoff (51%). March 11 filing deadline. May 24 primary, June 21 runoff (if**



Bill Clark/CQ Roll Call

**Raphael Warnock**

**necessary).** What was once a feud between GOP leadership focused on winning the Senate and Trump's preferred candidate appears to be coming to an end. Herschel Walker, 1982 Heisman Trophy winner from the Univ. of Georgia,

is the frontrunner for the GOP nomination. As a former running back for Trump's USFL New Jersey Generals and contestant on *The Celebrity Apprentice*, Walker has a long relationship with Trump. But Walker had been living in Texas until recently and has been open about his serious mental health struggles, and his ex-wife says he once held a gun to her head in the middle of an argument. Despite that baggage, the GOP establishment appears to be coming around to Walker, with McConnell recently telling *Politico* that "there's every indication he's going to be a good candidate."

Trump's influence and preference hasn't cleared the field. State Agriculture Commissioner Gary Black (\$680,000 in the bank on June 30), Atlanta businessman Kelvin King (\$567,000) and banking executive/former Navy Seal Latham Saddler (\$1 million) are all running. But Walker has a considerable initial advantage, and Republican strategists hope that his reputation as a hometown hero and his strong initial image ratings will insulate him from attacks on his personal life. If the untested Walker implodes, look for former Sens. Kelly Loeffler or David Perdue to float themselves as potential liferafts for the party.

There's been no time to rest for Warnock. Since he was first elected in the Jan. 5 runoff special election, he's been a top GOP takeover target in the 2022 race for a full term. Warnock raised \$138 million last cycle and already had \$10.5 million in the bank at the end of June for this race. Democrats are confident he can hold together the party's successful coalition, but any disproportionate dip in Democratic turnout could be problematic for Warnock. Battleground.

*Trafalgar (R), Sept. 2-4 (LVs) — GOP Primary ballot: Walker 76%, Black 6%, Saddler 3%, King 2%.*

*Fabrizio Lee (R) for Save America PAC (pro-Walker), Aug. 11-12 (LVs) —*

*GOP Primary ballot: Walker 54%, Black 5%, Carter 3%, King 2%, Saddler 1%.  
Public Policy Polling (D), Aug. 4-5 (RVs) — General Election ballot:  
Warnock over Walker 48% - 46%. Warnock over Black 46% - 38%. Warnock  
over Kelly Loeffler (R) 47% - 44%.*

**Hawaii.** Brian Schatz (D) appointed 2012, elected 2014 (70%), 2016 (74%). June 7 filing deadline. Aug. 13 primary. Schatz has no announced challengers in the Democratic primary or the general election, was sitting on \$3.6 million at the end of June, and gets to run in a state Biden won by 30 points. Doesn't hurt that it never drops below 70 degrees either. Solid Democratic.

**Idaho.** Mike Crapo (R) elected 1998 (70%), 2004 (99%), 2010 (71%), 2016 (66%). March 11 filing deadline. May 19 primary. Crapo has an endorsement from former President Trump, and had \$4.9 million in the bank on June 30 (which goes a long way in Idaho). But that hasn't cleared the field entirely. Jeremy Gilbert, a 34-year-old Army veteran, is running as well. But at the moment there's no reason to believe Crapo is vulnerable in the primary, and he certainly won't have trouble in the general election in a state Trump carried by 31 points last year. Solid Republican.

**Illinois.** Tammy Duckworth (D) elected 2016 (55%). Nov. 29, 2021 filing deadline. March 15 primary. In a favorable enough political environment, this race could be competitive for Republicans. But it's not clear if they have a candidate who could take advantage of that situation. If Democratic state legislators draw an aggressive enough gerrymander, one or more of the state's GOP members could make the jump. But even Rep. Adam Kinzinger or Rep. Rodney Davis would have a tough time, if they made it out of the primary. Duckworth had \$5 million in her campaign account on June 30, and the state's partisan lean is in her favor. Biden won by 17 points in 2020. Right now the only declared Republican candidate is Peggy Hubbard, a Navy veteran who lost the 2020 GOP Senate primary. Solid Democratic.

**Indiana.** Todd Young (R) elected 2016 (52%). Feb. 4 filing deadline. May 3 primary. It's all quiet in the Hoosier State, where Democrats are in the midst of a full rebuild of their party and nobody is seriously talking about challenging Young, who had \$4.5 million in the bank on June 30. Hammond Mayor Tom McDermott, who finished second in the 2020 Democratic primary to now-Rep. Frank Mrvan in the 1st District, is the biggest Democratic name in the race. Solid Republican.

**Iowa.** Chuck Grassley (R) elected 1980 (54%), 1986 (66%), 1992 (70%), 1998 (68%), 2004 (70%), 2010 (64%), 2016 (60%). March 18 filing deadline. June 7 primary. Grassley answered one of the cycle's biggest outstanding questions when he announced he would seek an eighth term in the Senate. The 88-year-old incumbent had \$2.5 million in the bank on June 30 and is the heavy favorite given Iowa's recent Republican lean; in 2020 Trump won by 8 points while Sen. Joni Ernst won a 7-point victory in a Senate race that looked tied up until Election Day.

