



Michigan COMMENTARY

PREVIEW OF THE 1988 NATIONAL ELECTIONS

By Craig Ruff and Diane Drago

This commentary assesses the early prospects in the November 1988 elections for the presidency, the U.S. Senate, and the U.S. House of Representatives. Included is a state-by-state summary of the congressional races that sets forth the partisan makeup of each U.S. House delegation, indicates which U.S. Senate seats are up for election, and previews the likely U.S. Senate candidates and their prospects.

The Presidency

The earliest primaries and caucuses have left no clear indication as to which pair of GOP and Democratic candidates will face each other in November. The national media have made each caucus and primary a make-or-break event for one or more candidates (indeed, Babbitt, Haig, and du Pont broke). The media have now made Super Tuesday (March 8) the Armageddon of 1988.

After a year of traipsing through corn fields and snowed-under villages and spending somewhere between \$10-15 million on organization and advertising, neither party's presidential flock has a clear shepherd. No candidate has yet turned on the American voting public; no candidate has molded a campaign around a theme that grabs the public's mind; no candidate has clearly established himself as the leader for the nineties; and no candidate can yet be rated the odds-on favorite to measure the curtains in the White House next January.

The Republicans

The Republicans have the clearer choice and narrower field: It will be Dole or Bush. The current GOP presidential race is the most competitive since Eisenhower faced off against Taft in 1952--and potentially the most bitter. The images of both Bush and Dole are suffering from the testiness of their rhetoric. Bush has spent the past seven years rising above his moderate instincts. By clinging to the cloak of Reagan, Bush has increased his chances of nomination but somewhat diminished his chances of winning the general election. (Reagan's name will not be on the ballot, and voters will measure Bush's vision more than his experience.) Many Republicans believe Dole would be the stronger nominee; his appeal to Democrats and Independents stems from a fairly strong impression of him as a man of compassion. In fact, Dole would likely be the favorite to win in November against any Democrat if he can get the nomination. Robertson remains a wild card in this race. The true test of his appeal and strength will be in the primary elections of Super Tuesday; his organizational prowess in caucuses has already been established.

Our best guess: Bush will win a clear victory in the numerous primaries and caucuses of March 8 and gain the nomination on the first ballot. Dole lacks the organizational muscle to beat Bush in the home stretch.

The Democrats

The Democrats are making history--at least in modern times--by limping toward the convention with no clear favorite for a first-ballot nomination. Not since 1952 has either party had to go beyond one ballot at the nominating convention. Dukakis appears to be the only Democrat with a chance of blowing away the rest of the field; to do so, he must win a plurality of Super Tuesday delegates. Dukakis is running on the "You Can Trust Me, I'm a Good Manager" theme, à la Jimmy Carter--a theme that hardly excites Democrats, particularly the New Deal variety. Labor favors Gephardt as the nominee, but Big Labor is afraid of making a choice too early in the unsettled process. Gore is many Democrats' dream for vice president in 1988 or president in 1996, when he will be all of 48 years old. Simon lost his chance in Iowa, and Jackson never had one.

Our best guess: If Dukakis carries the South, a first-ballot nomination is his. It is more likely, however, that Jackson will make a strong showing in the South, and no one will enter the convention with enough delegates to wheel-and-deal his way to a first-ballot nomination. The result could be a brokered Democratic convention, which would likely consider noncandidates Mario Cuomo, Bill Bradley, Sam Nunn, and even Lee Iaccoca as well as the announced contenders. The noncandidates, however, have not yet endured the microscopic examination of the national media, and so it is virtually impossible to predict where a brokered convention might lead. In any event, whichever candidate emerges from Super Tuesday as the real or perceived winner will be able to wield a fair amount of influence at the convention.

The Outcome

We predict that the GOP will retain the White House. The Republican edge in the electoral college is considerable; almost 200 of the 270 votes needed are firmly in the GOP camp, barring a serious economic downturn. The Democrats can count on fewer than 100. The Republican candidate needs to win barely one-third of the swing states to gain a majority.

It is difficult to envision Dukakis, Cuomo, or Bradley having enough appeal to the more conservative, southern, western, and plains' voters to make one of them a national winner. The Republicans' Achilles' heel, however, is the economy. In good times, partisan loyalties, an inclination to support the party in power, and assessments of the candidates' character, experience, and vision make the difference in voter decisions. In bad times, many voters put these factors aside and vote their pocketbook. The best predictor in calling the 1988 presidential election is the state of the economy.

