2008 Election Preview — A Brief Look at the Races

FLEISHMAN HILLARD INTERNATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS

Last Updated June 16

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Election Overview

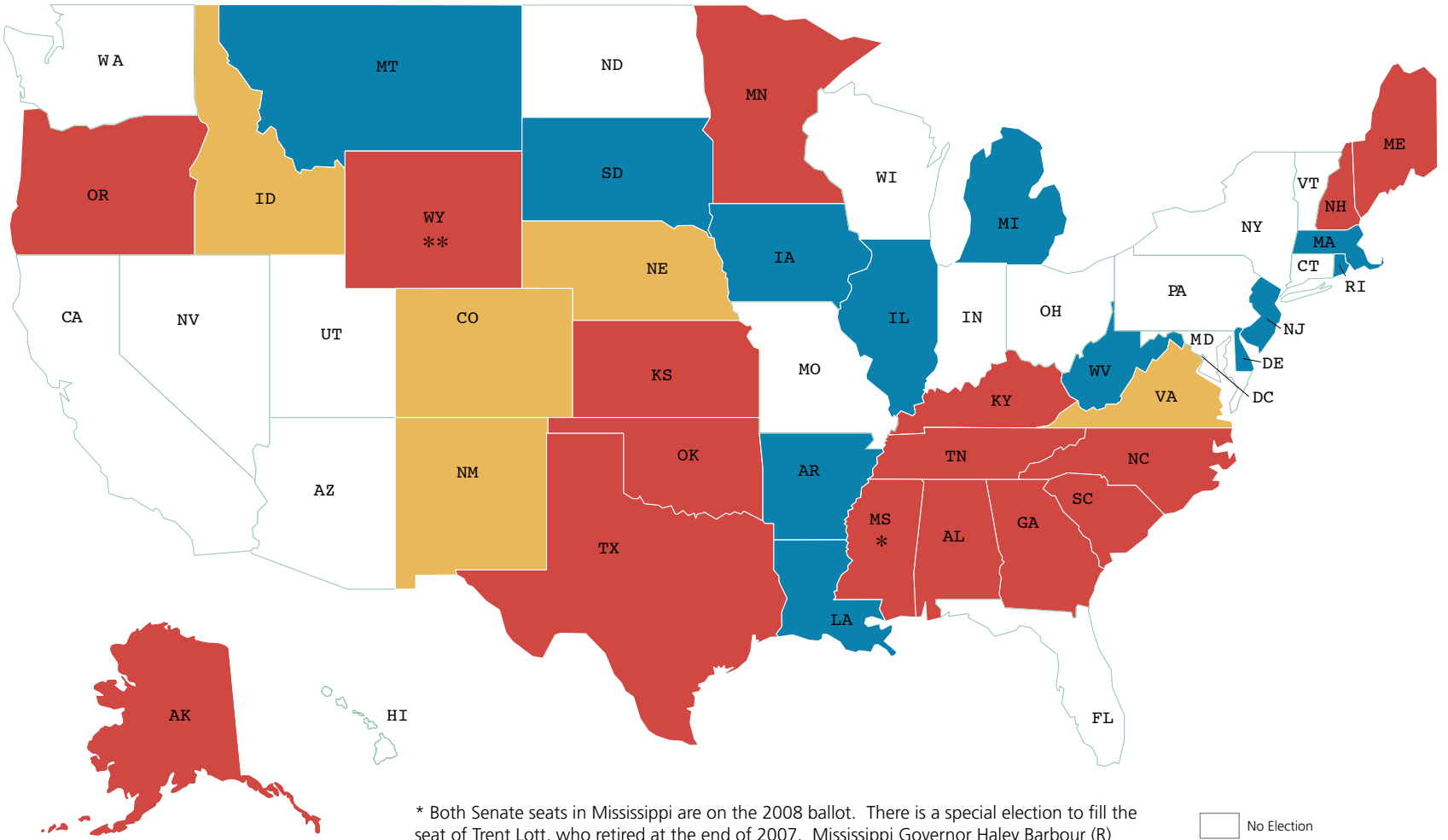
Thirty-five of 100 seats in the Senate will be up for election this year. Of these 35 contests, 33 are regular elections and the winners will serve six-year terms from January 3, 2009 until January 3, 2015. Two special elections will also be held for full terms in seats due to resignations: one in Wyoming and another in Mississippi. The winners of these elections will serve the remainder of terms that expire on January 3, 2013.

Entering the 2008 election, the Senate is composed of 49 Republicans, 49 Democrats, and two independents (Bernie Sanders of Vermont and Joe Lieberman of Connecticut, who both caucus with Democrats). Of the 35 seats up for election, 23 are held by Republicans and 12 by Democrats.

Democrats are considered to possess a field advantage in 2008 because they only have to defend half as many seats as Republicans. In addition, five Republicans have announced they are not running again compared to zero Democrats. This open seat gap between the parties is the largest margin in 50 years.

All polling data cited comes from either Rasmussen Reports, or Larry J. Sabato's Crystal Ball.

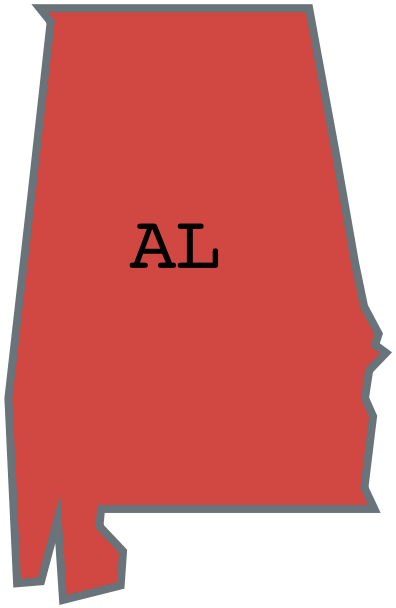
2008 Senate Races



* Both Senate seats in Mississippi are on the 2008 ballot. There is a special election to fill the seat of Trent Lott, who retired at the end of 2007. Mississippi Governor Haley Barbour (R) appointed Representative Roger Wicker (R) to replace Lott but now faces an election to serve out the remainder of the term.

