

CLISTON BROWN'S 2012 ELECTION NIGHT PREVIEW

*Analyzing the Presidential Races and Key
Congressional Contests In All 50 States and the
District of Columbia*

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States With Poll Closings at 7 p.m. Eastern

Electoral Votes

<i>Obama</i>	<i>Romney</i>	<i>Toss-Ups</i>
3	44	13

VIRGINIA

Electoral Votes: 13
Expected Presidential Result: Toss-up

Key Congressional Races

Senate: Tim Kaine (D) vs. George Allen (R)

What to Expect

A long night. Virginia's presidential race and its U.S. Senate race are both locks to be characterized as "too close to call" when the polls close at 7 p.m. eastern. Obama won Virginia by 7 percent in 2008 but much of his suburban strength has eroded. The keys here will be turnout among African-Americans and Latinos and in the college towns. In 2008, returns from the Republican counties and cities came in early, and it wasn't until late in the evening that Obama pulled ahead. If you are looking for clues, keep an eye on **Loudoun County**, in exurban northern Virginia. Obama won the previously Republican county by 8 percent in 2008, and if he wins it again in 2012, it will be an indication that his support among suburban white voters has not completely collapsed.

The U.S. Senate race between former governors Tim Kaine (D) and George Allen (R), who held this Senate seat for a term before losing in 2006, should also be very close. It is unlikely that the winner in the Senate race will come from a different party as the winner in Virginia's presidential race, as it is hard to imagine that very many Allen voters will vote for Obama, or that very many Kaine voters will vote for Romney. The latter scenario, however, is more likely than the former one. If Romney wins Virginia by a very close margin, Kaine may still prevail.

GEORGIA

Electoral Votes: 16
Expected Presidential Result: Safe Romney

Key Congressional Races

House 12th District: John Barrow (D-incumbent) vs. Lee Anderson (R)

What to Expect

Romney has consistently led in all polling, and neither side is making any moves here that would indicate Georgia will be competitive. On the strength of African-American and young voters, Obama only lost the state by about 5 percent in

2008, but all indications are that the 18-29 vote will not be nearly as strong for him in 2012. Early African-American turnout in Georgia has been heavy, so the networks might not be able to call Georgia right away when the polls close at 7 p.m. eastern. The first characterization of Georgia is likely to be “too early to call.” If the networks call it for Romney right away, that is a bad sign for Obama. On the other hand, if they say it is “too close to call,” that is an extremely worrisome sign for Romney.

The only Congressional race that is expected to be in any doubt is in the 12th District, where incumbent Democrat **John Barrow** is the underdog against Republican challenger **Lee Anderson**. Barrow has survived numerous uphill battles for eight years, but the state’s recent redistricting made his district much more Republican. If Barrow manages to win, it will be an upset.

INDIANA

Electoral Votes: 11
Expected Presidential Result: Safe Romney

Key Congressional Races

Senate: Joe Donnelly (D) vs. Richard Mourdock (R)

House 8th District: Larry Bucshon (R-incumbent) vs. Dave Crooks (D)

What to Expect

Although Obama won Indiana by a slim margin in 2008, it has been apparent for more than a year that the circumstances on the ground in this traditionally Republican state made a repeat unlikely. The Obama campaign has made no attempt to compete here in 2012. The networks may be able to call Indiana right at 7 p.m. eastern or shortly afterward, although they may initially characterize it “too early to call” due to Obama’s unexpected victory there four years ago.

Although Indiana is not expected to be competitive in the presidential race, it does have one of the most interesting Senate races in the country. State Treasurer **Richard Mourdock** (R), a Tea Party favorite who shocked longtime Sen. Richard Lugar in the Republican primary, has committed numerous verbal gaffes that have created an opening for Congressman **Joe Donnelly** (D) to pull the upset. Donnelly now appears to be a slight favorite, and if he wins, it would be a major blow to Republican hopes of taking over the Senate.

Democrats also hope to pick up a House seat in southwestern Indiana, a traditionally competitive district known as the “Bloody 8th” due to its numerous close races. First-term Congressman **Larry Bucshon** (R) is a slight favorite against State Rep. **Dave Crooks** (D), but the district became more Democratic after redistricting and includes Democratic-leaning Evansville and Terre Haute.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Electoral Votes: 9
Expected Presidential Result: Safe Romney

Key Congressional Races
None

What to Expect

South Carolina has not gone Democratic since 1976 and won't do so this year. The state is not in play and only its large African-American voting population will make it relatively close. The networks may initially characterize it as "too early to call," but South Carolina will be in the Romney column within half an hour of the polls closing.

KENTUCKY

Electoral Votes: 8
Expected Presidential Result: Safe Romney

Key Congressional Races
House 6th District: Ben Chandler (D-incumbent) vs. Andy Barr (R)

What to Expect

The networks will call Kentucky for Romney when the polls close at 7 p.m. eastern.

The only Congressional race of interest is in the 6th District, where incumbent Congressman **Ben Chandler** (D) faces a rematch against **Andy Barr** (R), whom he narrowly defeated in 2010. Chandler's district became slightly more Democratic after redistricting, but if Obama loses badly in Kentucky, as he did in 2008, his performance could impact Chandler.

