

From the National Director

Most election analysts project no better than narrow Democratic gains in this year's U.S. Senate races. The NCEC has been one of the few organizations which has seen the fight for majority control of the Senate more positively.

A net gain of five Senate seats plus the tie breaking vote of a Democratic Vice President would oust Trent Lott and elect Tom Daschle as Majority Leader. A few months ago, facing the resignation of four incumbent Democratic senators, this looked like a tall order.

Today, the NCEC feels confident in projecting a definite gain for Senate Democrats and, with a little luck, majority control and a chance to oust Jesse Helms, Orin Hatch and Mitch McConnell from their positions of power over our lives.

The four vacant seats were created by retirements in New York, New Jersey, Nebraska and Nevada. Hillary Clinton is ahead in New York, as is Jon Corzine in New

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NCEC Optimism Grows for Democratic Senate Majority

Senate seats in 33 states are up for grabs on November 7th. As of today, the NCEC rates 16 of these elections as either "competitive" or "leaning" either Republican or Democratic (see chart on page 2). These 16 races will determine which party will control the U.S. Senate; which party will set the national agenda; whether Trent Lott or Tom Daschle is Majority Leader.

Many pundits are saying if the Democrats gain ground in 2000, they will win control in 2002 when twenty Republican incumbents and only thirteen Democrats are up for re-election. The NCEC can't wait for 2002. We want to oust the Republicans with their negative agenda now. We want to win this November and prevent further regression in American democracy.

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Blair Clark 1918 - 2000

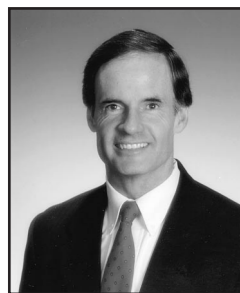
Blair Clark, Secretary of NCEC's Board of Directors, died on June 6 in Princeton, New Jersey. He was 82 years old.

Blair had a distinguished career as a journalist and editor. He started as president and editor of *The Harvard Crimson*. He founded and published a crusading New Hampshire newspaper, became a foreign correspondent for CBS and rose to become general manager and vice president of CBS News. In the seventies, Blair was the editor of *The Nation* magazine.

Blair was the campaign manager for Senator Eugene McCarthy's campaign for President in 1968. His life was a commitment to and a passion for liberal politics and ideals.

For us, Blair Clark was a warm and generous friend. His wise counsel will be sorely missed and the cheerfulness he brought to us will always be remembered.

DELAWARE: Governor Tom Carper

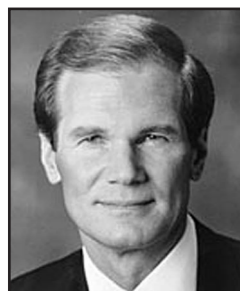


Senator Bill Roth (R-DE) may be the longest serving Senator in state history, but his tenure is in jeopardy. Governor Tom Carper (D), a former House member, will challenge Senator Roth in the November election. Both men are popular within the state and have

high approval ratings, but Carper has captured a massive lead in the polls. A September 1999 survey taken by Mason-Dixon Political/Media Research reported that Carper held a 14-point lead over Roth, 51% to 37%. A more recent poll by the Center for Applied Demography and Survey Research also found Carper with a substantial lead, this time 51% to 38%.

While Governor Carper enjoys a massive lead in the arena of public opinion, Senator Roth is winning the money chase. On March 31, Roth had \$1.9 million to spend. This amount more than doubles Carper's \$784,000. The Governor may be able to catch up once Delaware's hectic legislative session ends. His current work on the Education Accountability Act has certainly kept Carper busy in recent months. It is important that Carper build an adequate war chest to compete in Philadelphia's expensive media market, but with adequate funding Governor Carper could oust the incumbent Republican and become Delaware's next Senator.

FLORIDA: Bill Nelson



The retirement of Senator Connie Mack (R-FL) has left Democrats with a golden opportunity in Florida. Likely Democratic nominee and former Congressman Bill Nelson has already achieved substantial name recognition through an extensive career in public service. Nelson, the state Insurance Commissioner, will face Republican Representative Bill McCollum in November.

