

## From the National Director

The good news is that of the 34 Senate seats up for election in 2002, 20 are held by Republicans and 14 are held by Democrats. Also, on the plus side, all 14 Democrats have indicated they will run for reelection and most of them have survived difficult challenges in the past. It also may help that historically the President's party loses seats in midterm elections.

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## NCEC Takes an Early Look at the Battle for US Senate Control in 2002

### Indicators Point to a "No Holds Barred", "Down-to-the-Wire", Year Long Fight — Starting Now.

Anyone who has paid attention for the past eight months understands that the only check we have on the regressive agenda of the Bush administration is majority control of Congress. Even the one seat edge Democrats enjoy in the Senate, as a result of the Senator Jim Jeffords switch, has only slightly slowed Bush's relentless drive to downsize government and empower big business.

### A First Look at the 2002 Senate Races

The recent switch of Vermont Senator Jim Jeffords from the Republican Party, giving Democrats control of the Senate, only increases the drama that will unfold as we approach next year's Senate races. Both

Republicans and Democrats will be in high gear because control of the Senate (and indeed the House) could easily go either way.

If Democrats are to increase their 50-49-1 majority in the Senate, they are going to have to hold their current seats and pick off a few Republican seats.

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### Democrats Must Defend 14 Seats

#### Safe Democratic (6)

Biden-DE  
Durbin-IL  
Kerry-MA  
Levin-MI  
Reed-RI  
Rockefeller-WV

#### Leans Democratic (7)

Baucus-MT  
Carnahan-MO  
Cleland-GA  
Harkin-IA  
Johnson-SD  
Landrieu-LA  
Torricelli-NJ

#### Tossup (1)

Wellstone-MN

### Republicans Must Defend 20 Seats

#### Safe Republican (11)

Cochran-MS  
Craig-ID  
Domenici-NM  
Enzi-WY  
Gramm-TX  
Hagel-NE

#### Leans Republican (6)

Inhofe-OK  
McConnell-KY  
Roberts-KS  
Stevens-AK  
Warner-VA

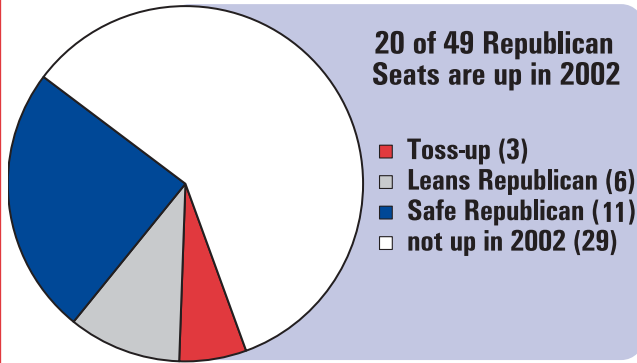
#### Tossup (3)

Allard-CO  
Collins-ME  
Helms-NC (possible open)  
Sessions-AL

Thompson-TN (likely open)  
Thurmond-DC (open)

## Republicans Have to Defend More Seats, but Several Democratic Incumbents are Threatened

Of the 34 Senate seats up for reelection next year, 20 are currently held by Republicans and 14 by Democrats. (See chart.)



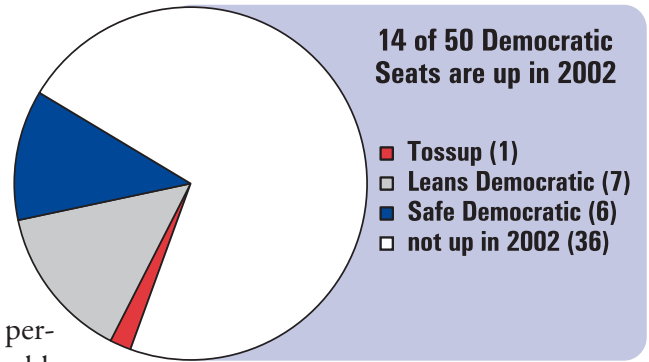
Republicans are in the unenviable position of having to defend more seats against challengers. This means that Republicans will have to raise a lot more money to protect their 20 seats. It also means that by being more thinly spread out, Republicans are more likely to be harmed by any potential, unanticipated political developments such as a retirement, death, or scandal.