Democrats feel they have a strong challenger to Grassley in former 1st District Rep. Abby Finkenauer, who lost a close re-election race last year. The 32-year-old Finkenauer cuts a generational contrast with Grassley, who has held elected office since the Eisenhower administration. She raised more than \$1 million in her first fundraising quarter but is a substantial underdog in the general election. And she'll first have to win a primary that could include 2020 Democratic primary runner-up

Michael Franken, a retired admiral.

A Sept. 12-15 poll from J. Ann Selzer and the *Des Moines Register*



Caroline Brehman/CQ Roll Call

**Abby Finkenauer**

where this race begins and don't consider it in the first or second tier of opportunities. Solid Republican.

*J. Ann Selzer & Co. for the Des Moines Register, Sept. 12-15 (LVs) (live caller) — General Election ballot: Grassley over Finkenauer 55% - 37%.*

**Kansas.** Jerry Moran (R) elected 2010 (70%), 2016 (62%). June 1 filing deadline. Aug. 2 primary. Last cycle, Democrats had a highly touted and well-funded candidate in state Sen. Barbara Bollier, and hoped that Biden would keep things close enough at the top of the ticket. But Biden lost by 15 points and Bollier by 12. Any real vulnerability for Moran would come in a primary, but as an incumbent with the endorsement of former President Trump, no serious challenge looks likely. The only notable name in the Democratic field at the moment is former Kansas City Mayor Mark Holland, who is also the former senior pastor at Trinity Community Church. Moran had \$3.4 million in the bank on June 30. Solid Republican.

**Kentucky.** Rand Paul (R) elected 2010 (56%), 2016 (57%). Jan. 7 filing deadline. May 17 primary. In a cycle where Democratic donors will be looking for villains to target with their dollars, former state Rep./2020 Senate candidate Charles Booker stands to benefit from running against Paul, whose viral fights with Dr. Anthony Fauci have made him loathed among the Democratic base. Booker announced raising \$1.7 million since he joined the race. But in 2020, Democratic nominee Amy McGrath raised \$96 million only to lose to Sen. Mitch McConnell by 20 points, demonstrating how no amount of money can overcome a state's massive partisan lean. Paul had \$4.7 million in the bank on June 30 and says he raised another \$4 million in the third quarter. Kentucky voted for Trump by 26 points last year, and it's difficult to see how Democrats can overcome that hurdle, especially in a midterm with a Democrat in the White House. Solid Republican.

**Louisiana.** John Kennedy (R) elected 2016 (60%). July 22 filing deadline. Nov. 8 jungle primary. December runoff (if needed). Kennedy had \$8.6 million in the bank on June 30 and an endorsement from former President Trump. Democrats are more focused on stopping a GOP-drawn map from passing the state legislature with veto-proof majorities than on defeating Kennedy. The only Democrat in the race so far is former Navy fighter pilot Luke Mixon, a commercial pilot from Baton Rouge. Solid Republican.

**Maryland.** Chris Van Hollen (D) elected 2016 (61%). Feb. 22 filing deadline. June 28 primary. Van Hollen doesn't look likely to attract a credible Republican challenger, especially with popular GOP Gov.



Larry Hogan more interested in running for president in 2024. Greenbelt Mayor Colin Byrd, a councilman whose role as mayor is largely ceremonial, is also running in the Democratic primary to Van Hollen's left, but the 29-year-old only had \$8,200 in the bank on June 30 and doesn't look to be a serious threat. The senator was sitting on \$3.1 million at the end of June. Solid Democratic.

**Missouri. Open; Roy Blunt, R, not seeking re-election. March 29 filing deadline. Aug. 2 primary.** Even with a potentially damaged GOP nominee, Democrats are unlikely to win the Republican open seat. At a minimum, this could be a headache for GOP strategists if primary voters nominate embattled former Gov. Eric Greitens.

As it currently stands, Greitens benefits from the large number of GOP candidates. Despite the sexual assault and campaign finance accusations that forced him out of the governor's mansion in 2018, Greitens retains a solid base of support that could be enough to win a fractured primary field. He had a modest \$134,000 in his campaign account on June 30 but is bolstered by the backing of GOP mega-donor Richard Uihlein. In his way are state Attorney General Eric Schmitt (\$1.1 million), Reps. Vicky Hartzler (\$1.5 million) and Billy Long (\$559,000), and personal injury lawyer/minor GOP celebrity Mark McCloskey (\$167,000). Schmitt and Hartzler look strongest out of the gate, but it's still early. Rep. Jason Smith has not publicly announced his decision.

Rather than try to prosecute Greitens' past alleged sins, his opponents are probably better off explaining to GOP voters how nominating the former governor jeopardizes the seat. But then a single candidate might need to consolidate all of those voters. This is a race where Trump's endorsement could have an impact.