** Both Senate seats in Wyoming are on the 2008 ballot. There is a special election to fill the seat of Craig Thomas, who died in office. John Barrasso (R) was appointed to replace Thomas but now faces an election to serve out the remainder of the term.

ALABAMA



Incumbent

Senator Jeff Sessions — Republican

Challenger

State Senator Vivian Davis Figures — Democrat

Recent Poll

Sessions	**62%**
Figures	**29%**

2002 Results

GOP – Sessions (incumbent)	790,757	59%
Dem – Parker (challenger)	537,883	40%

Overview

Alabama overwhelmingly voted for President Bush in 2000 and 2004, and Senator Sessions won election in his 2002 race by a large margin. However, Democrats do control both chambers of the state legislature. Recent polls show a 59% approval rating for Sessions, who is considered the fifth-most conservative Senator (as ranked by National Journal), and maintains a large fundraising lead. State Senator Davis is running uncontested for the Democratic nomination.

ALASKA

Incumbent

Senator Ted Stevens — Republican

Challenger

Mayor Mark Begich — Democrat

Recent Poll

Stevens	**45%**
Begich	**47%**

2002 Results

GOP – Stevens (incumbent)	155,054	79%
Dem – Vondersaar (challenger)	20,466	10%

Overview

Senator Stevens is the longest-serving Republican in the U.S. Senate, but has become involved in an FBI corruption investigation scandal (he has not been indicted). Mayor Begich is the current mayor of Anchorage. The primary election is not held until late August. Should Stevens be indicted before then, several other candidates are considered to be contenders for the seat. Stevens maintains a large fundraising advantage in a state that traditionally votes Republican.

ARKANSAS

Incumbent

Senator Mark Pryor — Democrat

Challenger

Rebekah Kennedy — Independent/Green Party

Recent Poll

Pryor	**90%**
Other	**10%**

2002 Results

Dem – Pryor (challenger)	435,346	54%
GOP – Hutchinson (incumbent)	372,909	46%

Overview

Although he is a first-term incumbent in a state President Bush won in 2000 and 2004, Senator Pryor will not face a major party challenger. Many pundits anticipated former Governor Mike Huckabee would challenge the incumbent, but the state party announced it would not field a candidate in March of this year. Rebekah Kennedy is the only challenger with previous statewide campaign experience. As the Green Party candidate for Attorney General in 2006, she received just four percent of the vote.

COLORADO

Incumbent

None – open seat

Challengers

Congressman Mark Udall — Democrat

Bob Schaffer — Republican

Recent Poll

Udall	**47%**
Schaffer	**41%**

2002 Results

GOP – Allard (incumbent)	707,349	51%
Dem – Strickland (challenger)	634,227	46%

Overview

This seat was considered to be in play even before incumbent Senator Wayne Allard announced he would not seek re-election in 2007. Congressman Udall, the Representative from Colorado's 2nd District and a relative of former Congressman and Presidential candidate Mo Udall, will face former Congressman Schaffer. Udall currently leads Schaffer by an almost 2-1 ratio of cash on hand. Colorado has been a battleground state in several recent elections and this race is expected to be one of the closest Senate contests this year.

DELAWARE

2002 Results

Dem – Biden (incumbent)	135,170	58%
GOP – Clatworthy (challenger)	94,716	41%

Incumbent

Senator Joseph Biden — Democrat

Challenger

Christine O'Donnell — Republican

Recent Poll

Biden	**58%**
O'Donnell	**41%**

Overview

Senator Joe Biden, has claimed an easy victory in each of his last several campaigns and is a 35-year veteran of the Senate. His challenger is Christine O'Donnell, a public relations consultant, who contends that Delaware is suffering from "Biden Fatigue". However, Biden maintains high approval ratings (63%), wide name recognition, a strong fundraising advantage, and a long history of service to Delaware.

GEORGIA

Incumbent

Senator Saxby Chambliss — Republican

Challenger

Jim Martin (presumptive) — Democrat

Recent Poll

Chambliss	**52%**
Martin	**36%**

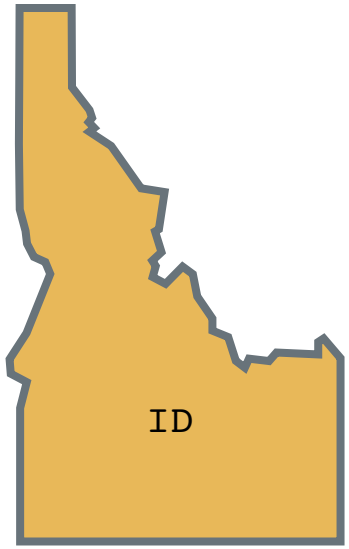
2002 Results

GOP – Chambliss (challenger)	1,068,902	53%
Dem – Cleland (incumbent)	928,905	46%

Overview

Senator Chambliss unseated incumbent Max Cleland in one of 2002's most contested races. His significant approval ratings through his first term are attributed to his conservative leaning and support among Georgia's evangelical Christian population. On the Democratic side, Jim Martin is considered the presumptive nominee. Martin, a former state representative, State Human Resources Commissioner, and candidate for Lieutenant Governor, faces challenges in the July primary from broadcast journalist Dale Cardwell and DeKalb County CEO Vernon Jones.

IDAHO



Incumbent

None – open seat

Challengers

Lieutenant Governor Jim Risch — Republican

Larry LaRocco — Democrat

Recent Poll

Risch	**42%**
LaRocco	**32%**

2002 Results

GOP – Craig (incumbent)	265,849	65%
Dem – Blinken (challenger)	132,845	33%

Overview

Lieutenant Governor Risch won his party's nomination from more than a dozen Republican candidates who sought to replace Senator Larry Craig. LaRocco is a former Congressman, lost the 2006 Lieutenant Governor's election by a wide margin. Risch also leads LaRocco nearly 2-to-1 in fundraising. However, with a large percentage of voters still undecided, Risch below 50%, and the so-called "Craig effect," some pundits think this seat may move from safe to in play as the election draws closer.