VERMONT

Electoral Votes: 3
Expected Presidential Result: Safe Obama

Key Congressional Races
None

What to Expect

The networks will call Vermont for Obama when the polls close at 7 p.m. eastern.

States With Poll Closings at 7:30 p.m. Eastern

<i>Electoral Votes</i>		
<i>Obama</i>	<i>Romney</i>	<i>Toss-Ups</i>
0	20	18



Electoral Votes: 18
Expected Presidential Result: Toss-up

Key Congressional Races

House 6th District: Bill Johnson (R-incumbent) vs. Charlie Wilson (D)

House 16th District: Betty Sutton (D-incumbent) vs. Jim Renacci (R-incumbent)

What to Expect

Ohio is crucial to either candidate reaching 270 electoral votes, so whichever way it ultimately goes almost certainly will indicate the winner. Obama has consistently led in all reputable polls of the state, but his margins for the last few weeks have rarely exceeded more than 2 percent. The networks will characterize Ohio as “too close to call,” and it will likely stay that way for hours. **Hamilton County**, which includes Cincinnati, is the key indicator here. Traditionally Republican, it went for Obama in 2008. If he hangs on there, it is a strong indication that he will win Ohio. If not, Obama may still win, but it will be close.

There are two House races of interest. In the 6th District, which runs along the West Virginia border, former Congressman **Charlie Wilson** (D) is trying to regain the seat he lost to Congressman **Bill Johnson** (R) in 2010. While Wilson barely lost last time, he is swimming upstream in a part of the state where Obama is likely to lose by a significant margin. In the 16th District, which includes the area south and west of Cleveland, two incumbents are lumped together due to redistricting. Congresswoman **Betty Sutton** (D) may have a small edge over Congressman **Jim Renacci** (R).

NORTH CAROLINA

Electoral Votes: 15
Expected Presidential Result: Leans Romney

Key Congressional Races

House 7th District: Mike McIntyre (D-incumbent) vs. David Rouzer (R)

What to Expect

Obama won North Carolina by a scant margin in 2008 and is still advertising in the state, but it is unlikely he can replicate the winning coalition he had here four

years ago. As in Georgia, Obama is getting strong support in early voting. If he does upset Romney here, he is certain to be reelected, but even a close loss here (2 percent or less) probably indicates an Obama victory nationally.

The only Congressional race that appears close is in the 7th District, where incumbent Democrat **Mike McIntyre** is in a tight battle with Republican **David Rouzer**. Redistricting by the Republican legislature is all but certain to send Democratic incumbent **Larry Kissell** down to defeat in the 8th District.

WEST VIRGINIA

Electoral Votes: 5
Expected Presidential Result: Safe Romney

Key Congressional Races

None

What to Expect

The networks will call West Virginia for Romney when the polls close at 7:30 p.m. eastern.

States With Poll Closings at 8 p.m. Eastern

Electoral Votes

<i>Obama</i>	<i>Romney</i>	<i>Toss-Ups</i>
96	72	4

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Electoral Votes: 4
Expected Presidential Result: Toss-up

Key Congressional Races

House 1st District: Charlie Bass (R-incumbent) vs. Ann Marie Kuster (D)

House 2nd District: Frank Guinta (R-incumbent) vs. Carol Shea-Porter (D)

What to Expect

New Hampshire is almost certain to be “too close to call” when the polls close at 8 p.m., but this state, with only four electoral votes, is not likely to be decisive. The state has leaned slightly to the Democrats in recent years, but is also very familiar with Romney, from neighboring Massachusetts.

The state has two very important House races, both rematches from 2010. Both are expected to be close and could potentially go either way. In the 1st District, Congressman **Charlie Bass** (R), who had lost his seat during the Democratic wave of 2006, reclaimed it in 2010 with a narrow win over **Ann Marie Kuster** (D) in an open-seat battle. In the 2nd District, former Congresswoman **Carol Shea-Porter** (D) is attempting to reclaim the seat she lost to Congressman **Frank Guinta** (R) in 2010.

FLORIDA

Electoral Votes: 29
Expected Presidential Result: Leans Romney

Key Congressional Races

House 10th District: Dan Webster (R-incumbent) vs. Val Demings (D)

House 18th District: Allen West (R-incumbent) vs. Patrick Murphy (D)

House 22nd District: Lois Frankel (D) vs. Adam Hasner (R)

House 26th District: David Rivera (R-incumbent) vs. Joe Garcia (D)

What to Expect

Florida is likely to be extremely close, and an Obama win is not impossible, but everything will have to go perfectly for him. If he wins both Orange County (Orlando) and Hillsborough County (Tampa), and racks up big numbers in Miami-Dade County, he may have a chance to prevail. However, Romney appears to

have a slight edge in the state. Expect Florida to stay “too close to call” for quite some time on election night.