While Republicans sort through their primary, Democrats need to bolster their candidates in the event the race gets national attention with a Greitens nomination. They need a credible contender in case Greitens ends up being unelectable. Currently, state Sen. Scott Sifton (\$101,000 in the bank on June 30) and Marine veteran Lucas Kuncie (\$324,000) make up the Democratic top tier. Sifton has much stronger ties to the state party establishment, but Kuncie's strong fundraising and buzzy online presence have earned him some attention from Democratic strategists in DC. Also running are 2020 6th District nominee/community college professor Gena Ross, medical device company CEO Spencer Toder, Air Force veteran Jewel Kelly, and LGBT activist Tim Shephard.

Even if Republicans nominate Greitens, Democrats will have a tough time considering Trump won by 15 points last November and Gov. Mike Parson won by a similar 16-point margin. Solid Republican.

*Remington Research (R) for MO Scout, Sept. 8-9 (LVs) — GOP Primary Ballot: Schmitt 28%, Greitens 27%, Hartzler 17%, Long 8%, McCloskey 5%.*

*Remington Research (R) for MO Scout, June 9-10 (LVs) — GOP Primary Ballot: Greitens 34%, Schmitt 25%, Hartzler 14%, McCloskey 7%.*

**Nevada. Catherine Cortez Masto (D) elected 2016 (47%). March 18 filing deadline. June 14 primary.** Despite Democrats' recent winning streak, the Silver State always plays host to tight federal races and 2022 should be no exception. Republicans got their desired candidate in former state attorney general Adam Laxalt, who was the party's gubernatorial nominee in 2018 and is also the grandson of former Gov./former Sen. Paul Laxalt. He's the rare candidate this cycle to enter the race with praise from both former President Trump, who quickly endorsed him, and Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, who's also in his corner and whose close adviser Josh Holmes is one of Laxalt's

general consultants. First he'll have to get through retired Army Ranger Capt. Sam Brown, an underdog with an inspiring life story.

Cortez Masto had \$6.6 million in the bank on June 30 and gets to run in a state Biden won in 2020. While Democrats think Laxalt has plenty of vulnerabilities as the face of Trump's baseless efforts to overturn the election results last year, the party knows it will have to work to turn out the lower-propensity voters that form their base in Nevada. Laxalt has won statewide once before, but it was an underwhelming performance in a great year for Republicans. He also lost the gubernatorial contest in 2018, in a bad year for the GOP. Given the evenly divided partisan nature of the state — and Nevada's unique "none of these candidates" option, which always wins a decent share of the vote — this race will be close from wire to wire. Battleground.

*Mellman Group (D) for The Nevada Independent, Sept. 15-22 (RVs) (mixed mode) — General Election ballot: Cortez Masto over Laxalt 46% - 41%.*

*WPAi (R) for Adam Laxalt Campaign, Sept. 11-15 (LVs) — General Election ballot: Laxalt over Cortez Masto 39% - 37%.*

**New Hampshire. Maggie Hassan (D) elected 2016 (48%). June 10 filing deadline. Sept. 13 primary.** If the election were held today, GOP Gov. Chris Sununu would likely defeat Hassan. Fortunately for



Chris Sununu

Hassan, it's not for another year. While the governor is widely expected to run, he hasn't officially announced and has even said he's in no hurry to do so. Sununu currently has a positive image and job approval rating, making him

Republicans' top Senate recruit in the country. Even if Sununu enters the race, he could have a complicated primary. Retired Army Brigadier General Don Bolduc is running and Trump has gone out of his way to say nice things about him. Considering Trump's popularity with GOP primary voters, that could make things difficult for Sununu and GOP strategists who want him to be the nominee.

Meanwhile, Hassan is preparing for a huge race. She had \$6.6 million in the bank on June 30 and is already on television, with \$1.2 million in ads highlighting her work on veterans' issues, according to Kantar. The senator won't be her party's top fundraiser, but strategists believe she'll raise what she needs and the early ads won't eat into funds she'll need next year. Democrats know Sununu would give them a tough race, but believe he is vulnerable on abortion rights and think his numbers will come back to earth once he enters a federal race. Republicans are bullish, even to the point where they believe it could turn into their own version of the 2020 race in Colorado, where former Democratic Gov. John Hickenlooper led GOP Sen. Cory Gardner wire to wire and it wasn't particularly competitive in the end. But the first step is for Sununu to get in. If he does, this is probably the marquee Senate race of the cycle. Battleground.

*St. Anselm Univ., Aug. 24-26 (RVs) (online) — General Election ballot: Sununu over Hassan 49% - 41%.*

*Univ. of New Hampshire Survey Center, July 15-19 (LVs) (online panel) — General Election ballot: Sununu over Hassan 49% - 48%. Hassan over Bolduc 51% - 41%. Hassan over Kelly Ayotte (R) 49% - 45%.*

**New York.** Chuck Schumer (D) elected 1998 (55%), 2004 (71%), 2010 (66%), 2016 (70%). April 7 filing deadline. June 28 primary. The prospect of a primary challenge to Schumer from Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez remains unlikely. Republicans miss no opportunity to speculate on what the Queens congresswoman will do next year, but the reality is that there's little reason to believe Ocasio-Cortez would jeopardize her seat and her substantial platform running against the formidable Schumer. Most of the progressive energy in the Empire State will be spent on the gubernatorial race, where Gov. Kathy Hochul is looking to win a primary in her own right after taking over from the scandal-plagued Andrew Cuomo. Solid Democratic.