ILLINOIS

Incumbent

Senator Richard "Dick" Durbin — Democrat

Challenger

Steve Sauerberg — Republican

Recent Poll

Durbin	**60%**
Sauerberg	**38%**

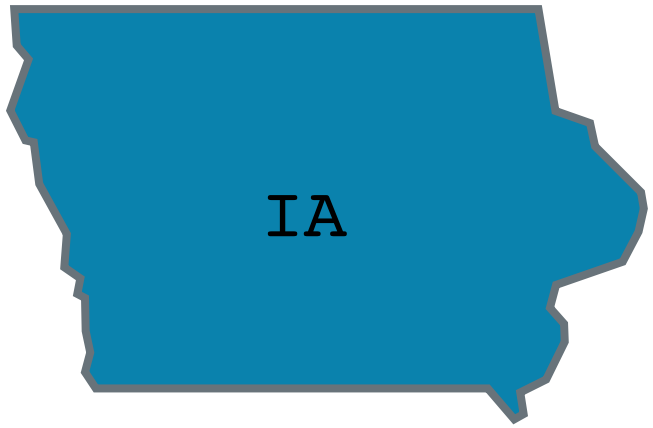
2002 Results

Dem – Durbin (incumbent)	2,080,411	60%
GOP – Durkin (challenger)	1,320,621	38%

Overview

Current Democratic Majority Whip Durbin has maintained high approval ratings and enjoys a significant advantage in fundraising and state party infrastructure. Sauerberg, a practicing physician, won the February Republican primary, and has already contributed $1 million of his own money to his campaign. The high cost of campaigning in Illinois has a history of favoring those with bigger bank accounts.

IOWA



Incumbent

Senator Tom Harkin — Democrat

Challenger

Christopher Reed — Republican

Recent Poll

Harkin	**54%**
Reed	**44%**

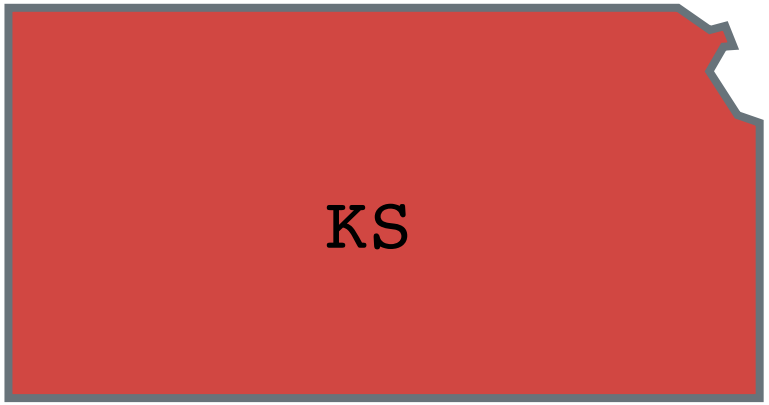
Overview

Iowa has trended Democratic in recent elections, winning two Congressional seats and both chambers of the state legislature, as well as retaining the Governor's mansion in 2006. Senator Harkin has maintained high approval ratings throughout his tenure, and sits as Chairman of the Senate Agriculture Committee in a state dominated by farming. Businessman and Navy veteran Reed narrowly won the contested Republican primary.

2002 Results

Dem – Harkin (incumbent)	550,156	54%
GOP – Ganske (challenger)	446,209	44%

KANSAS



Incumbent

Senator Pat Roberts — Republican

Challenger

Jim Slattery (presumptive) — Democrat

Recent Poll

Roberts	**52%**
Slattery	**40%**

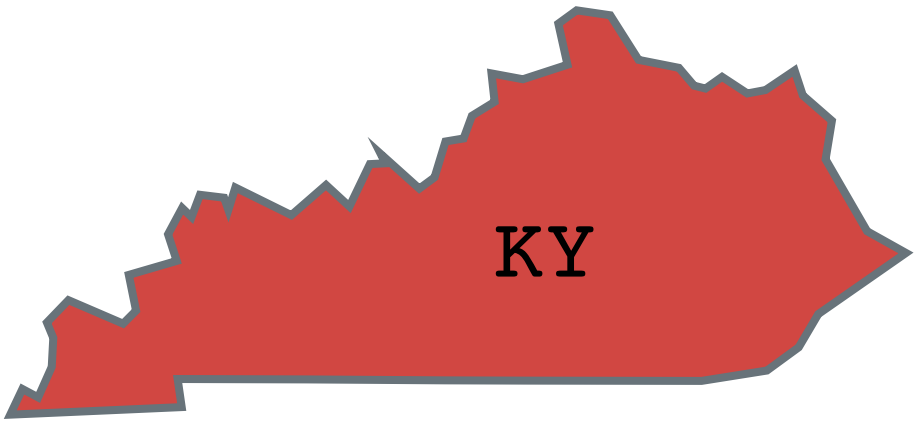
2002 Results

GOP – Roberts (incumbent)	632,134	83%
Liber – Rosile (challenger)	69,395	9%

Overview

Roberts was first elected in 1996 with 62% of the vote, and then reelected in 2002 with 83% percent of the vote — the highest rate for any statewide election in Kansas history. Roberts enjoys support from the state's business community and social conservatives. Former Congressman Slattery left the state after losing the 1994 race for governor and has statwide name recognition, but faces a challenge in the August 5th primary from railroad engineer Lee Jones.

