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When Issue Ownership is Not Enough: A Look At the  
Battle For the U.S. Senate in Television Advertising  
(2008-2014)

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study seeks to broaden the understanding of the issues in which political candidates utilise in campaign television advertising in the United States. Specifically, this includes political party ‘owned’ issues and the interaction of issue salience and public opinion upon the types of appeals that candidate use. This is examined in a sample set of competitive U.S. Senate election campaigns in 2008, 2010, 2012 and 2014. The hypotheses presented based on prior research stated that issues categorised as salient would constitute a majority of television ad issue appeals and that public opinion would closely mirror those results by no more than ten per cent. Instead, what the analysis found was that issue salience only constituted a majority of issue appeals in 2008 and a plurality in 2012. Secondly, public opinion issue appeals aligned within 10 per cent of issue salient appeals in the midterm elections of 2010 and 2014, but not in the Presidential election years of 2008 and 2012. Why is this? This study suggests that issue appeals in television advertising may be contextualised not solely by national issue salience and opinion but depending if the election is a Presidential or a midterm. In addition, issues in Senate elections are suggested to be dependent not only on national but local constituency issue salience.

## **CHAPTER I.**

### **Introduction**

Political analysts, researchers and voters have long recognised and associated political parties in the United States with specific issues. Political issues are at the core of election campaigning. Consequently, the question that political researchers have repeatedly pondered is how do political campaigns decide which issues are central to achieving victory on Election Day. Political parties ‘own’ certain issues, however issue ownership alone is not enough for political campaigns; issue salience and public opinion are likely to factor into decisions when creating campaign strategies. Although the preeminent literature relating to political issues is oriented toward Presidential election campaigns (Petrocik, 1996; Petrocik et al., 2003) around which issue ownership theory was developed, others have attempted to analyse issue agendas from U.S. Senate campaigns (Brasher, 2003). This is precipitated on the idea that Senate campaigns address national issues more often than other Congressional races. In other words, Senate candidates speak to issues that affect the nation as opposed to candidates for the House of Representatives, whose campaigns often address local issue agendas. An earlier study suggested there is no conclusive evidence that Senate campaigns overly rely on party issues or issue salience (Sides, 2007: 482-483). However, few studies have attempted to examine issue messaging in recent Senate campaigns.

Often, voters’ primary interaction with candidates is via television advertising in the United States. In fact, television advertising has been one of the most potent forms of messaging for political campaigns to disseminate issue positions to the electorate (Brazeal and Benoit, 2001; Brians and Wattenburg, 1996). Although campaign television adverts are central to information dissemination to the electorate

(Walgrave and De Swert, 2007). Campaign video advertising is oriented toward the desires of the electorate, taking into account those voters predisposed to voting for a particular candidate (Ansolabehere and Iyengar, 1994). Campaign television advertising has been found to focus on issues not candidates (Kaid and Johnston, 2001). In addition, research seems to indicate that the issues in which campaigns focus on in their television advertising involve bidirectional flows of information between the media, the electorate and the campaigns themselves. This advances the question of what types of issues are raised by recent United States Senate campaign television adverts and how they intersect with one another.

This dissertation will examine these issues through a qualitative content analysis of television campaign advertisements for United States Senate campaigns from the period of 2008-2014. This study will focus on a subset of election campaigns deemed competitive for where interaction of issue salience and public opinion will be assessed against party owned issues. This will be measured through manual content analysis of 228 campaign ad transcripts. Issue appeals will be calculated against one another, along with an analysis of the findings and their relevance to the larger academic body of research in this area of study.

## **CHAPTER II.**

### **Literature Review**

Prior literature seems to indicate that political campaigns are effectively akin to marketing operations that serve to promote the candidate for office, while appealing to the widest possible swath of citizens that may be convinced to vote for party's particular candidate (Petrocik, 1996). Voters, in turn, often can be motivated to select candidates whose issue positions closely match their own. These views may not be static, but they are conditioned by the economic or political issues of the day in which a campaign takes place. Campaigns also attempt to shape the issue agenda of the political races in they field candidates (Banda, 2013). In contrast, other research has found that campaigns cannot effectively influence voters unless an issue is considered significant (Bélanger and Meguid, 2008). Utilising these findings, one may draw the conclusion that campaigns are more susceptible to issue salience than not. Political campaigns have limited ability to set the agenda and are predisposed to influence by external factors.

#### ***2.1 Issue Ownership and Party Competence***

Political party issue ownership is conferred on political parties through long standing political processes, which enable parties to become identified with a certain stand on specific issues (Petrocik, 1996). First identified within this context by researchers Budge and Farlie (1983) it was Petrocik who popularised issue ownership theory in 1996. The theory states that voters select political parties that correlate with owned issues and policy competence (Bélanger and Meguid, 2008). This has been referred to as 'the issue-ownership theory of voting' (Petrocik et al., 2003: 600). In addition, campaigns often seek to use the criteria by which voters select a candidate



utilising a process called ‘heresthetic change’ (Riker, 1990). This may be achieved through campaign priming and by changing which issues that voters find salient before and during a political campaign (Branda, 2013: 447-448). Candidates will attempt to bring forth issues that advantage them through repeated discussion during the campaign (Brasher, 2003; Branda, 2013). Voters not simply driven by ideology will be driven to vote for candidates or parties that they feel may be best equipped to deal with a particular problem or set of issues facing their constituency (Petrocik et al., 2003: 600). This is largely distinct from policy or issue voters who consistently vote on issues despite issue saliency (Petrocik et al, 2003, Brody and Page, 1972). Petrocik et al., state that voters are largely ‘pragmatic’ and are drawn toward a party’s issue ‘reputation’; therefore issue ownership is a key component to campaign strategy (2003: 600). Conversely, party issue ownership may only have limited utility because voters are driven toward consensus issues for which there are little variance in opinion (Egan, 2013). Egan states this is a new facet to party issue ownership, the consensus issue. This may be way campaigns tend to converge on similar issues such as the deficit, jobs and taxes. If Egan is correct, this is a potential weakness of Petrocik’s ownership theory, or at least an unexplored dimension. On the other hand, Petrocik addressed some of these concerns (but not wholly) with the classification of performance issues, separate from party owned issues.

Issue ownership is largely considered stable and firm. Attributed to long-standing reputations for which parties build through campaigns and policy (Petrocik, 1996). However, other research has stated that issue ownership may be unstable, affected by voter concerns, public opinion and a party’s legislative record while in office (Sides, 2007: 483; Pope and Woon, 2008: 7-8). The stability of issue

ownership is of concern, as this can be a control variable for which researchers use to measure campaign messaging against issue salience and public opinion.

While research is largely centred on issue ownership theory, Branda (2013) broadens this to include what he terms ‘issue agendas’, or issues that can be practically and cognitively linked to one another (449). Branda argues that issues alone are difficult to conceptualise for a voter, however by discussing of a ‘larger set’ of policy positions, candidates can provide the public with knowledge that builds engagement between citizens and the politician (449). Issue agendas do not conflict with Petrocik’s (1996) issue ownership theory.

Parties are representative of their constituent voters. The link between political parties owned ‘issue agenda and the social characteristics of its supporters is quite strong’ (Petrocik, 1996: 828). Issue ownership is driven by voter perception, which may not align with the reality of how political parties have dealt with an issue in the past (Walgrave and De Swert, 2007). In addition, it is argued that issue ownership helps facilitate cognitive decision-making for the voter when making a decision as to whom they prefer (Bélanger and Meguid, 2008). Brasher (2003) confirms this conclusion stating that there is a ‘26% increase in the likelihood that a candidate will discuss [a party owned issue], if he or she is a member of the party that has the better reputation for handling that particular issue’ (464). Voters are susceptible to campaign messaging, along with issue salience, which can define the margin between success and failure (Petrocik et al., 2003: 601-602). Petrocik et al. (2003) states that issue ownership theory’s ‘empirical underpinning’ is that although policy preferences of voters change slowly, the electorate reacts to what it believes are the most important issues relevant at the period of an election (602). The process of cultivating

and benefiting from issue association and issue salience can be characterised as an organic process between the political party and the voter.

Party partisanship has been increasing over the past twenty years (Hetherington, 2001: 628-629). This assertion should indicate that party issue ownership is key to mobilising party voters. In addition, partisan issues should assist in voter choice and party identification. These owned issues provide an identity to voters, cognitively allowing members of the electorate to coalesce around sets of issues that will provide the basis for political power (Hinich and Munger, 1996: 82). In this sense, issues owned by political parties are essential to policy voting behaviour.

In addition to long-standing issue ownership, political parties are also evaluated by their performance while in political office. Petrocik (1996) terms these as 'performance issues'. Parties or individual politicians will be assessed on their accomplishments or behaviour while in elected office. These performance issues can advantage a challenger when voters judge that an incumbent candidate or party is unable to handle current policy issues (Petrocik, 1996: 827). Often, this is seen during U.S. mid-term elections when an incumbent President's party loses seats in Congress. This has been linked to issues of economic performance, foreign policy or Presidential unpopularity (Abramowitz et al., 1986). Short-term performance issues can overwhelm long-standing issue associations during an election campaign.

## ***2.2 Political parties, the Media and Advertising***

The news media often reinforce political party issue ownership. This includes both short-term performance and long standing political policy issues. An issue may be associated with a party if the media reports that association repeatedly over a

prolonged period. This can be attributed, in part, to the agenda-setting power of the media (Petrocik et al., 2003). While political reporting in the United States is often centred on candidates rather than political parties, candidates can be seen as representative of their respective parties for which they claim affiliation (Walgrave and De Swert, 2007: 54). However, unlike in parliamentary systems, political candidates are not required to adhere to party platforms or party messaging in U.S. campaigns. On the other hand, media reporting is instrumental in linking party owned issues to candidates (Petrocik et al., 2003). Walgrave and De Swert (2007) certainly found this to be true in their study of Belgian politics. Casual observation suggests this may also be the case in the United States.

The news media reporting also has a demonstrated effect on how voters cognitively evaluate political candidates. Ansolabehere and Iyengar (1994) found that citizens associate higher profile news coverage with which party is best rated as being competent with dealing with a particular issue (348). For example, Ansolabehere and Iyengar stated in the early 1990s, during the Los Angeles riots, voters associated solutions with crime and civil unrest with a preference for the Republican Party (348). This was because the Republicans were associated as best to deal with issues of law and order. In Presidential campaigns, Petrocik et al. (2003) discovered that media reporting was more oft to focus on Republican owned issues. The researchers speculate this is an inherent bias that voters have toward Republican issues such as defence, crime and taxes. This is an effect of media agenda setting power and how it can influence voter behaviour even if the effect is unintended.

Media reporting is only but a part of the overall media strategy that political campaigns utilise. Campaigns in the United States use television advertising in an attempt to mobilise voters. Voters, over long periods may cognitively associate

political parties or candidates with past political advertising (Popkin, 1991). This includes policy association which voters associate with parties' ability to best handle certain issues (Petrocik, 1992). Strategists consider 'voters' political predispositions', when creating television (or radio) campaign advertisements (Ansolabehere and Iyengar, 1994: 335). Voters inform parties and vice versa. This is not to say that campaign advertising is solely centred on political issues; many political commercials focus on 'candidate qualities' (Benoit and Airne, 2007: 494). This may encompass ads that can be characterised as positive, neutral or negative.

The relative importance of television adverts by political campaigns cannot be understated. Research has shown that voters tend to use television advertising to make decisions about for whom to vote to the detriment of other forms of political media (Brians and Wattenberg, 1996: 185). Political television advertising is suggested to be more effective at conveying issue positions of candidate than any other medium (Just et al., 1990: 131). Low information voters may exclusively obtain their only exposure to campaign issues through television advertising (Herrnson and Patterson, 2000). Other work despites this finding, stating that viewers do not substantively recall issue appeals from advertising (Faber and Storey, 1984). Despite this finding, campaigns have been found to centre on issues, rather than candidates at the Presidential level (Kaid and Johnston, 2001). This has been reinforced by additional studies by Democratic party campaigns for President were more likely to emphasise issues in the ads than Republican candidates (71% to 62%) (Kaid and Johnston, 2001: 95). A study by Freeman et al. (2004), found that nearly during 2000 that 90% of all television campaign ads had some issue mentions or appeals (727).

Research has stated that in past U.S. elections, by en large there have been differences between the ratio of positive versus negative advertising when comparing

Presidential versus Congressional campaign commercials. A comparison of Presidential (1984-2000) and Congressional (1986-2000) by Brazeal and Benoit (2001) found that Congressional advertising was significantly judged to have more positive messages than Presidential campaign adverts. In fact, Presidential campaign commercials were found to be, by and large, categorised as categorically more negative. Kaid (2006) stated that negative campaign ads have been utilised in Presidential contests substantively over the past 50 years (42-43). Additionally, it has been inferred that campaigns that use more positive character or issue appeals than negative are more likely to win election (Benoit, 1999).

Brazeal and Benoit found that Congressional advertising centred on issues more often than the aforementioned candidate qualities by a ratio of 70% to 30% (2001: 447). Presidential campaigns are distinct from Congressional elections because of the effect of personalisation and character qualities on campaign strategy (Brazeal and Benoit, 2001). Electing a national executive will focus on issues of leadership and character qualities, that are not as valued in most legislative officials, whose media exposure is limited in comparison to candidates for President.

Through it has been shown that candidates tend to be more successful when their television ads centre on issues owned by their respective political parties (Ansolabehere and Iyengar, 1994; Benoit and Airne, 2007). Ansolabehere and Iyengar (1994) stated that political candidates were perceived to be more credible when they produced advertising on associated party issues. This does not take into account voters' inclinations. Kaid (2006) states that undecided and low information voters can utilise campaign adverts to make candidate evaluations. This is mitigated by the voter's interest and intent when viewing the television advertisements (Christ et al., 1994: 263-265). On the other hand, Sides (2007) found no advantage being conferred

by party owned issues and suggested that the manner in which the message was framed was an effective ‘agenda-setting strategy’ (484).

### ***2.3 Public Opinion and Issue Salience Converge***

While political parties will seek to advantage themselves of their owned issue associations, it is disingenuous to assume that all issue associations confer political advantages to candidates. Political parties may lose favour with voters if their issue association can be cognitively linked with poor policy outcomes or shifts in public opinion (Benoit and Airne, 2005). This may encompass the aforementioned performance issues or shifts in public opinion. Political parties may also respond to the political climate by trespassing on another party’s owned issues. This is a perilous strategy, because there is a risk to alienating party issue voters. Conversely, in contrast to other studies has been found that issue trespassing does not negatively affect campaign effectiveness (Sides, 2007).

Issue salience can be defined as topical issues that the electorate identifies as problems that the government should address (Brody and Page: 1972, 455). Voters are likely to be influenced by issue salience despite party issue ownership (Bélanger and Meguid, 2008). It would be difficult for say, a political party to inject an issue such as a pro-environmental message on a large scale during an economic crisis such as the one that originated in the United States in 2008. This would be despite the assertion that voters may believe that the Democratic Party in the United States is better at handling of environmental issues than the Republican Party. Petrocik (1996) aligns with this assertion, stating that issue salience is key to determining if a party or candidate will campaign on its owned issues. When national issues are more ‘salient’, they are likely to influence voting behaviour (Abramowitz et

al., 1986: 566-567). This is of course, variable, and highly dependent on a multitude of factors including the national and local political environment at the time in which an election campaign takes place. On the other hand, Bélanger and Meguid (2008) state that issue salience is only assumed to play a key role and that there is 'rarely a consensus among issue voters' as to the most important issues of the day (479-480). Their findings do positively correlate issue salience with vote choice (Bélanger and Meguid, 2008: 487). Brody and Page (1972) largely concur, stating that issue salience matters to even the most partisan voter. It has been noted that voters may harbour a 'lack of cognitive fidelity' regarding salient issues (Brody and Page, 1972: 456). This should indicate to political candidates that issue ownership alone is not enough; campaign issues must be recent and topical.