There are several interesting House races and Democrats are expected to gain some pickups in Florida this time. In the 10th District, first-term Congressman **Dan Webster** (R) is a slight favorite in this Orlando-area seat, but is getting a tough battle from Democrat **Val Demings**, the former Orlando police chief. If Obama does well in the Orlando area, Demings could benefit. In the 18th District, Tea Party firebrand **Allen West** (R) has committed a number of embarrassing gaffes but may have a slight edge over Democrat **Patrick Murphy** in the Republican-leaning district. In the newly created, Democratic-leaning 22nd District, former West Palm Beach mayor **Lois Frankel** (D) is favored to beat former State Rep. **Adam Hasner** (R). And in the 26th District, first-term Congressman **David Rivera** (R) has come under fire for ethical issues and is now expected to lose to Democrat **Joe Garcia**.

ILLINOIS

Electoral Votes: 20
Expected Presidential Result: Safe Obama

Key Congressional Races

House 8th District: Joe Walsh (R-incumbent) vs. Tammy Duckworth (D)

House 10th District: Bob Dold (R-incumbent) vs. Brad Schneider (D)

House 11th District: Judy Biggert (R-incumbent) vs. Bill Foster (D)

House 12th District: William Enyart (D) vs. Jason Plummer (R)

House 13th District: David Gill (D) vs. Rodney Davis (R)

House 17th District: Bobby Schilling (R-incumbent) vs. Cheri Bustos (D)

What to Expect

The networks will call Illinois for Obama when the polls close at 8 p.m. eastern.

While there is nothing to see in the presidential race, there are six Congressional districts in Illinois that will have much to say about whether Democrats can improve their fortunes significantly in the House. Illinois' Democratic legislature created a redistricting map that is expected to gain four to five pickups for Democrats. In the Chicago suburbs, three Republican incumbents are in serious danger of losing, particularly gaffe-plagued Congressman **Joe Walsh** (R-8th), who is almost certain to lose to war veteran and amputee **Tammy Duckworth** (D). Congressman **Bob Dold** (R), who like Walsh won in the 2010 GOP wave, has a tough race against businessman Brad Schneider (D), although Dold appears to be exceeding expectations in a slightly Democratic-leaning district. Longtime Congresswoman **Judy Biggert** (R-11th) faces an uphill battle against former Congressman **Bill Foster** (D), who lost in a different district in the 2010

wave. In northwestern Illinois, Congressman **Bobby Schilling** (R-17th) is the underdog against East Moline alderwoman **Cheri Bustos** (D). Downstate, two open seats (Districts 12 and 13) are both close. Republican **Jason Plummer** appears to have a slight edge over Democrat **William Enyart** in the 12th District, while Democrat **David Gill** appears to be leading Republican **Rodney Davis** in the 13th District.

PENNSYLVANIA

Electoral Votes: 20
Expected Presidential Result: Likely Obama

Key Congressional Races

House 12th District: Mark Critz (D-incumbent) vs. Keith Rothfus (R)

What to Expect

Although Republicans have made noise about targeting Pennsylvania, where Obama's approval ratings have been poor, they have only this week made any significant investment in the state, where the dynamics favor the Democrats. Ultimately, the state is all but certain to go to Obama, but how the networks characterize it when the polls close at 8 p.m. eastern could say much about the overall picture. If the networks call it for Obama right away, he may be in better shape than expected and headed for victory. If it is "too early to call," then the election is likely to be very close. If it is "too close to call," that is a bad sign for Obama.

There is one close House race, where incumbent Democrat **Mark Critz** faces a tough challenge from GOP attorney **Keith Rothfus**. Critz is slightly favored.

NEW JERSEY

Electoral Votes: 14
Expected Presidential Result: Safe Obama

Key Congressional Races

None

What to Expect

The networks will call New Jersey for Obama when the polls close at 8 p.m. eastern.

MASSACHUSETTS

Electoral Votes: 11
Expected Presidential Result: Safe Obama

Key Congressional Races

House 6th District: John Tierney (D-incumbent) vs. Richard Tisei (R)

What to Expect

The networks will call Massachusetts for Obama when the polls close at 8 p.m. eastern.

A surprisingly close House race has developed in the 6th District, in the state's northeast corner. Congressman **John Tierney** (D) has come under scrutiny over an illegal offshore gambling ring allegedly run by two brothers-in-law, in which Tierney's wife and brother were also implicated. While this seat would normally go Democratic without any trouble, Tierney is now an underdog against **Richard Tisei** (R), a former state legislator.

TENNESSEE

Electoral Votes: 11
Expected Presidential Result: Safe Romney

Key Congressional Races

House 4th District: Scott DesJarlais (R-incumbent) vs. Eric Stewart (D)

What to Expect

The networks will call Tennessee for Romney when the polls close at 8 p.m. eastern.

A potential surprise has developed in what would otherwise be a safe Republican House seat. A sex scandal has enveloped Congressman **Scott DesJarlais** (R), who was taped attempting to pressure a mistress to get an abortion. More details are emerging on other possible affairs. State Senator **Eric Stewart** (D) hopes to spring an upset, although the district is strongly conservative.