A recent poll conducted by several Florida news agencies shows Nelson leading McCollum by ten points. McCollum's primary contender, Tom Gallagher, recently dropped out of the race. This is excellent news

for Democrats, since Gallagher was almost even with Nelson in the polls. McCollum, an ardent conservative who served as one of the Impeachment Trial Managers, is far less appealing to Florida voters. Both candidates are on even financial footing; McCollum had \$2.4 million on hand as of March 31 compared to Nelson's \$2.6 million. Gallagher's decision to exit the race leaves Nelson facing a weaker opponent in the general election. This pivotal change gives Nelson a significant advantage that may leave Democrats with another Senate seat in November.

MICHIGAN: Representative Debbie Stabenow



Senator Spencer Abraham (R-MI) is one of the most vulnerable Republicans in the Senate. Second term Representative Debbie Stabenow (D) will challenge the freshman Senator for the seat in the 2000 elections. With minimal primary opposition for either candidate, the race is getting off to an early start. A recent EPIC/MRA poll of 600 likely voters found Stabenow leading Abraham 43% to 39%. This is especially promising as it reveals an 8-point increase from an earlier poll that was taken by EPIC/MRA in April.

One challenge Representative Stabenow faces is competing with Abraham's massive war chest. While Stabenow has raised roughly \$2 million, Senator Abraham has over \$5 million. Attack ads aired by the Federation for American Immigration Reform may have forced Abraham to devote resources to a response, but Stabenow has faced similar problems. One group, Americans for Job Security, has already spent nearly \$450,000 on negative advertisements. The massive financial advantage may be counteracted by *The Washington Post's* discovery of the unscrupulous tactics used by Abraham's campaign to raise the money. Senator Abraham staffers, with help from Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott, have extorted money from high-tech industries by linking their contributions to important legislation. Much of the funding has been directed to a "stealth PAC", Americans for Job Security, used to attack Representative Stabenow. At a time when Americans are more concerned than ever before with campaign finance reform, this scandal does not bode well for the Abraham campaign.

Debbie Stabenow has a great deal of support in Michigan. Her commitment to preserving Social Security, expanding health care coverage, and improving education resonates with voters. While she may lack Abraham's funding, she has the support of the public. If recent polls are any indication, Stabenow has an excellent opportunity to reclaim the Senate seat for the Democrats in November.

MINNESOTA: September 12 Primary



Republican Senator Rod Grams is one of the most vulnerable incumbents that will come up for re-election this year. Not only is his conservative ideology unpalatable for many Minnesota voters, but he also suffers from a low profile. Those who are familiar with Senator Grams are hardly pleased with his work so far. A

Minneapolis Star-Tribune poll taken in late February found Grams' favorable/unfavorable ratings to be 46% and 21% respectively, hardly a stellar performance for an incumbent Senator. Even more encouraging for Democrats, only 29% of the 1,021 adults polled felt he deserved re-election, while 51% favored giving a different candidate a chance. Another difficulty faced by Rod Grams is his floundering campaign organization. He is already on his third campaign manager. Furthermore, Grams is hemorrhaging cash. The Senator's reserves have dwindled down to just over \$1 million, putting him on the same footing as the better-funded Democratic primary candidates.

“ 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

The Democrats' one major problem in recapturing this Senate seat is the large field of primary candidates with no predominant figure. While the Democrats have not united behind a single candidate as of this point, all that will change after the September 12 primary. The winner of that primary has great potential to become the next Senator from Minnesota.

MISSOURI: Governor Mel Carnahan



The Missouri Senate race is shaping up to be a contest between ideological opposites. Ultra-conservative Senator John Ashcroft (R-MO) and Governor Mel Carnahan (D) will almost definitely face off in November. Both have completely overshadowed their August 8 primary opponents. The money chase in Missouri is especially competitive. Ashcroft held the lead as of March 31 with \$4.1 million to Carnahan's \$3.2 million. However, Carnahan is building momentum. He outraced his opponent in the second half of 1999 and the first quarter of 2000. Missouri Democratic Party executive director Roy Temple explained, "it's extraordinary for a challenger to raise more than an incumbent senator during any period, and particularly this early in the campaign... It's a testament to Mel Carnahan's broad base of support."

