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# THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY HOLDS A LEAD IN KEY STATES

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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- ▶ Strong polling numbers for Democrats in the critical Senate battleground states of Arizona, North Carolina, Maine, and Iowa suggest that **Democrats are well positioned to win control of the Senate.**
- ▶ In Arizona, Democrat Mark Kelly is leading Republican Senator Martha McSally by a 10 percentage point margin.
- ▶ In North Carolina, Democrat Cal Cunningham holds an eight percentage points lead over Republican Senator Thom Thillis.
- ▶ In Maine, Republican Susan Collins trails Democrat Sara Gideon by three percentage points.
- ▶ In Iowa, Democratic Theresa Greenfield is up two percentage points over Republican Senator Joni Ernst.
- ▶ In Arizona, North Carolina, and Maine, former Vice President Joe Biden is ahead of President Donald Trump by three percentage points, four percentage points, and 10 percentage points. Trump leads Biden by one percentage point in Iowa.
- ▶ Democrats enter the final three full months of the campaign season with key advantages in the Senate races that are crucial for the party to win back control of the upper chamber. Between July 25 and August 2, Data for Progress conducted a poll of likely voters in four states--Arizona, North Carolina, Maine, and Iowa--using both web-panels and text-to-web.

In all four races, Democratic Senate candidates lead their Republican opponents. Of note, Republican Senators are running behind President Donald Trump in three states, Arizona, North Carolina, and Iowa. Only in Maine is Republican Susan Collins outperforming Trump. Former Vice President and presumptive Democratic nominee Joe Biden also holds a lead over Trump in these key battleground states.

In Arizona Biden holds a three percentage point advantage over Trump. Democrat Mark Kelly, a former astronaut and husband of former United States Representative Gabby Giffords holds a commanding 10-point lead over his Republican opponent, current Senator Martha McSally. McSally lost a 2018 Senate race to Democrat Kristen Sinema and was then appointed to the Senate by Arizona's Republican Governor, Doug Ducey after interim Senator Jon Kyle stepped down.

In North Carolina, Biden is at 49 percent while Trump sits four-points back at 45 percent. In the Senate race, Democrat Cal Cunningham also is at 49 percent while the Republican incumbent Thom Thillis is at 41 percent.

In Maine, Biden is currently the choice of a majority (53 percent) of voters, with Trump 10-points back at 43 percent. In 2016, former Secretary of State Clinton did manage to win a narrow plurality in Maine overall but she lost in Maine's Second Congressional District and with it one Electoral College vote. On the whole, she underperformed President Barack Obama and Biden's 2012 performance in a state that though

trending Republican remains a shade of light blue. Current Maine State Speaker of the House and Democratic Candidate for Senate Sara Gideon holds a three-point lead over the incumbent, Republican Susan Collins. Collins is slightly outperforming Trump, suggesting she retains some loyalty from Maine voters. She's represented the state in the Senate since 1997. Gideon, meanwhile, has been a prolific fundraiser and is well positioned for campaigning this fall.

Last, in Iowa Trump holds a one-point advantage over Biden. Democratic Senate candidate Theresa Greenfield is up two-points over Republican incumbent Joni Ernst.

When we look at responses among voters who self-identify as Democrat, we see that Arizona, Kelly is actually running ahead of Biden, at 93 percent and 91 percent, respectively. In the three other races, Biden performs slightly better