The Congress

The U.S. House of Representatives has 435 members; all are up for election every two years. In the U.S. Senate, the 100 members have staggered six-year terms; one-third are up at each biennial election. The exhibit on the next page lays out the present composition of the two houses and summarizes our predictions for the November national elections.

<u>1988 U.S. CONGRESSIONAL AND SENATE RACES</u>		
	<u>HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES</u>	<u>SENATE</u>
Total Democratic seats presently held	256 ^a	54
Total Republican seats presently held	177	46
Democratic seats up for reelection	258 ^a	18
Republican seats up for reelection	177	15
Secure Democratic seats	218	11
Secure Republican seats	135	8
Democratic seats that could go Republican	31 ^b	4
Republican seats that could go Democratic	29 ^b	5
Questionable Democratic seats	9 ^c	3
Questionable Republican seats	13 ^c	2
PREDICTION	The Republicans could make a net gain of 10-15 seats, especially if there is a Republican presidential winner.	No change anticipated. The Senate should retain its present ratio of 54 Democrats to 46 Republicans.
^a There is one vacant seat in Virginia at present due to the death of Democratic Congressman Dan Daniel and one vacant seat in Louisiana due to Democratic Congressman Buddy Roemer becoming governor.		
^b The incumbent won the 1986 election by between 52 and 60 percent.		
^c The incumbent won the 1986 election by 52 percent or less.		

The U.S. Senate

The current 54-46 Democratic edge in the Senate is likely to be maintained. Of the 33 seats to be contested, seven Democratic seats are in some jeopardy, as are seven Republican seats. Eleven Democrats and eight Republicans seem safe.

Some Senate races promise to be close and exciting. Watch California, where incumbent Pete Wilson (R) and likely challenger Lt. Governor Leo McCarthy (D) will set new records for spending. Florida will be entertaining; incumbent Democrat Lawton Chiles is retiring, and it is likely that GOP Congressman Connie Mack will square off against former Democratic Governor Reubin Askew. Minnesota Republican Dave Durenberger will be challenged by Hubert H. Humphrey, III, whose father and mother both held the seat. New Jersey pits Democratic incumbent Frank Lautenberg against Heisman-trophy winner and former Brigadier General Pete Dawkins. In Ohio, maverick Democrat Howard Metzenbaum will face a stiff challenge from Cleveland Mayor George Voinovich.

Michigan's Don Riegle is virtually assured of reelection. The Republicans, still divided over the internecine state convention delegate wars, cannot hope to close ranks behind a candidate to oppose Riegle--although not even a unified GOP and a unity candidate could defeat him this year. Unlike 1984, when Republican challenger Jack Lousma came much closer than expected to beating Senator Carl Levin, there will be no Reagan coattails and no GOP presidential landslide in Michigan.

The U.S. House of Representatives

The current 256-177 Democratic majority (there are two vacant seats) is in no peril, but the Democrats could lose 10 to 15 seats--a few more if an anticipated Republican landslide develops--particularly if the GOP presidential

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candidate runs strong. Two-thirds of all House seats in 1986 were won by more than 60 percent of the vote (218 by Democrats and 135 by Republicans). The commanding Democratic edge in the House is evidenced by the fact that Democrats would retain control even if the GOP captured every seat won by Democrats by less than 60 percent of the vote in 1986.

Two Republican congressmen from Michigan can expect fairly strong Democratic challenges, although both remain odds-on favorites to retain their seats. Bob Davis (R-11th District) will face State Senator Mitch Irwin (D-Sault Ste. Marie). Carl Pursell (R-2nd District) likely will be challenged by State Senator Lana Pollack (D-Ann Arbor), who first must get through a primary.

The Democrats would love to unseat Bill Schuette in the sprawling 10th District, which extends from the Lansing city limits to Traverse City, and the Republicans would love to unseat Bob Carr, in the Lansing-to-Pontiac 6th District; neither party, however, seems able to field a strong opposing candidate.

The best chance of a significant upheaval in Michigan's congressional delegation will be in 1992, when reapportionment will cost the state one or two seats. Which district or districts are eliminated, which incumbents choose to retire, and which party controls the redistricting will determine the extent of the 1992 shake-up.

We hope that you find this commentary of interest. We welcome your reactions.