KENTUCKY



Incumbent

Senator Mitch McConnell — Republican

Challenger

Bruce Lunsford — Democrat

Recent Poll

McConnell	**44%**
Lunsford	**49%**

2002 Results

GOP – McConnell (incumbent)	726,396	64%
Dem – Weinberg (challenger)	400,818	36%

Overview

Senator McConnell is considered a strong incumbent due to strong financial support, his position as Senate Minority Leader, and Kentucky's traditional record of voting Republican. However, his approval ratings are currently below 50%, a Democrat was elected to the Governor's mansion in 2006, and the DSCC has targeted this race. Lunsford, a businessman and former Kentucky Commerce Secretary, emerged from a seven-way primary as the Democratic nominee.

LOUISIANA

Incumbent

Senator Mary Landrieu — Democrat

Challenger

John Kennedy — Republican

Recent Poll

Landrieu	**47%**
Kennedy	**44%**

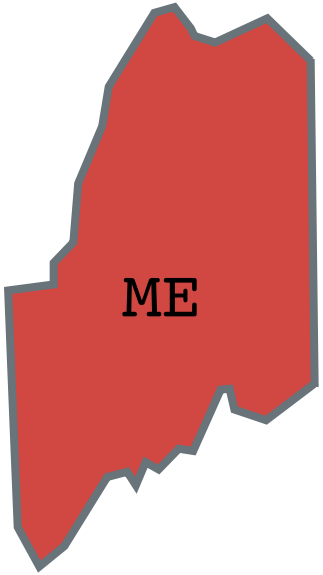
2002 Results

Dem – Landrieu (incumbent)	563,400	46%
GOP – Terrell (challenger	327,975	27%

Overview

Senator Landrieu has been narrowly elected in her first two elections, and faces challenges once again from the Katrina-displaced African-American population and recent Republican victories in Senate, Gubernatorial, and Presidential elections. However, the recent Democratic special election victory in the state's longtime-Republican 6th Congressional District may show a trend reversal. Kennedy is a Democrat-turned-Republican State Treasurer. This election is expected to be one of the most hotly contested Senate elections in 2008.

MAINE



Incumbent

Senator Susan Collins — Republican

Challenger

Congressman Tom Allen — Democrat

Recent Poll

Collins	**52%**
Allen	**42%**

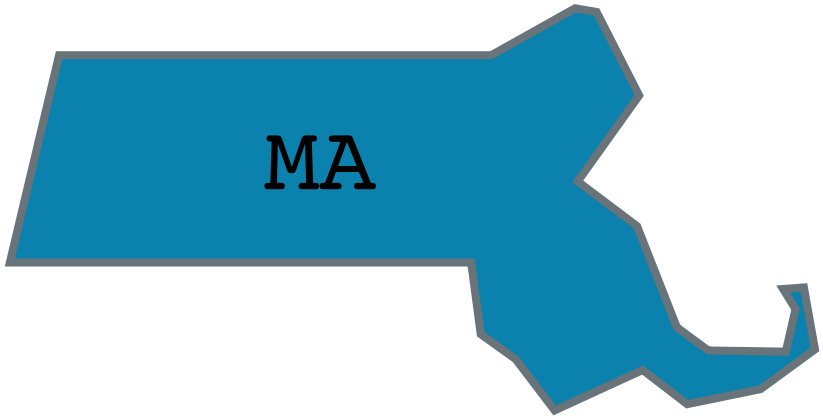
2002 Results

GOP – Collins (incumbent)	290,266	59%
Dem – Pingree (challenger)	205,901	41%

Overview

Both candidates have been in Washington for 12 years — Collins in the Senate and Allen in the House. Maine has trended Republican in recent years, with Senator Olympia Snowe winning re-election in 2006 by the largest margin of victory of any Republican candidate in that year's election. As the race develops, it is shaping up to be the most expensive in Maine history. Allen's tenure in Congress gives him name recognition, but Collins' has fairly strong approval ratings and the advantage of incumbency.

MASSACHUSETTS



Incumbent

Senator John Kerry — Democrat

Challenger

Jeff Beatty (presumed) — Republican

Recent Poll

Kerry	**63%**
Beatty	**25%**

2002 Results

Dem – Kerry (incumbent)	1,596,974	81%
Liber – Cloud (challenger)	368,423	19%

Overview

Senator Kerry is running for re-election in this traditionally-Democratic voting state, and maintains strong fundraising, approval ratings, and party support. Retired Air Force officer Jim Ogonowski was the favorite to win the GOP nomination, but fell 30 signatures short of the 10,000 required to be on the primary ballot. Former CIA, FBI and Delta Force officer Jeff Beatty is favored in the state's September primary election, and has strong credentials on homeland security issues.

MICHIGAN

Incumbent

Senator Carl Levin — Democrat

Challenger

State Representative Jack Hoogendyk — Republican

Recent Poll

Levin	**54%**
Hoogendyk	**37%**

2002 Results

Dem – Levin (incumbent)	1,893,788	61%
GOP – Raczkowski (challenger)	1,184,548	38%

Overview

Levin is running for his sixth term as Senator, and enjoys strong fundraising abilities, positive name recognition, and the Chairmanship of the Senate Armed Services Committee. State Rep. Hoogendyk gathered double the number of signatures needed to be placed on the ballot, but does not have significant statewide name recognition.