Republicans are helped, however, by the fact that many of their incumbents hail from safe states in the South and West, which were won comfortably by Bush in 2000. Eleven Republican incumbents are

considered safe, whereas only six Democrat incumbents are considered safe.

Eight Democrats are perceived as vulnerable. Democrat Senators who can expect to have difficult races include: Baucus (MT), Carnahan (MO), Cleland (GA), Harkin (IA), Johnson (SD), Landrieu (LA), Torricelli (NJ), and Wellstone (MN).

Republicans will still have a difficult time defending several of their incumbents. The seven Republican Senators perceived as vulnerable include: Allard (CO), Collins (ME), Helms (NC), Hutchinson (AR), Sessions (AL), Bob Smith (NH), and Gordon Smith (OR). Retirements may also play a major role in the 2002 elections. As of this summer, only Strom Thurmond of South Carolina has said he will not seek reelection. Thurmond, who has a record-setting 45 years in the Senate, will be 100 years old



when he retires.

Another very likely retirement includes Fred Thompson of Tennessee, who has only raised \$22,000 during the last six months and can safely be presumed to be retiring even though he has not made any public statements.

The retirement of more incumbents could mean golden opportunities to either party. Others who have been rumored to be considering retirement are Republicans Helms (SC) and Gramm (TX). Gramm continues to raise huge quantities of money, which leads one to believe he is leaving his options open if he is even considering retiring in the first place. Jesse Helms has openly said he is thinking about retiring, but there is no agreement which way he is leaning. Helms is expected to make an announcement by the end of this year.

**NCEC has provided invaluable technical assistance to my reelection effort. Their expertise has made a major difference not only in my race, but in countless races across the country. Without a doubt, the NCEC has led the fight for progressive candidates and won many of the most important battles. ”**

**Senator Edward Kennedy  
Democrat, Massachusetts**

## Races To Watch:

### Vulnerable Democratic Seats

#### Max Baucus (Montana)

Baucus won in 1996 with only 49.5% of the vote in this heavily Republican state. Bush won Montana 58.4% to Gore's 33.4%. Two Republicans are mentioned for a possible Senate run: state senator Mike Taylor and Jim Peterson, former executive at the Montana Stockgrowers Association. Neither is widely known statewide. Baucus could face a formidable challenge if one of these candidates picks up steam and is well funded.

#### Jean Carnahan (Missouri)

Carnahan was appointed to the Senate after her late husband, Governor Mel Carnahan, beat Senator John Ashcroft three weeks after the governor died in a plane crash. A special election is to be held in 2002. Republicans are counting on Representative Jim Talent, who narrowly lost the 2000 gubernatorial race. Carnahan has not said whether she will run for reelection, but she has already raised over \$2.3 million in campaign funds.

#### Max Cleland (Georgia)

Cleland won by a close 1.2% margin in 1996 and Republicans have been looking forward to challenging him again in this conservative state. Cleland would also be hurt if fellow Georgian Senator, Zell Miller, switches to the Republican Party. Miller hinted last spring at such a move, but has also promised to help Cleland's reelection campaign. Several Republican Representatives, including extremist Bob Barr, are considering challenging Cleland. Bibb County Commissioner Calder Clay and State House Minority Leader Bob Irvin have already amassed sizable war chests.

#### Tom Harkin (Iowa)

Iowa populist Harkin has always had competitive races. He will be challenged by moderate Republican Representative Greg Ganske. Ganske sponsored the

Democrat-supported Patients' Bill of Rights in the House and is popular in Iowa. Harkin has probably benefited from the Democratic takeover of the Senate more than most. The farming state Senator now holds chairmanship of the important Agriculture Committee.