1988 ELECTIONS

State	CURRENT CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION		SENATE RACES	
	Democrats	Republicans	Incumbent	Challengers/Comment
Alabama	5	2	no Senate race in 1988	
Alaska	0	1	no Senate race in 1988	
Arizona	1	4	Dennis DeConcini (D)	Keith DeGreen (R) - businessman Other Republicans may enter the primary but DeConcini is expected to win reelection.
Arkansas	3	1	no Senate race in 1988	
California	27	18	Pete Wilson (R)	Leo McCarthy (D) - current lt. governor Bill Press (D) - KABC-TV commentator Wilson seems fairly secure, but McCarthy could provide a close race.
Colorado	3	3	no Senate race in 1988	
Connecticut	3	3	Lowell P. Weicker, Jr. (R)	Gary Johnson (D) - veterans' rights activist Joseph Lieberman (D) - state attorney general Weicker could be beaten. Lieberman raised approximately \$375,000 during the last five weeks of 1987 and appears to be mounting a tough race.
Delaware	1	0	William V. Roth, Jr. (R)	Samuel Beard (D) - civic activist Democratic state Senator Harris McDowell and Thomas Connolly, former aide to Senator Biden, are considering entering the race. Lt. Governor S.B. Woo (D) is also considering. Roth could be vulnerable. He won by 55 percent in 1982.
Florida	12	7	Lawton Chiles (D)	Congressman Connie Mack (R) Reubin Askew (D) - former governor Congressman Dan Mica (D) The race should be one of the closest in the nation.
Georgia	8	2	no Senate race in 1988	
Hawaii	1	1	Spark Matsunaga (D)	No Republican candidate has announced. Matsunaga is secure.
Idaho	1	1	no Senate race in 1988	
Illinois	13	9	no Senate race in 1988	

CURRENT
CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION

SENATE RACES

<u>State</u>	<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Republicans</u>	<u>Incumbent</u>	<u>Challengers/Comment</u>
Indiana	6	4	Richard Lugar (R)	Jack Wickes (D) - Indianapolis attorney (Gary Hart supporter in 1984) Lugar should win easily.
Iowa	2	4	no Senate race in 1988	
Kansas	2	3	no Senate race in 1988	
Kentucky	4	3	no Senate race in 1988	
Louisiana	4	3	no Senate race in 1988	
	A special election will be held on 3/8/88 to fill the seat vacated by Buddy Roemer (D). There are 8 congressional districts in Louisiana.			
Maine	1	1	George Mitchell (D)	No Democratic primary. No Republican candidate has announced, but Jack Wyman, executive director of the Christian Civic League of Maine, is considering. Mitchell is expected to retain his seat.
Maryland	6	2	Paul Sarbanes (D)	Robert Kaufman (D) - businessman Emerson Sweatt (D) - businessman Nine Republicans have entered the primary. Sarbanes seems fairly secure; he won by 64 percent in 1982. In the Republican primary, the local press is expecting either businessman Thomas Blair or former Democratic-state-legislator-turned-Republican Patrick McDonough to win.
Massachusetts	10	1	Edward M. Kennedy (D)	No Republican has announced. Kennedy's seat is secure.
Michigan	11	7	Donald Riegle (D)	Jim Dunn (R) - former congressman James Elsmar (R) - attorney Robert Huber (R) - former congressman Armand Velardo (R) - attorney Riegle is secure.
Minnesota	5	3	Dave Durenberger (R)	Hubert H. Humphrey III (D) - state attorney general Durenberger seems fairly safe, but Humphrey should make it a close race.

CURRENT
CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION

SENATE RACES

<u>State</u>	<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Republicans</u>	<u>Incumbent</u>	<u>Challengers/Comment</u>
Mississippi	4	1	John Stennis (D) RETIRING	<p>Congressman Trent Lott (R) Congressman Wayne Dowdy (D) Dick Molpus (D) - secretary of state Gilbert Fontaine (D) - businessman</p> <p>No clear favorite as of now. In the Democratic primary, Dowdy and Molpus are the serious candidates in a close primary race.</p>
Missouri	5	4	John Danforth (R)	<p>Jeremiah Nixon (D) - state senator</p> <p>Danforth should win easily.</p>
Montana	1	1	John Melcher (D)	<p>Conrad Burns (R) - radio broadcaster Jack McDonald (R) - former state senator</p> <p>Melcher could be vulnerable--a midsummer poll showed that only 37 percent of the voters were inclined to reelect him.</p>
Nebraska	0	3	David Karnes (R)	<p>Congressman Hal Daub (R) Robert Kerrey (D) - former governor</p> <p>The primary between Daub and Karnes is expected to be close. The November race is a toss up.</p>
Nevada	1	1	Chic Hecht (R)	<p>Richard H. Bryan (D) - governor</p> <p>Hecht is very vulnerable. Some polls have shown Bryan ahead by as much as 3 to 1.</p>
New Hampshire	0	2	no Senate race in 1988	
New Jersey	8	6	Frank R. Lautenberg (D)	<p>Pete Dawkins (R) - retired brigadier general</p> <p>Republicans feel they have a chance to beat Lautenberg with Dawkins, who won the Heisman trophy while at West Point.</p>
New Mexico	1	2	Jeff Bingaman (D)	<p>Joe Carraro (R) - state senator Corky Morris (R) - GOP state chairman Rick Montoya (R) - former assistant secretary of the interior William Valentine (R) - president pro-tem of the state Senate</p> <p>Bingaman may be vulnerable. Montoya is considered strong, but state Senator Joe Carraro could give him a good race.</p>