**North Carolina.** Open; Richard Burr, R, not seeking re-election. Dec. 17, 2021 filing deadline. March 8 primary, April 26 runoff (if necessary). Both parties are headed for competitive primaries in one of the most important Senate races in the country. Former state Supreme Court Chief Justice Cheri Beasley is trying to become the frontrunner but the primary will be a proving ground. Democratic strategists believe her judicial background (and lack



Cheri Beasley

Courtesy Beasley Campaign

of a legislative voting record) will be an asset, along with her previous statewide victories. Afghanistan war veteran/state Sen. Jeff Jackson often gets dismissed because another white guy with a military background, Cal Cunningham, lost the 2020 Senate race to GOP Sen. Thom Tillis. But Jackson is a credible candidate in this race and a better politician than Cunningham, who never caught fire with voters. Jackson reported raising "more than \$900,000" in the third quarter but hasn't said how much cash he had at the end of September. Beasley says she raised \$1.5 million and had "nearly" \$1.7 million in the bank on Sept. 30. State Sen. Erica Smith (who lost the 2020 primary to Cunningham) is also running, but is in a distinctly lower tier. She had \$55,800 in the bank on June 30.

On the Republican side, Trump endorsed Rep. Ted Budd, but that support hasn't cleared the field. The congressman had \$1.7 million in the bank on June 30 and will have to continue to raise money and communicate Trump's support to voters. That's because the initial frontrunner is former Charlotte mayor/former Gov. Pat McCrory, who started the race with higher name I.D. from his previous time in office and had \$955,000 on hand at the end of June. Former Rep. Mark Walker (\$926,000) is also running, but it's unclear where he can pull together enough support. And a new candidate just entered the race this week: decorated Afghanistan war veteran Marjorie K. Eastman.

The March primary will be an early test of Trump's strength considering he endorsed a candidate who was not the frontrunner. In the general election, it's up to Democrats to prove they can win a federal statewide race after multiple close losses. They believe boosting turnout among Black voters, both in urban and rural areas, is key to getting over the top, fueling some of the optimism about Beasley. But she's got to win the primary first. Republicans have consistently won most of the biggest races in North Carolina lately, and think either Budd or McCrory would be strong general election candidates. But the narrow historical margins

are evidence they can't take the state for granted. Battleground.

*Public Policy Polling (D) for EMILY's List (pro-Beasley), Aug. 31-Sept. 1 (RVs) — Democratic Primary ballot: Beasley over Jackson 33% - 24%.*

*WPAi (R) for Club for Growth (pro-Budd), June 22-24 (LVs) (live caller) — GOP Primary ballot: GOP Primary Ballot: McCrory 45%, Budd 21%, Walker 13%.*

*Meeting Street Insights (R) for Ted Budd Campaign, June 9-10 (LVs) (live caller) — GOP Primary Ballot: McCrory 45%, Budd 19%, Walker 12%.*

**North Dakota.** John Hoeven (R) elected 2010 (76%), 2016 (78%). April 11 filing deadline. June 14 primary. In 2016, Hoeven won the largest Senate victory in state history with a 61-point thumping of Democratic-NPL nominee Eliot Glassheim. His only vulnerability would be in a primary, and he seems to be on the good side of the former president, so he shouldn't have any issue winning renomination. Solid Republican.

**Ohio.** Open; Rob Portman, R, not seeking re-election. Feb. 2 filing deadline. May 3 primary. Ohio is an expansion state for Democrats: a place where they can compete under the right circumstances. Part of that scenario includes a bitter Republican primary that produces an unelectable GOP nominee. The early leader is former state treasurer/2012 Senate nominee Josh Mandel, who started this race with \$4 million left over from a brief run in 2018. But the field is full of well-funded contenders, including former state party chairwoman Jane Timken, *Hillbilly Elegy* author JD Vance, investment banker/2018 Senate candidate Mike Gibbons, car dealership owner Bernie Moreno, and state Sen./part-owner of the Cleveland Guardians baseball team Matt Dolan.

The Republican race feels like a performance for an audience of one: Donald Trump. And he has declined to endorse up to this point despite getting involved in most of the other top Senate races. Senate Conservatives Fund and Club for Growth PAC endorsed Mandel. Dolan, the most recent entrant into the race, appears to be the only candidate using a more moderate tone. With a combination of fundraising and personal money, all of the top six candidates should have money to communicate with voters. At the end of June, Mandel had \$5 million in the bank, Gibbons \$5.8 million, and Moreno \$1.6 million. Timken had \$3.1 million on Sept. 30. Vance and Dolan's first reports are due Oct. 15. With seven months left, it feels like this primary still has some twists and turns left.