MARYLAND

Electoral Votes: 10
Expected Presidential Result: Safe Obama

Key Congressional Races

House 6th District: Roscoe Bartlett (R-incumbent) vs. John Delaney (D)

What to Expect

The networks will call Maryland for Obama when the polls close at 8 p.m. eastern.

In the House, redistricting has altered the 6th District from a reliably Republican seat in western Maryland to a Democratic-leaning district taking in much of Montgomery County in the Washington, D.C. suburbs. Businessman **John Delaney** (D) is a heavy favorite to end the long career of 86-year-old Congressman **Roscoe Bartlett** (R).

MISSOURI

Electoral Votes: 10
Expected Presidential Result: Likely Romney

Key Congressional Races

Senate: Claire McCaskill (D-incumbent) vs. Todd Akin (R)

What to Expect

Obama came within a whisker of carrying Missouri in 2008, but it isn't likely to be that close this time. Neither campaign has devoted more than token resources here, and Romney is a strong favorite to win the state.

The big race in Missouri is the Senate contest between incumbent Democrat **Claire McCaskill** and Republican Congressman **Todd Akin**. Akin dealt a serious blow to his own candidacy with his televised comments on abortion and rape, possibly preserving a seat that the Democrats had been likely to lose. Despite the controversy, Missouri's move in the Republican direction in recent years ensures that this will be a close race, although McCaskill is favored.

ALABAMA

Electoral Votes: 9
Expected Presidential Result: Safe Romney

Key Congressional Races

None

What to Expect

The networks will call Alabama for Romney when the polls close at 8 p.m. eastern.

CONNECTICUT

Electoral Votes: 7
Expected Presidential Result: Safe Obama

Key Congressional Races

Senate: Chris Murphy (D) vs. Linda McMahon (R)
House 5th District: Elizabeth Esty (D) vs. Andrew Roraback (R)

What to Expect

The networks will call Connecticut for Obama when the polls close at 8 p.m. eastern.

The Senate race between Congressman **Chris Murphy** (D) and wrestling executive **Linda McMahon** (R) has been intense and dirty, and McMahon's monetary advantage and brilliant advertising have kept her close in this Democratic state.

In the House, the 5th District seat being vacated by Murphy is likely to stay in Democratic hands, but it is not a slam-dunk. This is the best district in the state for Republicans, and a battle between two former state legislators, **Elizabeth Esty** (D) and **Andrew Roraback** (R) could be close. But Esty should win.

OKLAHOMA

Electoral Votes: 7
Expected Presidential Result: Safe Romney

Key Congressional Races

House 2nd District: Rob Wallace (D) vs. Markwayne Mullin (R)

What to Expect

The networks will call Oklahoma for Romney when the polls close at 8 p.m. eastern.

Republicans expect to take over the only Democratic House seat in Oklahoma. Congressman Dan Boren (D) is retiring, and Republican **Markwayne Mullin** is favored to defeat Democrat **Rob Wallace** in the 2nd District.

MISSISSIPPI

Electoral Votes: 6
Expected Presidential Result: Safe Romney

Key Congressional Races

None

What to Expect

There is an outside chance that Mississippi may be “too early to call” at 8 p.m. eastern, due to two factors: potential heavy African-American turnout and Mississippi’s tendency to report returns very slowly. But there is no chance that Obama will be competitive in Mississippi.

MAINE

Electoral Votes: 4

Expected Presidential Result: Safe Obama

Key Congressional Races

Senate: Angus King (I) vs. Charlie Summers (R) and Cynthia Dill (D)

What to Expect

The networks will call at least three of Maine’s four electoral votes for Obama when the polls close at 8 p.m. eastern. The results from Maine’s 2nd Congressional District, which has one electoral vote, may take longer to determine but should also favor Obama.

The Senate race is extremely interesting. Former Gov. **Angus King**, an independent, has consistently held a significant lead in the race. Secretary of State **Charlie Summers** (R) has been in second place in all polling, while Democratic nominee **Cynthia Dill**, a state legislator, is running a distant third. Dill’s poor showing is largely due to the strategic decision by Democrats to support King and prevent a close three-way race that could allow Summers to win. Most observers expect King to caucus with the Democrats if he wins the seat.

RHODE ISLAND

Electoral Votes: 4

Expected Presidential Result: Safe Obama

Key Congressional Races

House 1st District: David Cicilline (D-incumbent) vs. Brendan Doherty (R)

What to Expect

The networks will call Rhode Island for Obama when the polls close at 9 p.m. eastern.

In the state's 1st House district, Congressman **David Cicilline** (D) inhabits what should be one of the safest Democratic districts in the country, but has become embroiled in several controversies that date back to his time as mayor of Providence. He faces a tough challenge from former state policeman **Brendan Doherty** (R).

DELAWARE

Electoral Votes: 3
Expected Presidential Result: Safe Obama

Key Congressional Races

None

What to Expect

The networks will call Delaware for Obama when the polls close at 8 p.m. eastern.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Electoral Votes: 3
Expected Presidential Result: Safe Obama

What to Expect

The networks will call the District of Columbia for Obama when the polls close at 8 p.m. eastern.