#### Tim Johnson (South Dakota)

A Democrat in a state as heavily Republican as South Dakota can never consider himself safe for reelection. Johnson can count on having a tough race but will also get plenty of help from popular fellow South Dakota Senator, Tom Daschle, now the Majority Leader. Republican Representative John Thune seems to have decided to forego a gubernatorial run and is widely expected to challenge Johnson for his Senate seat. Johnson has \$1.3 million on hand in this small state, but it will take more than a well-funded campaign to win over the 60% of voters who supported Bush.

#### Mary Landrieu (Louisiana)

Landrieu won in 1996 by only 5,788 votes out of a total 1,700,102. Two prominent Republicans have already hinted at runs: Representative John Cooksey and state Elections Commissioner Suzanne Haik Terrell. Louisiana is a swing state, and Landrieu's reelection could depend highly on how people perceive Bush's and Congressional Republicans' approval ratings at the time.

#### Bob Torricelli (New Jersey)

Currently being investigated for his 1996 campaign fundraising activities, Torricelli's political future depends largely on the scope (and timing) of a potential indictment. Republicans have not had any prominent candidates step forward yet, but as Torricelli's legal problems continue, they may see a chance to challenge a Senator they thought untouchable only a year ago.

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### Vulnerable Republican Seats

#### Wayne Allard (Colorado)

Solidly conservative Wayne Allard was first elected in 1996 by a margin of 5% against Democratic lawyer Tom Strickland. In 2002 it appears Allard will face Strickland in a rematch. Although Bush won Colorado by 9%, Democrats will portray Allard as too conservative for Coloradans.

#### Susan Collins (Maine)

Collins will be finishing her first term next year in this New England swing state. Gore carried Maine over Bush by 5% last November, and Clinton won Maine in both 1992 and 1996. Three Democrats are vying for the nomination, the front-runner being former state senate majority leader, Chellie Pingree, who has been endorsed by Maine's two Democratic Representatives Tom Allen and John Baldacci.

#### Jesse Helms (North Carolina)

Always-controversial conservative Jesse Helms has not yet said whether he will run for reelection in 2002. If he retires, there will undoubtedly be a flood of Republican candidates, including Elizabeth Dole, former Senator Lauch Faircloth and Representatives Richard Burr and Robin Hayes. Several Democrats are also rumored to be considering a Senate run. Bush won North Carolina comfortably, but Democrats have done well in major statewide races in the last few years.

#### Tim Hutchinson (Arkansas)

Since his election in 1996, Hutchinson has compiled one of the most conservative voting records in the Senate. Democrats already have a strong candidate in State Attorney General Mark Pryor, whose father was Hutchinson's predecessor in the Senate. Hutchinson also appears to be heading into a winnable, if bruising, primary fight with State Representative Jim Bob Duggan, who is likely to criticize Hutchinson for championing "family values" while he divorced his wife and married a former staff member.

#### Jeff Sessions (Alabama)

It appears that the first term senator will face a tough opponent in 2002. Who the opponent will be is entirely another matter. Three prominent figures are expected to run for the Democratic nomination. State Auditor Susan Parker and wealthy civil rights attorney Julian McPhillips have both announced they wish to challenge Sessions. Former U.S. Attorney Doug Jones is also said to be considering a run. Jones was the prosecutor who recently won the 37-year-old Birmingham church bombing case.

#### Bob Smith (New Hampshire)

Conservative Bob Smith, who left the Republican Party briefly during his failed run for President, may be the only incumbent threatened by a serious primary contest. Some state Republicans, angry for his disloyalty to the party and worried that he will lose to Democratic governor Jeanne Shaheen, are pushing Representative John Sununu to challenge him in a primary. Sununu has made no statements whether he would challenge Smith. Recent polls have Shaheen beating Smith by comfortable margins, but a Sununu - Shaheen contest has the Republican ahead 51% to 35%. Of course, a lot could happen between now and November 2002, especially if a messy Republican primary fight ensues. Bush won New Hampshire by only 7,211 votes.