Ashcroft holds a miniscule lead in the polls. According to the most recent survey, conducted in late-February by Mason-Dixon Political/Media Research Inc., Ashcroft led Carnahan 47% to 43%, well within the margin of error. The war of words has already begun. In March, Carnahan labeled Ashcroft's \$4 trillion tax cut as a "reckless plan." The Governor pointed out that Ashcroft provides no explanation for how this massive loss in government funding would be financed. Carnahan went on to explain, "It's time for Senator Ashcroft to lay out in detail how he will come up with \$4 trillion in tax cuts without spending the Social Security surplus. The reason Senator Ashcroft hasn't done it so far is because he can't." The upcoming campaign will be an important one, as this race is far too close to call and will likely remain so until Election Day.

NEBRASKA: Governor Ben Nelson

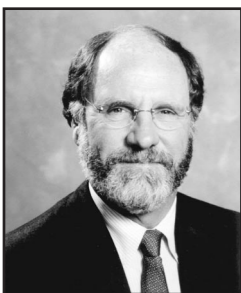


The retirement of Senator Bob Kerry left Democrats with serious concerns regarding the open seat Senate race. While Kerry was popular in the state, most voters lean towards the Republican party, especially in presidential years. Fortunately Democrats may

have found the one man who can hold on to this important Senate seat, former Governor Ben Nelson (D-NE). Nelson began his service as governor in 1990 and was re-elected with an impressive 73% of the vote. He will compete with former Attorney General and Republican nominee Don Stenberg in November.

Nelson holds a commanding lead in the polls. A survey conducted by the *Omaha World Herald* found Nelson leading Stenberg by more than 2-1 (53%-22%). The poll also concluded Nelson has a favorable rating of 71% and an unfavorable rating of only 12%. The financial situation in the Nebraska Senate race also heavily favors the Democrat. Nelson's war chest of \$720,000 dwarfs Stenberg's \$23,000. Nonetheless, there is still some cause for concern. Nelson held similar advantages in his 1996 race against Chuck Hagel, but eventually lost by 14 points. While the former Governor has all the advantages at the moment, he will need to hold on to them until the election.

NEW JERSEY: Jon Corzine



On June 6, Jon Corzine (D-NJ) defeated former Governor Jim Florio in the state's Democratic Senatorial primary. The one time CEO of Goldman, Sachs, and Co. will attempt to retain the seat of retiring Senator Frank Lautenberg (D-NJ). His Republican competi-

tor, Representative Bob Franks, defeated primary challenger and state Senator William Gormley by the slimmest of margins. New Jersey is an important swing state and this race will be a focal point for both parties. Despite the rather contentious primary, Florio pledged his total support to Corzine.

Corzine already has a 7 point lead according the latest opinion poll, conducted by Mason Dixon. The 43% to 36% gap is especially impressive when one considers Franks was leading Corzine in the polls three months earlier. Fundraising will not be a concern for the Senate candidate, worth somewhere between \$300 and \$400 million. Corzine spent nearly \$34 million on the primary and will likely spend a similar amount in the general election if necessary. With the primary behind him, Jon Corzine is prepared to reunite the party and defeat Representative Franks in the November election.

NEW YORK: Hillary Clinton



The New York Senate race has changed considerably since the withdrawal of New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani. Now Hillary Clinton will face off against Long Island Representative Rick Lazio. Lazio's name recognition has increased considerably since Giuliani's departure

and his statewide poll numbers now resemble the mayor's. The First Lady still holds the lead, 46% to 44%, according to the latest Zogby International poll of likely voters. The money chase has also changed considerably. Hillary Clinton, with \$6.6 million in the bank on March 31, trailed Giuliani by \$2.5 million. Lazio's recent entry into the race may leave Clinton with a financial advantage, although Giuliani's staff is already returning many contributions with letters urging donors to redirect funding to Lazio's campaign.

The Senate race has also become more volatile since Giuliani abandoned the race. Many voting blocs have shifted and once-committed voters are now up for grabs. The National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League stepped forward on May 25 to endorse the First Lady. Considering Lazio's opposition to certain forms of abortion and federal funding, protection of reproductive rights may become an important issue in the November election. Clinton picked up another important endorsement from the Long Island Building Trades, a conglomeration of 38 different unions that endorsed Lazio in 1998 but is backing Clinton in the upcoming Senate race. Although the New York Senate race has lost the star power of Rudy Giuliani, this is shaping into one of the most closely watched, and hotly contested, races of 2000.