MINNESOTA

Incumbent

Senator Norm Coleman — Republican

Challenger

Al Franken — Democrat

Recent Poll

Coleman	**47%**
Franken	**45%**

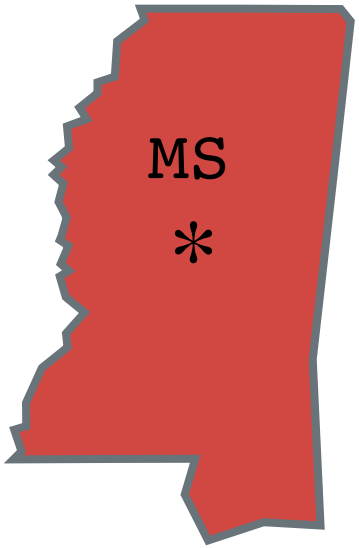
2002 Results

GOP – Coleman (challenger)	1,091,253	50%
Dem – Mondale (challenger)	1,029,982	47%

Overview

Minnesota has become a battleground state in recent years, with several close statewide elections, and this contest seems likely to continue the trend. Senator Coleman beat former Vice President Walter Mondale in 2002 after incumbent Senator Paul Wellstone died in a plane crash, and he enjoys positive approval ratings. In a state that elected a WWF wrestler as Governor, it shouldn't seem odd that actor, comedian and radio host Al Franken has been endorsed by state Democrats to take on incumbent Norm Coleman. Many nonpartisan analysts call the race a tossup, even though Franken has never held public office, and it is expected to be one of the most tightly-contested races in 2008.

MISSISSIPPI 1



Incumbent

Senator Thad Cochran — Republican

Challenger

Erik Fleming — Democrat

Recent Poll

Cochran	**58%**
Fleming	**35%**

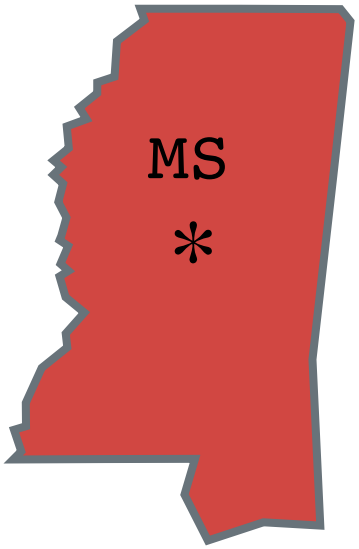
2002 Results

GOP – Cochran (incumbent)	521,482	85%
Ref – O'Hara (challenger)	94,127	15%

Overview

Senator Cochran is running for his 6th term in the Senate. Before being first elected in 1978, he spent three terms in the House. Cochran faced no Democratic opposition in 2002 or 1990, and he's never won re-election with less than 61%. His Democratic opponent this year, former state Rep. Erik Fleming, was defeated by Trent Lott in the 2006 race for the state's other Senate seat, 64%-35%. Fleming spent just $38,000 in that race.

MISSISSIPPI 2



Incumbent

Senator Roger Wicker — Republican

Challenger

Governor Ronnie Musgrove — Democrat

Recent Poll

Wicker	**46%**
Musgrove	**47%**

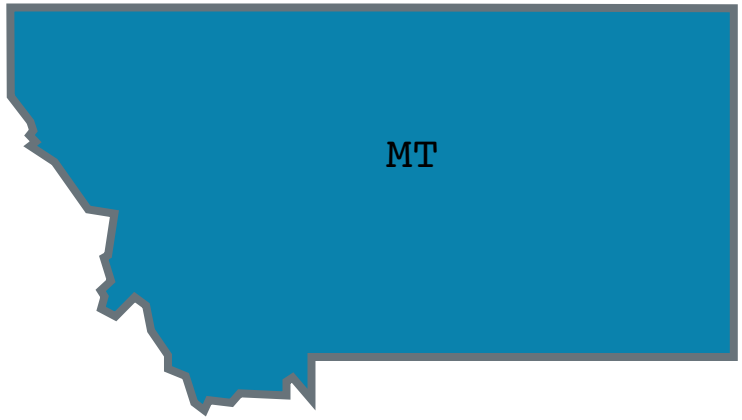
2002 Results

GOP – Lott (incumbent)	376,074	64%
Dem – Fleming (challenger)	205,993	35%

Overview

Mississippi is in the unusual position of having two Senate races this year due to the retirement of Trent Lott. Senator Wicker left his House seat at the end of 2007 after being appointed by Gov. Haley Barbour to serve in Lott's retired seat until the November election. Musgrove has won two statewide elections, including for lieutenant governor in 1995 and governor in 1999. Musgrove holds an advantage of more statewide name recognition, while Wicker is known mainly by just his Northern Mississippi district. In addition, Barack Obama at the top of the Democratic ticket may increase turnout for Musgrove in a state where one-third of the population is African-American. Still, Wicker is running as a Republican in a state that has voted Republican in the last seven presidential elections.

MONTANA



Incumbent

Senator Max Baucus — Democrat

Challenger

Bob Kelleher – Republican

Recent Poll

Baucus	**63%**
Kelleher	**42%**

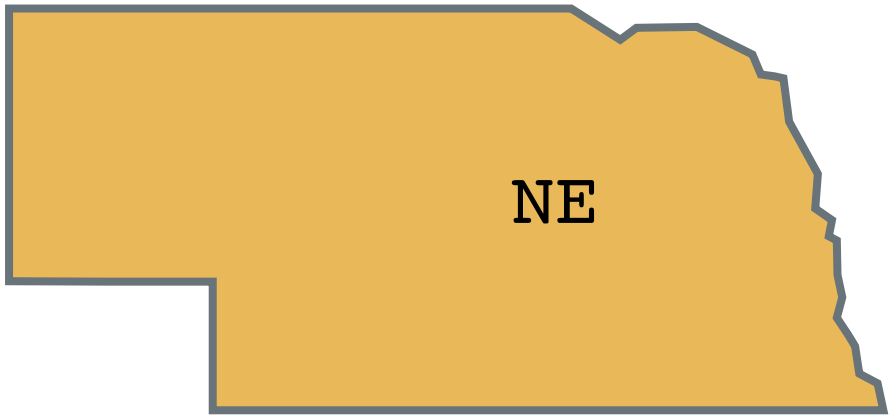
2002 Results

Dem – Baucus (incumbent)	202,908	63%
GOP – Taylor (challenger)	102,766	32%

Overview

Senator Baucus enjoys significant approval ratings and name recognition, and an electorate that has trended Democratic in several recent statewide elections. However, President Bush won the state by 20 points in both 2000 and 2004. His challenger is Bob Kelleher, an 85-year old attorney who has run for office in Montana 15 times.