## Democrats Hold Leads In Key Races

Among all voters



### Arizona



### North Carolina



### Maine



### Iowa



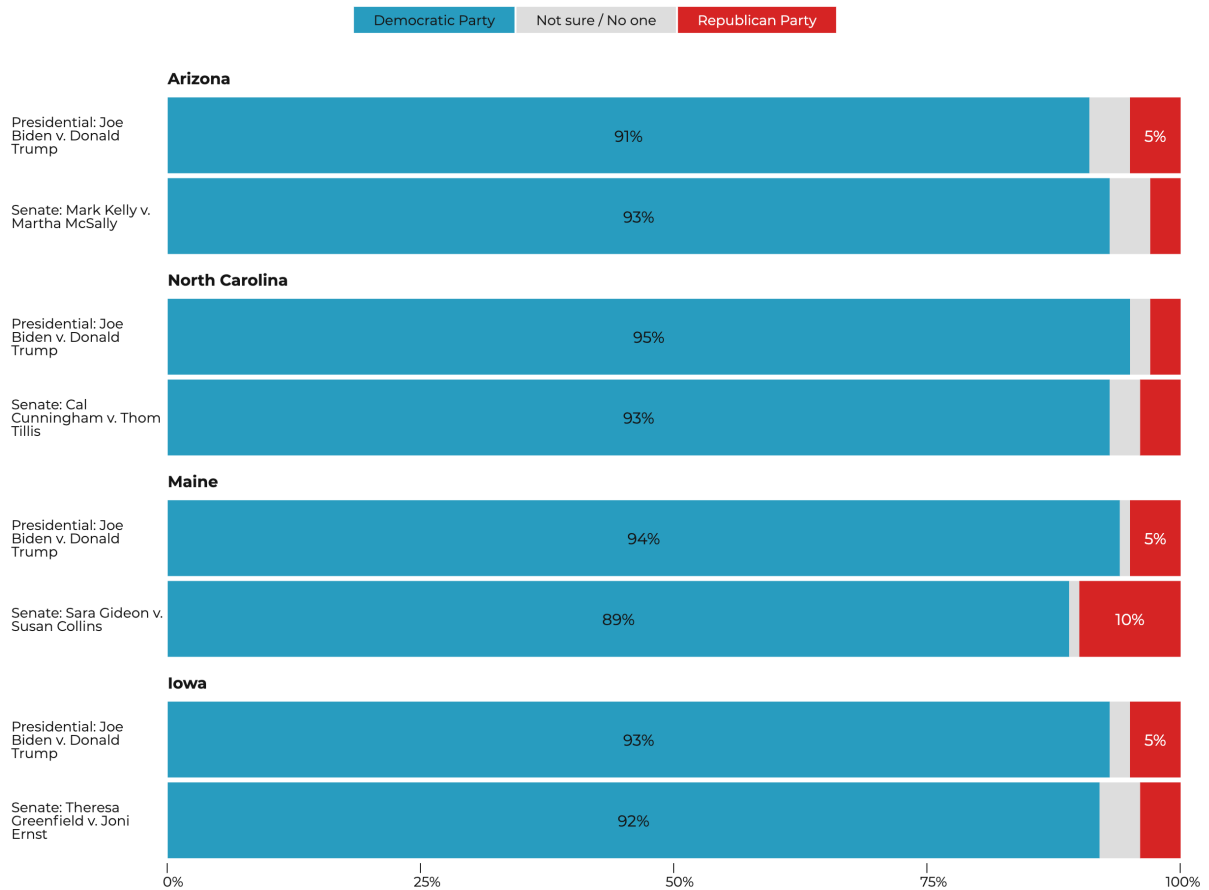
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## Democratic Voters Are Supportive Of Their Party's Candidates

Among voters who self-identify as Democrats



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with Democrats than the respective candidates, suggesting that they all have room to improve as they consolidate their party behind them. Of note, in Maine, Collins currently has support from 10 percent of Democrats, suggesting that while her crossover appeal has shrunk considerably, she can still win support from Democratic voters.

