

## **U.S. SENATE CAMPAIGNS**

### **November 4, 2012 – Fearless Forecasts**

This year, there are 33 seats up for election.

21 are currently held by Democrats

10 are currently held by Republicans

2 are held by independents who caucus with the Democrats: Bernie Sanders in Vermont and Joe Lieberman in Connecticut (Lieberman is retiring).

The remaining seats divide as follows: 30 Democrats and 37 Republicans.

Democrats need to win 21 seats to have a majority. Republicans need to win 14 seats to have a majority (one less in each case if they have the Vice Presidency).

Here is how the 33 seats shape up:

#### **Safe/Very Likely Democratic (16)**

California (Dianne Feinstein)  
Delaware (Tom Carper)  
Florida (Bill Nelson)  
Hawaii (Mazie Hirono)  
Maine (Angus King)\*  
Maryland (Ben Cardin)  
Michigan (Debbie Stabenow)  
Minnesota (Amy Klobuchar)  
New Jersey (Robert Menendez)  
New Mexico (Martin Heinrich)  
New York (Kirsten Gillibrand)  
Pennsylvania (Bob Casey)  
Rhode Island (Sheldon Whitehouse)  
Vermont (Bernie Sanders)\*  
Washington (Maria Cantwell)  
West Virginia (Joe Manchin)

#### **Safe/Very Likely Republican (5)**

Mississippi (Roger Wicker)  
Tennessee (Bob Corker)  
Texas (Ted Cruz)  
Utah (Orrin Hatch)  
Wyoming (John Barrasso)

\*Independents caucus with Democrats

## **12 Contested Seats**

Arizona - Open Seat, currently held by Republican John Kyl

Earlier in the fall, this looked like a sure win for Republican Jeff Flake, but the changing demographics of Arizona has helped make this a contest that Democrat Richard Carmona might just win; but Flake seems to be surging at the end and it is hard to bet against Republicans in Arizona. So, with less trepidation than I would have had a few days ago:

Prediction: **REPUBLICAN FLAKE HOLDS SEAT**

Connecticut – Open Seat, currently held by Joe Lieberman

For a long time, it looked like Republican Linda McMahon had a real shot at this seat. However, in recent weeks, Democrat Chris Murphy has opened up a lead.

Prediction: **DEMOCRAT MURPHY HOLDS SEAT**

Indiana – Open Seat, currently held by Republican Richard Lugar

Tea Partier Richard Mourdock defeated long-time Senator Richard Lugar in the primary. As you may know, in a recent debate, Mourdock said that a pregnancy resulting from rape was “God’s will.” Democrats and Joe Donnelly were very glad he said this.

Prediction: **JOE DONNELLY PICKS UP SEAT FOR DEMOCRATS**

Massachusetts – Scott Brown, Republican incumbent

This had been a very close election, and in some ways still is. However, most reliable (and some not so reliable) polls in the past few weeks have given Democrat Elizabeth Warren a slight lead.

Prediction: **ELIZABETH WARREN PICKS UP SEAT FOR DEMOCRATS**

Missouri – Claire McCaskill, Democrat incumbent

Todd Akin was the Republican who Claire McCaskill wanted to run against. At first, this still looked like a good bet for a Republican pick up. However, after Akin talked about “legitimate rape” and how a woman can magically will her body to not get pregnant when raped, McCaskill looked very smart.

Prediction: **MCCASKILL HOLDS SEAT FOR DEMOCRATS**

Montana – Jon Tester, Democrat Incumbent

This is probably the most difficult Senate seat to predict. However, even a usually Republican-leaning pollster recently had Tester ahead by 1% over Republican Denny Rehberg. I am tossing a coin.

Prediction: **DEMOCRAT TESTER HOLDS SEAT**

Nebraska – Open Seat, currently held by Democrat Ben Nelson

For the longest time, this looked like the surest thing for a Republican pick-up. Recently, however, there seems to be rumblings that former Democratic Senator Bob Kerrey has made this into a race. But even if true, it seems to be too little, too late.

Prediction: **DEB FISCHER PICKS UP SEAT FOR REPUBLICANS**

Nevada – Dean Heller, Republican incumbent

Early on, this looked like a good chance for a Democratic pick-up. However, a House ethics investigation of Democrat Shelley Berkley has turned this into a pretty easy win for Heller.

Prediction: **REPUBLICAN HELLER HOLDS SEAT**

North Dakota – Open seat, currently held by Democrat Kent Conrad

Democrat Heidi Heitkamp has turned this into a potentially tight contest, but it seems doubtful she can overcome Rick Berg’s lead, but she could surprise us.

Prediction: **BERG PICKS UP SEAT FOR REPUBLICANS**

Ohio – Sherrod Brown, Democratic incumbent

Republicans had targeted this seat, but Brown has held a steady lead for some time.

Prediction: **DEMOCRAT BROWN HOLDS SEAT**

Virginia – Open seat; currently held by Democrat Jim Webb

This is another extremely close and definite toss-up election between Republican, former Senator George Allen and Democrat, former Governor Tim Kaine. Polls have had this very close since the beginning, although most reliable ones in recent days give Kaine a slight edge.

Prediction: **DEMOCRAT KAINE HOLDS SEAT**

Wisconsin - Open seat, currently held by Democrat Herb Kohl

This is the race between former Governor Tommy Thompson and Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin. If elected, Baldwin would be the first openly Lesbian member of the U.S. Senate. As you would expect in today's Wisconsin, this has been another very close race. It appears that Baldwin may have a slight edge, but it is hard to assess how much support she may lose because of homophobia. Nonetheless...

Prediction: **BALDWIN HOLDS SEAT FOR DEMOCRATS**

FINAL PREDICTED TOTALS

Democrats win 22 seats

Republicans win 9 seats

Independents win 2 seats (and caucus with Democrats)

Senate will have: 52 Democrats

46 Republicans

2 Independents (who caucus with Democrats)

This gives Democrats an effective 54-46 majority. Even in the unlikely event that Republicans win Indiana, Montana, Virginia and Wisconsin, Democrats will still hold a majority because of the Vice-President's tie-breaking vote.