Research has struggled how to accurately measure or define salience. Voter choice will impact which issues should be considered of importance. Niemi and Bartels (1985) speculate that voters have difficulty in evaluating issues for which they use to make voting decisions (1219). This is not a foregone conclusion as salient issues are not equally important to all voters (Niemi and Bartels, 1985: 1220). Conversely, other research has measured issue salience simply by asking how important an issue is when considering their vote in an upcoming election (Walgrave et al., 2012). This latter method closely mirrors the method for which this study will draw its measure of issue salience.

Public opinion seems to be the often-discarded key that mediates issue ownership and issue salience. Public opinion should, inform a political campaign if they should use party owned issues in their political campaign. The mediation between public opinion and issue salience has not often been researched at the legislative level, however it has been observed at the Presidential level (Petrocik,



1996). Issue driven Senate campaigns have been analysed; however, they have not substantively drawn together public opinion and issue ownership (Brasher, 2003). Political campaigns have to weigh issues such as mobilising their voters through issue based campaigning while not driving opposition voters to the polls (Branda, 2013). Capitalising on issue salience that corresponds to party owned issues should benefit party affiliated candidates. Parties mobilise issue voters who are galvanised on one or a set of political issue stances (Brody and Page, 1972). Consequently, issue reputation alone does not compel voter interest and that parties need to be ‘concerned about conveying the significance of their issues to the public’ (Bélanger and Meguid, 2008: 489). Issue salience informs which party owned issues political organisations should utilise during a campaign.

The utility of issue salience is limited to campaign strategists. If public opinion and issue salience align an advantage may be conferred on a political campaign. The convergence of salience and public opinion may serve to negatively or positively impact a party or political candidate. An example of this can be seen with the Democratic majority voted into Congress in 2006, which was reaction in part to negative public perception of the War in Iraq and the Republican administration of George W. Bush (Benoit and Airne, 2005: 496). Perceived policy failures may allow competing candidates and parties to trespass on issue associations. A party previously thought of as the most competent to handle an issue can find that they have been negatively impacted by public opinion. This, in turn, may allow for another party to trespass on that issue association. Benoit and Airne (2005) argue that this may risk estrangement of the trespassing party’s core policy voters (496). On the other hand, a party may trespass on an owned issue, not through changing its preferred policy stance, but through a change in public opinion. However it is noted that issue salience

and information do not result changes to public opinion (Carter, 1965). The news media may be a catalyst for changes in public opinion.

The media's agenda setting power has not only the ability to create issue salience, but public opinion (Weaver, 1991; Soroka, 2003). Weaver's (1991) research suggests that issue salience and public opinion are irrevocably linked. Soroka (2003) states that issue salience is positively correlated to public opinion and policy outcomes. Soroka is more cautious than Weaver, stating that the nature of the relationship between issue salience, public opinion and policy outcomes needs further examination. Potential implications of these findings suggest that public opinion is dependent on issue salience.

#### ***2.4 Competition and Issue Convergence***

Research advises that campaigns rated as competitive will produce higher quality analysis for measurement of issue salience and public opinion's effect upon the willingness to campaign on party owned issues. Campaigns are likely to speak to party issues and proposed policy outcomes when a political race is ranked as being competitive. Kaplan et al. (2006) states that competitive campaigns will likely result in a state of 'issue convergence' (733). Issue convergence is where political candidates address the same issue area in their respective campaigns. Other research has stated that political candidates will not address one another in competitive elections, only discussing their own party issue agendas (Simon, 2002; Petrocik, 1996; Spiliotes and Vavreck, 2002). Simon (2002) states that 'no issues can advantage all parties simultaneously' (64). While this can be seen as generally true, it does not take in account the political or news environment that may contextualise an election.

The study conducted by Kaplan et al. (2006) concluded by stating that competitive campaigns are characterised by a higher rate of issue convergence than in non-competitive campaigns. What advantage would issue convergence confer on a candidate when issue ownership theory states that a party will attempt to focus on policy positions that solely benefit that candidate? Current economic, foreign policy or other salient issues may force issue convergence particularly in competitive political campaigns (Sigelman and Buell, 2004). Kaid and Johnston (2001) found that approximately half of all campaign advertising from Democrats and Republicans focused on similar issues, primarily economic (95). Other studies have stated that the electorate's opinion and desires plays a significant role in determining the message that candidates use (Aldrich and Griffin, 2003; Damore, 2005). The media's setting power can be used to force candidates to discuss particularly salient issues, thus forcing candidates to speak to one another's issue positions because of the importance that campaigns believe that the public places on certain issues (Sigelman and Buell, 2004; Herrnson and Patterson, 2000). Sigelman and Buell's research addressed issue convergence in Presidential campaigns whereas research by Ansolabehere and Iyengar (1994) found little support for a riding the wave hypothesis that proposed candidates would tend to converge on salient issues. An important difference between these two concludes is that Ansolabehere and Iyengar centred on Congressional campaigns; where as Sigelman and Buell found the opposite to be true in Presidential contests. Critically, it may be that because Congressional campaigns have a lower media profile, there is little incentive for candidates to converge on similar issues. Importantly, even when issue convergence occurs it does not negate the advantages of a party campaigning on owned issue agendas.

## **2.5 What Message?**

Legislative campaigns have also been critiqued for a lack of policy or issue driven messaging (Brasher, 2003). Many legislative campaigns may be characterised by locally driven appeals or broad sweeping generalisations such stating that a candidate is, for example, a ‘true conservative’ without providing specific policy appeals. Petrocik et al. (2003) concentrates on issue owned agendas in political advertising, discovering that Republicans and Democrats did heavily rely on issue appeals in their television advertising in Presidential campaigns (607-608). Research by Brasher (2003) who discusses issue briefly, stating that issue appeals do constitute a majority of Senate advertising, with approximately 50% of all Senate campaign themes, followed by character, performance and partisanship (456-457). A related study analysed Congressional campaign advertisements from 1986-2000 and found that 70% included mentions of policy positions, the other 30% were character related (Brazeal and Benoit, 2001: 444). Personal qualities were found to be the most important message in character related advertising by 86% (Brazeal and Benoit, 2001: 444).

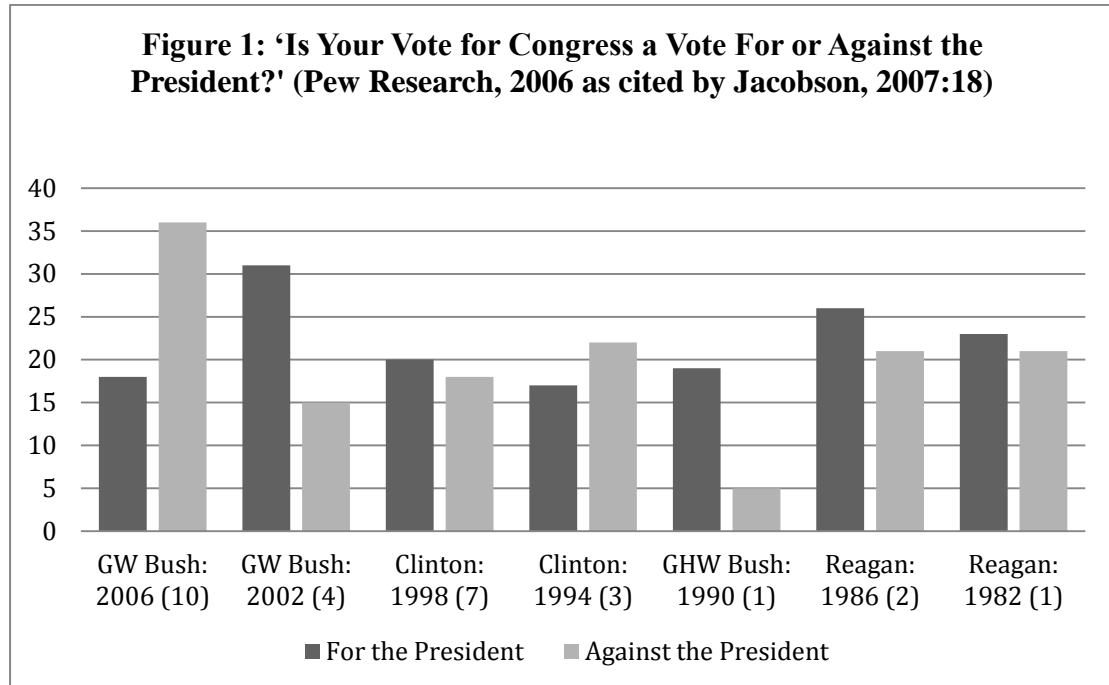
Although Brazeal and Benoit (2001) state that Senate campaigns do use and discuss issues in a majority of campaign messaging, character appeals are a substantive portion. Issue ownership, salience and public opinion are key to this project, however understanding to what degree non-issue appeals are made may provide additional contextual data as to how recent campaigns have been conducted in races for the U.S. Senate.

## ***2.6 Presidential Gains, Midterm Losses***

The subject of this study, Senate campaigns in the United States, will differentiate between Presidential versus non-Presidential election campaigns. Midterm elections are notable for losses of Congressional seats by members of the incumbent President's party. Research by Campbell (1987) and Abramowitz et al. (1986) state that from 1938 until 1994 the President's party lost seats in the U.S. Congress. This trend continued in 2006 through 2014. Exceptions included the 1998 and 2002 midterm elections which both saw small gains for the President's party. The 2002 election, contextualised by the 11 September 2001 terror attacks on Washington D.C. and New York, were arguably linked to the Republican President, George W. Bush and Republican issue ownership of issues of national security and defence. Performance issues can be closely linked with Presidential popularity (Abramowitz et al., 1986). It was found that in, the 1974 and 1982 midterm campaigns; scandal and economic issues (which was termed an 'exogenous variable') were prominent in media reporting both of which dealt losses to the incumbent President's party (Abramowitz et al., 1986: 567). It is important to note that not all midterm losses can be measured equally. Certain elections may be characterised by minor losses, while others may place an opposition party into the majority in the respective legislative chamber. An example of the latter would be the 2006 midterm election that resulted in a net increase of 31 Democratic candidates elected to the House of Representatives and 6 Democrats in the Senate.

Polling data compiled by 'The Pew Research Center' during midterm election from 1982-2006 asked respondents if their vote for Congress was a vote for or against the incumbent President. Surprisingly, with the exception of 1994 and 2006 a majority stated they were voting for the President. However, this data has limited

utility because it does not take into account if the respondent actually voted, their political association or which issues were important to the perspective voter. See Figure 1 for a detailed breakdown of the Pew Research data.



Note: The Number of polls average for each year is in parentheses  
 Source: Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, 'October 2006 Survey on Electoral Competition: Final Topline,' accessed at <http://www.people-press.org/> and cited by Jacobson (2007).

Campbell (1987) stated a theory as to why voters turnout is higher in Presidential election years, yet less so in the Congressional midterm elections. Independent voters are prone to the effects of the salience of Presidential elections, and consequently are prone to the effects of issue handling reputation, issue salience and public opinion. In addition, environments favourable to a political party will lead to a higher turnout of voters predisposed to select that party's candidates (Campbell, 1987). Presidential elections are highly salient and dispose the electorate toward participation. Conversely, midterm elections are characterised as lower profile, and a 'normal' rate of partisanship is found in the voting public. Partisans, who feel disadvantaged by the political climate, may choose not to cast a ballot (Campbell, 1987). Campbell refers to this as the revised theory of surge and decline.

This discussion on issue salience, issue ownership and public opinion, along with the contextual research on the effect of the Presidency on Congressional elections elicits the question, what effect do owned issues have on issue salience, and the role of public opinion? This research proposes to attempt to illuminate these issues in recent U.S. Senate campaigns, specifically within elections held in 2008, 2010, 2012 and 2014. Previous literature does not satisfactorily address the interaction of public opinion and issue salience in conjunction with issue ownership theory in recent Senate campaigns. Thus, the hypothesis is as follows:

Hypothesis 1: Although political parties ‘own’ certain issues, issue salience will take precedence over party issues. Candidates will rely on issue salience for a majority of issue appeals in campaign ads.

Hypothesis 1b: The overall percentage of advertisement issue appeals that align with issue salience will closely align with public opinion by no more than 10 per cent of all issue appeals analysed.

Prior academic work has struggled to centre on singular definitions of issue salience and public opinion; this review of pertinent literature and the forthcoming proposed methodology should satisfactorily address these concerns. This research will take a direct and straightforward approach toward examining the effect of issue salience and public opinion on Senate campaigns over the past seven years.

## CHAPTER III.

### Methodology

This project aims to assess United States Senate campaigns from 2008, 2010, 2012 and 2014 to see if political parties campaigned on their ‘owned’ issues. These owned issues would be justified by linking existing polling data on what political parties are ranked as having higher levels of competence on a particular set of policies. This may generally include, for example, health care, care for the poor or the environment as Democratic Party owned competences, whereas the Republican Party is likely to be rated as having higher competences on issues of social morality, cutting taxes and national defence. Through this ‘lens’ an examination will be made using a qualitative content analysis of television advertising. Public opinion data will be sourced to contrast against issue salience and campaign messaging. This research will be effectively a combination of primary research into the campaigns compared against data collected by the Polling Report ([www.pollingreport.com](http://www.pollingreport.com)).

The sample criteria for selecting Senate races for examination is proposed to as follows: races determined by the *Cook Political Report* to be rated as ‘toss up’ by polling conducted prior to Labour Day of the year of the Senate election. In other words, polling could not definitely state that a Senate seat was leaning, likely or rated as solid for the Republican or Democratic Party. This research anticipates that utilising races selected ‘toss-up’ (or competitive) will provide for a more concise examination of the importance of party owned issues, issue salience and public opinion. Political candidates will want to broaden their appeal to as many voters during a general election campaign. *The Cook Political Report* is notable for its use of the ‘Cook Partisan Voting Index’ that ranks Congressional races as strong, lean or ‘toss-up’ for either the Democratic or Republican Parties. In addition, *The Cook*



*Political Report* is noted as an industry leading online publication for political professionals (Ballotpedia, n.d.). See Appendix A for a complete listing of Senate campaigns deemed competitive. This research of Senate campaigns, issue ownership and interaction between issue salience and public opinion is utilising thirty-four races from 2008, 2010, 2012 and 2014.

This research will use stratified random sampling method to narrow the list of electoral contests. In an effort to create an unbiased sample size, a chronological listing of these elections will further delineated by the state in which they take place in alphabetical order. Each contest was assigned a number one through four in numerical order, and by selecting each electoral contest ranked, leaves a sample size of nine U.S. Senate campaigns for analysis. Because the number of electoral contests deemed competitive varies from each campaign year, some election years will differ in the number of political campaigns analysed. Figure 2 displays the sample set gathered from the list of competitive Senate campaigns from which this study will draw.