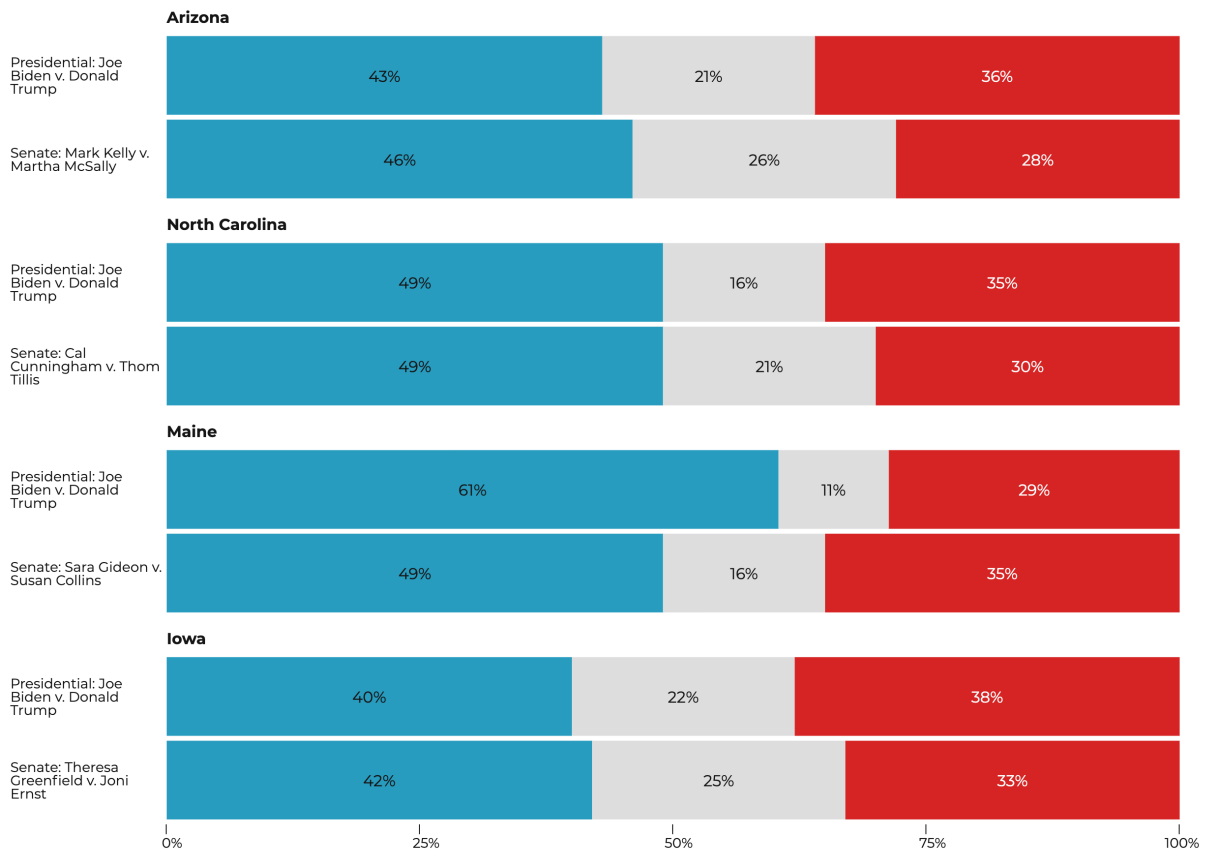
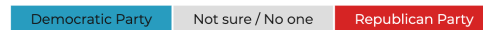
Among voters who self-identify as Independents, Democrats are also well positioned. In Arizona, Biden and Kelly sit at 43 percent and 46 percent, respectively, compared to 36 percent for Trump and 28 percent for McSally. In North Carolina, 49 percent of Independents currently favor both Biden and Cunningham. In contrast, Trump stands at 35 percent, with Tillis five-points back at 30 percent.

In Maine, Biden holds a commanding lead among Independents at 61 percent, with Trump only at 29 points. With Independents, Gideon and Collins are at 49 percent and 35 percent, respectively. In

Iowa, Greenfield actually does two-points better than Biden with Independents, with the former at 42 percent and the latter at 40 percent. On the Republican side, Trump is at 38 percent, with Ernst at 33 percent.

