



behavior research center's

Rocky Mountain Poll

Rated in the Top 15% of Political Polls in the U.S.

NEWS RELEASE [RMP 2016-III-01]

Contact: Earl de Berge
Research Director
Jim Haynes
President

U.S. SENATE RACE: UNCOMMITTED VOTER RANKS JUMP DRAMATICALLY BOTH MCCAIN AND KIRKPATRICK LOSE GROUND

Phoenix, Arizona, June 22, 2016. Assuming U.S. Senator John McCain wins his primary challenge, the results of a June statewide voter poll suggest that an early independent expenditure campaign against Democrat Ann Kirkpatrick has cost her votes, but not gained McCain any new ones.

In April of this year, McCain and Kirkpatrick were running dead even in the BRC Rocky Mountain Poll, each with 42 percent of the vote and 16 percent undecided. Today, however McCain's vote eroded modestly to 40 percent while Kirkpatrick's vote declined to 31 percent.

More significant, however, is the finding that the proportion of voters who are uncommitted rose to 29 percent in June from 16 percent in April. Recording an increase in the proportion of undecided voters as we approach an election is almost unheard of. The normal pattern is for the ranks of undecided voters to decline steadily as an election nears, sometimes to as little as ten percent. But 2016 is, as most observers are saying, not a normal election year.

It appears that the U.S. Senate race may turn on the voting intentions of registered Independents and younger voters. This traces to the current reality that most Democrats and Republicans are "staying home," that is, voting for the candidate of their party (61 percent of both Democrats and Republicans are "staying home"). Among Independents, however, only 12 percent were uncommitted in April, but as of today, that figure has skyrocketed to 45 percent. At the same time, McCain's vote among Independents shrank from 47 percent in April to 37 percent today.

Even more dramatic is the decline in Kirkpatrick's appeal to registered Independents: 41 percent in April but only 18 percent today. This decline may trace to the ads launched against Kirkpatrick's voting record in the House.

-more-

The growth in the number of uncommitted voters is not just confined to Independents and younger voters but is found throughout the poll results. For example, the proportion of undecided voters grew between April and June as follows, among these groups:

	June	April
All voters	29%	16%
Independents	45	12
Hispanics	29	13
Under 35 years	44	13
35 to 54	29	19
55 and older	18	18

Thus it appears increasingly clear that the two most serious challenges for both candidates are: keeping their party loyalists at home, and equally important, finding messages that resonate with Independent voters.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This Rocky Mountain Poll - Arizona (2016-III-01), is based on 448 interviews with Arizona registered voters conducted between June 6 and June 19, 2016. Interviewing was conducted in both English and Spanish by professional interviewers of the Behavior Research Center on both land lines and cell phones. Where necessary, figures for age, sex, and race were weighted to bring them into line with their actual proportion in the population. In a sample of this size, one can say with a 95 percent certainty that the results have a statistical precision of plus or minus 4.7 percent of what they would have been had the entire adult voter population been surveyed. The Rocky Mountain Poll is conducted by the Behavior Research Center of Arizona and is an independent and non-partisan research program sponsored by the Center.

This statement conforms to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

Further Note on Behavior Research Center

Nate Silver of the website fivethirtyeight.com rated BRC as one of the top 15 percent of political polling firms in the nation for methodology and accuracy, giving BRC an "A-" rating. Mr. Silver and his website have correctly predicted national and state election outcomes in recent election cycles by aggregating polling results from multiple research firms.

ENCLOSED: Statistical Tables

“If the 2016 general election for U.S. Senator from Arizona were being held today, which of the following candidates would you vote for?” (LIST OF CANDIDATES RANDOMLY ROTATED)

	Republican John McCain	Democrat Ann Kirkpatrick	Uncommitted
Statewide June 2016	40%	31%	29%
Statewide April 2016	42	42	16
Statewide January 2016	38	37	25
Statewide November 2015	37	31	32

June 2016 Detail

Maricopa	42%	34%	24%
Pima	29	30	41
Rural	44	24	32
Democrats	23	61	16
Republicans	61	17	22
Independents	37	18	45
Hispanics	26	44	29
Non-Hispanic minorities	26	53	21
Under 35	31	25	44
35 to 54	41	30	29
55+	46	36	18

~~~~~