Archival polling data will measure public opinion in 2008, 2010, 2012 and 2014. This will be measured against issue salience. Issue salience will be defined in this instance as an overall set of issues that the public states are the most important during an election season. Archived polling data from the Polling Report; [www.pollingreport.com/prioriti.htm](http://www.pollingreport.com/prioriti.htm) will demonstrate the issues that the public find salient. This data will be as close to the period of late August – October of the election year under analysis. Public opinion, on the other hand, will be defined as the attitudes or policy positions of the public on salient issues. For the purposes of this study, public opinion will be considered relevant against salient issues when those polled rate an issue above 10% against the polling data listed in this study. Online

outlets will be used to contextualise issue salience and public opinion when applicable.

**Figure 2: Sample set of U.S. Senate campaigns deemed competitive immediately prior to the traditional Labour Day General Election Campaign beginning, (I) indicates incumbent (source: The Cook Political Report, n.d.)**

Minnesota (Republican Coleman (I) v. Democrat Franken)	2008
California (Democrat (I) Boxer v. Republican Fiorina)	2010
Nevada (Democrat (I) Reid v. Republican Angle)	2010
Pennsylvania (Democrat Sestak v. Republican Toomey)	2010
Montana (Democrat (I) Tester v. Republican Rehberg)	2012
Maine (Independent King v. Republican Summer v. Democrat Dill)	2012
Alaska (Democrat (I) Begich v. Republican Sullivan)	2014
Louisiana (Democrat (I) Landrieu v. Republican Maness, v. Republican Cassidy)	2014
Kentucky (Republican (I) McConnell v. Democrat Grimes)	2014

Finally, this research will analyse television video advertising. Videos intended for television are typically thirty seconds in length. This is due to the time and budgetary constraints of TV advertising. Videos were produced for Internet consumption only that well exceed thirty seconds, however these are out of the scope of this research, which is focusing on television advertisements. Senate campaign videos from 2008, 2010, 2012 and 2014 can be found either through YouTube, [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com), or the National Journal, [www.nationaljournal.com](http://www.nationaljournal.com). Videos analysed will be limited to those approved for by the candidates and not third party political action committees.

Transcription and coding of Senate campaign ads will be conducted manually. Ads will be primarily based on the audio portion of the ad, with corresponding

contextual information, if pertinent. Coding of adverts will allow for multiple issue appeals per ad, however multiple mentions of the same issue will be coded as a single issue appeal. Issue appeals will be coded against the table in Figure 3 (Petrocik, 1996; Petrocik et al., 2003). Issue salience and public opinion will be measured against the corresponding polling data for each election year given in the case study. See Appendix B for transcripts of campaign ads.

**Figure 3: List of owned issues, United States (Petrocik, 1996; Petrocik et al., 2003)**

<b>Democratic Issues:</b>	<b>Republican Issues:</b>	<b>Performance Issues:</b>
Health Care	Religion/Morality	Economy
Education	Debt/Deficit	Performance of Government
Labour/Jobs	Taxes	Foreign Policy
Environment	National Security/Military	
Senior Citizens	Crime	
Poverty	'Shrinking' size of Government	
Agriculture		
Civil Rights/ Equality		

## **CHAPTER IV.**

### **Case Study: Issues, Salience and Public Opinion**

Political issue ownership theory ascribes political parties with owned issues. These issues generally, in the United States, can be divided as previously stated as party owned issues, and performance issues. Petrocik (1996) and Petrocik et al. (2003) provide a baseline of party owned issues. These will be the basis for the study of Senate campaign advertisements 2008-2014. Figure 3 lists sets of issues and the corresponding party that has a positive issue handling reputation.

#### ***4.1 2008, Presidential Election year***

The economic crisis that began in 2007 became a major worldwide issue in 2008 that arguably dominated media coverage in the United States. This is reflected in a multitude of public opinion surveys conducted prior to the start of the general election campaign. This election year was notable not only for the economic recession, but it was an open election for the Presidency. The incumbent and highly unpopular President, George W. Bush was barred from seeking re-election. President Bush's popularity polling sat at 33% per polling from Gallup conducted the 5-7 September 2008 (Gallup, 2009). Consequently, performance issues would come to dominate campaign messaging, primarily focused on the economy.

Polling from early September 2008 shows that the economy and jobs was of overwhelming concern to the voting public, with taxes and government spending coming in second. The poll from *Newsweek* featured in Figure 4, demonstrates a public opinion split between supporters of the Democratic and Republican nominees for President, on which issues are of highest concern. Other polling from NBC News and the Wall Street Journal from 15-18 August 2008 stated that respondents felt that

‘job creation and economic growth’ was the most important issue for the federal government to address (Polling Report, 2008). Energy and health care costs were ranked as second and third. The Iraq War had fallen to a distant fourth in the NBC poll.

**Figure 4: Newsweek Poll conducted by Princeton Survey Research Associates 10-11 September 2008 (Polling Report, 2008), N= 1, 038 registered voters, Margin of Error+/- 3.8**

<b>Question: ‘Which one of the following issues is most important in determining your vote for president this year?’</b>			
	All	Obama (Democrat) Supporters	McCain (Republican) Supporters
<b>Economy and jobs</b>	39	55	23
<b>Taxes, government spending</b>	14	7	22
<b>Iraq War</b>	10	15	5
<b>Terrorism, national security</b>	10	2	18
<b>Energy policy, gas prices</b>	8	7	9
<b>Abortion, guns, marriage</b>	8	3	13
<b>Health Care</b>	7	9	4
<b>Other/None</b>	1	-	1
<b>Unsure</b>	3	2	5

The party messaging of both the Democratic and Republican Parties reflected much of the public’s concern over the economy, energy prices and taxes. The Iraq War and Afghanistan were of concern but the economic crisis was key in both major candidates for President, Democrat Barack Obama and Republican John McCain. Obama favoured tax breaks and increased financial regulation, whereas McCain preferred tax reduction for most Americans regardless of income (ICPSR, n.d.). Obama and McCain addressed concerns over energy prices, only diverging on solutions to reduce American dependence on foreign energy (ICPSR, n.d.). These concerns would be key in Senate campaign messaging as well.

There is only one campaign for analysis in 2008, as stated in the aforementioned sample of competitive Senate elections. This Senate race, where Democratic challenger, Al Franken faced incumbent Republican Senator, Norm Coleman. Seventeen advertisements produced by the Norm Coleman campaign were selected for analysis versus seven for Democrat Al Franken. Al Franken's campaign appears to have removed his 2008 Senate adverts from the Internet. This study is reliant on video advertising of Franken's campaign hosted away from the Senator's 'YouTube' website, often by the NationalJournal.com. The majority of these advertisements were found to be character appeals, both in favour or against the opposing candidate. Energy or the price of petrol was mentioned in association with the performance of Congress or the Bush administration. Energy concerns are conflated with the economy.

Research into this set of 2008 campaign ads found in Norm Coleman's campaign ads, repeated themes included characterising himself as independent, distancing himself from the Bush administration (i.e. 'not a rubber stamp') and as a 'watchdog' who favours regulation on the energy and financial sectors. Ten of Coleman's seventeen ads included positive character appeals. Two adverts are characterised as completely negative character attacks on Al Franken. Other issues discussed by Coleman's include increases college aid and Medicare (or improving health care). These are typically Democratic issues, however given the scope of the economic crisis and job losses this is not unexpected given the 2008 issue salience and public opinion data found in Figure 4.

Coleman's main opponent, Al Franken utilised performance issues, attempting to link Norm Coleman with President Bush on the economy and energy prices. There were repeated references to 'Big Oil', lobbyists and Iraq when characterising his

opponent or the record of the Bush administration. Franken’s campaign repeatedly spoke on the Democratic owned issues of health care and the cost of higher education. Middle class tax cuts were mentioned, along with proposing tax increases for the ‘wealthiest 1%’.

<b>Figure 5: Number and Percentage of Issue Appeals in overall campaign ads analysed, multi-issue appeals are included in individual ads, 2008 sample</b>					
Candidate	Number of Ads	Republican Issue Appeals/ %	Democratic Issue Appeals/ %	Performance Issue Appeals/ %	Number of Salient Issues v. Public Opinion Appeals
<b>Minnesota Republican Coleman</b>	17	9/32.14%	10/35.71%	9/32.14%	18/ 9
<b>Minnesota Democrat Franken</b>	8	5/27.78%	7/38.89%	6/33.33%	10/ 3

These two campaigns together demonstrate convergence on the issues that the public found most important during 2008. Both candidates discuss energy, jobs and health care briefly in campaign advertising. Franken relies heavily on linking Coleman with the poor state of the economy and government performance. Issues discussed are arguably relevant to the voting public, and align with public opinion and issue salience. The Franken campaign utilised performance issues and Democratic owned issues. The Republican opponent, interestingly, had an almost even weighting between the use of Democratic and Republican owned issue appeals, and was less reliant on performance-based issues in campaign video advertising. Salient issues appear to play a role in issue messaging; however public opinion, in this contest seems to have had no impact. A caveat, particularly with the Franken campaign is that it is difficult to draw broad conclusions based on the low number of adverts uncovered for analysis.

The outcome of the 2008 Congressional races was notable for a gain of eight Senate seats going to the Democratic Party, along with twenty-one-seat improvement for the Democrats in the House of Representatives. This case study and the outcome of the election suggest that although President Bush was not running for re-election, performance issues tied to the outgoing Republican President weighed heavily on Republican Party losses in both chambers of Congress. The link between the economy, performance issues and a Presidential election year left voters predisposed to elect a Democratic led government in the national legislature (Campbell, 1987). Democratic Congressional candidates found success in the troika of issue salience (the economy), public opinion (government performance) and a high profile Presidential election.

#### ***4.2 2010, Midterm Election***

The issue concerns of the 2008 Presidential election campaign had not dissipated. The economy had continued to perform poorly and public opinion polling from the autumn of 2010 illustrated the public's concern with the employment and the economic recession. Often these polls associate job growth with the economy as a single issue. A CBS News poll from 1-5 October 2010 resulted with 54% of respondents stating that the economy and jobs were the most pressing issue facing the United States, second only to health care at 7% (Polling Report, 2010). The CBS poll has a substantial number of respondents who stated 'other' at 22%. Health care was third in the Bloomberg poll at 10%. Despite this difference, all other polling from the period of October through November 2010 was consistent in the jobs and the economy being the top concern of polling respondents. Figure 6 lists the results of the Bloomberg National Poll from early October 2010. These issues align largely



with assertions from BBC News on the most salient topics of the 2010-midterm elections (BBC News, 2010). Additional polling from Gallup in September 2010 found an almost even split between polling respondents who were asked which political party can ‘do a better job of handling the problem’ they rated as most important with 40% stating the Republican Party, 38% the Democratic Party and 22% who said either party or who had no opinion (Saad, 2014).

In addition to the most salient issues in 2010, this midterm election can be seen as a referendum on President Obama. Midterm elections often focus on the President’s political party and his administrations performance over the past two years (Abramowitz et al., 1986). President Obama’s job approval ratings from Gallup stood at 46% approval/46% disapproval the week of 6-12 September 2010. These numbers through the November 2010 election dipped at most by 2% points (Gallup, 2015a). This indicates that approximately half of the electorate may is susceptible to negative evaluations of the President and his party.

<b>Figure 6: Bloomberg National Poll, 7-10 October 2010, N=721 margin of error +/- 3.7 (Polling Report, 2010)</b>	
<b>‘Which of the following do you see as the most important issue facing the country right now: unemployment and jobs, the federal deficit and government spending, health care, the war in Afghanistan, or immigration?’</b>	
<b>Unemployment/Jobs</b>	49%
<b>Federal deficit/spending</b>	27%
<b>Health Care</b>	10%
<b>War in Afghanistan</b>	7%
<b>Immigration</b>	5%
<b>Other</b>	1%
<b>Unsure</b>	1%

The initial 2010 Senate campaign samples included the California race between Democratic incumbent Barbara Boxer and Republican challenger Carly Fiorina, the Kentucky Senate campaigns of Republican Ron Paul and Democrat Jack Conway, and finally, the Pennsylvania election of Democratic Joe Sestak versus Republican Pat Toomey. Unfortunately, in the Kentucky race for Senate, it appears

that Democratic challenger Jack Conway as removed all campaign advertising. The next Senate election for which a sizeable advertising sample can be gathered in alphabetical order by state name from the 2010 competitive campaign list in the Nevada race between Democratic incumbent Harry Reid and Republican challenger Sharron Angle. Throughout this sample of races it is expected that campaign messaging will be dominated by references to the job losses/growth as well as the wider lack of a recovery from the economic recession.

When coding for issue or character appeals in the 2010 election, it was found that often the issue of the economy and job losses were conflated. Specifically, this was an issue when evaluating the California Senate race. Republican challenger, Carly Fiorina was noted by Democrat Barbara Boxer, for having been the CEO at the California based company, Hewlett Packard during a period of employment reductions. Senator Boxer alleged that Fiorina was responsible for 30,000 job losses. Boxer's campaign stated in one ad that while Californians lost their jobs, Fiorina tripled her salary. Another ad attacking Fiorina used the wording in reference to jobs: 'Shanghai instead of San Jose, Bangalore instead of Burbank'. These were negative characterisations of Fiorina, but were also coded as Democratic issue appeals because of the association between the Democratic Party and the issue of jobs/labour.

Democratic Senators, Harry Reid and Barbara Boxer were have found to capitalise on the salient issue of the increased cost of energy to promote their accomplishments or agenda with clean energy technology. Namely, this includes discussion of solar, wind and geothermal energy development along with associated job creation. These campaigns were able to link the environment, jobs or labour issues with their legislative voting record. The emphasis of these ads is on job creation and economic growth. Interestingly, it appears that the campaigns were cognitively

promoting a less salient issue, the environment with a topical one, jobs and economic growth.

On the other hand, the Republican challengers in California and Nevada, Carly Fiorina and Sharron Angle used performance issues to link failures in economic growth along with mentions of deficits/debt, high taxes and the size of government on the incumbents. Similarly to the Democratic candidates, Republican Party owned issues featured prominently. It is notable that neither Angle nor Fiorina offered substantive positive policy appeals, only criticism of their political opposition. Angle was noted for her criticism of President Obama, who was mentioned by name three times, whereas Fiorina never directly discussed the President, only her challenger. In addition, three of Sharron Angle's advertisements centred on the issue of 'illegal' immigration by repeatedly mentioning Senator Reid supporting social security benefits, tuition and tax breaks for migrants. Conversely, Fiorina did not discuss immigration or social issues; her message as centred on government performance, deficits, taxes and the economy with only one advertisement mentioning national defence or terrorism.

The campaigns of Reid and Angle were notably negative. Senator Reid's campaign strategists repeatedly referred to Sharon Angle as 'extreme' or 'dangerous'. In fact, Angle was characterised as extreme in ten advertisements, and in five, as dangerous. Reid repeatedly stated that Angle wanted to 'wipe out' Social Security and Medicare. The theme of many of Reid's campaign ads were the use of statements or votes in the Nevada state legislature, characterising Angle as a threat to social programmes or even society itself. Six of Reid's twenty-one campaign adverts could be characterised as predominantly negative character attacks on Angle. On the other

hand, seven of sixteen of Angle’s campaign advisements can be considered as predominately negative character attacks on Harry Reid.