States With Poll Closings at 8:30 p.m. Eastern

Electoral Votes

Obama

Romney

Toss-Ups

0

6

0

ARKANSAS

Electoral Votes: 6

Expected Presidential Result: Safe Romney

Key Congressional Races

None

What to Expect

The networks will call Arkansas for Romney when the polls close at 8:30 p.m. eastern.

States With Poll Closings at 9 p.m. Eastern

Electoral Votes

<i>Obama</i>	<i>Romney</i>	<i>Toss-Ups</i>
60	77	19

WISCONSIN

Electoral Votes: 10
Expected Presidential Result: Toss-up

Key Congressional Races

Senate: Tammy Baldwin (D) vs. Tommy Thompson (R)

What to Expect

It is likely that this state will be characterized as “too close to call” when the polls close at 9 p.m. eastern. Wisconsin hasn’t voted for a Republican presidential candidate since the Ronald Reagan 49-state landslide of 1984, but that doesn’t mean it has been a safe bet for Democrats. George W. Bush barely missed carrying the state in 2000 and 2004, and Obama’s 14-point victory here in 2008 was unusual. Wisconsin appears to be reverting to form in 2012, and it could be several hours before the state is called. Wisconsin is crucial to Obama’s roadmap to 270 electoral votes.

Wisconsin also has one of the nation’s closest Senate races, as Congresswoman **Tammy Baldwin** (D) faces former Gov. **Tommy Thompson** (R). Baldwin has held slim leads in most recent polling, but Thompson has been a household name in Wisconsin for decades. This race should go down to the wire.

COLORADO

Electoral Votes: 9
Expected Presidential Result: Toss-up

Key Congressional Races

House 3rd District: Scott Tipton (R-incumbent) vs. Sal Pace (D)

House 6th District: Mike Coffman (R-incumbent) vs. Joe Miklosi (D)

What to Expect

Colorado is almost certain to be characterized as “too close to call” when the polls close at 9 p.m. eastern. Although Colorado was reliably Republican for generations, the influx of Democrats into the state in recent years has moved it to a toss-up state, and it went convincingly for Obama in 2008. Jefferson and Adams counties, in the Denver suburbs, will say much about who wins the state.

There are two House races that appear close, although the incumbent Republicans in each district appear to have a slight edge. First-term Congressman **Scott Tipton** (R-3rd) represents a district in the Western Slope that typically goes Republican, but may be vulnerable to a challenge from state legislator **Sal Pace** (D) if the state tips to Obama. Congressman **Mike Coffman** (R-6th), also in his first term, created controversy with disparaging remarks against Obama, and his district, east of Denver, became much more Democratic after redistricting. He has a tough race against state legislator **Joe Miklosi** (D).

TEXAS

Electoral Votes: 38
Expected Presidential Result: Safe Romney

Key Congressional Races

House 23rd District: Francisco Canseco (R-incumbent) vs. Pete Gallego (D)

What to Expect

The networks will call Texas for Romney when the polls close at 9 p.m. eastern.

Most of Texas' 36 House districts are set, but one House race in doubt is in southwest Texas, where Congressman **Francisco Canseco** (R) faces a tough contest from Democratic state legislator **Pete Gallego**. Canseco was elected in the 2010 wave but the district leans marginally Democratic.

NEW YORK

Electoral Votes: 29
Expected Presidential Result: Safe Obama

Key Congressional Races

House 1st District: Tim Bishop (D-incumbent) vs. Randy Altschuler (R)

House 18th District: Nan Hayworth (R-incumbent) vs. Sean Maloney (D)

House 19th District: Chris Gibson (R-incumbent) vs. Julian Schreibman (D)

House 21st District: Bill Owens (D-incumbent) vs. Matt Doheny (R)

House 24th District: Ann Marie Buerkle (R-incumbent) vs. Dan Maffei (D)

House 25th District: Louise Slaughter (D-incumbent) vs. Maggie Brooks (R)

House 27th District: Kathy Hochul (D-incumbent) vs. Chris Collins (R)

What to Expect

The networks will call New York for Obama when the polls close at 9 p.m. eastern.

New York has more competitive House races than any state in the country besides California. Republicans picked up several seats, mostly upstate, in the 2010 wave, and three of those swept in on the tide have tough races, though of those three, only Congresswoman **Ann Marie Buerkle** (R-24th) appears highly likely to lose. She faces a rematch against former Congressman **Dan Maffei** (D), and redistricting made the district more favorable to Democrats. In the 18th District, centered on suburban Westchester County, Congresswoman **Nan Hayworth** (R) is a slight favorite against **Sean Maloney** (D), a former advisor to President Clinton and two New York governors. Just north of Hayworth's district, Congressman **Chris Gibson** (R) looks like a likely winner against Democrat **Julian Schreibman**. If two of these three GOP seats flip, that is a good sign for the Democrats. Conversely, if more than one of the four Democratic seats that appear close go Republican, this portends well for the GOP. The most vulnerable Democrat in the state is Congresswoman **Kathy Hochul** (D-27th), who won a special election in the state's most Republican district and is an underdog against Republican **Chris Collins**. Other Democrats facing tough but winnable races are Congressman **Tim Bishop** (D-1st) on Long Island, who faces a rematch against **Randy Altschuler** (R), whom Bishop barely defeated in 2010. Also, Congressman **Bill Owens** (D-21st) has a tough race in a Republican-leaning upstate district, and longtime and popular Congresswoman **Louise Slaughter** (D-25th) has a strong opponent in **Maggie Brooks** (R).