Considering Trump won Ohio easily in 2016 and 2020, it's not clear how being closely aligned with the former president is an unpardonable sin. Democrats believe Mandel is uniquely disqualifying, considering he lost the 2012 Senate race to Democrat Sherrod Brown. They don't have Brown this time. They also believe Vance — who benefits from a \$10 million Super PAC seeded by his former boss, billionaire Peter Thiel — could have his own problem. The candidate was asked by Spectrum News if women should be forced to carry a pregnancy to term if it was the result of rape or incest. "The question betrays a certain presumption that's wrong," Vance said. "It's not whether a woman should be forced to bring a child to term, it's whether a child should be allowed to live, even though the circumstances of that child's birth are somehow inconvenient or a problem to the society." Democrats pounced on the characterization.

The Democratic side is more clear with Youngstown-area Rep. Tim Ryan the early frontrunner. He announced \$3.6 million in the bank on Sept. 30, and has been compiling endorsements from organized labor. He's facing former Consumer Financial Protection Bureau official Morgan Harper, who raised a considerable \$533,000 in the beginnings of her



campaign, in the primary. Third quarter FEC reports are due Oct. 15. But Harper burned some bridges by challenging Rep. Joyce Beatty in the Democratic primary in 2020 in the 3rd District (Beatty won 68-32 percent).

In spite of some of the colorful GOP candidates, the Republican nominee will start with a significant advantage in a Republican leaning state in a Republican leaning cycle. Democrats are hoping GOP turnout could suffer among Trump supporters when Trump is not on the ballot. But it's also unclear how Democratic voters stay motivated as the former president is not in the spotlight. Solid Republican.

*WPAi (R) for Josh Mandel Campaign, Sept. 20-23 (LVs) (live caller) — GOP Primary ballot: Mandel 37%, Vance 13%, Gibbons 8%, Timken 6%, Dolan 3%, Moreno 1%.*

*Remington Research (R) for Josh Mandel Campaign, Sept. 6-7 (LVs) — GOP Primary ballot: Mandel 34%, Vance 16%, Timken 11%, Gibbons 5%, Dolan 2%, Moreno 2%.*

*Redfield & Wilton, Aug. 20-24 (RVs) — General Election ballot: Mandel over Ryan 38% - 36%. Ryan over Vance 36% - 33%. Ryan over Timken 36% - 33%.*

*WAPi (R) for Club for Growth (pro-Mandel), July 27-29 (LVs) (live caller) — GOP Primary ballot: Mandel 40%, Vance 12%, Timken 8%, Dolan 3%, Gibbons 3%, Moreno 1%.*

*Fabrizio Lee (R) for Protect Ohio Values PAC (pro-Vance), July 20-22 (LVs) (live caller) — GOP Primary ballot: Mandel 21%, Vance 12%, Timken 7%, Mike Turner 7%, Gibbons 2%, Moreno 2%, Dolan 1%.*

**Oklahoma. James Lankford (R) elected 2014 special (68%), 2016 (68%). April 15 filing deadline. June 28 primary.** Lankford picked up another primary challenger in state Sen. Nathan Dahm, a term-limited state legislator from Broken Arrow with a penchant for controversial statements. The incumbent was already facing a challenge from Tulsa pastor Jackson Lahmeyer, who, like Dahm, has attacked Lankford for dropping his objection to Biden's Electoral College victory on Jan. 6. But Trump hasn't set his sights on Lankford (\$1.6 million on June 30), and unless that happens he doesn't look like he's in much danger from Lahmeyer (who had just \$136,000 in the bank on June 30) or Dahm, especially with both men in the race potentially splitting the "MAGA vote." Solid Republican.

**Oregon. Ron Wyden (D) elected 1996 special (48%), 1998 (61%), 2004 (63%), 2010 (57%), 2016 (56%). March 8 filing deadline. May 17 primary.** Republicans haven't won an Oregon Senate seat since 2002 and it doesn't look like they'll start now. Wyden had \$4.8 million in the bank on June 30 and the initial Republican field is lackluster. Jo Rae Perkins, the Q-Anon promoter who lost to Sen. Jeff Merkley in 2020 by 17 points, is running, as are Grant County Commissioner Sam Palmer and Prineville Mayor Jason Beebe. Solid Democratic.

**Pennsylvania. Open; Pat Toomey (R) not seeking re-election. March 8 filing deadline. May 17 primary.** Both parties are headed for competitive primaries in one of the most important Senate races in the country. The GOP field includes former Army Ranger Sean Parnell, who is regarded as the initial frontrunner because he is backed by Trump; real estate developer Jeff Bartos; former U.S. Ambassador to Denmark Carla Sands; and former Trump campaign activist/2020 4th District nominee Kathy Barnette. Parnell lost a close race to Democratic Rep. Conor Lamb in the 17th District in 2020 and Bartos ran unsuccessfully for lieutenant governor in 2018 and is a former finance chairman for the state party.