#### Gordon Smith (Oregon)

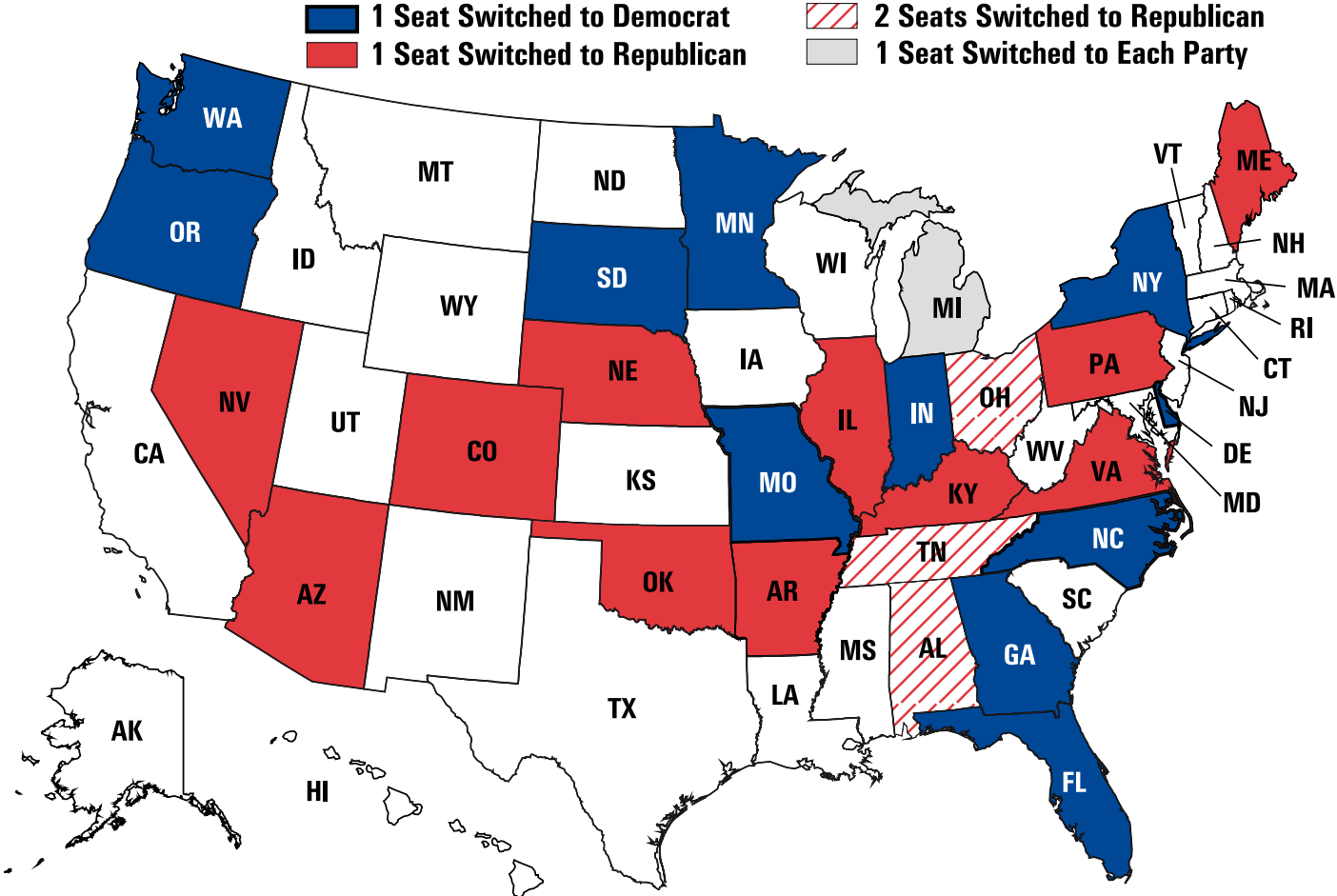
Smith lost a special election to current Democrat Senator Ron Wyden before winning a very close open-seat race in 1996. In a state that has gone to Democrats in the last 4 presidential elections, Smith has an uphill battle in 2002. This is especially true if popular Governor John Kitzhaber decides to run against Smith. A Republican poll last spring placed Kitzhaber 2 points ahead of Smith.