MICHIGAN

Electoral Votes: 16
Expected Presidential Result: Likely Obama

Key Congressional Races

House 1st District: Dan Benishek (R-incumbent) vs. Gary McDowell (D)

House 3rd District: Justin Amash (R-incumbent) vs. Steve Pestka (D)

What to Expect

Michigan may be "too early to call" when the polls close at 9 p.m. eastern, but if it doesn't end up in the Obama column soon thereafter, that portends very badly for the president.

Two Republican House members elected in 2010 face tough races. In the 1st District, which encompasses sparsely populated northern Michigan, Congressman **Dan Benishek** (R) is an underdog against former state legislator **Gary McDowell** (D). If Benishek survives, it could be a good night for Republicans. In the 3rd District, in Republican-leaning western Michigan, Congressman **Justin Amash** (R) is a slight favorite against Democrat **Steve Pestka**.

ARIZONA

Electoral Votes: 11
Expected Presidential Result: Likely Romney

Key Congressional Races

Senate: Richard Carmona (D) vs. Jeff Flake (R)
House 1st District: Ann Kirkpatrick (D) vs. Jonathan Paton (R)
House 9th District: Kyrsten Sinema (D) vs. Vernon Parker (R)

What to Expect

Despite the fact that neither campaign has spent any resources in a state that has been seen as likely Republican, the polling has been surprisingly close. Heavy Latino turnout could make this state closer than expected, although ultimately it is hard to see Obama winning it. Arizona will probably be characterized as “too early to call” when the polls close at 9 p.m. eastern.

There are three key Congressional races, including a very close open-seat Senate race between **Richard Carmona** (D), former U.S. Surgeon General, and Congressman **Jeff Flake** (R). Much to the surprise of many political observers, Carmona, possibly buoyed by the state’s Latino community, has held a slim lead in polling. In the state’s sprawling 1st District, which covers most of the northeast chunk of Arizona, former Congresswoman **Ann Kirkpatrick** (D) seeks to reclaim her seat against former state legislator **Jonathon Paton** (R). In the newly created 9th District, in Phoenix’s eastern suburbs, former state legislator **Kyrsten Sinema** (D), who has become well known in liberal circles due to frequent appearances on MSNBC, is a slight favorite against Paradise Valley city councilman **Vernon Parker** (R).

MINNESOTA

Electoral Votes: 10
Expected Presidential Result: Likely Obama

Key Congressional Races

House 6th District: Michele Bachmann (R-incumbent) vs. Jim Graves (D)
House 8th District: Chip Cravaack (R-incumbent) vs. Rick Nolan (D)

What to Expect

While recent polling has shown Romney closing the gap in Minnesota, this state is a difficult lift for Republican presidential candidates, none of whom have carried the state since 1972. Minnesota will probably be too early to call at 9 p.m. eastern, but if the networks can call it right away for Obama, it is a good sign for him.

Democrats have high hopes for two current Republican House seats in Minnesota. In the 6th District, Congresswoman and former presidential candidate **Michele Bachmann** (R) may have a tough battle with educator **Jim Graves** (D). Her district became more Democratic after redistricting, and she received a good deal of negative publicity during her presidential run. That said, Democrats have thought Bachmann was vulnerable in past elections but have come up short. A much likelier Democratic pickup is in the state's Democratic-leaning 8th District, where first-term Congressman **Chip Cravaack** (R) appears to be a slight underdog against former Congressman **Rick Nolan** (D), who previously held a House seat from 1975-81.

LOUISIANA

Electoral Votes: 8
Expected Presidential Result: Safe Romney

Key Congressional Races

None

What to Expect

The networks are likely to call Louisiana for Romney when the polls close at 9 p.m. eastern. The only potential issue in an immediate call is the likely heavy African-American turnout for Obama, which may delay the networks' call slightly.

KANSAS

Electoral Votes: 6
Expected Presidential Result: Safe Romney

Key Congressional Races

None

What to Expect

The networks will call Kansas for Romney when the polls close at 9 p.m. eastern.

NEBRASKA

Electoral Votes: 5
Expected Presidential Result: 4 Safe Romney, 1 Likely Romney

Key Congressional Races

Senate: Bob Kerrey (D) vs. Deb Fischer (R)

What to Expect

The networks will call at least four of Nebraska's five electoral votes for Romney when the polls close at 9 p.m. eastern. But Nebraska is one of only two states (along with Maine) that splits its electoral votes, with the winner of the state getting two votes, and the winner of each Congressional district gets one vote. The state's 2nd District voted for Obama narrowly in 2008, but it appears likely to flip back to the Republicans this year.