The Republican primary has already gotten personal. Bartos chose

to highlight two protection-from-abuse orders against Parnell, a line of attack picked up by a pro-Bartos Super PAC in the first TV ads of the election. Parnell in turn called on Bartos to drop out of the race, and is seeking an order from a judge to seal his ongoing custody proceedings. With eight months left in the primary, it looks like multiple candidates will have enough money to make their case. Bartos had \$1.8 million in the bank on June 30 (including \$840,000 in personal money), Parnell had \$597,000 and Barnette had \$476,000. Sands says she loaned her campaign \$3 million and raised another \$500,000, but her third quarter FEC report won't be out till Oct. 15, and just because she loaned herself the money doesn't mean she'll spend it all.

The Democratic primary isn't likely to be a walk in the park either. Lt. Gov. John Fetterman is the initial frontrunner. But he'll still have to answer questions about a 2013 incident in which he pulled a gun on an unarmed Black jogger. Fetterman is trying to cultivate his image as a populist champion while Lamb, who represents part of western Pennsylvania, has a moderate reputation.

Montgomery County Commission Chairman Val Arkoosh has received less media attention than either Fetterman or Lamb but shouldn't be



Val Arkoosh

forgotten. She's the only woman in the race and the only one with a base in the left-trending suburbs in southeast Pennsylvania. Her path likely relies on Lamb and Fetterman splitting the western Pennsylvania vote and spending most of their time and money on

each other rather than her. Fetterman and Lamb's fundraising could box her out, so her performance this quarter will be an important benchmark, as well as if she puts any of her own money in.

Black voters could be the key to the Democratic primary, particularly with Fetterman's past. But it's unclear whether state Rep. Malcolm Kenyatta of Philadelphia is running a strong enough campaign to take advantage of that opportunity. He had \$281,000 in the bank on June 30 compared to Fetterman's \$3.1 million, Lamb's \$1.7 million, and \$632,000 for Arkoosh. State Sen. Sharif Street (\$190,000), the son of former Philadelphia Mayor John Street, is still exploring a bid but doesn't look as likely to run.

While the GOP primary is more contentious now, the Democratic nomination is too important for that primary to not get personal as well. Both races are proving grounds for candidates ahead of what will be one of the most competitive general elections in the country. Democrats are encouraged to see none of the top GOP candidates trying to emulate Toomey, the outgoing GOP senator with a moderate reputation. But Democrats can't afford for any slippage in turnout in a state Biden won narrowly in 2020. Battleground.

**South Carolina. Tim Scott (R) appointed 2013, elected 2014 special (61%), 2016 (61%). March 29 filing deadline. June 7 primary.** Scott is fundraising like he's in a top-tier race, and had \$14.5 million in the bank on June 30. But those dollars are more likely to be spent launching a presidential campaign in 2024 than they are against any Democratic challenger in 2022. After now-DNC chairman Jaime Harrison raised and spent \$130 million to lose to Sen. Lindsey Graham by 10 points in 2020,



Democrats aren't going to give much mind to the more popular Scott. The one announced Democratic candidate, State Rep. Krystle Nichole Matthews, had just \$7,400 in the bank on June 30. Solid Republican.

**South Dakota. John Thune (R) elected 2004 (51%), 2010 (unopposed), 2016 (72%). March 29 filing deadline. June 7 primary.** Thune hasn't made a public decision about running for re-election yet, but Republicans have no reason to think he won't run again. He had \$14.7 million stockpiled in the bank on June 30 and has another term if he wants it. If Thune decides not to run for re-election, look for GOP Rep. Dusty Johnson to try to move up and Sioux Falls Mayor Paul TenHaken to run for the at-large House seat. Solid Republican.

**Utah. Mike Lee (R) elected 2010 (62%), 2016 (68%). March 17 filing deadline. Spring nominating conventions. June 28 primary.** Lee has attracted a few challengers in the GOP primary, most notably former state Rep. Becky Edwards, a moderate Republican who recently finished 10 years in the state legislature, and Ally Isom, a former staffer to then-Gov. Gary Herbert. Both take issue with Lee's embrace of Trump. But it's not clear how much that message is going to resonate with GOP primary voters. On June 30, Edwards had \$466,000 in the bank compared to Lee's \$1.6 million.

The race also got a jolt when former CIA officer/House GOP staffer/2016 presidential candidate Evan McMullin announced he would challenge Lee as an independent. McMullin won 22 percent of the presidential vote in 2016 in Utah, and the state's Mormon population has been less enamored with Trump than other GOP base voters. But while the 2016 election shows McMullin's appeal, it also shows the difficulty of his new task. He didn't come close to winning the state, which Trump carried with 45 percent to Clinton's 27 percent. Lee is better-liked now than Trump was in 2016 (and Trump also won 58 percent of the vote in 2020).