#### Fred Thompson (Tennessee)

If Thompson does indeed decide to retire (he has raised less than \$21,000), his seat will become the second open seat contest in the 2002 Senate races. Tennessee now leans Republican. Al Gore lost his own state by 3.8% of the vote, but an open seat race here could still prove to be competitive. Two Democrats

Republicans continued on page 6

## Senate Turnover 1994-2000



## Historical Gains in Midterms

There are two major historical realities concerning Midterm Elections (non-presidential-year elections). First, the party in the White House usually loses seats. Democrats lost 10 seats and control of the Senate in 1994 during Clinton's first term. (See map.)

The approval rating of President Bush and the public's perception of the Republican Party will play a major role. Second, voter turnout is much lower than during presidential elections. This means that for Democrats to win, they must champion the issues where Bush and

Congressional Republicans are perceived as weak (healthcare and the environment being two primary examples), and Democrats need to mobilize voters and get them to the polls.

Senate Seat Changes Since 1994					
Year	1994	1996	1998	2000	2002
Seats switched to Democrats	0	2	3	7	?
Seat switched to Republicans	10*	3	3	2	?
Loss/Gain by Democrats	-10 Dems	-1 Dems	No change	+5 Dems	?

\*Includes post-election party-switching by Campbell (CO) and Shelby (AL).

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Strom Thurmond of South Carolina will finally retire and other possible GOP retirees are Jesse Helms of North Carolina and Fred Thompson of Tennessee. The Beltway rumor-mill has Pete Dominici of New Mexico and Phil Gramm of Texas considering retirement but their senior aides deny it.

Unfortunately, in 20 of the 34 states with Senate contests next year, Bush won by 5 per cent or more. Gore won by 5 points in only 6.

Last year when Democrats picked up 5 Senate seats many of the races were in states along the northern tier, most of which lean Democratic. Next year, many of the key races will be in Southern or prairie states that tend to vote Republican.

Republican recruiting failures may help Democrats in Montana and South Dakota. But Democrats have yet to find their strongest candidates in North and South Carolina.

Vulnerable Democrats like Max Baucus, Mary Landrieu, Max Cleland, Tim Johnson and Jean Carnahan will be in races which will go down to the wire and will require maximum attention.

NCEC is acutely aware that every incumbent Democratic Senator must win in order to block Trent Lott and the right wing from regaining control of the Senate agenda and being a rubber stamp for The White House.

The one thing we have learned after 6 months of George W. Bush and Co. is that they believe that dishonesty is always the best policy.

**The NCEC has played a key role in all my elections. This year I'm counting on them more than ever. My colleagues would agree that NCEC's unique electoral and demographic analyses are indispensable to running a modern campaign. My hat is off to NCEC and the members who make its work possible. ”**

**Senator Tom Harkin  
Democrat, Iowa**

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are looking at a potential run: Representatives John Tanner and Harold Ford, Jr. Republican Representative Ed Bryant may decide to run if Thompson announces his retirement.

### **Strom Thurmond (South Carolina)**

The longest-serving Senator ever is the only one to officially announce his retirement. Republicans have a frontrunner in Representative Lindsey Graham. Many Democrats are rumored to be considering running in this Republican-leaning state, but none have committed yet. This potentially competitive race could slip away from the Democrats if they cannot recruit a strong candidate.

Democrats continued from page 3

### **Paul Wellstone (Minnesota)**

Wellstone, the party's premiere liberal senator, has had two high profile races for the Senate, and this one will not be different. He beat incumbent Rudy Boschwitz 50.5% to 47.9% in 1990 despite the fact that Boschwitz spent \$6.2 million to Wellstone's \$1.3 million. Wellstone refused to take PAC money in that race.

Wellstone survived a challenge from Boschwitz in 1996, winning 51.0% to 41.9%. The White House has recruited the popular St. Paul mayor, Norm Coleman, who came in a close second in the 1998 three-way Governor's race that put Jesse Ventura in power. Coleman is considered a moderate and is a former Democrat. A recent poll has Wellstone behind Coleman by 2 points.

**NOW ONLINE:  
more information on 2002 Senate Races**

