

# Which Senate Seats are Most Likely to Flip in November?

## Hotline's 2016 Senate Power Rankings

### 1. Illinois



*Incumbent: Mark Kirk (R)*

*Challenger: Tammy Duckworth (D)*

- Kirk is in an interesting predicament because he is one of the more outspoken anti-Trump Republicans running for office, but if the Trump vote falls too far it might cost Kirk his Senate seat especially with the state leaning Democrat already.
- Kirk and Duckworth have both raised upwards of \$10 million, but Kirk has spent about \$3 million more than Duckworth.
- Kirk's campaign is hoping to benefit from the absence of Illinois's hometown hero, Barack Obama, at the top of the ticket.

### 2. Wisconsin

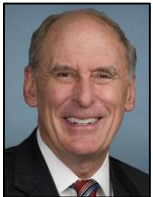


*Incumbent: Ron Johnson (R)*

*Challenger: Former Sen. Russ Feingold (D)*

- This race has focused on national security, which Johnson spoke about at the RNC. He has not mentioned Trump and has avoided the topic as much as possible saying he "supports but does not endorse" the candidate.
- This looks like a likely pick up opportunity for Democrats with Feingold up by 11 points among likely voters in a recent Marquette Law School Poll.

### 3. Indiana (Open)



*Incumbent: Dan Coats (R) (retiring)*

*Challengers: Former Gov. Evan Bayh (D) and Rep. Todd Young (R)*

- Todd Young survived a competitive and expensive primary in the spring and was expected to take the seat handily.
- Evan Bayh, a former Indiana Governor and Senator, entered the race late with considerable campaign funding from previous races and strong name recognition.
- Republican and Democrat internal polling each shows their own candidate in the lead. However, GOP outside groups might move resources to other more promising races if they are not confident in a Republican victory.

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### 4. New Hampshire



*Incumbent: Kelly Ayotte (R)*

*Challenger: Gov. Maggie Hassan (D)*

- New Hampshire voters tend to be more in tune with politics than the average voter so Trump will likely have less of a down-ballot impact on Ayotte than in other states. Trump was reluctant to endorse Ayotte before her primary.
- Hassan leads Ayotte by 10 points in recent NH polling and Trump's support among Republicans has dropped to 63%.
- Ayotte supports Trump, but has often qualified that support, prompting Trump to delay endorsing her. She may have to denounce Trump altogether to defend against attacks from Hassan.

### 5. Pennsylvania



*Incumbent: Pat Toomey (R)*

*Challenger: Katie McGinty (D)*

- Pennsylvania is one of the bluest states in the close Senate races, making Toomey's support for Trump a liability.
- However, McGinty has to make up ground, having never held statewide office.
- Toomey has a significant incumbent and financial advantage.
- Even with Toomey's well-funded campaign, attacks on his support for Trump could give McGinty the edge considering Clinton leads Trump in PA polling by at least 10 points. Toomey currently trails McGinty by a slim margin.

### 6. Nevada (Open)



*Incumbent: Harry Reid (D) (retiring)*

*Challengers: Catherine Cortez Masto (D) and Rep. Joe Heck (R)*

- Republicans are optimistic about picking up this seat due to Heck's good relationship with Hispanic voters. However, Trump's alienation of Hispanic voters could be problematic for Heck.
- The race remains close, but Democratic groups will likely begin targeting Latinos for the presidential race, which may bolster former state Attorney General Cortez Masto's favorability.
- Democratic Party leaders say they are confident they can hold the seat.

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### 7. North Carolina



*Incumbent: Richard Burr (R)*

*Challenger: Deborah Ross (D)*

- Ross was initially considered one of the Democrat's weakest recruits, but she has outraised Burr two quarters in a row.
- No outside groups are spending here yet, but Republicans were alarmed by Ross's increased fundraising.
- The Clinton campaign has made NC a top priority, which should create momentum for Ross. The state also has a high-profile governor's race that will likely make the whole ticket in NC competitive.

### 8. Ohio



*Incumbent: Rob Portman (R)*

*Challenger: Former Gov. Ted Strickland (D)*

- Portman leads Strickland by 9 points in current polling; he has also spent over \$5 million more than Strickland and has about \$10 million more cash on hand.
- Strickland appears to have gotten the message that he can't rely on his name recognition as a former governor. He went on TV in August, a month earlier than scheduled, while Ohio Democrats unveiled new attack ads on Portman's private-sector career. However, it will be an uphill battle for Strickland.

### 9. Florida



*Incumbent: Marco Rubio (R)*

*Challenger: Rep. Patrick Murphy (D)*

- Rubio and Murphy won't win their primaries until August 30<sup>th</sup>, resulting in a fairly neutral race up to that point.
- Rubio is in the best position among Republicans to separate himself from Trump, having campaigned against him.
- Murphy will have to combat Rubio's significant name-recognition and incumbent advantage. Despite entering late, Rubio caught up to Murphy in fundraising and has outspent him by about \$2 million, though Murphy has over \$5 million more cash on hand.

Source: Andrea Drusch, Kyle Trygstad, "Hotline 2016 Senate Power Rankings," National Journal, August 10, 2016; HuffPost Pollster, 2016; OpenSecrets, 2016.

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### 10. (Tied) Missouri



*Incumbent: Roy Blunt (R)*

*Challenger: Jason Kander (D)*

- Missouri is not as vulnerable as other states on the list, but both parties are watching the race closely.
- GOP outside groups included Missouri in fall TV ad reservations, indicating they consider Blunt's seat vulnerable.
- GOP strategists worry that the contrast between Blunt's background as a longtime lawmaker in a family of lobbyists and Kander's background as an Army veteran and young Secretary of State will draw the anti-establishment vote to the Democrats.
- However, Blunt has outraised and outspent Kander by over \$6 million and \$3 million respectively.

### 10. (Tied) Arizona



*Incumbent: John McCain (R)*

*Challenger: Ann Kirkpatrick (D)*

- From a demographics standpoint, Arizona looks more vulnerable than Missouri because of its large Hispanic population that could be alienated by Trump and motivated to vote Democrat.
- McCain is expected to win his primary race in late August, but has to allocate resources to both a primary and general election fight. Meanwhile, Kirkpatrick is unopposed and solely focused on attacking McCain.
- In addition there is ongoing hostility between McCain and Donald Trump.