<b>Figure 7</b>		<b>Number and Percentage of Issue Appeals in overall campaign ads analysed, multi-issue appeals are included in individual ads, 2010 sample</b>			
<b>Senate Candidate</b>	<b>Number of Ads</b>	<b>Republican Issue Appeals/%</b>	<b>Democratic Issue Appeals/%</b>	<b>Performance Issue Appeals/%</b>	<b>Number of Salient Issues v. Public Opinion Appeals</b>
<b>Nevada Democrat Reid</b>	21	0/0%	21/72.31%	8/27.59%	14/ 14
<b>Nevada Republican Angle</b>	16	9/42.86%	0/0%	12/57.1%	11/ 9
<b>California Democrat Boxer</b>	8	0/0%	15/83.33%	3/16.67%	9/ 9
<b>California Republican Fiorina</b>	10	11/64.71%	0/0%	6/35.29%	9/ 9
<b>Pennsylvania Republican Toomey</b>	9	7/43.75%	2/12.5%	7/43.75%	7/ 6
<b>Pennsylvania Democrat Sestak</b>	11	2/20%	4/40%	4/40%	5/ 4

Finally, the Sestak and Toomey campaign stands as an outlier from the California and Nevada Senate campaigns in 2010. Neither Sestak nor Toomey were incumbent Senators, both however had been incumbent Congressmen in the House of Representatives. Both the Sestak and Toomey campaigns created television advertisements that centred largely on the issue of the economy and government performance. Sestak characterised Toomey as a threat to the Social Security programme, and with links to failures in the national economy. Toomey, on the other hand, repeatedly referred to Sestak as a ‘liberal’ who adhered to higher taxes, government spending and healthcare.

Issue salience in the 2010 Senate campaigns examined appears to largely align with public opinion. Issue salience, however, appears to have compromised approximately half of all issue appeals found. A majority of the advertisements in 2010 discussed jobs and the economy, followed by healthcare and the national debt or deficit. Interestingly, foreign policy or terrorism was rarely brought to the forefront of the issues discussed. The economic recession was of prime concern to most voters and the campaigns spoke to those concerns, particularly in the area of job loss or growth. Out of a total of 75 ads transcribed for the 2010 midterm elections, 33 make mention of the economy or references to job losses or growth. That is 44% of all ads examined in 2010 Senate campaigns. Of the 75, 16 mention the issue of taxes or increasing debt or deficits, of which all were Republican candidates but for one ad by Democrat Joe Sestak. Healthcare came in third; primarily in ads from Democratic candidates with one mention by Republican Pat Toomey was an attack on the voting record of his opponent. Figure 8 illustrates this analysis. These findings cannot be found in these percentages across individual campaigns.

The 2010 midterm election came to be defined by the conservative insurgency known as the ‘Tea-Party’. Republican candidates won control of the House of Representatives with a sixty-three-seat gain. The Democratic Party maintained control of the Senate, although the party lost six seats. Our sample incumbents, both Boxer and Reid won re-election, while in the Pennsylvania race, Pat Toomey won the Senate seat by a victory of 80,000 cast state-wide. This election was characterised as a referendum on President Obama (Mardell, 2010). Overall turnout in the United States midterms was 36.9%, a decrease from the 57.1% turnout in the Presidential election of 2008 (DeSilver, 2014).

### 4.3 2012, Presidential Election

The 2012 election campaign, like the 2008 campaign was dominated by the Presidential election. The difference being that in 2012, there was an incumbent President running for re-election. The unemployment rate in August of 2008 stood at 8.0% (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015). This was a decrease from a high of 10.0% in October 2009, but markedly higher than a pre-recession low of 4.4% in 2007. In addition, public opinion of Congress was decidedly negative. Congressional approval polling numbers in September 2010 stood at 13%, whereas Presidential approval was at 50% during the same month (Gallup, 2015a, 2015b).

<b>Figure 8: Bloomberg National Poll conducted by Selzer and Company, 21-24 September 2012, n= 1,007, nationally, MoE +/- 3.1 (Polling Report, 2012)</b>	
<b>‘Which of the following do you see as the most important issue facing the country right now?’</b>	
<b>Unemployment and jobs</b>	43%
<b>Federal Deficit</b>	14%
<b>Health Care</b>	11%
<b>Gas Prices</b>	7%
<b>Situation in the Middle East</b>	6%
<b>Taxes</b>	4%
<b>Immigration</b>	3%
<b>Terrorism</b>	3%

The list of salient issues that polling organisations used to measure public opinion had not changed significantly since 2010. Polling conducted in September 2012 reflected that a majority of people were concerned with the economy and job growth with a CBS News/New York Times Poll registering 37% of respondents stating that this was the most important issue when deciding on how to vote for president (Polling Report, 2012). An NBC News/Wall Street Journal Poll had 46% of respondents stating that the economy was the single most important issue when deciding for whom they would elect as president. The sole anomaly in all polls analysed was that 15% of respondents to the NBC News poll selected social issues

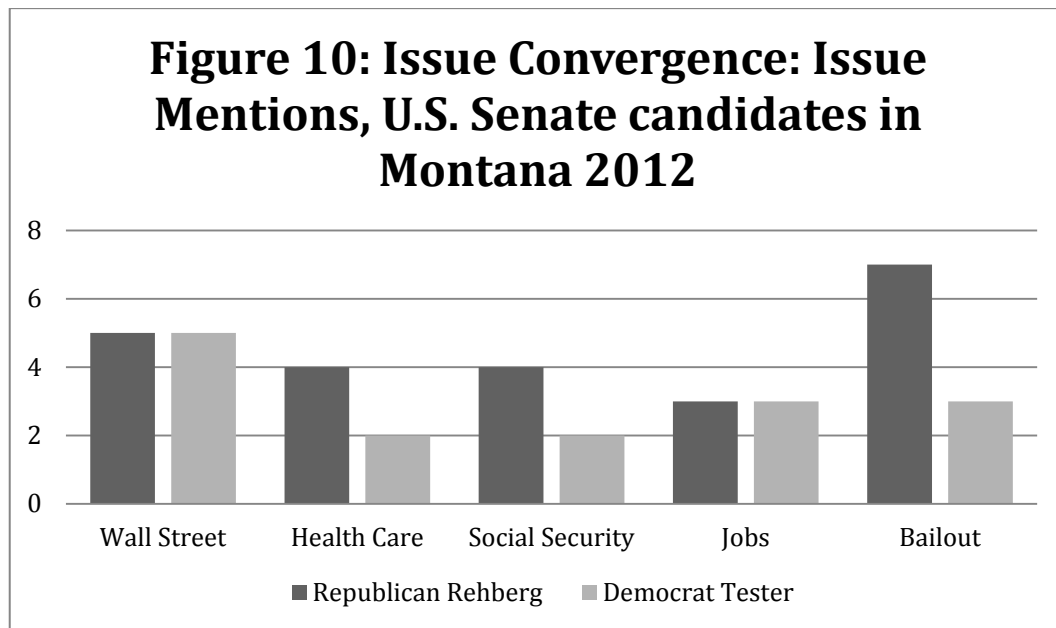
and values as the most important issue. Figure 8 provides the full range of data from the Bloomberg National Poll, conducted 8-12 September 2012. The top three from the CBS News and Bloomberg Poll align and will be selected as the most salient issues of 2012, along with the corresponding public opinion data, that campaign-advertising themes will be measured again.

In addition, research by the Pew Research Center states that the central issue for voters is the economy. The Pew Research Center’s analysis of the issues most important to voters in 2012 states that energy policy and terrorism have declined in importance significantly for voters from the previous Presidential election in 2008 (Pew Research Center, 2012). Consequently, it is expected that candidates for Senate in the 2012 sample will see a reduction in energy or terrorism themed appeals in campaign advertising. Figure 9 provides the full range of how voters have shifted their priorities since the 2008 election.

<b>Figure 9: Voters’ Priorities 2008, 2012 (Pew Research Center, 2012)</b>			
<b>% Of voters saying each is very important to their vote</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>Per Cent Change</b>
<b>Economy</b>	87	87	0
<b>Jobs*</b>	80	83	+3
<b>Health Care</b>	73	74	+1
<b>Education</b>	73	69	-4
<b>Budget Deficit**</b>	69	68	-1
<b>Taxes*</b>	71	66	-5
<b>Medicare</b>	--	65	--
<b>Terrorism</b>	72	60	-12
<b>Foreign Policy</b>	--	60	--
<b>Energy</b>	77	55	-22
<b>Abortion</b>	39	46	+7
<b>Immigration</b>	52	41	-11
<b>Pew Research Center, 12-16 September 2012. Research based on registered voters. All 2008 Figures from August except * October 2008 and ** May 2008.</b>			

The 2012 campaigns selected for analysis include the Montana campaigns of Republican Denny Rehberg against Democratic incumbent Jon Tester and the Maine

campaign of Independent candidate Angus King versus Republican Charlie Summers. Again, in the initial sample it was proposed that the Wisconsin race between Tammy Baldwin and Tommy Thompson was to be analysed, however Mr Thompson's campaign appears to have removed all of his campaign advertising from the Internet. Therefore, the next state race (Maine) in the sample list was elected as a substitution.



The Montana campaigns of Tester and Rehberg produced results that were surprisingly bipartisan, regardless of party issue ownership. There were fewer adherences to national issues, and many issues discussed in the television adverts referenced specifically local Montana issues such as the coal energy production and the concerns over job losses or gains specific to Montana. There was no discussion found referencing overall national energy policy or the cost of fuel for the citizens of Montana. Rehberg and Tester discussed their support of the proposed 'Keystone' energy pipeline with the jobs that would be created for Montanans. In fact, the themes in the candidates' respective Senate advertisements show a measure of issue convergence. This was measured by inputting the transcripts of the campaign ads into a text analysis tool at [www.wordcount.com](http://www.wordcount.com). Tester and Rehberg each mentioned



‘Wall Street’ in a negative context five times. Each campaign also made positive issue appeals on their support of the U.S. Social Security and Medicare programmes. Figure 10 indicates text matches in both campaigns ads. This does not take into account issue mentions, which could be worded differently (e.g. cancer as an appeal for health care).

Looking towards the next state in our sample, Maine, which included the only declared independent candidate in the campaigns sample. The Maine Senate campaigns differ significantly from others previously analysed in this study because one of the main opponents, Angus King, ran for Senate without party affiliation. King, was in the past, had served as governor of Maine yet had not claimed political party membership since 1993 when he was registered as a Democrat. Maine has been characterised as a moderate state where independent candidates have found some success (Richardson, J 2012). King was one of two other candidates in the race for Senate to replace retiring Republican Senator Olympia Snowe. The Republican Party candidate was Charlie Summers and the Democrat, Cynthia Dill. While evaluating campaign ads in the race, no evidence of advertising from Dill’s campaign was found. In fact, the news media in Maine reported that a Republican political action committee purchased television adverts for the Democratic candidate (Richardson, W 2012). Six campaign ads were found for Charlie Summers and eight for Angus King.

Republican candidate Summers ads were found to primarily focus on the issues of Republican owned issues such as the debt (e.g. spending or debt), taxes and jobs. Government performance was discussed occasionally to either denote dissatisfaction with President Obama or to promote Summers record as Maine’s Secretary of State. The Republican’s campaign also made a single campaign appeal to

protect Social Security and Medicare through linking the issue of government spending as a threat to entitlement programmes for senior citizens.

Maine independent Angus King was dependent on his prior record as governor of which he linked to issues of bipartisanship, lowering taxes and reducing debt. Six of King’s ads were either primarily or in part focused on positive character appeals. Only once did he directly criticise Summers (his opponent) for signing a no taxes pledge to which King’s campaign linked to being problematic to resolving the increasing national debt. Consequently, Angus King’s advertising would be characterised as politically neutral. Only brief mentions of two Democratic issues were found: the environment and jobs, of which the latter was tied to King’s past political performance as mayor of the town of Roxbury, Maine. The only incursions of the Maine independent into Republican owned issues was related to either his past political record as someone who has reduced taxes, or the threat of the national debt.

<b>Figure 11</b>					
<b>Number and Percentage of Issue Appeals in overall campaign ads analysed, multi-issue appeals are included in individual ads, 2012 sample</b>					
<b>Senate Candidate</b>	<b>Total Number of Ads</b>	<b>Republican Owned Issues</b>	<b>Democratic Owned Issues</b>	<b>Performance Issues</b>	<b>Number of Salient Issues v. Public Opinion Appeals</b>
<b>Montana Republican Rehberg</b>	20	16/41.03%	10/25.64%	13/33.33%	18/ 9
<b>Montana Democrat Tester</b>	12	12/40%	13/43.33%	5/16.67%	9/ 8
<b>Maine Republican Summers</b>	6	9/56.25%	3/18.75%	4/25%	10/ 8
<b>Maine Independent King</b>	9	6/54.55%	2/18.18%	4/36.36%	8/ 4

In conclusion to 2012, an amalgamation of data collected reveals little consistency in terms of if Republican or Democratic candidates rely on respective

party owned issues. Montana's Rehberg demonstrates a trend toward using Republican issues, however many of his campaign's television ads were appeals toward protecting jobs, senior citizens and education. This was influenced by the salience of these issues and public opinion, which align with many of the voters' priorities in Figure 9. Democrat Tester used both Democratic and Republican owned issues without heavily emphasising government performance. On the other hand, Charlie Summers in Maine was significantly focused on Republican issues and independent opponent Angus King (who won the election) kept his advertising loosely focused on Republican issues. It is worth noting that King, although an independent in the U.S. Senate, currently caucuses with the Democratic Party. See Figure 11 for issue appeals by party ownership for the Senate races in the 2012 campaign sample. Despite the importance of issue salience, less than half of all issue appeals (excluding character) were rated as nationally salient (47%, See Figure 15).

#### ***4.4 2014, Midterm Election***

The economic recovery and job growth was arguably an important, if not the most important issue for voters in 2014. Consequently, the midterm elections of that year would come to be characterised as a referendum on the second term of the Obama administration (Boerma, 2014). The slow pace of the economic recovery and lagging job growth concerned most voters, despite reporting that the economy had been adding new jobs each year of the Obama presidency (Kurtz, 2014). Job growth, while important, was not the single defining issue in news reporting in 2014. In fact, news media reporting during 2013 and 2014 often-focused on issues of legal amnesty for undocumented workers in the United States and the enactment of the Affordable Health Care Act (ACA), often called 'Obamacare'.

Public opinion polling data from the second half of 2014 provides insight as to topical issues and the weight to which voters assign importance to those issues. Again, much as in the 2008, 2010, and 2012 electoral contests, the economy was consistently ranked the highest in importance for probable voters. However, unlike in elections from that same period, the media reporting of the problematic rollout of the Affordable Care Act forced salience of health care related issues to near the top of the issues to which voters felt concerned. In addition, terrorism and national security were ranked highly by voters as concerns, likely due to the increase in reporting over concerns of fighting by the 'Islamic State' (or ISIS/ISIL) and the Ebola medical outbreak in central Africa. The latter two concerns, health care and national security would prove opportunistic for the Republican Party as a means to attack the policies of the Obama administration and in the case of national security, run advertisements on a party owned issue (Sargent, 2014). MSNBC analysts suggested that in the case of national security and its link to the 2014 midterm message by Republican candidates:

It's embedded in the party's DNA. Since the beginning of the Cold War, the GOP's first instinct has always been to assert how it's tougher and stronger on communism/terrorism than the Democratic Party is... (Sargent, 2014).