PENNSYLVANIA: Representative Ron Klink



The 2000 elections will leave Democrats with an opportunity to oust Senator Rick Santorum (R-PA). The freshman Senator is far from the political mainstream in a typically moderate state and his ultra-conservative views on subjects such as Social Security

make him a major target. Santorum will find competition in the form of Pittsburgh-area Congressman Ron Klink (D-PA). Klink handily defeated his five primary opponents by capturing 41% of the vote, 15% ahead of 2nd place finisher Allyson Schwartz. Now the Congressman must reunite the party and improve his low name recognition. In addition, fundraising will be extremely important for Klink, who, as of March 31, had only \$119,000 to compete with Santorum's mammoth \$3.7 million war chest. Fortunately, the end of the primary should provide an inflow of cash from local supporters as well as national organizations.

A survey taken by the Mellman Group showed Santorum leading Klink 43% to 31%. The race will tighten considerably once Klink raises the money necessary to get his message out and improve his name recognition outside of western Pennsylvania. This is especially true considering the fact that, while Santorum has an early lead, he still falls far short of 50% in the polls. The Klink campaign will focus on economic issues, where Santorum's right wing agenda is far too extreme for Pennsylvanians. For example, Santorum has proposed the complete privatization of Social Security. Congressman Klink is well positioned to upset Senator Santorum and return this seat to the Democrats.

VIRGINIA: Senator Chuck Robb



Senator Chuck Robb (D-VA) will face his most difficult campaign yet against former Governor George Allen (R). Senator Robb trails Allen in fundraising by more than \$1.5 million. In addition, Senator Robb still lags behind Allen in the polls, although he is

beginning to catch up. In 1999, almost every poll conducted found Allen to be in the lead by a large margin. As of May 9, this lead narrowed to a single point. The Virginia Commonwealth University poll indicated that Allen is leading Robb 41% to 40%. As Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee spokesman David DiMartino explained, "Senator Robb has secured the momentum in this race by totally eliminating Allen's double digit lead in just nine months."

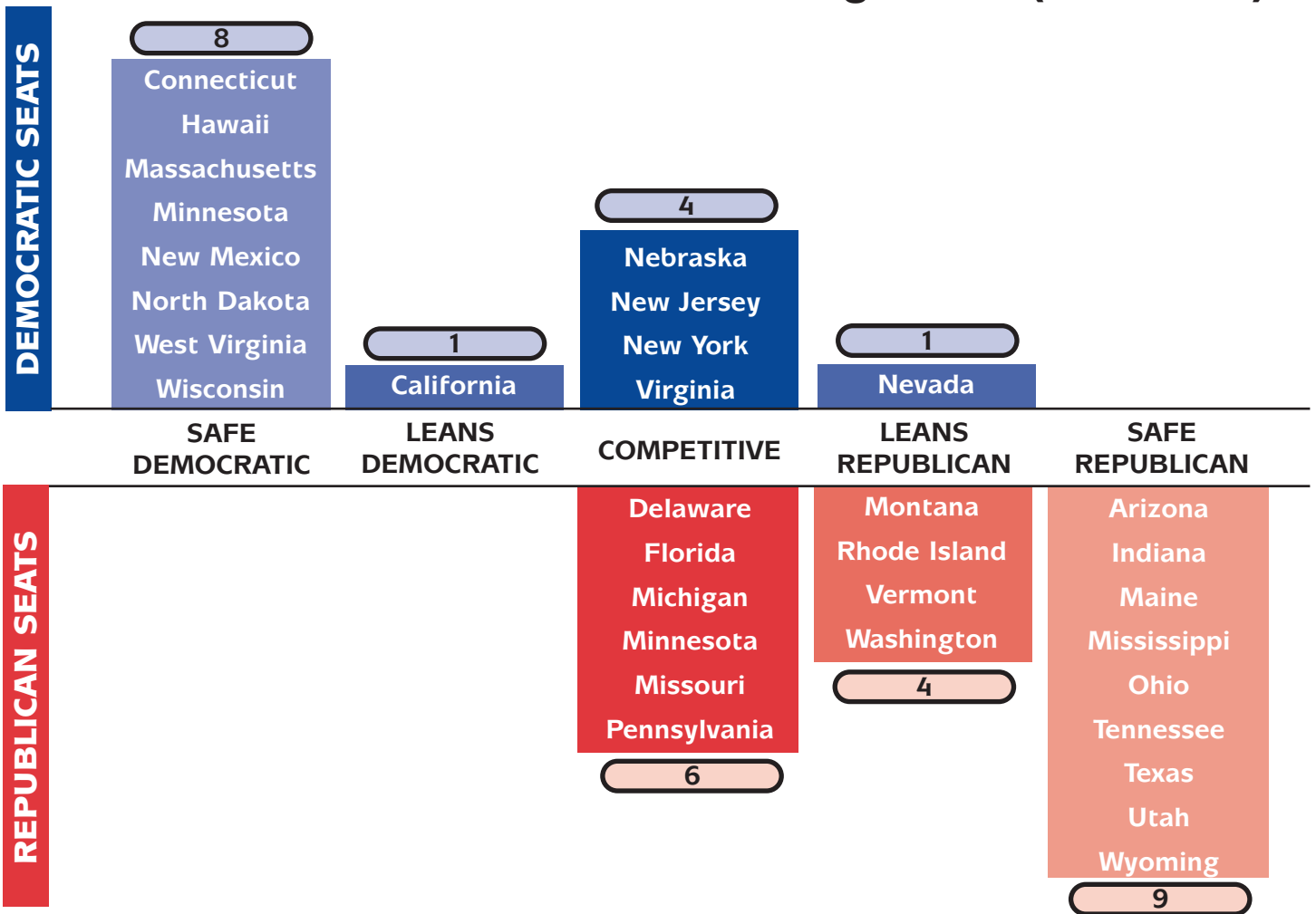
The Senator has been under a constant barrage of attacks from Allen's campaign, but much of this negative campaigning has backfired. Allen spent a great deal of time criticizing Robb's support of a 1993 tax increase on motor fuel and supports repealing the tax. Senator Robb responded by explaining that the tax is vital to the building of new roads in Northern Virginia; a response punctuated by Republican Senator John Warner's (R-VA) criticism of Allen's plan. Warner argued that cutting the gas tax would be irresponsible and could lead to a loss of more than \$450 million in the state's annual highway funding. Allen also received backlash for his criticism of Robb's opposition to an amendment prohibiting flag burning. Many found it hypocritical for Allen, a man who never served in the armed forces, to question the patriotism of a retired marine captain who fought in Vietnam. Senator Robb has brought new energy and enthusiasm to a campaign that seemed hopeless just a few short months ago.