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SENATE RACES

<u>State</u>	<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Republicans</u>	<u>Incumbent</u>	<u>Challengers/Comment</u>
New York	20	14	Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D)	No Republican challenger has announced. Moynihan is in no trouble now that U.S. Attorney Ralph Guilliane has opted not to run.
North Carolina	8	3	no Senate race in 1988	
North Dakota	1	0	Quentin Burdick (D)	Jack Dalrymple (R) - state representative Dale Sandstorm (R) - public service commissioner Earl Strinden (R) - state House leader Steve Sydness (R) - Fargo businessman Burdick should retain the seat.
Ohio	11	10	Howard Metzenbaum (D)	Congressman Bob McEwen (R) George Voinovich (R) - Cleveland mayor Metzenbaum is considered vulnerable. Voinovich has been successful in raising money--Reagan made an appearance in January and helped raise \$300,000 for him.
Oklahoma	4	2	no Senate race in 1988	
Oregon	3	2	no Senate race in 1988	
Pennsylvania	12	11	John Heinz (R)	Joseph Vignola (D) - Philadelphia city comptroller Heinz seems secure.
Rhode Island	1	1	John Chafee (R)	Lt. Governor Richard Licht (D) Chafee could be vulnerable. Licht is expected to be a strong candidate.
South Carolina	4	2	no Senate race in 1988	
South Dakota	1	0	no Senate race in 1988	
Tennessee	6	3	Jim Sasser (D)	Bill Anderson (R) - Johnson City attorney Sasser should win easily unless former GOP Governor Lamar Alexander decides to enter the race.
Texas	17	10	Lloyd Bentsen (D)	Congressman Beau Boulter (R) Milton Fox (R) - former state representative Ned Snead (R) - businessman Bentsen should retain the seat.

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SENATE RACES

<u>State</u>	<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Republicans</u>	<u>Incumbent</u>	<u>Challengers/Comment</u>
Utah	1	2	Orrin Hatch (R)	Brian Moss (D) - Salt Lake City businessman and son of Frank Moss who lost to Hatch in 1976. Hatch should win easily.
Vermont	0	1	Robert Stafford (R) RETIRING	Congressman Jim Jeffords (R) William Gray (D) - attorney Jeffords is heavily favored at this time.
Virginia	4	5	Paul Trible (R)	Charles Robb (D) - former governor No Republican has announced, but former Congressman Robert Daniel, retired Major General Jerry Curry, Customs Commissioner William von Raab, and a former aide to Senator Warner are considering. Robb seems likely to win at this point.
Washington	5	3	Dan Evans (R) RETIRING	Congressman Don Bonker (D) Congressman Mike Lowry (D) Washington lobbyist, and former advisor to President Ford, Doug Smith is expected to announce his candidacy for the Republican nomination. Former Senator Slade Gorton and GOP State Chair Jennifer Dunn are said to be considering. The seat could go Democratic.
West Virginia	4	0	Robert C. Byrd (D)	No Republican has announced. Byrd seems secure.
Wisconsin	5	4	William Proxmire (D) RETIRING	Susan Engeleiter (R) - state Senate leader Steven King (R) - state Republican chairman Anthony Earl (D) - former governor Ed Garvey (D) - attorney for NFL Players Union who ran unsuccessfully for the seat in 1986 Congressman Jim Moody (D) There is no clear cut choice in this race. Either party could win it. The Democratic primary race should be close.
Wyoming	0	1	Malcolm Wallop (R)	Pete Maxfield (D) - dean of law at University of Wyoming John Vinich (D) - state senator Wallop should win easily.

A special election will be held for Congressman Daniels' vacant seat. There are 10 congressional seats in Virginia.