NEBRASKA



Incumbent

None – open seat

Challengers

Scott Kleeb — Democrat

Mike Johanns — Republican

Recent Poll

Kleeb	**40%**
Johanns	**55%**

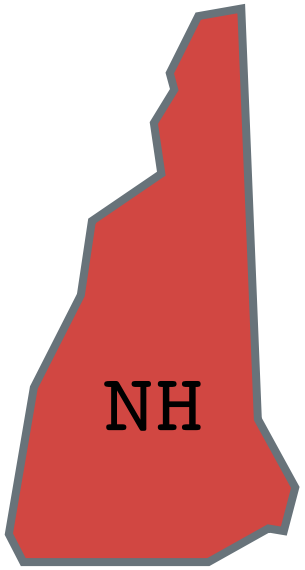
2002 Results

GOP – Hagel (incumbent)	391,648	83%
Dem – Matulka (challenger)	68,657	14%

Overview

This seat had been easily held for two terms by Senator Chuck Hagel, but his announced retirement threw it into play in the 2008 cycle. Republicans convinced former Secretary of Agriculture Johanns to leave to return home and make a bid for Senate, landing what is considered their strongest candidate of the 2008 cycle. Democrats originally tried to recruit former Senator Bob Kerrey, now the president of The New School, a New York university. Kerrey demurred, and Kleeb, who attracted netroots attention in his 2007 Congressional race, won the Democratic primary.

NEW HAMPSHIRE



2002 Results

GOP – Sununu (challenger)	225,506	51%
Dem – Shaheen (challenger)	206,689	47%

Incumbent

Senator John Sununu — Republican

Challenger

Governor Jeanne Shaheen — Democrat

Recent Poll

Sununu	**43%**
Shaheen	**50%**

Overview

This contest takes place in what has become a very competitive state, and is expected to be another hotly-contested election. Former Governor Shaheen is challenging Senator Sununu in a rematch of their 2002 open seat contest. Sununu has been criticized by both liberals and conservatives in his state for some of his legislative votes, and carries significant negative ratings. Shaheen is considered a formidable candidate and has moved ahead of Sununu in polling for three consecutive months.

NEW JERSEY

2002 Results

Dem – Lautenberg (challenger)	1,112,499	54%
GOP – Forrester (challenger)	909,383	44%

Incumbent

Senator Frank Lautenberg — Democrat

Challenger

Dick Zimmer — Republican

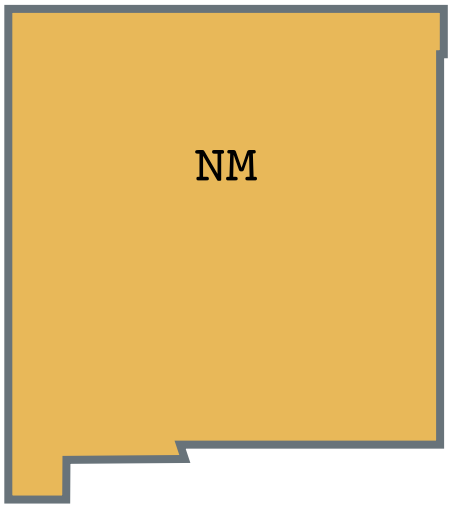
Recent Poll

Lautenberg	**45%**
Zimmer	**44%**

Overview

At first glance, the fact that New Jersey has not elected a Republican to statewide office in a decade would indicate a Democratic hold in this race. However, age has become an issue for 84-year old incumbent Senator Lautenberg, who fended off a strong primary challenge by Congressman Rob Andrews despite polls showing that voters were concerned about Lautenberg's age. Former Rep. Zimmer is running again for the same Senate seat he lost twelve years ago, when Democrat Robert Torricelli beat him by ten points. Recent polls indicate this race has tightened, and this seat may be in play.

NEW MEXICO



Incumbent

None – open seat

Challengers

Congressman Tom Udall — Democrat

Congressman Steve Pearce — Republican

Recent Poll

Udall	**60%**
Pearce	**35%**

2002 Results

GOP – Domenici (incumbent)	296,935	65%
Dem – Tristani (challenger)	161,409	35%

Overview

Incumbent Senator Pete Domenici has easily held this seat for the GOP in past elections, but his announcement that he did would not run for re-election makes this a battleground state. U.S. Representatives Heather Wilson and Pearce battled for the Republican nomination, but Pearce narrowly won the June 3 primary, winning 51%-49%. Congressman Udall, comes from a political family (Congressman Mark Udall in Colorado, former Congressman and Presidential candidate Mo Udall, and Senator Gordon Smith in Oregon are all cousins), was unopposed in his primary. Both parties have indicated they will heavily invest money and resources into the state, and the general election race is considered to be extremely competitive

NORTH CAROLINA

Incumbent

Senator Elizabeth Dole — Republican

Challenger

State Senator Kay Hagan — Democrat

Recent Poll

Dole	**47%**
Hagan	**48%**

2002 Results

GOP – Dole (challenger)	1,283,203	54%
Dem – Bowles (challenger)	1,034,941	45%

Overview

This seat has been in Republican hands for the last 35 years. Despite this fact, this race is expected to be competitive until the election. Senator Dole won by a wide margin in 2002 and maintains significant positive name recognition, but Democrats now hold a majority of the state's House delegation. State Sen. Hagan, easily won the May 6 primary, and is the niece of the late Lawton Chiles, a three-term U.S. Senator and two-term Governor of Florida. Recent polls have showed this race to be a statistical dead heat.