Polling data from CBS News bears out this shift in public opinion to issues relating to immigration and terrorism (Polling Report, 2014). The shift in the relative importance of certain issues, namely health care, terrorism and immigration, during the midterm election season demonstrates a trend toward Republican owned issues (or issue positions). The question being, could Republican candidates be driving this shift in public opinion with their campaign messaging coupled with the fact that midterm

election voter turnout is lower than in Presidential election years? See Figure 12 for this trend in public opinion.

<b>Figure 12: CBS News Poll, 23-27 October 2014, N= 1, 079 registered voters nationwide, MoE +/- 4 (Polling Report, 2014)</b>			
<b>‘Which one of the following issues will be most important in deciding your vote for Congress this November?’</b>			
	23-27/10/2014	3-6/10/2014	12-15/09/2014
<b>The Economy</b>	38%	34%	38%
<b>Health Care</b>	23%	17%	16%
<b>Terrorism</b>	11%	16%	17%
<b>Immigration</b>	9%	13%	10%
<b>Federal budget deficit</b>	8%	9%	8%
<b>International conflicts</b>	7%	7%	6%
<b>Something else</b>	2%	2%	1%
<b>Unsure/No answer</b>	2%	3%	3%

The sample size for the 2014 races includes three contests: incumbent Democrat Mark Begrich against Republican challenger Dan Sullivan in Alaska; the three way Louisiana contest between Republican Rob Maness, Republican Bill Cassidy and Democratic incumbent Mary Landrieu; and finally, the then Senate minority leader and Republican incumbent Mitch McConnell versus Democrat Alison Grimes in Kentucky. These races were not only included in campaigns declared competitive by the *Cook Political Report*, but reporting from *The Wall Street Journal* in 2014 listed these four as ‘Senate races to watch’ (The Wall Street Journal, 2014). Political statistician Nate Silver had predicted that there was a 60% chance that the Republican Party could win enough seats to wrest control of the Senate from the Democratic Party (Silver, 2014). Silver felt much of this was due to energised Republican voters and the relative unpopularity of President Obama, whose approval rating stood at an approximately 45% in July 2014 (Real Clear Politics, 2014).

A comprehensive analysis of campaign advertisements from these three elections in Kentucky, Louisiana, and Alaska demonstrate consistent themes from

Republican candidates that are primarily focused on the performance of the Obama administration which in turn, they attempt to link to their Democratic opponents. In addition, the states in which these campaigns originate discuss restrictions placed on energy exploration (oil and gas in Louisiana and Alaska; coal in Kentucky) and these themes are conflated with the loss of employment opportunities for residents of their respective state. In addition, the aforementioned unpopularity of the ACA, or ‘Obamacare’ is often discussed with a \$700 billion cut in spending to the Medicare programme. This latter issue appeal, being targeted toward senior citizens. Fifty-seven per cent of seniors who did elect to vote in the midterm 2014 elections voted for Republican candidates (Kiley, 2014).

The Alaskan campaign for Senate was characterised by either the Democratic candidate, Begich, attempting to distance himself from President Obama, often advocating that he challenged the President on issues salient to Alaskans relating specifically to the ACA, energy exploration and employment. Begich’s campaign often attacked Republican Dan Sullivan’s record as state attorney general while standing positively on his own record as someone who ‘fights for Alaskans’ and ‘takes on Obama’. The Begich campaign did not rely on Democratic owned issues in campaign advertising, with the exception of promoting Begich as a positive force for job growth in Alaska. Mark Begich often ran on policy appeals that could be considered as either performance or Republican owned issues. Republican Dan Sullivan, on the other hand primarily attempted to link Begich with the Obama administration’s policies and record since 2008. Performance of government was a predominant theme in 13 out of 18 of the Sullivan campaign television adverts. Performance of government appeals can be separate into two types: negatively linking Begich with President Obama, or positive acclaims of Sullivan’s performance in

Alaska's state government. Discussion of the ACA was predominant. Twenty-seven ads were transcribed total for these campaigns, nine for Mark Begich and eighteen for Dan Sullivan. Dan Sullivan only mentioned jobs/employment five times while Begich mentioned jobs (conflated with 'opening up Arctic drilling') four times. Sullivan discussed at length his military record or themes related to national security in six campaign ads. On the other hand, Begich only discussed the military in one ad, not specifically relating to national security, but in keeping a military base open (economy) and health care for veterans.

Turning now to the senate campaign in the state of Louisiana. The Louisiana Senate election in 2014 was differentiated from other states because the race included two Republican candidates, both facing off against Democratic incumbent Mary Landrieu. Louisiana state law does not require that political parties select one candidate in a proceeding party primary election. The result being, if no candidate receives a majority during the general election, a run-off election is held the following month. This, in effect, makes the general election, akin to a party primary, and the run-off election, similar to a general election in other states. Louisiana appears to be an outlier in this regard, unlike any other state selected for analysis in this research study.

The Louisiana Senate race was considered an important race for both the Democratic and Republican parties as the seat was considered critical to control of the U.S. Senate. Senator Landrieu was thought to be vulnerable due to her support of the Obama administration, particularly the ACA. President Obama's approval rating was 38% in Louisiana, per an October 2014 poll by the University of New Orleans (Avery, 2014). Landrieu's opponents wanted to cognitively link negative perception of President Obama with the record of Senator Landrieu.

Congressman Bill Cassidy, a Republican, was considered to be the most viable candidate to oust Landrieu. The Republican's campaign was found to repeatedly use themes of 'Landrieu supports Obama 97% of the time' or a variation of that theme. In fact, '97%' was mentioned in 6 out of 11 advertisements by the Cassidy campaign. The Cassidy campaign also relied on Republican used issues of national security repeatedly, primarily focused on 'securing the border' or criticising proposed amnesty for undocumented migrant families. On the other hand, the ACA or Obamacare was mentioned negatively seven times; and Cassidy's campaign mentioned 'cancelled health plans', '\$700 billion in cuts' and 'big rate increases'. Overall, out of eleven ads from Bill Cassidy, all eleven were associated with the performance of government relating to Senator Landrieu and/or President Obama.

Republican Rob Maness, associated with the 'Tea Party' movement, was found to only have four advertisements created for television. None of the Maness campaign ads were found to mention Senator Landrieu directly, while three of the four attacked Obama (or 'Obamacare'). Two of Maness' mentioned securing borders, related to themes of national security and immigration.

The Landrieu campaign was found to have stayed consistently aligned with the Senator's legislative record (performance of government) or Democratic owned issues. These issue appeals were found to relate to senior citizens, equality, health care and education. Only one television advert was found to contain a Republican owned issue, mentioning her support of military bases in Louisiana, along with her support procuring material for U.S. military overseas. The Senator directly addressed the '97%' support of the Obama administration, by defending her legislative record as protecting senior citizens, women and veterans. Five of the ten advertisements by the



Landrieu campaign criticised Cassidy's congressional record, all simultaneously defending Democratic owned issues.

Finally, focusing attention on the Kentucky 2014 Senate election between Republican Mitch McConnell and Democrat Alison Grimes. Near the traditional start of the general election campaign in September 2014, McConnell had a lead in polling from Rasmussen, 46-41% (Rasmussen, 2014). The approval rating for President Obama in Kentucky was 29% in the first half of 2014 and among the lowest in the nation (McCarthy, 2014). Further analysis from Rasmussen stated that environmental regulations on the coal industry and related industry, contributed to the negative perception of the Obama administration (2014). Coal is associated with the loss of jobs and associated national issues such as the performance of government. National security and the ACA would become salient issues in the Kentucky election.

Alison Grimes, the challenger, was found to focus her campaign television adverts primarily on vague promises of protecting or bringing jobs to Kentucky. Grimes explicitly mentioned coal jobs once in a criticism of McConnell's performance in the Senate. The Democrat's campaign ads were found to repeatedly focus on McConnell's absence from committee hearings, protection of domestic violence victims (coded as civil rights) and the abovementioned generic references to jobs or employment. Grimes focused on positive character appeals while distancing herself from any association with President Obama.

Issue appeals by the McConnell campaign were largely centred on local, performance and character appeals. The Republican Senator referenced coal jobs or a 'war on coal' in four separate advertisements, two of which repeatedly utilised the word coal three or more times in a single ad. These ads were either attacks on Grimes, Obama or acclaims for McConnell protecting workers negatively impacted

by losses of jobs. McConnell's ads referenced 'jobs' in four out of twenty ads analysed. Fourteen of Senator McConnell's ads focused either on his legislative record, Grimes record in state government or the policies of the Obama administration. Two of McConnell's ads focused on the ACA/Obamacare. Nine of the twenty ads that McConnell's campaign ran mentioned Obama, while eleven mentioned Grimes. Four ads were found to have a variation of the theme 'Obama needs Grimes, Kentucky needs McConnell'. The strategy employed by the McConnell campaign focused largely on the unpopularity of the President along with positive acclaims for McConnell. This is noteworthy as McConnell was found to have used Democratic owned issues more often than Republican owned issues in his advertisements. This is due to the salience of local issues (jobs, agriculture) and appeals against the ACA (cuts to Medicare, negative impacts on senior citizens) to draw out negative connotations to President Obama and McConnell's Democratic challenger.

In conclusion, the Republicans gained nine seats and majority control of the Senate. This was largely attributed to the energised Republican base and the widespread dissatisfaction with President Obama (Dovere, 2014). Total election turnout in 2014 was 36.3% of the voting age population (Infoplease, 2014). Overall voter turnout was down from the 2010 midterm, however voter turnout in each state examined here in 2014 had a net increase in turnout over the 2010 elections; see Figure 13 (Montanaro et al., 2014). Republican candidates won each of the races examined in 2014.

<b>Figure 14</b>		<b>Number and Percentage of Issue Appeals in overall campaign ads analysed, multi-issue appeals are included in individual ads, 2014 sample</b>			
<b>Senate Candidate</b>	<b>Total Number of Ads</b>	<b>Republican Owned Issues</b>	<b>Democratic Owned Issues</b>	<b>Performance Issues</b>	<b>Number of Salient Issues v. Public Opinion Appeals</b>
<b>Alaskan Republican Sullivan</b>	18	10/ 34.48%	6/ 20.69%	13/ 44.83%	15/ 11
<b>Alaska Democrat Begich</b>	9	6/ 28.57%	9/ 42.86%	6/ 28.57%	8/ 6
<b>Louisiana Republican Cassidy</b>	11	7/ 23.33%	12/ 40%	11/ 36.67%	14/ 14
<b>Louisiana Republican Maness</b>	4	7/ 53.85%	2/ 15.38%	4/ 30.77%	5/ 3
<b>Louisiana Democrat Landrieu</b>	10	1/ 3.85%	14/ 53.85%	11/ 42.31%	5/ 5
<b>Kentucky Republican McConnell</b>	20	5/ 15.63%	11/ 34.38%	16/ 50%	10/ 9
<b>Kentucky Democrat Grimes</b>	9	1/ 6.25%	10/ 62.5%	5/ 31.25%	5/ 5

The analysis of the themes in each of these races suggests that party owned issues aside, Republican candidates were likely to utilise performance issues. Performance of government was often cited either as positive or negative acclaim by the candidate for their record in government, against their opponent's record in government or in reference to the policies of the President. Candidates also often discussed their role in domestic violence legislation, which was coded as civil rights, as opposed to crime because the appeals typically centred on protection of women not persecution of a perpetrator. As a percentage, Republican candidates overwhelmingly relied on performance issues in campaign television advertising along with appeals on

Democratic issues particularly where relevant to the state in which the election was held. Issue appeals were largely contained to the top issues nationally in 2014. These were the economy (conflated with jobs/labour in adverts), health care, national security and immigration.) Figure 14 illustrates this data. The unpopularity of President Obama and his administration's policies were demonstrably the overarching theme in 2014 campaign advertising.

## CHAPTER V.

### Discussion

Although public opinion plays a significant role in shaping campaign television advertising in U.S. Senate campaigns, it is outweighed by the broader category of issue salience as defined by this study. Amalgamated data from the sample of campaigns investigated in this study demonstrate that issue salience plays a significant role in determining advertisement content by campaign strategists. However, issue salience alone does not appear to overwhelmingly dominate issue appeals in candidate adverts. See Figure 15.

<b>Figure 15: Identified Issue appeals excluding character issues in all campaign ads transcribed/examined, campaign ads=228</b>					
<b>Election Year</b>	<b>Issue Appeals identified*</b>	<b>Issue Appeals aligning with Issue Salience (includes public opinion)/%</b>	<b>Issue Appeals aligning with Public Opinion/ %</b>	<b>Respective Party Owned Issue Appeals that align with candidate by party</b>	<b>Performance Issue Appeals</b>
<b>2008</b>	46	28 (60.87%)	12 (26.09%)	16 (34.78%)	15 (32.61%)
<b>2010</b>	109	55 (50.46%)	51 (46.79%)	66 (60.55%)	40 (36.7%)
<b>2012</b>	96	45 (46.88%)	29 (30.31%)	38** (39.58%)	25 (26.04%)
<b>2014</b>	167	62 (37.13%)	53 (31.74%)	60 (35.93%)	66 (39.52%)
<b>*Individual issue appeals may be salient and may or may not align with party owned issues</b>					
<b>** Party issue appeals not calculated for Maine Independent candidate Angus King</b>					

A cursory look at the content of the ads (provided in Appendix B) illuminates several possibilities as to why issue salience plays but a part in campaign advertising. Despite the assertion by Brasher (2003) that U.S. Senate candidates are willing to discuss ‘issues from the national agenda’, many of these campaigns are speaking in a nuanced manner to local and state issues, which may or may not converge with nationally salient issues (456). In other words, while certain issues may be nationally salient, how they affect local voters varies by region or district constituency. An

example of this is appeals that candidates in states whose economy may depend on jobs relating to energy exploration or extraction, such as, Louisiana, Alaska, Montana, and Kentucky. Energy was not considered salient in 2014 (Louisiana, Alaska and Kentucky) but was in 2012. A majority of mentions of energy may be contextualised by appeals to protecting jobs or job growth. This is an example of the difficulty of coding issues by national issue salience. A closer look into the interaction between national and local issues is warranted.

In retrospect, it appears that Hypothesis 1 is not wholly supported; however issue salience is noted as being a plurality of all issue appeals coded in this study. Hypothesis 1 has clear support in adverts analysed in 2008 and 2010. In 2012, we see that approximately 47% of issue appeals align with issue salience, not a majority. Conversely, only almost 40% of issue appeals align with party owned issues. The 2014 campaigns cited in this study show an even weaker percentage of Senate ads associated with issue salience (37.13%), however in it is worth noting that party issue ownership is weaker than issue salience in this case. Some of this again may be attributed to appeals to jobs or labour that were coded as Democratic issues instead of a performance issue (i.e. 'The Economy').