This race could develop into something like the 2014 Kansas Senate race, where Democrats begrudgingly abandoned their own nominee for independent wealthy businessman Greg Orman. But Orman lost anyway and was less defined than McMullin. For now, the burden is on McMullin to prove he can put together a viable campaign and convince the state's Democrats to rally behind his cause instead of fielding their own candidate. That's easier said than done, so this race is still Solid Republican.

*OH Predictive Insights, Aug. 2-8 (RVs) (online panel) — GOP Primary Ballot: Lee 45%, Edwards 3%, Brendan Wright 3%, Isom 2%.*

**Vermont. Pat Leahy (D) elected 1974 (50%), 1980 (50%), 1986 (63%), 1992 (54%), 1998 (72%), 2004 (71%), 2010 (64%), 2016 (61%). May 26 filing deadline. Aug. 9 primary.** Leahy still hasn't made a public decision on whether he'll seek a ninth term. If he does, he'll win, and if he serves at least three and a half years of his next term he'll become the longest-serving senator in U.S. history, surpassing Robert Byrd's record of 51 and a half years. If Leahy, who is 81, doesn't run, expect a crowded Democratic primary to replace him. Gov. Phil Scott, the state's insanely popular liberal Republican governor, continues to show no interest in running for Senate, and told *The Atlantic* he'd vote for Leahy if Leahy runs again. Solid Democratic.

**Washington. Patty Murray (D) elected 1992 (54%), 1998 (58%), 2004 (55%), 2010 (52%), 2016 (59%). May 20 filing deadline. Aug. 2 primary.** With the potential for a great cycle for the GOP, Republicans need credible candidates in longer-shot races. Veterans advocate/former triage

nurse Tiffany Smiley looks like that candidate. She 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 who went on to become the first active-duty blind Army officer, motivational speaker, and triathlete. She raised an impressive \$1.6 million over the first five months of the race and finished September with \$1.2 million in the bank. But she's also running in a state where Republicans haven't won a U.S. Senate race in more than a quarter of a century and Biden just won by nearly 20 points. Murray had \$5.9 million at the end of September and has the state's partisan lean to her advantage. If this race is truly competitive later next year, then Republicans are probably well on their way to the Senate majority and looking to pad their gains. Solid Democratic.

**Wisconsin. Ron Johnson (R) elected 2010 (52%), 2016 (50%). June 1 filing deadline. Aug. 9 primary.** Everyone is still waiting on the senator to announce whether he will seek a third term or not, but the race will be competitive no matter what he decides.

After months of speculation, Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes entered the crowded and competitive Democratic primary. He enters the race with high expectations and some statewide name identification, but doesn't have the nomination wrapped up. His first FEC report, due Oct. 15, will be watched carefully for evidence of early support.

State Sen. Chris Larson, who was endorsed by Progressive Change Campaign Committee, dropped out of the race and endorsed Barnes, but a handful of other Democrats remain. State Treasurer Sarah Godlewski,



Courtesy, Mandela Barnes Campaign

**Mandela Barnes**

who has been endorsed by EMILY's List, had \$243,000 in the bank on June 30. 2016 8th District nominee/Outagamie County Executive Tom Nelson (\$406,000) is running as a progressive champion. Milwaukee Bucks executive Alex Lasry,

the son of billionaire Bucks owner Marc Lasry, had \$1 million on hand at the end of June and could choose to overwhelm the field with personal money; he's already advertising on TV. Radiologist Gillian Battino has an interesting profile but has struggled to raise money early (\$34,000 in the bank on June 30), particularly without EMILY's List. Steven Olikara, the founder of non-profit group Millennial Action Project, which aims to foster young leaders in Washington, had \$55,000 and is running as well. Milwaukee City Alderwoman Chantia Lewis jumped in the race but her announcement was overshadowed by an early September felony indictment on campaign finance charges (she denies wrongdoing).

Democrats will make the case that Johnson has changed. To them, the senator's recent moves to cast doubt about what happened on January 6 at the Capitol and on the effectiveness and safety of the Covid-19 vaccine is in contrast with the businessman and outsider who won the 2010 and 2016 Senate races. Johnson has won twice before, had \$1.7 million in the bank at the end of June and has personal money to spend if necessary. But he also can't get too comfortable, considering he's one of only two 2022 Senate seats held by a Republican in a state Biden won in 2020. If he doesn't run, Republicans will look to Rep. Mike Gallagher. No matter what happens, this race will be competitive. Battleground.

IE

# Colorado Redistricting: New District, Fortunate Incumbents

By Bradley Wascher

Last week, Colorado’s independent redistricting commission approved a new congressional map. The Centennial State was allocated an additional representative in Congress during this year’s decennial reapportionment, and (pending final approval from the state Supreme Court) we now know what the new 8th District — as well as the updated lines for Colorado’s seven existing districts — will look like.