OKLAHOMA

Incumbent

Senator James Inhofe — Republican

Challenger

State Senator Andrew Rice — Democrat

Recent Poll

Inhofe	**57%**
Rice	**36%**

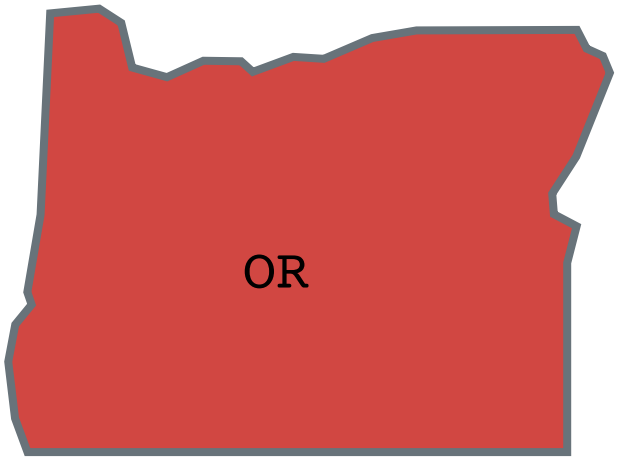
Overview

Senator Inhofe has won his last two elections with at least 57 percent of the vote, and is considered an entrenched incumbent. State Senator Rice won his party's primary, but has consistently polled behind Inhofe throughout the campaign season.

2002 Results

GOP – Inhofe (incumbent)	578,579	57%
Dem – Walters (challenger)	369,789	37%

OREGON



Incumbent

Senator Gordon Smith — Republican

Challenger

State House Speaker Jeff Merkley — Democrat

Recent Poll

Smith	**45%**
Merkley	**42%**

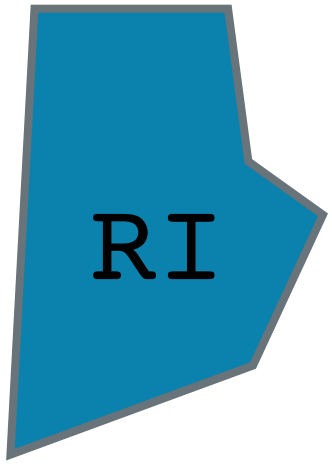
2002 Results

GOP – Smith (incumbent)	695,345	56%
Dem – Bradbury (challenger)	487,995	40%

Overview

Senator Smith is running for his third term, but has been burdened with low approval ratings, and faced a primary challenge for the nomination. On the Democrat side, State House Speaker Merkley won his party's nomination after a five-way primary. Though Smith is well-funded, a seasoned campaigner, and has one of the most moderate records in the Senate, national Democrats have targeted this race and recent polls show the election in a statistical tie.

RHODE ISLAND



Incumbent

Senator Jack Reed — Democrat

Challenger

Robert Tingle (presumptive) — Republican

Recent Poll

Reed	**78%**
Tingle	**22%**

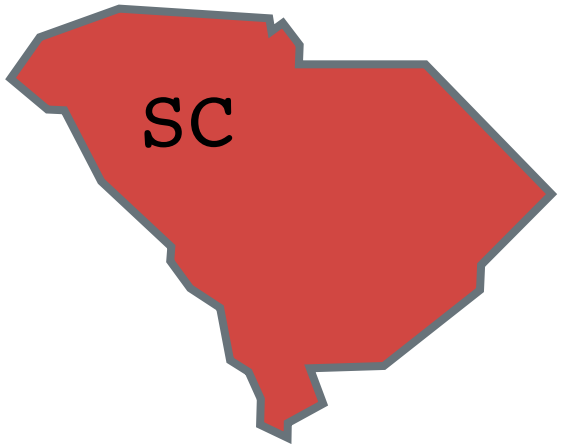
2002 Results

Dem – Reed (incumbent)	241,315	78%
GOP – Tingle (challenger)	66,613	22%

Overview

Second-term incumbent Senator Reed is considered one of the safest bets for re-election in 2008. The National Journal has called him "probably the safest incumbent of the cycle" and he enjoys a nearly 2-to-1 approval to disapproval rate. He currently has no official challenger, but some pundits speculate that his 2002 challenger Robert Tingle, who has since run unsuccessfully for Rhode Island's second district Congressional seat, or sitting Governor Don Carcieri may enter the race before the September primary.

SOUTH CAROLINA



Incumbent

Senator Lindsey Graham — Republican

Challenger

Michael Cone — Democrat

Recent Poll

Polling data unavailable

Overview

This seat has been held by Republicans for much of the 20th century, in large part to former Senator Strom Thurman. Senator Graham is an Air Force Reserve colonel, has a large name recognition and fundraising advantage, and is considered a safe bet for re-election. Attorney Michael Cone won his party's primary after a recount against attorney Bob Conley, who has since been nominated for the seat by the South Carolina Working Families Party.

2002 Results

GOP – Graham (incumbent)	597,789	54%
Dem – Sanders (challenger)	484,798	44%

SOUTH DAKOTA

Incumbent

Senator Tim Johnson — Democrat

Challenger

State Representative Joel Dykstra — Republican

Recent Poll

Johnson	**63%**
Dykstra	**28%**

2002 Results

Dem – Johnson (incumbent)	167,481	50%
GOP – Thune (challenger)	166,954	49%

Overview

Senator Johnson is running for a second term after his razor-thin victory over now-Senator John Thune in 2002. Johnson has generated significant goodwill within his state by battling back from his near-fatal brain hemorrhage 18 months ago. This goodwill has also boosted his fundraising ability, and he has a large war chest on hand for the election. State Representative Joel Dykstra won the June primary, but represents a relatively small portion of the state's electorate. Despite the state's general Republican tendencies (60 percent victory for Bush in 2004), Governor Mike Rounds did not enter the nominating process, even though he was heavily recruited by state and national Republicans.