## Democrats Hold A Lead With Independent Voters

Among voters who self-identify as Independents / Third Party



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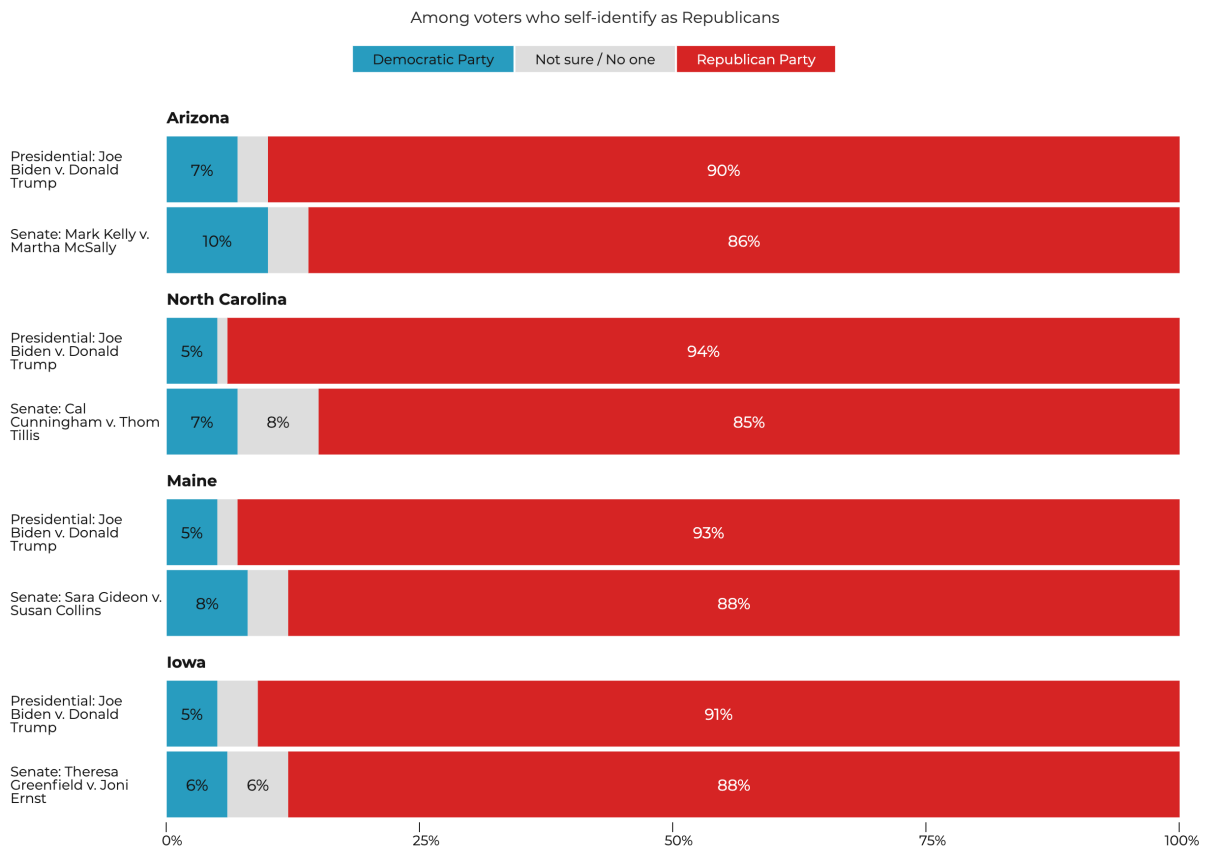
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Among voters that self-identify as Republicans, Trump runs ahead Republican Senate candidates in Arizona, North Carolina, Maine, and Iowa by four-points, nine-points, five-points, and three-points, respectively. This means that if Republican Senate candidates are able to consolidate their position among their party's voters, there is space for their overall polling to improve.

The Democratic Party is well positioned in key states. Biden holds leads in all four of these states. Importantly, Democratic Senate candidates are

also maintaining leads over their Republican opponents. For Democrats, winning a trifecta, i.e., control of the White House, Senate, and House, in 2020 will be necessary to pass much of their ambitious policy agenda. If Democrats were to win these four seats, Democratic Senator Doug Jones were to lose, and Biden were to win the presidency, the party would have with the Vice President casting a tie breaking vote, a majority in the upper chamber. While much can change between now and November, the advantage is currently with the Democratic Party.

## Republican Senate Candidates Are Running Behind President Trump In Key Senate Races Among Republicans



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## AUTHORSHIP

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## METHODOLOGY

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Between July 24 and August 2, 2020, Data for Progress conducted a survey of likely voters in Arizona, Maine, North Carolina and Iowa using both web-panels and text-to-web. The responses were weighted to be representative of likely voters by age, gender, education, race, and voting history. The survey was conducted in English.