

U.S. SENATE  
September 25, 2006

Currently, the U.S. Senate has 55 Republicans, 44 Democrats, and 1 Independent. Since the Independent, Jim Jeffords of Vermont, usually votes with the Democrats, the lineup is effectively 55-45. For control of the Senate to change, the Democrats must make a net gain of six seats.

This year, there are 33 seats up for election.  
15 are currently held by Republicans  
17 are currently held by Democrats  
1 is held by the Independent

Therefore, the Democrats need to win 24 of the 33 seats for a change to occur. Just 23 of the 33 seats can really be considered “safe” at this time (14 Democrats and 9 Republicans). With 10 of the contests being “close,” the Democrats must retain the “safe” seats and win 8 of the 10 close contests – a very difficult, though not impossible task.

Here is how the 33 seats shape up, as of this writing:

Safe/Very Likely Democratic (14)

California (Dianne Feinstein)  
Delaware (Thomas Carper)  
Florida (Bill Nelson)  
Hawaii (Daniel Akaka)  
Massachusetts (Ted Kennedy)  
Michigan (Debbie Stabenow)  
Minnesota (Open – Amy Klobuchar)  
Nebraska (Ben Nelson)  
New Mexico (Jeff Bingaman)  
New York (Hillary Clinton)  
Pennsylvania (Bob Casey, Jr.)  
Vermont (Bernie Sanders)  
West Virginia (Robert Byrd)  
Wisconsin (Herb Kohl)

Safe/Very Likely Republican (9)

Arizona (John Kyl)  
Indiana (Richard Lugar)  
Maine (Olympia Snowe)  
Mississippi (Trent Lott)  
Nevada (John Ensign)  
Texas (Kay Bailey Hutchison)  
Utah (Orrin Hatch)  
Wyoming (Craig Thomas)

Close Contests (10)

Connecticut - Currently Democratic seat; Independent Lieberman vs. Demo Lamont  
Maryland - No incumbent running; currently Democratic seat (Leans Democratic)  
Missouri - Currently Republican seat  
Montana - Currently Republican seat  
New Jersey – Currently Democratic seat  
North Dakota - Currently Democratic seat  
Ohio - Currently Republican seat (Leans Democratic)  
Rhode Island - Currently Republican seat (Leans Democratic)  
Tennessee - Currently Republican seat  
Virginia - Currently Republican seat (Leans Republican – Allen)  
Washington – Currently Demo seat; (Leans Democratic - Cantwell)