



Review of 2008 Senate Elections

Top Tier Senate Races

Colorado

Sen. Wayne Allard (R) has announced that he will retire at the end of his term. The race looks set: U.S. Rep Mark Udall (D) vs. ex-Rep. Bob Schaffer (R). Colorado is trending Democratic, and Udall starts off as a narrow favorite.

Louisiana

Sen. Mary Landrieu (D) is considered to be in trouble because of previous close contests and because so many of her African-American constituents fled the state as a result of Hurricane Katrina. At the end of August, State Treasurer John Kennedy switched to the Republican Party, and formally filed to run for the Senate in late November.

Maine

The field is set: Rep. Tom Allen (D) is challenging incumbent **Sen. Susan Collins (R)**. While Collins starts out in the lead, the race is sure to tighten.

Minnesota

Sen. Norm Coleman (R) is running for re-election, but is likely to have a strong challenge. Democratic candidates at this point include Al Franken (D), who had \$2.5 million in his campaign treasury at the end of the third quarter of 2007, wealthy attorney Mike Ciresi (D), who ran for the Senate in 2000, college professor Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer (D) and banker/attorney Bob Olson (D). The first stage in the nominating process are local Democratic caucuses on February 5.

New Hampshire

Sen. John Sununu (R) faces re-election in a state that turned heavily Democratic in 2006. Former Gov. Jeanne Shaheen (D), who lost to Sununu in 2002, is running, with early polls showing conflicting results. Dartmouth medical professor/ex-astronaut Jay Buckey (D) is still running.

New Mexico

Sen. Pete Domenici's (R) announced in October that he will not run for re-election. Rep. Heather Wilson (R) and Steve Pearce (R) have announced they

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will run in a tough primary. Rep. Tom Udall (D) is running, and is not expecting a primary challenge. Udall is the favorite in the November contest.

Oregon

Sen. Gordon Smith (R) is vulnerable. He faces two challengers, Oregon House Speaker Jeff Merkley and activist/ex-DoJ environmental attorney Steve Novick (D). Former National Endowment for the Arts Chairman John Frohnmayer, has announced he will run as an independent.

Virginia

Sen. John Warner (R) has announced he is not running again. The formerly very red state has been moving toward purple. Ex-Governor Mark Warner (D) is running, and is the favorite. The likely Republican nominee is former Gov. Jim Gilmore (R), although he will get a challenge from Delegate Robert Marshall (R). Early polling shows Warner far out in front, and his fundraising has been going great.

Potentially close races

Alaska

A wide-ranging public corruption inquiry by the DoJ and FBI has expanded to include not only **Sen. Ted Stevens' (R)** son/ex-state Senate president Ben Stevens (R), but also a home remodeling project of Sen. Stevens himself. Two Democrats are considering the race: Anchorage Mayor Mark Begich (D) and ex-State House Minority Leader Ethan Berkowitz (D).

Kentucky

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R) is being attacked in the state for his pro-war stance, but he is probably safe. However, polls show a close contest against some candidates. Wealthy businessman Bruce Lunsford (D), who previously ran for Governor, may be the frontrunner Democratic nomination. Also running are Iraq war veteran Andrew Horne (D), a previous House nominee, and businessman Greg Fischer (D).

North Carolina

On October 30, State Sen. Kay Hagan (D) announced she will run against **Sen. Elizabeth Dole (R)**, after prodding by state and national Democrats. Businessman Jim Neal (D) is also in the contest. Democrats argue that Dole is vulnerable.