The second part of the hypothesis presented by this study having to do with public opinion, being the assertion that public opinion will align closely with issue salience by no more than 10 per cent of issue appeals identified is not supported across all campaigns studied 2008-2014. Surprisingly, in two of the years analysed, 2010 and 2014 Hypothesis 1b was supported. These were midterm elections. Both of these election years resulted in having a significantly higher percentage of performance issues than the Presidential election years of 2008 and 2012. Both the 2010 and 2014 elections were notable for extensive gains in Congress for the

Republican Party at the expense of the Democratic Party and incumbent President Obama. The higher percentage of performance issues in these elections is consistent with the link that Abramowitz et al. (1986) between performance issues, Presidential popularity and gains by the opposition in the legislature. Campbell (1987) states that fewer party supporting voters will participate during a midterm election, hence the emphasis on performance issues by candidates during the midterm elections cited by this research.

The two Presidential election years, 2008 and 2012 where Hypothesis 1b was explicitly not supported were likely due to the influence of higher Presidential election year turnout. Referencing Campbell (1987), it is likely that the anticipated influx of independent voters would influence campaigns to broaden their messaging away from less partisan issues and targeted public opinion to appeal to a wide swath of voters. This would also account for the decrease in candidates using respective party owned issues during those two election campaigns. Conversely, the midterm election results suggest that strategies were used to appeal to the most partisan or dissatisfied voters. The 2010 election used a higher percentage of party owned issues. The strategy was to mobilise Republican voters. In 2014, the data reflects a mixture of partisan issues, performance issues combined with issue salience. Arguably, this confluence of issues is reflective of a desire to appeal to policy issue voters combined with the low approval ratings of the President and Congress.

Despite these findings issue ownership theory seems to be weakened somewhat by issue salience however, a closer look at the collected data reveals that party owned issues remain preferred by candidates particularly when both align. For example, Democratic appeals on job and labour protection or growth are classified as party owned issues and are top concerns of the electorate as demonstrated by polling

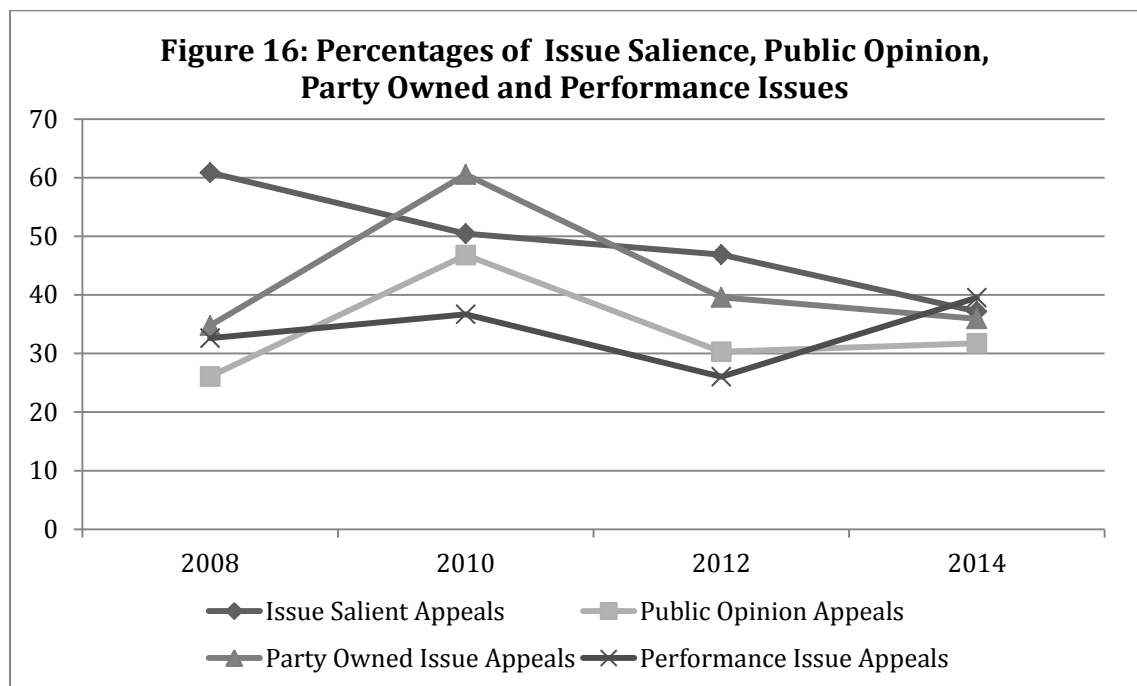
in each of the election cycles analysed here. Likewise, Republican candidates remain committed to issues of national security and crime, which are related to issues of terrorism, illegal immigration. On the other hand, some candidates such as Mary Landrieu (2014), Harry Reid (2010) and Carly Fiorina (2010) aligned issue appeals to their respective party almost exclusively. In the case of some candidates who were incumbents, many defended their legislative accomplishments in order to galvanise support from partisan voters, particularly in midterm elections where turnout is lower.

The results presented in this study are based on issue ownership theory being regarded as relatively stable (Petrocik, 1996; Petrocik et al., 2003). The aforementioned classification of performance issues in this study co-insides with Egan's discussion of consensus issues. Issue salience being the other mitigating factor that solidifies the conclusions in this research. Again, issue ownership theory is mediated by issue salience and to a lesser extent public opinion, just not as conclusively as predicted by the hypotheses presented here.

Although not specifically addressed by the case studies, character issues make up a substantive portion of ads analysed. While some ads were specifically positive or negative character appeals, others were conjoined with issue appeals. This was most often seen in the 2010 and 2014 elections. A brief examination of campaign ad transcripts indicates that often (but not always) character appeals are combined with performance issues or health care, jobs, crime, taxes, women's civil rights or national security. The most common issue being jobs, considered salient for each election year in this study. Sixty adverts were found to contain character appeals, thirty-seven of which also contained issue appeals either in favour of the positive character of the candidate or as a negative attack against the opponent. The percentage of character ads with issue appeals found is 61.67%. This informs a wider body of research that



issues make up an essential part of advertising in U.S. Senate campaigns. These character appeals, both negative and positive often contain substantive issue content.



The final graphic in this study, Figure 16 depicts the above-discussed data from Figure 15 so that the reader can easily visualise the relationships by percentage between the issue salience, public opinion, party owned and performance issues and how these results change by each election year. Issue salience was at its zenith in 2008 and was strongest in 2012. Senate candidates were more reliant on party owned issues in the 2010 midterm, whereas in 2014 performance issues were for the first time in this study strongest. Both elections resulted in considerable Republican victories in the Senate. The strength of performance issues may be the result of dissatisfaction with President Obama, particularly after six years as President. Arguably, the low job approval numbers of Congress and President Obama were catalysts in decisions to make performance issues a centrepiece in 2014 whereas they were not in the 2008, 2010 and 2012 elections. This is tangible evidence of the potency of public opinion on Senate campaign advertising on television.

Issue salience was the dominant in the elections of both 2008 and 2010, both Presidential election years. Public opinion remained far below the percentages of both salience and party owned issues for both electoral contests. This could suggest that Presidential campaigns are having an influence on the issues discussed in competitive Senate campaigns from this period. Per Brasher (2003), Senate campaigns do address national issues. Could an issue synergy exist between Presidential and Senate issue appeals in television advertising? Caution is warranted without corresponding data from those campaigns. This is an area for future investigation.

Finally, Figure 16 illustrates an unexpected finding. There appears to be a corresponding relationship between party owned issue appeals and public opinion in every election analysed in this research. Although party owned issues are foremost over public opinion the findings here suggest that political campaigns prefer to use their party owned issues with the caveat that the inclination to use those issues is mediated toward using party owned issues that are considered highly important to voter choice, i.e. public opinion. It is interesting that issue salience as defined by this study does not align with public opinion. On the other hand, one may assume that campaign strategists want to use their party owned issues and move toward those issues when public opinion aligns with party owned issues. In addition, relative issue appeal convergence is found in the 2014 election for the first and only election cycle in this study. This may suggest that overall dissatisfaction with government in the United States is motivating political strategists to diversify messaging strategies in an effort to appeal to an increasingly discontented electorate. Additional study into the interaction between party issue ownership, issue salience and public opinion in Senate campaign television ads is justified, particularly with a larger data set.

Senate campaigns do discuss issues. This aligns with assertions by Kaid and Johnston (2001), Brasher (2003) and Petrocik et al. (2003). While the Petrocik et al. focused on Presidential campaigns, the Senate television ads here do suggest the same to be true in Senate campaigns. In fact, a brief examination of transcripts suggest that not only do campaigns discuss issues in a majority of all television advertising, but often these ads converge on similar issues. Often, these ads did centre on jobs, economic growth and performance of government. Although this suggests some measure of issue convergence, it is the context in which Senate ads address the issues in which you find divergence. For example, in 2010, Barbara Boxer discussed her opposition to gas/oil exploration and favouring new 'green' energy under the guise of promoting jobs or protecting labour. Her opponent, Carly Fiorina, simultaneously advocated for less government regulation as a path to economic and job growth. Both candidates addressed the same issue but were dependent on other party (or performance) issue appeals. This can be seen in other campaigns selected for analysis. As this study did not address non-competitive campaigns, the high rate of issue convergence within this context aligns with Kaplan et al. (2006) who stated that issue convergence is seen at a higher percentage in competitive electoral contests.

## **CHAPTER VI.**

### **Conclusion**

The deciding factor of which issues candidates for U.S. Senate is centred primarily around which issues will resonate with the electorate, particularly issues that voters feel are the most important facing their communities and the country. However, there is no unified strategy in which campaigns respond to voter concerns. The research presented here certainly suggests that issue salience and public opinion do have a quantifiable impact on the type of issue appeals that campaign strategists employ in pursuit of electoral victory. This conclusion however does not indicate that candidates ignore party owned issues. In fact, Senate campaigns from 2008-2014 prefer to advance their message through party owned issues, but those issue appeals align with salience and public opinion, campaign tacticians are likely to make those issues the cornerstone of their campaigns. The primary caveat to this approach is that it does not take into account the nuanced view of how particular issues are viewed locally from within the state in which the campaign takes place. Issues that are viewed as Republican or Democrat owned on a national level, particularly in Presidential election contests may be viewed differently depending on how a policy affects the electorate. In this study, this was most often seen in the conflation of energy appeals that were often intertwined with economic growth, job and labour protection and in some cases, the environment. Thus, it is difficult to make generalisations regarding the types of issue appeals Senate campaigns rely upon.

This discussion on party owned issues begs the question of if party owned issues are as Petrocik asserts, relatively stable and firm. A possible implication of the findings of this study suggests that party issues are both simultaneously stable and dynamic. Change in party owned issues do occur; however the process is slow. The

intervening variable within this is the interaction of issue salience and public opinion, which may allow for issue convergence. Over a period of time, this is likely where change will occur in party issue ownership.

This analysis of competitive Senate campaign ads for 2008-2014 does indeed propose that candidates are constrained by party owned issues (Spiliotes and Vavreck, 2002: 258). However, this inhibition is loosened by public opinion and issue salience. As it is difficult to make generalities about Senate campaigns, the units of study presented here suggest that each election is unique to the period in which it takes place. Ultimately, campaigns are designed to win elections. Elections will be won through fluid and strategic movement through the spheres of party and performance issues, issue salience and public opinion.

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## Appendices

### : Appendix A:

Complete list of U.S. Senate campaign deemed competitive by the Cook Political Report for election years, 2008, 2010, 2012, and 2014

<b>Complete List of Races Deemed Competitive Prior to Labour Day in the corresponding election year (Cook Political Report, 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014)</b>			
2008	2010	2012	2014
Colorado: Udall v. Schaffer	California: Boxer v. Fiorina	Hawaii: Hirono v. Lingle	Alaska: Begich v. Sullivan
Minnesota: Coleman v. Franken	Colorado: Bennett v. Buck	Montana: Tester v. Rehberg	Arkansas: Cotton v. Pryor
Mississippi: Wicker v. Musgrove	Florida: Rubio v. Crist	New Mexico: Heinrich v. Wilson	Colorado: Udall v. Gardner
New Hampshire: Shaheen v. Sununu	Illinois: Kirk v. Glannoulas	North Dakota: Heitkamp v. Berg	Iowa: Ernst v. Braley
Oregon: Merkley v. Smith	Kentucky: Paul v. Conway	Virginia: Kaine v. Allen	Louisiana: Maness v. Landrieu v. Cassidy
	Missouri: Blunt v. Carnahan	Wisconsin: Baldwin v. Thompson	Michigan: Peters v. Land
	Nevada: Reid v. Angle	Maine: King v. Summers v. Dill	North Carolina: Hagan v. Tillis
	New Hampshire: Ayotte v. Hodes	Massachusetts: Brown v. Warren	Georgia: Chambliss v. Nunn
	Pennsylvania: Sestak v. Toomey	Nevada: Heller v. Berkley	Kentucky: McConnell v. Grimes
	Washington: Murray v. Rossi		
	Washington: Feingold v. Johnson		

## **Appendix B:**

Manually coded transcripts from all ads in this study separated by year and candidate. Most ads originated from the candidates' YouTube channel, and the 2008 Al Franken ad transcripts were taken from the National Journal.

### **MINNESOTA 2008**

#### **Norm Coleman (Republican)**

<https://www.youtube.com/user/ColemanforSenate>

Watchdog 2008:

He's been called a Watchdog. A former prosecutor, Norm Coleman saw the need for a special investigator in Iraq, and then delivered. Norm directed investigations into Oil for Food scandal, exposed dangerous holes in national security and uncovered billions in government waste and abuse. Leading newspapers say Kudos to Coleman; A valuable service: Highly praiseworthy oversight. Norm Coleman, Independent, Effective, Results for Minnesota.

**Crime; National Security; Performance of Government**

What to Expect:

Here's some things you're probably going to see some more of from the other side. First let's show you a crummy picture, bad hair day. Then they'll play some scary music. They'll say I'm in the pocket of lobbyists and special interests, but I fought for ethics reforms to restore trust in Congress. They'll say I'm a rubber stamp for George Bush even though the Washington Post has ranked me as one of the most independent Senators.

**Character, positive; Performance of Government**

The McGarrys:

When I see these personal attacks against Norm, I guess I take it personally because we consider the Senator a friend of ours. We would not have gotten Jacob home, without his help and assistance. Guatemala is changing their whole adaption process. He stepped in, he made a call and he completed the entire pre-approval process. He took a personal interest in our family, and he helped us when we needed it.

**Character, positive**

Rick Wright:

I was a steel worker and the doctor diagnosed me with macular dystrophy. The state has pulled my driver's license and declared me legally blind. We were trying to fight the social security administration. I had reached the end of my rope. My wife suggested I call Senator Coleman's office. He did what I couldn't do. That's what this country needs, more people doing the right thing and he does the right thing.

**Health Care; Character, positive**

Our Future:

We're all anxious, our home, savings, retirement, all on the line. We can point fingers, play the blame game or pull together, restore confidence and turn this economy around. We should all agree, no golden parachutes for failed Wall Street

executives, iron clad taxpayer protections, tougher regulations, real transparency and no blank checks.

**Economy, Deficit/Debt; Performance of Government**

Sarah:

My Dad is Norm Coleman and he's running for Senate. Six years ago I did that commercial, since then I've changed but my Dad hasn't. He's smart, nice and when he says he is going to do something, he does it. He said he'd bring people together to get things done, improve rural health care, cut taxes, create jobs, develop alternative energy and that's exactly what he did. And you know the best part? He's got a really good heart. I just thought you should know.