TENNESEE

Incumbent

Senator Lamar Alexander — Republican

Challengers

Mike Padgett — Democrat

Bob Tuke — Democrat

Recent Poll

Alexander	**58%**
Padgett	**31%**

Alexander	**59%**
Tuke	**30%**

2002 Results

GOP – Alexander (incumbent)	888,223	54%
Dem – Clement (challenger)	726,510	44%

Overview

Senator Alexander has maintained strong approval ratings since his tenure as Governor, and currently has a nearly 4-to-1 positive to negative rating. He does not have a challenger in his party's primary. Several candidates are vying for their party's nomination in the August primary, with former Knox County Clerk Padgett and former State Democratic Party Chairman Bob Tuke considered the most serious contenders. Neither Padgett nor Tuke has wide name recognition by the state's population, and their primary battle has been hard-fought.

TEXAS

Incumbent

Senator John Cornyn — Republican

Challenger

Rick Noriega — Democrat

Recent Poll

Cornyn	**52%**
Noriega	**35%**

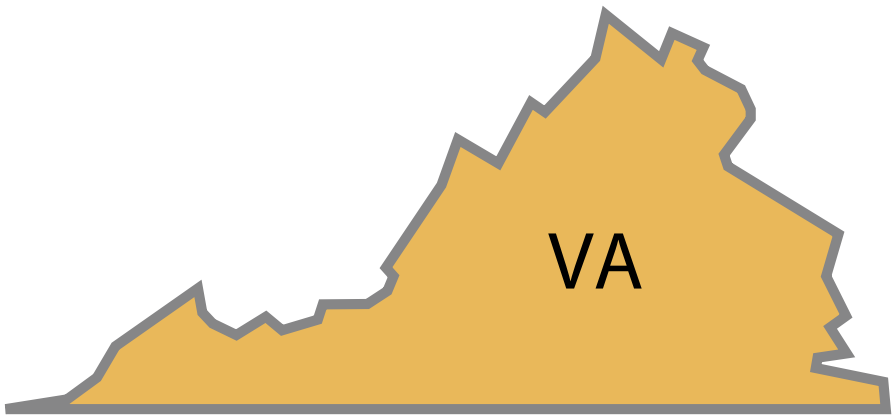
2002 Results

GOP – Cornyn (incumbent)	2,480,991	55%
Dem – Kirk (challenger)	1,946,681	43%

Overview

Senator Cornyn's approval ratings have not been excellent, and polls conducted before 2008 showed that he could be vulnerable to a Democratic challenge. After more high-profile candidates, including Houston Mayor Bill White decided not to run, state Rep. Rick Noriega won a four-way primary for his party's nomination. Cornyn's has showed strong fundraising abilities, which provide him a key advantage in this enormous state. Through the first quarter, Cornyn had far outraised Noriega and still had close to $9 million in the bank.

VIRGINIA



Incumbent

None – open seat

Challengers

Governor Mark Warner — Democrat

Governor Jim Gilmore — Republican

Recent Poll

Warner	**55%**
Gilmore	**37%**

2002 Results

GOP – Warner (incumbent)	1,298,843	84%
Ind – Spannaus (challenger)	143,653	9%

Overview

Two former governors are vying for the chance to succeed five-term Republican Senator John Warner in a race some pundits consider the highest-profile Senate election in 2008. Gilmore faced a serious challenge at the nominating convention from conservative State Delegate Bob Marshall, which may portend a split base during the general election. Warner still maintains high name recognition and approval ratings from his recent tenure as Governor. While Virginia has voted Republican in 10 straight presidential elections, Bush did not win more than 54% in 2000 or 2004, the state's populous northern and southeastern sections have solidly voted Democratic in recent elections, and sitting Republican Senator George Allen lost his 2007 re-election bid.

WEST VIRGINIA

Incumbent

Senator Jay Rockefeller — Democrat

Challenger

Jay Wolfe — Republican

Recent Poll

Rockefeller	**63%**
Wolfe	**37%**

2002 Results

Dem – Rockefeller (incumbent)	271,314	63%
GOP – Wolfe (challenger)	158,211	37%

Overview

Jay Rockefeller, the great-grandson of oil magnate John Rockefeller, is running for his fifth term in the Senate. He has enjoyed approval ratings over 60% for the majority of his current term, is Chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, and has won his last two elections by large margins. However, President Bush won West Virginia by significant percentages in 2000 and 2004, and Republicans have made gains on the local and statewide level in recent elections. Former State Senator Wolfe ran unopposed in his party's primary, but has trailed by around 20 percentage points in all polls taken to date.

WYOMING 1

Incumbent

Senator Michael Enzi — Republican

Challengers

Chris Rothfuss — Democrat

Al Hamburg — Democrat

Recent Poll

Polling data unavailable

2002 Results

GOP – Enzi (incumbent)	133,615	73%
Dem – Corcoran (challenger)	49,587	27%

Overview

The second of two states holding simultaneous elections for both Senate seats in 2008, Wyoming provide a similar level of suspense as Mississippi's simultaneous elections. Senator Enzi is finishing up his second term in the Senate, and at 64 is only slightly older than the average Senator, but months of speculation led some to believe would not run for re-election. Two Democrats are running against each other in the August primary for the chance to face Enzi in the general election: Rothfuss, a professor at the University of Wyoming, and Hamburg, who has been a perennially unsuccessful candidate for various state offices. This election is considered the safer of the two Wyoming Senate seats up in 2008.

WYOMING 2

Incumbent

Senator John Barrasso — Republican

Challengers

Keith Goodenough — Democrat

Nick Carter — Democrat

Recent Poll

Polling data unavailable

2002 Results

GOP – Thomas (incumbent)	135,174	70%
Dem – Corcoran (challenger)	57,671	30%

Overview

This special election is being held to fill the remainder of the late Senator Craig Thomas' unexpired term, which runs through 2012. Former State Senator Barrasso was appointed to replace Thomas early in 2008, and has gotten nearly a year of incumbency under his belt. Two Democrats are currently running in their party's primary: former State Senator Goodenough, and Carter, an attorney. Some speculation exists that Democratic Governor Dave Frudenthal will enter the primary before the August election, but he has so far demurred on this possibility. Barasso is considered the weaker of the two incumbents, and many pundits speculate Democrats will focus their resources on this election.

Sources

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