The U.S. Senate race between former Senator **Bob Kerrey** (D) and state legislator **Deb Fischer** (R) appeared to be an easy win for Fischer until recently, but Kerrey, who also once served as governor, has made a spectacular comeback in the polls and is now closing in on the lead. If Democrats pick up this seat, which Republicans are counting on, there is virtually no chance the GOP will take over the Senate.

NEW MEXICO

Electoral Votes: 5
Expected Presidential Result: Likely Obama

Key Congressional Races

None

What to Expect

New Mexico, with the largest percentage of Latino voters of any state, is likely to be a fairly easy win for Obama. If the state isn't called for him at 9 p.m. eastern, it should be soon afterward.

NORTH DAKOTA

Electoral Votes: 3
Expected Presidential Result: Safe Romney

Key Congressional Races

Senate: Heidi Heitkamp (D) vs. Rick Berg (R)

What to Expect

The networks will call North Dakota for Romney when the polls close at 9 p.m. eastern.

The Senate race, once expected to be an easy win for Congressman **Rick Berg** (R), has turned into a dogfight, as former state Attorney General **Heidi Heitkamp** (D) has mounted a spirited challenge. A Heitkamp win signals the Democrats will

continue to hold the Senate; a loss would not be unexpected and would not necessarily portend a Republican takeover.

SOUTH DAKOTA

Electoral Votes: 3
Expected Presidential Result: Safe Romney

Key Congressional Races

None

What to Expect

The networks will call South Dakota for Romney when the polls close at 9 p.m. eastern.

WYOMING

Electoral Votes: 3
Expected Presidential Result: Safe Romney

Key Congressional Races

None

What to Expect

The networks will call Wyoming for Romney when the polls close at 9 p.m. eastern.

States With Poll Closings at 10 p.m. Eastern

Electoral Votes

<i>Obama</i>	<i>Romney</i>	<i>Toss-Ups</i>
6	9	6

IOWA

Electoral Votes: 6
Expected Presidential Result: Toss-up

Key Congressional Races

House 2nd District: Dave Loebsack (D-incumbent) vs. John Archer (R)

House 3rd District: Leonard Boswell (D-incumbent) vs. Tom Latham (R-incumbent)

House 4th District: Steve King (R-incumbent) vs. Christie Vilsack (D)

What to Expect

Iowa went convincingly for Obama in 2008, but has typically been a closely divided state, with Democrats prevalent in the eastern counties and Republicans strong in the western counties. In a more normal election, as this one appears to be, Iowa is likely to be close. Key counties include Polk County and Scott County, both of which Obama won decisively in 2008. If he wins either of these counties by less than 5 percent, Romney is likely to carry the state.

There are three very interesting House races, including an incumbent-vs.-incumbent race in the 3rd District in southwestern Iowa between Congressman **Leonard Boswell** (D) and Congressman **Tom Latham** (R). This matchup came about after Iowa lost a House seat after the 2010 census. Latham has been considered a slight favorite, but Boswell has been competitive in recent polling. In the 2nd District, in southeastern Iowa, Congressman **Dave Loebsack** (D) is known as a less-than-stellar campaigner, and he faces a difficult test from attorney **John Archer** (R). And in the 4th District, in northwestern Iowa, Congressman **Steve King** (R) occupies the state's most Republican seat, but has a strong opponent in **Christie Vilsack** (D), the state's former first lady. The state should split 2-2, but if Republicans win three seats, it probably also portends a Romney win in Iowa.

NEVADA

Electoral Votes: 6
Expected Presidential Result: Leans Obama

Key Congressional Races

Senate: Dean Heller (R-incumbent) vs. Shelley Berkley (D)

House 3rd District: Joe Heck (R-incumbent) vs. John Oceguera (D)
House 4th District: Steven Horsford (D) vs. Danny Tarkanian (R)

What to Expect

The bulk of Nevada's votes are in Clark County, which includes the Democratic stronghold of Las Vegas. If Obama wins Clark County by a sizable margin, he can lose the rest of the state but still win. The key county to consider is Washoe County, which includes Reno and which Obama won in 2008. If he wins Washoe County again, he will win the state easily. Although this has been considered a battleground state, the trend in Nevada is toward the Democrats, and Obama has held small but consistent leads. The Democratic turnout operation in Nevada is one of the nation's best, and Democrats usually outperform their polling numbers here. Even if the networks characterize Nevada as "too close to call," Obama has the advantage and should win. If Romney does win Nevada, he is likely to win the election.

The state has an extremely close Senate race. Senator **Dean Heller** (R) was appointed to fill a vacancy and has held a small polling lead against Congresswoman **Shelley Berkley** (D). However, if Obama can win by more than 5 percent, he may propel Berkley to victory. In the 3rd House district, south of Las Vegas, Congressman **Joe Heck** (R) is a slight favorite to beat state House speaker **John Oceguera** (D). In the newly created 4th District, State Senate majority leader **Steven Horsford** (D) looks like a slight favorite against businessman **Danny Tarkanian** (R), son of famous University of Nevada-Las Vegas basketball coach Jerry Tarkanian.

