

Services

[Business, Corporate &
Securities](#)

[Government Relations](#)

Arizona 2024 Election Preview

By Marcus Obsorn and Daniel Romm

All 90 state legislative seats are up for grabs this election cycle and with Republicans clinging to razor thin margins in both the Arizona House (31-29) and Arizona Senate (16-14), Democrats are hoping to flip at least one of the chambers this November.

The last time Democrats controlled a legislative chamber in Arizona was in 1992 when they controlled the Senate, 17-13. The last time Democrats controlled both the House and Senate was in 1966.

In addition to the Arizona Legislature, all nine U.S. Congressional Districts, and a U.S. Senate seat are in play, along with three Corporation Commission seats. There are also a number of other important county races and statewide ballot initiatives.

Arizona held their primary election on Tuesday, July 30. Voter turnout was significantly down compared to 2020 and 2022 with only 30% of eligible voters participating. The low voter turnout was likely due to the earlier primary date this year; the 2020 and 2022 primary dates were held later in August, giving voters a bit more time to return early ballots.

Arizona has a semi-open primary system which allows independent voters to vote by selecting either a Republican or Democrat ballot. While there were no real major surprises from the primary, two GOP incumbent legislative members lost their seats.

Incumbent Senator Ken Bennett (R-LD 1) was defeated by former State Representative Mark Finchem. Finchem was the GOP nominee for Arizona Secretary of State in 2022 and is endorsed by former President Donald Trump. He previously served four terms in the Arizona House (2015-2023), representing a southern Arizona district before recently relocating to northern Arizona to challenge Bennett, who was seen as a more “moderate” candidate.

Additionally, incumbent Senator Justine Wadsack (R-LD 17) was defeated by former Arizona State Senator Vince Leach. Leach served in the Senate from 2019 to 2022 where he was president pro tempore before being defeated by the more right-leaning Wadsack in the GOP primary in 2022.

While 12 out of the 30 legislative districts had competitive primaries, there are really only a handful of districts that have the potential to impact the outcome of the general election.

Legislative District 2 is a swing district in northwest Phoenix which may well determine control of the Arizona Senate. In the GOP primary, incumbent State Senator Shawna Bolick fended off a spirited challenge from MAGA acolyte Josh Barnett, and now will face Democratic Representative Judy Schwiebert and her massive campaign war chest.

Both the House and Senate races should also be highly competitive in legislative districts 4 (Maricopa County), 13 (Maricopa County), 16 (Maricopa County, Pima County, and Pinal County), and 17 (Pima County and Pinal County). The outcome of these few races will likely determine the balance of power in the Arizona Legislature.

On the federal side, Arizona will have one of the more closely watched races for the U.S. Senate this November. The Republican nominee, Kari Lake, will face off against Democratic Congressman Ruben Gallego. Gallego has served in the U.S. House since 2015. Prior to his time in Congress, he was a member of the Arizona House of Representatives. He is an Army veteran, and he currently serves on the U.S. House Armed Services Committee and Natural Resources Committee. Lake is a former television news anchor and is endorsed by former President Trump. In 2022 she lost a close election to Katie Hobbs for Governor of Arizona. The outcome of this race to replace outgoing Independent Senator Kyrsten Sinema could potentially determine the balance of power in the U.S. Senate.

In Congressional District 1, former Arizona legislator Amish Shah overcame a significant spending disadvantage to sew up the Democratic nomination. He now prepares to face GOP Congressman David Schweikert in what should be one of Arizona's hardest-fought congressional contests.

In Congressional District 2, first-term Congressman Eli Crane easily defeated challenger Jack Smith in the Republican primary. He will face the Democrat nominee and former president of the Navajo Nation, Jonathan Nez. While the district's voting history splits 53% toward Republicans and 46% toward Democrats, this is expected to be a close election.

In Congressional District 3, fewer than 42 votes currently separate Democrats Yassamin Ansari and Raquel Terán. Per state law, a mandatory recount is underway. The declared winner of this race will likely win the general election in this heavily Democratic-leaning district.

Another competitive race will be in Congressional District 6. Incumbent GOP Congressman Juan Ciscomani will face a rematch with former state legislator Kirsten Engel in November. Engel ran unopposed in the district's Democratic primary. The 2022 race between these candidates was decided only by a few thousand votes.

Maricopa County, the state's largest county, featured some competitive primary races, especially for county board of supervisors. Out of the two incumbents who faced primary challenges, only GOP Supervisor Thomas Galvin prevailed. All five seats are now at-stake, but of particular interest are the open seats in District 1 (Joel Navarro-D vs. Stewart-R), District 3 (Danny Valenzuela-D vs. Kate Brophy-McGee-R), and District 4 (David Sandoval-D vs. Debbie Lesko-R).

For Maricopa County Recorder, Stephen Richer fell to GOP State Representative Justin Heap in the primary, setting up a November contest between the GOP Freedom Caucus candidate and Democrat Tim Stringham. Expect this local race to generate outside interest as the administration of Maricopa County elections may have national ramifications.

Scottsdale Corporate and Securities Group

Mark Lasee
480.429.4828
mark.lasee@kutakrock.com

Marc Lieberman
480.429.7103
marc.lieberman@kutakrock.com

Richard Lieberman
480.429.4830
richard.lieberman@kutakrock.com

Michael Tobak
480.429.5000
michael.tobak@kutakrock.com

Isaiah Wilson II
480.429.7122
isaiah.wilson@kutakrock.com

Ken Witt
480.429.4864
ken.witt@kutakrock.com

Dwayne Fearon
480.429.4859
dwayne.fearon@kutakrock.com

Scottsdale Government Relations Group

Marcus Osborn
480.429.4862
marcus.osborn@kutakrock.com

Daniel Romm
480.429.4852
daniel.romm@kutakrock.com

Arizona is a swing state and the voter turnout for the general election should be significantly higher with the presidential election and the U.S. Senate race. Additionally, a reproductive rights ballot initiative that would essentially codify *Roe v. Wade*, allowing for abortions to be performed up to the point of fetal viability, will also drive up voter participation this November.

Election Day is Tuesday, November 5; however, early voting in the state begins on October 9.

