

Will Republicans Trying To Flip Democratic Seats Hold On To Leads? As of close of business Wednesday, three Republican Senate candidates led their Democratic opponents by double-digits in the Realclearpolitics.com averages of polls: Steve Daines in Montana (+18 points), Mike Rounds in South Dakota (+12.2), and Shelley Moore Capito in West Virginia (+16.6). Three Republicans had leads outside the margin of error: Tom Cotton in Arkansas (+5), Bill Cassidy in Louisiana (+4.5), and Cory Gardner in Colorado (+3.3). Two Republicans led within the margin of error: Dan Sullivan in Alaska (+2.2) and Joni Ernst in Iowa (+2.1). These candidates are in a good position a few days away from Election Day, but how likely is it that they will be able to hang on until polls close next Tuesday?

Senior Columnist at Sabato's Crystal Ball Sean Trende [examined](#) polling data as far back as 1998 to find out how often a candidate with a specific lead a certain number of days away from Election Day won. His research suggests 100% of candidates with average leads between 4% and 19% six days before the election went on to win. That is good news for Daines (+18), Rounds (+12.2), Capito (+16.6), Cotton (+5), and Cassidy (+4.5), though Cassidy will face a November runoff. Of candidates with a 2% or 3% lead six days out, 80% won. That suggests Gardner (+3.3), Sullivan (+2.2), and Ernst (+2.1) could flip Democratic seats in Colorado, Alaska, and Iowa.

Anything can happen in the next few days, but if these candidates continue to perform well and get out their vote, Republicans could be in for a good night next week.

Percentage of Candidates Holding On To Leads Over Closing Days Of Election

		Days from Election								All Days
		1-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15	16-18	19-21	13+	
Margin	1%	75%	50%	68%	88%	44%	53%	50%	49%	61%
	2%	45%	80%	50%	64%	70%	69%	65%	68%	63%
	3%	69%	81%	74%	67%	77%	67%	69%	73%	73%
	4%	90%	100%	82%	92%	91%	75%	89%	84%	89%
	5%	100%	100%	90%	92%	86%	80%	90%	86%	93%
	6%	100%	100%	93%	93%	100%	100%	67%	94%	96%
	7%	100%	100%	100%	100%	83%	100%	75%	88%	96%
	8%	100%	100%	100%	90%	100%	100%	80%	96%	97%
	9%	100%	100%	100%	100%	82%	100%	100%	90%	96%
	10-15%	100%	100%	100%	96%	97%	100%	94%	97%	98%
	16-19%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
20%+	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	

Source: "What To Expect From Senate Polls In The Final Days," By Sean Trende, Sabato's Crystal Ball, October 16, 2014