South Dakota

Sen. Tim Johnson's (D) returned to work in September after a long illness,



and is running for re-election. He has won two elections to the Senate by very narrow margins. State House member Joel Dykstra (R) has declared his candidacy. If Johnson were to withdraw, possible candidates are Rep. Stephanie Herseth Sandlin (D) and Governor Mike Rounds (R), Public Utilities Commission chair Dusty Johnson (R), ex-LG Steve Kirby (R), state Senate Maj. Leader Dave Knudson (R), and Lieutenant Governor Dennis Daugaard (R)

Special Elections

Wyoming

After the death of Sen. Craig Thomas (R), Gov. Dave Freudenthal (D) selected '96 candidate/state **Sen. John Barrasso (R)** as the new Senator. Barrasso will serve until a special election in 2008, after which time the winner of the election will serve the remainder of Thomas' term until 2012.

Mississippi

Sen. Trent Lott (R) unexpectedly announced his resignation from the Senate by the end of 2007. The Governor appointed U.S. Rep. Roger Wicker (R) to replace him. The state Supreme Court rules that the special election will be held in November. Two Democratic candidates have announced, ex-Governor Ronnie Musgrove (D) and ex-Rep. Ronnie Shows (D).

Other Democratic seats

Arkansas

Sen. Mark Pryor (D) appears safe, although he has voted quite cautiously. The only distant threat: if former Governor Mike Huckabee drops out of the contest for President and decides to run for Senate instead.

Delaware

Sen. Joseph Biden (D) will win in a walk.

Illinois

Dick Durbin (D) is secure against physician Steve Sauerberg (R).



Iowa

Sen. Tom Harkin (D) has beat back previous challenges from Republican Congressmen, and would do so again if any decide to take the plunge.

Massachusetts

Sen. John Kerry (D) will romp to re-election, although he faces a challenge from retired Air Force Lt. Col. Jim Ogonowski (R), who ran a close second to Rep. Niki Tsongas in an October 2007 special election.

Michigan

Sen. Carl Levin (D) is in a strong position for re-election.

Montana

Ex-state Majority Leader Michael Lange (R) has indicated that he will challenge **Sen. Max Baucus (D)**.

New Jersey

Sen. Frank Lautenberg (D) is running for re-election and is safe. He has been challenged by businesswoman Anne Evans Estabrook (R) and Assemblyman Joseph Pennacchio (R) may run.

Rhode Island

Sen. Jack Reed (D) is safe.

West Virginia

Sen. Jay Rockefeller (D) is secure.

Other Republican seats

Alabama

Sen. Jeff Sessions (R) is safe; his likely opponent is state senator Vivian Davis Figures (D).

Georgia

Sen. Saxby Chambliss (R) does not appear to have any serious re-election problem. He has, however, been challenged by DeKalb County CEO Vernon Jones (D).

Idaho

Sen. Larry Craig (R), after pleading guilty in August after an incident in the Minneapolis airport, has now announced that he will stay in his seat until his term ends, and then step down. Lieutenant Governor Jim Risch (R) is the



leading Republican candidate. The Democratic nominee is '06 LG nominee/ex-Rep. Larry LaRocco (D).

Kansas

Sen. Pat Roberts (R) is safe.

Mississippi

Sen. Thad Cochran (R) has indicated he will run for re-election, and will be a shoo-in.

Nebraska

Sen. Chuck Hagel's (R) has announced that he is retiring at the end of his term. Former Agriculture Sec./ex-Gov. Mike Johanns (R) is the clear favorite. One potential Democratic candidate is rancher Scott Kleeb, who lost a House race in 2006; ex-Republican Nebraska businessman Anthony Raimondo (D) has also entered the contest.

Oklahoma

Sen. Jim Inhofe (R) is secure. State Senator Andrew Rice (D) has entered the race, but is far behind in the polls.

South Carolina

Republicans are angry with **Sen. Lindsey Graham (R)** because of his stance on the immigration bill and other issues, and may be challenged by businessman John Cina (R). Still, he is safe.

Tennessee

Sen. Lamar Alexander (R) is in good political shape.

Texas

Sen. John Cornyn (R) is probably secure; state Rep. Rick Noriega (D) is running while wealthy trial attorney Mikal Watts (D), who put a lot of his own money into the contest, dropped.