

U.S. SENATE  
Updated October 8, 2008

Currently, the U.S. Senate has 49 Republicans, 49 Democrats, and 2 Independents. Since the Independents, Joe Lieberman of Connecticut and Bernie Sanders of Vermont, caucus with the Democrats, the lineup is effectively 51-49. There is little chance that the Democrats will lose control of the Senate. The question is, how close will they come to a filibuster-proof 60-vote majority?

This year, there are 35 seats up for election.

23 are currently held by Republicans

12 are currently held by Democrats

5 seats are vacant (the incumbent is not seeking re-election). All are currently held by Republicans. Three will probably be won by Democrats.

All 12 current Democratic seats seem safe.

Overall, the Democrats need to win 21 of the 35 seats to reach 60 (assuming Lieberman does not decide to caucus with the Republicans). As of today, Democrats are likely to gain at least 4 seats, but have an outside chance to pick up the nine they would need. Currently, all 7 seats that are either Leaning Democratic (3 seats) or Toss-ups (4 seats), are held by Republicans. If the Democrats win all of them, they will reach the 21 seat total for this election.

Here is how the 35 seats shape up, as of this writing:

Safe/Very Likely Democratic (14)

Arkansas (Mark Pryor)

Delaware (Joe Biden)

Illinois (Dick Durbin)

Iowa (Tom Harkin)

Louisiana (Mary Landrieu)

Massachusetts (John Kerry)

Michigan (Carl Levin)

Montana (Max Baucus)

New Jersey (Frank Lautenberg)

New Mexico (Tom Udall)

Rhode Island (Jack Reed)

South Dakota (Tim Johnson)

Virginia (Mark Warner)

West Virginia (Jay Rockefeller)

Safe/Very Likely Republican (12)

Alabama (Jeff Sessions)

Idaho (Jim Risch)

Kansas (Pat Roberts)

Maine (Susan Collins)

Mississippi (Thad Cochran)

Nebraska (Mike Johanns)

Oklahoma (Jim Inhofe)

South Carolina (Lindsay Graham)

Tennessee (Lamar Alexander)

Texas (John Cornyn)

Wyoming (John Barrasso)

Wyoming (Michael Enzi)

Leaning Democratic (3)

Colorado (Mark Udall)

New Hampshire (Jeanne Shaheen)

North Carolina (Kay Hagan)

Leaning Republican (2)

Georgia (Saxby Chambliss)

Kentucky (Mitch McConnell)

Toss-up (4)

Alaska - Incumbent Republican Ted Stevens running

Minnesota - Incumbent Republican Norm Coleman running

Mississippi - Incumbent Republican Roger Wicker running

Oregon - Incumbent Republican Gordon Smith running