Optimism continued from page 1

If the Democrats can hold three of the four Democratic seats now open due to retirement and Senator Chuck Robb can win in Virginia, they will only need six more victories over Republicans, most of whom have serious vulnerabilities. For example, six-term Republican Senator Bill Roth of Delaware finds himself 14% behind the popular Democratic Governor Tom Carper. In Florida, Republican Tom Gallagher's decision to leave the primary races has left the GOP with Congressman Bill McCollum as their candidate. State Insurance Commissioner and former Congressman Bill Nelson leads McCollum by 10% in the polls and has a good chance to pick up retiring Senator Connie Mack's seat for the Democrats.

Al Gore's choice for Vice President could become the deciding vote which determines majority control of the next Senate.

NCEC Senate Judgements (as of June)



National Director, continued

Jersey and former Governor Ben Nelson in Nebraska. The most difficult of the four races will be in Nevada where Ed Bernstein is trailing.

The only Democratic incumbent in real difficulty is Senator Chuck Robb of Virginia. We're counting on Robb to pull it out.

If we lose one Democratic seat, we will only need victories over six of the Republican candidates, all of whom are considered second rate in Washington and in their home states.

This newsletter will give you an accurate snapshot of where the Senate races stand with four months to go.

Just the thought of recovering majority control at a moment when the U.S. Senate will be voting to confirm nominees to the Supreme Court is enough to spur us to

unprecedented efforts over the next four months. We hope you will be with us until the polls close.

We invite you to use the NCEC website (www.NCEC.org) or call us at 800-547-5911 for the latest information on House and Senate races. Also, look for our 96-page NCEC Special Report: 2000 Elections. This state-by-state rundown of the Presidential, Senate, Gubernatorial and House races will be mailed to NCEC members in August.

And finally, a correction. Many alert readers caught our mistake in a table on page 3 of the May-June Election Update. Debbie Stabenow is the Democratic candidate opposing Senator Abraham in Michigan. Dianne Byrum is the nominee in Michigan's 8th District (Stabenow's House seat). NCEC has endorsed both candidates. Please accept my apology.