**Taxes, Health Care, Jobs, (Energy); Performance of Government**

Hard Times:

These are hard times, there's no question about that. You go to the service station and you fill it up and I think you're holding your breath. Folks are worried about jobs, cost of food, costs of energy, cost of their kid's education. That's why Norm Coleman opposes new gas taxes, fought for energy reforms to reduce food and fuel costs and increased college aid. If you can bring people together, you can actually make a difference. You can get things done.

**(Energy); Jobs; Education; Taxes; Performance of Government**

Hope:

They say negative ads work, maybe they do. I've taken mine off the air. People are scared. Jobs, homes, savings, all at risk, but we can get through this with hope instead of anger, working together instead of tearing each other apart. That's how we changed St. Paul, rebuilt the bridge, kept the Ford plant open and we can do it again.

**Economy, Jobs**

There has got to be a better way:

Al Franken's eleventh hour attack, phony accusations filled with lies delivered anonymously in a Minnesota paper before being filed in a Texas court. The vicious personal attack on my wife. This time Al Franken has crossed the line. My name's in on the ballot, I'm fair game; my wife and family are not. In Minnesota this is as dirty as it gets.

**Character, negative**

Look Back:

One day our children will look back and ask, did we play politics or make history. Energy independence isn't just about the environment or gas prices, its about economic and national security. Foreign oil sabotages our economy, subsidises terror. We need more conservation and environmentally sound exploration and drilling, develop renewable resources and crack down on speculation.

**(Energy), National Security**

Gift:

Norm Coleman? The man has a gift. He can take two people who don't agree on anything, get them to work together and actually get something done. Republican, Democrat, East, West. That's how he brought hockey back. Got the funding to



rebuild the I-35W Bridge and increased Medicare coverage. Norm got these guys to work together. Republicans and Democrats? Piece of cake.

**Health Care; Character, positive; Performance of Government**

Working Together:

The key to making a difference is to focus on a shared vision. The tough work is pulling people together, at times bridging a partisan divide. It's not good enough just to criticise, not good enough to tear something down. The business of serving the people is about making a difference; it's about going something, not just fighting about it.

**Character, positive**

Solutions:

I think people know we've got a problem, but I think what they are looking for is solutions. Norm's plan? Prosecute Wall Street greed, balance the budget in five years, pass the Presidential line item veto, crack down on tax cheats, freeze Congressional pay and no tax increases, period. If we fail to do that, I believe our American way of life is at risk.

**Taxes; Economy; Debt/deficit; Performance of Government**

Rewind:

Those last minute attacks on Norm are getting pretty ridiculous. That group with made up corruption rankings, its run by one of Al Franken's friends. That big oil vote? Same energy bill Senator Obama voted for. Trips? Not one paid for by lobbyists. A mansion? Hardly, Norm rents one room in the basement. There's a reason almost every major newspaper endorses Norm Coleman, they know the truth.

**(Energy); Character, positive; Performance of Government**

Got It:

In a political race people will say a lot of things, they'll say Norm is a rubber stamp for the President but he's been ranked as one of the most independent Senators. They'll say he's in the pocket of big oil, but he voted to take away their special tax breaks. Actually, there is a special interest Norm will answer to. Hey Norm will you take out the trash? I'm on it honey.

**(Energy); Taxes; Performance of Government**

Wyatt:

This is my fishing buddy Wyatt Wreck. Wyatt survived a rare form of cancer, he's the reason I introduced the Conquer Childhood Cancer Act. See you have to work on the big issues, but you can't forget the little ones.

**Health Care**

History:

[www.nationaljournal.com/njonline/norm-coleman-for-senate-history--20080813](http://www.nationaljournal.com/njonline/norm-coleman-for-senate-history--20080813)

Inappropriate. Indefensible. Shocking. Uncomfortable.

All words describing Al Franken's work from leading Minnesota Democrats. His Democrat opponent's ad even says this:

No matter how many millions he spends, it is clear that his history of pornography, degrading women and minorities, and his questionable financial transactions will continue to be the focus.

Al Franken. In the words of other Democrats.

I'm Norm Coleman, and I approved this message.

**Civil Rights; Character, negative**

**Al Franken (Democrat)**

Who does Norm Coleman Work for?:

<http://www.nationaljournal.com/njonline/al-franken-for-senate-who-does-norm-coleman-work-for--20080813>

Al Franken, he gave speeches across the country, instead of paying taxes in the state he spoke, he overpaid taxes in the state where he lived. It was an honest mistake. And Norm Coleman? Coleman is being investigated for paying only \$600 a month to live in a million dollar D.C. home by a Washington insider connected to powerful lobbyists and it gets even worse, stay tuned for more.

**Character, positive, negative; Performance of Government**

Two Images:

<http://www.nationaljournal.com/njonline/al-franken-for-senate-two-images-20080804>

Have you seen Norm Coleman's TV ads? He says he's working for you.

But on the 10 issues most critical to the Bush presidency, Norm Coleman has stood with George Bush.

On the Bush economic plan.

On Iraq.

On Energy.

On privatizing Social Security.

So who do you believe? Norm Coleman's TV ads, or his record? It's time for Norm to go.

**National Security; (Energy); Senior Citizens; Performance of Government**

The More You Know:

<http://www.nationaljournal.com/njonline/al-franken-for-senate-the-more-you-know--20080728>

Real differences for the middle class. Al Franken says George Bush has been wrong on Iraq and wrong on the economy. Norm Coleman supports Bush almost 90 per cent of the time.

Franken: tax cuts for the middle class. Coleman: Make Bush's tax cuts for the wealthiest 1 per cent permanent.

Franken: No PAC money from big oil, drug and insurance companies. Coleman's taken \$3 million from special interests.

The more you know, the clearer the choice.

**Health Care; Taxes; (Energy); Performance of Government**

I'm Running:

<http://www.nationaljournal.com/njonline/al-franken-for-senate-i-m-running--20080116>

I'm running for that kid in Mankato who sells his plasma to pay for college.

For the grandmother in intensive care because she couldn't afford medicine. And for the people who tell me the cost of health care is ripping apart their lives.

I'm running for families, like the ones I grew up with here in St. Louis Park. I'm Al Franken. The drug companies, the insurance companies and the special interests have gotten their way for far too long in Washington.

## **Health Care; Education; Performance of Government**

Dr. Bob:

<http://www.nationaljournal.com/njonline/al-franken-for-senate-dr-bob--20080813>

My grandson Justin was headed to Iraq, but the helmet he was issued just wasn't as safe as it could be.

So I started raising money to equip him and his company. And that's when Al Franken offered to help. Al just made it his mission to raise money for improved helmets, almost 40,000 improved helmets to date.

I may be a conservative Republican from Texas, but I know Al Franken is a patriot. I'm proud to call him my friend and a friend of the troops and of America.

**Military; Character, positive**

No Joke:

<http://www.nationaljournal.com/njonline/al-franken-for-senate-no-joke--20080728>

I'm Al Franken. Minnesotans expect a real debate. Instead, Norm Coleman and his allies are attacking me for things I said as a comedian.

Look, I'm not proud of every joke I've ever told. But I know there's a difference between what you say as a comedian and what you do as a U.S. senator.

Norm Coleman has supported George Bush's war in Iraq, and he's taken millions from Big Oil and special interests.

**Performance of Government; (Energy); National Security (War)**

Mrs. Molin:

<http://www.nationaljournal.com/njonline/al-franken-for-senate-mrs-molin--20080116>

MRS. MOLIN: So I read about this man running for U.S. Senate, and I thought, that's the Alan Franken I taught in St. Louis Park.

AL FRANKEN: I got this letter from Mrs. Molin. She wanted to help with the campaign, so I asked her to be in a TV ad.

MRS. MOLIN: A TV ad? OK! Here we go.

Alan was a hard worker, and he went on to graduate from Harvard. He was funny, too. I guess that's why he became a comedian.

AL FRANKEN: I was really more of a satirist.

MRS. MOLIN: OK, Alan.

You see, he's also written six books, and hosted a radio show on public policy. He's been married to Franny for 32 years, and they have two grown kids.

And you know, he's visited our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan four times.

In the Senate, he'll work to make college affordable, fight for universal health care and end the war in Iraq.

**National Security (War); Education; Health Care, Character, positive**

No Wonder:

<http://www.nationaljournal.com/njonline/al-franken-for-senate-no-wonder--20080709>

In Washington, they debate whether former members of Congress should wait one year or two years before they can become registered lobbyists. How about never?

Right now, hundreds of former senators and congressmen are lobbying for Big Oil and special interests. No wonder gas is at \$4 a gallon.

I'm Al Franken. In Washington, I'll fight for a new law to prevent members of Congress from ever becoming lobbyists.

Something's got to change, and that's why I approve this message.

## **(Energy); Performance of Government**

### **CALIFORNIA 2010**

#### **Carly Fiorina (Republican)**

<https://www.youtube.com/user/CarlyforCalifornia>

Safe:

Barbara Boxer on national security? Terrorism kills, and Barbara Box is worried about the weather (climate change). I'm Carly Fiorina and I ran Hewlett Packard, I chaired the external advisory board for the CIA. We've had enough of her politics. I'll work to keep you safe.

**National defence**

Crushed:

Barbara Boxer failed to protect California jobs, praised the stimulus plan, while two and a quarter million Californians are unemployed. Trillions in deficits, billions in taxes, our hopes crushed by Washington. The legacy of Barbara Boxer. We can change Washington but not unless we change the people we send there.

**Economy and government performance, debt, taxes**

Work:

Washington, spending, deficits, trillions in new taxes. Free enterprise, it's almost gone. Had enough? Me too. Barbara Boxer must be held accountable for her 28 years in Congress. Her partisanship and huge expansion of our federal government, they stop now. Let's take Washington back. Make it listen, make it work.

**Government performance, taxes, big government, debt**

Day:

After 28 long years of Washington partisanship, this is Barbara Boxer's California. Trillions in Wasteful Spending, destroying small business, killing jobs, crushing hope. We can change this, but only if we change the people we send to Washington. California cannot afford Boxer for 6 more long years.

**Government Performance, debt, economy**

Bickering:

California jobs gone and Barbara Boxer plays politics. Her hometown newspapers refused to endorse her, saying we deserve a Senator who is effective and willing to reach across party lines. When bickering ends, solutions begin. No partisan games, I'll reach across the aisle, work with others, oppose my party when needed. Your agenda, not mine.

**Character, negative**

Sir:

(Barbara Boxer telling a military man to not call her ma'am but Senator, saying she worked hard for that title)

28 years in Washington and Barbara Boxer works for a title? I'll really go to work to end the arrogance in Washington

Picture: Barbara Boxer: So wrong. Too long.

**Character, negative**

Buck:

The reckless spending must stop. Boxer voted for trillions in spending, billions in new taxes, millions unemployed, yet Boxer says the stimulus is working. It isn't working for me

Carly: We can make Washington work, cut spending, ban earmarks. But Washington won't change unless you vote to change who we send there.

**Taxes, Deficits/debt, economy**

Jobs:

Does Barbara Boxer's big government mean more jobs? No, it means for taxes. Jobs come from the small businesses that Barbara Boxer's big government is helping destroy.

I'm Carly Fiorina, I started as a receptionist and became CEO of Hewlett Packard.

Jobs come from business, not Washington. It's less government that brings more jobs.

**Taxes, big government, jobs**

Label:

Everyone is hurting. Republican. Democrat. Independent. Your party doesn't matter anymore. It's fixing this mess. Boxer's been in there 28 years and look what we've got.

When bickering ends, solutions begin. I'm prepared to oppose my party when it's wrong. We can change Washington but first you have to vote to change the people we send there.

**Economy, government performance**

Something Done:

She started as a receptionist and became the CEO of Hewlett Packard. Carly Fiorina's focus, decency and drive can bring America back.

Let's stop sending Washington more of our money, and let's make sure they spend our money wisely and well. I have faith that working together we can actually get something done

**Character, positive**

**Barbara Boxer (Democrat)**

<https://www.youtube.com/user/BarbaraBoxer>

Precisely:

Carly Fiorina, as CEO she laid off 30,000 workers, and shipped jobs to China

Fiorina: China, India, Russia, Poland...I know precisely why those jobs go

...because Fiorina shipped them there, to Shanghai instead of San Jose. Bangalore instead of Burbank. Proudly stamping her products made in China. 30,000 workers gone, while Fiorina took \$100 million for herself. Carly Fiorina, Outsourcing jobs, out for herself.

**Jobs, Character, negative**

Made in America:

Barbara Boxer, she fought for our veterans the first full combat care centre in California. Her after school law is keeping a million kids off the street and out of gangs, and she's fighting every day to create new jobs

Boxer: I'm working to make California the leader in clean energy, to jump start our small businesses with tax credits and loans to create thousands more California jobs. I'm Barbara Boxer and I approve this message because I want to see the words made in America again

**Jobs, healthcare, government performance**

Outsourcing:

As the CEO of HP, Carly Fiorina laid off 30,000 workers

Fiorina: When you're talking about massive layoffs, which we did, perhaps the work needs to be done somewhere else

Fiorina shipped jobs to China, and while Californians lost their jobs, Fiorina tripled her salary, brought a million dollar yacht and five corporate jets

Fiorina: I'm proud of what I did at HP

Carly Fiorina, outsourcing jobs, out for herself

**Jobs, Character, negative**

Carly Fiorina: Out of Touch

Carly Fiorina, she's against banning assault weapons and that's reckless and dangerous. She's for risky new oil drilling that could threaten our jobs. Fiorina's plan would mean slashing social security and Medicare which would devastate seniors and she'd make abortion a crime. No wonder Fiorina is endorsed by Sarah Palin. Carly Fiorina just too extreme for California.

**Seniors, jobs, civil rights**

Glass:

It's just a piece of glass but we're using it to build solar panels across California. We're making hybrid trucks and building wind turbines and I'm helping our small businesses get tax credits and loans to create thousands more clean energy jobs to get us off foreign oil and get California back to work. I'm Barbara Boxer and I approve this message, because this (glass) means jobs, good jobs made in America.

**Jobs, environment, government performance**

Workers:

Man: I'm among 30,000 employees who used to work for HP.

Woman: I was supposed to retire there

Man: Carly Fiorina changed all that

Woman: Fiorina laid off 30,000 people

She shipped our jobs to China, India

Man: I had to pack my bags and I was out the door (at HP) that night

Woman: We even had to train our replacements

Woman: She didn't need 5 corporate jets

Man: \$100 million for herself

Man: Fiorina never cared about our jobs, not then and not now

**Jobs, Character, negative**

The Facts:

Carly Fiorina, as CEO she shipped American jobs to China

Chris Wallace at Fox: The facts are you laid off 30,000 American workers and many of those jobs went to India and China

Fiorina: Yes its true, jobs are being taken out of California

Before she was fired, Fiorina laid off 30,000 workers, outsourced jobs to China, and then took \$100 million for herself

Carly Fiorina, Outsourcing jobs, out for herself

**Jobs, Character, negative**

Fighting for Jobs:

Barack Obama: I'm optimistic because I know there are people like you out there, and there are people like Barbara Boxer in the Senate who is fighting to change this country for the better. You have in Barbara Boxer, a sub-compact Senator passionate about fighting for jobs, clean energy reform and green jobs that cannot be outsourced. And that's why I expect you to return Barbara Boxer to the United States Senate.