UTAH

Electoral Votes: 6
Expected Presidential Result: Safe Romney

Key Congressional Races

House 4th District: Jim Matheson (D-incumbent) vs. Mia Love (R)

What to Expect

The networks will call Utah for Romney when the polls close at 10 p.m. eastern.

In the newly created 4th House District, Congressman **Jim Matheson** (D) tries once again to prevail in heavily Republican Utah's most politically balanced district. Utah Republicans have been trying to get rid of him for years, but have never had as strong a candidate as **Mia Love** (R), an African-American Mormon mayor of a small community. Although some see this race as a tossup, look for Love to win this seat and become a rising star in the Republican Party.

MONTANA

Electoral Votes: 3
Expected Presidential Result: Safe Romney

Key Congressional Races

Senate: Jon Tester (D-incumbent) vs. Denny Rehberg (R)

What to Expect

The networks will probably call Montana for Romney when the polls close at 10 p.m. eastern. Although Montana was decided by only 3 percent in 2008, Obama is not likely to perform as well here this year.

Montana has one of the nation's top Senate races, as Senator **Jon Tester** (D) is a slight underdog against Congressman **Denny Rehberg** (R). Tester barely won in 2006, a great year for Democrats, against a flawed Republican candidate. Rehberg may narrowly flip this seat to the GOP.

States With Poll Closings at 11 p.m. Eastern

Electoral Votes

<i>Obama</i>	<i>Romney</i>	<i>Toss-Ups</i>
78	4	0

CALIFORNIA

Electoral Votes: 55
Expected Presidential Result: Safe Obama

Key Congressional Races

House 7th District: Dan Lungren (R-incumbent) vs. Ami Bera (D)
House 9th District: Jerry McNerney (D-incumbent) vs. Ricky Gill (R)
House 10th District: Jeff Denham (R-incumbent) vs. Jose Hernandez (D)
House 24th District: Lois Capps (D-incumbent) vs. Abel Maldonado (R)
House 26th District: Julia Brownley (D) vs. Tony Strickland (R)
House 36th District: Mary Bono Mack (R-incumbent) vs. Raul Ruiz (D)
House 52nd District: Brian Bilbray (R-incumbent) vs. Scott Peters (D)

What to Expect

The networks will call California for Obama when the polls close at 11 p.m. eastern.

Redistricting created a number of competitive House races for several members who had not seen difficult contests in some time, if ever. Four Republican incumbents and two Democratic incumbents will have to win tough battles to get back to Washington, and one open seat is probably leaning Democratic. In the 7th District, Congressman **Dan Lungren** (R) faces physician and educator **Ami Bera** (D), who has gotten a lot of buzz in the lead-up to November. Also in northern California, **Jose Hernandez** (D), a former engineer and astronaut, has received considerable support among liberal groups in his race to unseat Congressman **Jeff Denham** (R-10th). In southern California, two Republican incumbents are having serious trouble in reconfigured districts. Congresswoman **Mary Bono Mack** (R-36th), the widow of Sonny Bono, faces another progressive favorite, physician **Raul Ruiz** (D), and Congressman **Brian Bilbray** (R-52nd) is an underdog against economist **Scott Peters** (D). Among Democrats facing tough races, Congressman **Jerry McNerney** (D-9th) is in a battle with businessman **Ricky Gill** (R), and Congresswoman **Lois Capps** (D-24th) is a slight favorite over former Lt. Gov. **Abel Maldonado** (R). And in a key open seat on the Pacific coast in southern California, Democratic state legislator **Julia Brownley** is favored to win the 26th District seat against Republican legislator **Tony Strickland**.

WASHINGTON

Electoral Votes: 12
Expected Presidential Result: Safe Obama

Key Congressional Races
None

What to Expect

The networks will call Washington for Obama when the polls close at 11 p.m. eastern.

OREGON

Electoral Votes: 7
Expected Presidential Result: Safe Obama

Key Congressional Races
None

What to Expect

Oregon's vote-by-mail system may delay the call here, but Obama will win.

HAWAII

Electoral Votes: 4
Expected Presidential Result: Safe Obama

Key Congressional Races
None

What to Expect

The networks will call Hawaii for Obama when the polls close at 11 p.m. eastern.

IDAHO

Electoral Votes: 4
Expected Presidential Result: Safe Romney

Key Congressional Races
None

What to Expect

The networks will call Idaho for Romney when the polls close at 11 p.m. eastern.

States With Poll Closings at 1 a.m. Eastern

Electoral Votes

<i>Obama</i>	<i>Romney</i>	<i>Toss-Ups</i>
0	3	0

ALASKA

Electoral Votes: 3

Expected Presidential Result: Safe Romney

Key Congressional Races

None

What to Expect

The networks will call Alaska for Romney when the polls close at 11 p.m. eastern.

Total Expected Electoral Votes

<i>Obama</i>	<i>Romney</i>	<i>Toss-Ups</i>
243	235	60

Toss-up states

Ohio (18)

Virginia (13)

Wisconsin (10)

Colorado (9)

Iowa (6)

New Hampshire (4)