## A New District

The most significant change to Colorado’s congressional map is the addition of the 8th District, which is situated in the suburbs north of Denver. The 8th was designed with Colorado’s diverse demographics in mind, specifically to increase representation for the state’s Hispanic community. By taking in portions of Adams and Weld counties, including Commerce City, the 8th will be the most heavily Hispanic of Colorado’s eight districts, at 38.5 percent. The 8th will also likely be Colorado’s most competitive district. It would have voted for Donald Trump by 2 points in 2016, and for Joe Biden by 4 points in 2020. More broadly, across the 10 statewide elections that have taken place in Colorado since 2016, the final margin for either party in the 8th was never larger than 5 points, demonstrating just how close future races might be. The first election in the 8th is still a year away, but a field is already starting to develop. Democratic state Rep. Yadira Caraveo and Adams County Commissioner Chaz Tedesco are running. As other candidates prepare their campaigns, the district’s rating starts at Toss-up.

## Redrawing Old Lines

The state’s remaining districts might not be much different from 2020 to 2022. Under the rules of Amendment Y, the 2018 ballot measure that established Colorado’s independent congressional redistricting commission, new maps cannot be drawn with the purpose of protecting incumbents. But at least for 2022, the current members of Colorado’s delegation will start with a significant advantage, should they choose to run for re-election. The **1st District** still covers Denver, and is largely identical to its previous configuration. The primary difference is that the district has lost its slight southwest reach into Jefferson County, making the new lines reminiscent of those drawn after the 2000 census. This shouldn’t be a problem for Democratic Rep. Diana DeGette, however, as the 1st actually became more Democratic with the change. According to the *Inside Elections* Baseline metric, which captures each party’s political performance in a congressional district by combining all federal and state election results over the past four election cycles into a single average, the new 1st is D+51.2 — 8 points more Democratic than its previous incarnation; in the 2020 election, the district voted for Biden by 61 points. Initial rating: Solid Democratic. The **2nd District** still contains the cities of Fort Collins and Boulder, but many of the district’s smaller, outer counties have changed. These changes should shore up Democratic Rep. Joe Neguse: alongside voting for Biden by 40 points last November, the 2nd now has a Baseline of D+28.1, making it 8 points more favorable to Democrats than the previous lines. Initial rating: Solid Democratic. The **3rd District**, spanning most of the Western Slope, keeps Pueblo and Grand Junction but stays primarily rural. While the politics of the

## Rating Colorado’s New Congressional Districts

DISTRICT	INCUMBENT	INITIAL RATING
1st	Diana DeGette, D	Solid Democratic
2nd	Joe Neguse, D	Solid Democratic
3rd	Lauren Boebert, R	Likely Republican
4th	Ken Buck, R	Solid Republican
5th	Doug Lamborn, R	Solid Republican
6th	Jason Crow, D	Solid Democratic
7th	Ed Perlmutter, D	Likely Democratic
8th	OPEN, NEW	Toss-up

3rd are bound to be eclectic by virtue of its wide geographic range, Republican Rep. Lauren Boebert, the gun-toting freshman who quickly developed a contentious national profile, appears to be slightly boosted by the absorption of additional GOP-friendly areas. The new 3rd has a Baseline of R+10.3, approximately 1 point more Republican than before, and it supported Trump by an 8-point margin in 2020. Initial rating: Likely Republican. The **4th District**, home to Colorado’s Eastern Plains, sees its contours remain mostly intact, as they have been for the better part of 40 years. Already a district where Democrats rarely reached 40 percent, the 4th is set to be even more favorable for GOP Rep. Ken Buck in the years to come: it would have voted Trump by 18 points in 2020, and according to Baseline, the new lines create a district that is R+27.9, 3.5 points more favorable for Republicans. Initial rating: Solid Republican. The **5th District** maintains its identity as the Colorado Springs district — perhaps now more than ever. Republican Rep. Doug Lamborn has little to worry about as representative of one of the most conservative major cities in America. Alongside preferring Trump by 10 points last November, the 5th now has a Baseline of R+23.5, practically the same as it was before. Initial rating: Solid Republican. The **6th District**, which previously wrapped around Denver from the south, the east, and the north, loses its upper curvature. With most of the lost area coming from Adams County, the district is now primarily located in Arapahoe County, and the city of Aurora. The 6th also gains a sliver of Jefferson County, pushing Democratic Rep. Jason Crow even closer to safety in a district that has already trended toward (and flipped in favor of) Democrats over the last decade. The newly drawn 6th, which was Biden+24 in 2020, has a Baseline of D+9.9, 5 points more Democratic than the previous lines. Initial rating: Solid Democratic. The **7th District** is practically unrecognizable from when the district was first added in the 2002 redistricting cycle. Although the 7th loses almost all of its area in Adams County, in the north it gains Broomfield County and more of Jefferson County, and in the south it adds Chaffee, Custer, Fremont, Lake, Park, and Teller counties. Visual overhaul aside, this district still gets most of its votes from the west Denver suburbs, and has voted almost in lockstep with the state of Colorado as a whole over the past four election cycles. As such, Democratic Rep. Ed Perlmutter has few reasons to worry right now in a district Biden won by 14 points in 2020 and Democratic Gov. Jared Polis won by 10 points in 2018 — even considering its D+3.6 Baseline. Initial rating: Likely Democratic.

