

US Senator Jeff Flake in Double Electoral Jeopardy Twelve Months Away from Primary Election

Republican Party Divided – Provides Opening for Democrats

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PHOENIX (August 22, 2017) — A statewide Arizona survey of 400 likely Arizona 2018 General Election voters shows Republican incumbent Senator Jeff Flake twelve points behind his primary Republican opponent Kelli Ward and eight points behind prospective Democratic opponent U.S. Congresswoman Kyrsten Sinema (D, AZ-9).

Q. *If the primary election for United States Senate were held today, would you vote for [Rotate] Jeff Flake or Kelli Ward?*

28.2% *Jeff Flake*
42.5% *Kelli Ward*
5.1% *Some other candidate*
24.2% *Don't know, Refused*

Q. *If the General Election for United States Senate were held today, would you vote for [Rotate] Jeff Flake or Kyrsten Sinema?*

32.5% *Jeff Flake*
40.5% *Kyrsten Sinema*
27.0% *Don't know, Refused*

The Republican Primary Election sample was of 273 high efficacy Republican and PND/Independent voters and has a margin of error of $\pm 5.93\%$. The General Election sample of 400 high efficacy general election voters has a margin of error of $\pm 4.88\%$.

“While Election Day may still be more than a year away, Senator Jeff Flake’s campaign has a lot of work to do to persuade Republican primary voters that his form of principled Republican conservatism can trump the nativist populism that is fueling Republican voters’ antipathy towards Washington insiders. These same Republicans still give the President a 74% approval rating in Arizona,” said Chuck Coughlin, President & CEO of HighGround Public Affairs, which conducted the poll.

“The good news for Senator Flake’s campaign is that the election is still a year away and his campaign has the financial support to more clearly articulate his own views and define his opponent’s positions. Additionally, efforts to pass tax reform, infrastructure investment and

other major policy initiatives could substantially change the electoral environment in Arizona,” said Coughlin.

The survey showed that Congresswoman Sinema is not known by 45% of the electorate in Arizona while Ward was beaten by nearly 100,000 votes in her primary election against Senator John McCain in 2016.

Coughlin continued, “Kelli Ward may not be well-known in light of her campaign against Senator McCain in 2016. But even tacit support from the President, with subsequent staffing and financial resources, would be a huge boost for her chances.”

Additionally, General Election turnout in off-Presidential Cycle races in Arizona shows that Republicans historically have a twelve-point turnout advantage, which steepens the climb for any Democratic contender.

“The data clearly shows that a contentious primary fight would certainly strengthen the chances of the Democrats to pick up the seat in November of next year. There is an opportunity for Congresswoman Sinema to take advantage of the uncertainty on the Republican side by jumping into the Senate race,” Coughlin remarked. “The question for the General Election comes down to if Congresswoman Sinema will be able to define herself first to an electorate that is largely unfamiliar with her, or if Republican third-party groups can define her in ways unacceptable to Arizona’s General Electorate.”

The survey showed that Sinema enjoys a 51% approval rating among voters in her Congressional district which is largely within the cities of Phoenix and Tempe, which are more progressive, urban areas of the State.

Although a 14-point margin is a sizeable gap for Senator Flake, Arizona is known for its volatility when it comes to statewide races. Politicos such as Governors Fife Symington and Jan Brewer have been able to successfully rally from greater margins in shorter periods of time.

Coughlin stated, “It may look dire now, but we must remember a poll is a snapshot in time.”

“Even today, the Senate Leadership Fund (SLF) began to remind voters that [Kelli Ward is not a serious thinker](#) when it comes to the issues confronting our country. I would expect third-party groups like the SLF and dark money groups like Americans for Prosperity and Club for Growth to come to the Senator’s aid and tout his conservative credentials,” concluded Coughlin. “The Senator is in for the fight of his life and things will only get more difficult if the President Trump continues to pick intraparty fights.”

The audience tested in the statewide live caller survey was set to reflect the 2018 General Election in Arizona.

About the Survey

The poll surveyed 400 likely Arizona 2018 general election voters who have a history of electoral participation and was balanced to model the likely turnout of voters across party, age, region, and gender. The live interview survey of voters was conducted by HighGround Public Affairs to both landline and cell phone users. Anticipated turnout for the Arizona 2018 General Election has a partisan gap of Republican +12%.

Next, please tell me if you approve or disapprove of the job the following persons or groups are doing:

*Q. If the primary election for United States Senate were held today, would you vote for **[Rotate]** Jeff Flake or Kelli Ward? [N = 273]*

*28.2% Jeff Flake
42.5% Kelli Ward
5.1% Some other candidate
24.2% Don't know, Refused*

*Q. If the General Election for United States Senate were held today, would you vote for **[Rotate]** Jeff Flake or Kyrsten Sinema?*

*32.5% Jeff Flake
40.5% Kyrsten Sinema
27.0% Don't know, Refused*

*Q. If the General Election for United States Senate were held today, would you vote for **[Rotate]** Kelli Ward or Kyrsten Sinema?*

*30.5% Kelli Ward
31.8% Kyrsten Sinema
37.8% Don't know, Refused*

The survey was conducted on August 18-19th and the margin of error of the survey is $\pm 4.88\%$ with 95% confidence. The HighGround team has built a reputation of reliable and accurate polling over the past ten years – our research has been featured on Nate Silver's 538, Real Clear Politics, Huffington Post, and many other publications. Last year, HighGround "nailed" the Prop 123 election results within 0.2% of the outcome prior to the May 2016 Special election. Clients and surveys conducted by HighGround include League of Arizona Cities and Towns, Professional Fire Fighters of Arizona, Restoring Arizona, Arizona Hospital and Health Care Association, Education Health and Safety Coalition, local school districts, and various candidate campaigns. [Visit our website](#) to learn more about HighGround's polling experience.

Survey Demographics

Age Group:

10.8% 20 to 29
15.3% 30 to 39
19.7% 40 to 49
29.5% 50 to 64
24.7% 65 Plus

Sex:

48.0% Male
52.0% Female

Party:

44.2% Republican
31.8% Democrat
15.0% PND
9.0% Independent/Other

Congressional District:

11.0% CD1
14.3% CD2
7.0% CD3
11.0% CD4
12.3% CD5
13.7% CD6
6.0% CD7
13.0% CD8
11.7% CD9