Thank you very much California.

**Jobs, Environment, Government Performance**

## **NEVADA 2010**

### **Sharron Angle (Republican)**

<https://www.youtube.com/user/sharronangle>

Defeat Reid:

In politics you don't find many like Sharron Angle. Conservative, willing to take the tough stands. In the legislature, Sharron voted against tax and fee hikes over 60 times, led the fight against the largest tax increase in state history, and she's Nevada's leading opponent of outrageous property taxes.

Sharron Angle: Washington desperately needs a fighter for taxpayers

Sharron Angle, the conservative we can count on.

**Taxes, government spending (Debt/Deficit)**

Coalition:

To defeat Harry Reid, we need someone to build a coalition so big, he can't beat it and so strong, he can't break it. Only Sharron Angle has been building that army and now she's ready to take him on. Conservatives like Mark Levin and Joe the Plumber, and groups like the Gun Owners of America, and the Tea Party Express have lined up behind her. Their support proves she's the one we can trust to fight for our values, and with our backing Sharron can and will defeat Harry Reid.

**Character, positive**

Right Here, Right Now:

We have a fearful society right now. What they're afraid of is what they're going to be passing down to their children is not liberty and freedom, but debt and deficit.

That's why you and I have an opportunity, right now, to change the direction of our country. Government is not the solution to the problem, government is the problem.

We the people are the solution.

**Debt/deficit, big government**

Now:

(Opening image of Harry Reid)

on screen: 'Nevada is tops in unemployment' –MSN Money

on screen: 'Nevada overtakes Michigan for nation's worst' –Wall Street Journal

on screen: 'Unemployment falls in 37 states, rises in Nevada' –Associated Press

on screen: Since Harry Reid has become majority leader, Nevada has lost 135,000 jobs – U.S. Department of Labour

Help is on the way. Visit [www.sharronangle.com](http://www.sharronangle.com)

### **Government Performance, Economy**

Please Stop:

Harry Reid says he does more for Nevada. He's done more for unemployment. We were at 4.4%, now we're at 14%. He's done more for the foreclosure rate, as we have the highest foreclosure rate in the nation. He's done more for bankruptcy. We have the highest bankruptcy rate in the nation. Harry Reid has done more and its time for us to say, please stop doing it. We can't stand anymore.

### **Economy**

Faces:

On Harry Reid's watch the unemployment rate has shot past 14%, highest in the country. Our foreclosure rate is highest in the nation. Home values have dropped almost 50%. Those aren't just numbers, they're people who've lost who've lost their jobs; families who've lost their homes. Harry Reid has dragged Nevada down to its lowest point ever; and he wants to call me an extremist?

### **Economy**

Love Triangle:

It may be the most tragic love story of our time, Pelosi, Obama and Harry Reid. Together they promised to change America and boy, did they. Taxpayer funded bailouts, a \$787 billion dollar stimulus that failed, and spending so reckless its led to record deficits and skyrocketing unemployment. They say you can't buy love, but we've certainly paid a heavy price

### **Government performance, economy**

At Your Expense:

First, Harry Reid votes to give special tax breaks and social security benefits to illegal aliens, then Reid cheers as the President of Mexico slams Arizona's tough illegal immigration law. Now, Harry Reid has introduced a plan that gives illegals a pathway to amnesty and even special college tuition rates with the money coming from Nevada taxpayers. Harry Reid, the best friend illegals have ever had.

### **Crime (immigration); Character, negative**

Real World:

They're not statistics, they're people. They're the father who got laid-off today and doesn't know how he's going to pay for his mortgage. A frightened senior who has seen half of her home value disappear, and the small business owner who is closing for good.

Let's be honest, we tried it Harry Reid's way and it didn't work. Its time to end the bailouts and the reckless spending and higher taxes.

### **Taxes, Economy, Government Performance**

Big Clue:

Want to know just how out of touch Harry Reid is? Spending \$787 billion on a stimulus that failed is a start, or Reid voting to vote illegal aliens special tax breaks and social security benefits is another big clue. But here's the kicker, Reid actually



voted to use taxpayer dollars to pay for Viagra for convicted child molesters and sex offenders.

What else could you ever need to know about Harry Reid?

**Performance of Government, Character, negative**

Best Friend:

Illegals are sneaking across our border putting Americans safety and jobs at risk. And what does Harry Reid do? He comes out opposed to Arizona's tough new immigration law. Nevada families are struggling with the nation's highest unemployment. Harry Reid votes to give special tax breaks to illegal aliens and to give illegals social security benefits, even for the time they were here illegally.

Harry Reid, the best friend an illegal alien ever had.

**Character, negative; performance of government; economy**

Death Tax:

You're looking at ever time Harry Reid voted to raise taxes. Income tax, taxes on social security, taxes on small business, even the dreaded death tax. A staggering 300 times, Reid voted to raise taxes and it's a big reason for Nevada's economic meltdown. Now Reid and Pelosi are planning to raise taxes on 34 million families right after the election. Let's stop Harry Reid from ever raising our taxes again.

**Taxes; Economy**

The Wave:

Waves of illegal aliens streaming across our borders, joining violent gangs, forcing families to live in fear and what's Harry Reid doing about it? Voting to give illegal aliens social security benefits, tax breaks and college tuition.

Reid voted against declaring English our national language twice. He even sided with Obama and the President of Mexico to block Arizona's tough new immigration law.

Harry Reid, its clear whose side he's on, and it's not yours.

**Crime (immigration); character/negative**

Stupid Things Harry Says

Is there anyone Harry Reid hasn't insulted? While our soldiers were fighting in a war zone, Reid declared they had lost the war.

Reid referred to Obama as a light skinned African-American with no Negro dialect.

Reid degradingly called a female colleague the hottest Senator. And Reid insulted Hispanics in questioning their judgment in knowing who to vote for.

Harry Reid, everyday he's further out of touch.

**Character, negative**

Public Servant:

How did Harry Reid Get So Wealthy on a Public Servant's income?

Reid: I did a very good job of investing.

Right, like the shady deal where Reid made a million bucks doing nothing. The Truth is Reid is now worth up to \$6 million dollars and lives in a one million dollar

Washington Ritz Carlton Condo. But what's he telling struggling Nevada families?

Reid: 'I've been on a fixed income since I went to Washington'

Harry Reid, another multi-millionaire just trying to make ends meet.

**Character, negative**

Our Turn:

They promised change, but they delivered unprecedented spending, overwhelming debt, heart-breaking job loss, astounding foreclosures, skyrocketing bankruptcies. They promised change, now it's our turn.

**Debt, performance of government, jobs**

**Harry Reid (Democrat)**

<https://www.youtube.com/user/harryreid2010>

Yucca:

Each year 5 million pounds of radioactive waste are disposed of in the U.S. Sharon Angle wants to bring all 5 million pounds here for processing in Nevada. But one nuclear spill could endanger our families and kill Las Vegas tourism forever, and we all know how devastating one spill can be (pelican with oil pictured).

**Environment**

Right Direction:

It's in the desert sky and in deep underground. Energy that's made in America, fuelling new Nevada jobs.

Reid: Nevada's got everything that takes to lead in alternative energy And Harry Reid is making it happen, bringing the energy industry to the state, fast tracking new solar fields and wind farms, and \$144 million for geothermal. Tax credits that will create 41,000 new Nevada jobs.

It's happening here, American energy.

**Jobs, Environment, Government Performance**

Linda Ellen:

For Linda Ellen, a car accident meant surgery and a back held together with titanium. Her 10 drugs cost her \$5,000 a year, forcing her to skimp on her medicine. Linda's been caught in the Medicare doughnut hole. I backed health reform and this message because 58,000 Nevada seniors will get prescription help this year and overtime the doughnut hole will close entirely.

**Health Care, Government Performance**

Ron Nelsen:

Ron Nelson owns pioneer overhead door. Ron's a small businessman and provides his workers with health insurance, but the costs are crushing, up 22% last year alone. Ron is why I fought for reform. Now 24,000 Nevada businesses can get a tax credit to help them afford coverage. I'm Harry Reid and I grew up in a family that couldn't afford to go to the doctor so helping businesses like Ron's provide coverage for families like yours is personal.

**Health Care, Government Performance**

Katherine Duncan:

Katherine Duncan spent 3 days in the hospital after collapsing at home. The bill, \$15,000 but her insurance company called her blood pressure a pre-existing condition and refused to pay. 68,000 Nevadans are being denied coverage for the same reason. It's not right and health reform will stop it. I'm Harry Reid and taking on the

insurance companies was hard but letting them cut people off when they are sick is wrong. That's why I backed reform and this message.

### **Health Care, Government Performance**

Geothermal:

As you drive along I-80 and you see the steam coming out of the ground, it may not look like much but its geothermal energy. Geothermal can mean up to 16,000 construction jobs in Nevada. Harry Reid saw the potential for geothermal before just about anybody else.

(Reid for \$144 million in tax credits for Nevada geothermal energy)

Its Nevada jobs, its Nevada energy. Senator Reid is making that happen.

### **Jobs, Environment, Government Performance**

Social Security:

Social Security, it means independence, a secure income but shockingly Sharron Angle wants to wipe out social security. She'd cut benefits for everyone coming into the system. That's Sharron Angle. First a scientology plan to give messages to prisoners, now she wants to get rid of Medicare and social security. What's next?

### **Senior Citizens**

Reid Works Tirelessly for Nevada Veterans:

When I was in Vietnam Agent Orange messed me up. The VA hospital is being built in Nevada for one reason: Harry Reid.

### **Health care, Government Performance**

Extreme:

What do you call a candidate who says that the way things are doing it may be times for second amendment remedies, an armed response to our government? Who says a teenage rape victim should be forced to have the baby? Who proposed a scientology massage program for prisoners and who says Medicare and Social Security violate the Ten Commandments? What do you call that candidate? Extreme.

Sharron Angle, just too extreme.

### **Character, negative**

Angle Likens Social Security to Welfare:

You've heard Sharron Angle wants to wipe out social security, now she says its like welfare.

Angle: My grandfather would not even take his social security check because he said he was not up for welfare.

Welfare?

The people that invested money into social security all their working lives, its their money. To call it welfare is just plan insulting.

Sharron Angle would end welfare and social security.

People depend on these checks, its their livelihood, their food, their prescription drug costs, this is crazy.

### **Senior Citizens**

Spoiled:

I got up everyday looking for a job. The unemployed benefits helped get me through. Sharron Angle opposed extending unemployment benefits

Angle: No I wouldn't have voted for unemployment extensions.

She says laid-off workers are spoiled

Angle: We really have spoiled our citizenry. They want to be dependent on the government.

Worker: I'm not spoiled and I don't want to be dependent on anybody. If Sharron Angle doesn't get that, she should be out of work, not people like me.

### **Economy, Jobs/Labour**

Over the line:

Bill Ames: I've been in Nevada law enforcement for 17 years. Carrying a gun isn't just a part of my job, it's a Constitutional right I believe in but Sharron Angle goes way over the line when she keeps saying...

'If this Congress keeps going the way it is people are really moved toward those 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment remedies'

Ames: its crazy, but what she's actually talking about is armed resistance. Look, I'm a member of the NRA and a Republican, but that kind of talk is dangerous and way too extreme.

### **Character, negative**

Sharron Angle wont Fight for Nevada Jobs:

Garland Welch: You felt lucky, working on a job like this (carpenter) but when Wall Street greed crashed to economy, everything stopped. Sharon Angle says it's not a Senator's job to fight for jobs, that we're on our own.

Angle: People ask me, what are you doing to do to develop jobs in your state? Well that's not my job as a U.S. Senator

Welch: Not her job?

Angle: I'm not in the business of creating jobs.

Welch: Seems like the only job Sharron Angle wants to fight her is hers.

(Sharron Angle Just Too Extreme)

### **Labour/jobs**

I Don't Think So:

Colon cancer kills unless you catch it early. That's why 39 members of the Assembly voted to make sure insurance companies cover colon cancer tests, but Sharron Angle was only one of two to vote no

"Don't you think its government's responsibility to make sure insurance companies cover certain things? Angle: No, I don't think so.

Sharron Angle is against making insurance companies cover colon cancer tests, mammograms or anything else.

That's not just extreme, its dangerous.

### **Health Care**

Background Checks:

I work with kids who have been abused, and their stories break my heart. But when the Assembly created a programme to weed out sex offenders but helping youth groups and churches do background checks on volunteers, it passed with only 2 members voting no. Sharron Angle was one of them. She said background checks were an invasion of privacy. Sharron Angle voted to protect the privacy of sex offenders instead of the safety of our kids.

Sharron Angle, ideas so extreme, they're dangerous.

## **Character, negative; Crime**

Wild:

Sharron Angle voted against background checks to identify sex predators. She's against restraining orders that protect victims of domestic violence; she says rape victims should be forced to have the baby. Sharron Angle would wipe out Social Security, Medicare and privatize the VA.

## **Character, negative; Senior Citizens**

Barbara's Story:

When they did the biopsy it came back that it was malignant. (Barbara was diagnosed with cancer in 2007). I was stunned. I had a mammogram and the mammogram picked it up. Thank God.

In the Assembly, Sharron Angle tried to repeal the law that makes insurance companies cover mammograms. She wouldn't even cover mammograms.

If insurance companies don't even cover the cost of mammograms, fewer women will get them and more women will die.

(Sharon Angle: just too extreme)

## **Health Care**

A Better Choice for Northern Nevada:

Sharron Angle is reckless, radical and extreme. Electing Sharron Angle will cost northern Nevada thousands of jobs. She will be the knockout punch for Nevada's economy. Sharron Angle support tax credits for companies that ship jobs overseas, that's just crazy.

There is a better choice, Harry Reid is saving thousands of jobs.

Replacing Harry Reid with Sharron Angle would be a disaster.

## **Performance of Government, jobs**

More Than Wrong:

'Sharron Angle says she wants to end Social Security, but we depend on that money.'

'She doesn't think insurance companies should have to cover colon cancer tests that saved my life'

'Sharron angle voted against background checks for people who work with kids.'

'She says if you've been raped, you should be forced to have the baby. She calls it makes lemonade out of lemons.'

'As a Republican, I can't see voting for Sharron Angle.'

(Sharron Angle, not just extreme, dangerous)

## **Health Care, Senior Citizens, Civil Rights, Character/Negative**

Broken Promise:

From WWII to Iraq and Afghanistan, the VA has meant guaranteed care for those who serve. But now in another extreme proposal, Sharron Angle says privatise it. End the VA, as we know it.

When she was asked if veterans benefits. When asked if doctor's visits would be covered if he had her way: 'No, not if you're working toward a privatised system'

End our promise to veterans? Sharron Angle, dangerous ideas that put veterans at risk.

## **Health Care**

Extreme Hypocrisy:

It's Hypocrisy. Sharron Angle rails against government programmes, calls Social Security, welfare. Wants to wipe it out.

Angle: We need to faze Medicare and Social Security out.

But here's the thing, she lives off her husband's Bureau of Land Management pension. And her health care? Its government paid for life.

Sharron Angle is fine with wiping out your social security as long as her government checks keep coming.

Sharron Angle, extreme and hypocritical.

**Senior Citizens, Character, negative**

## **PENNSYLVANIA 2010**

**Joe Sestak (Democrat):**

<https://www.youtube.com/user/Sestak2010/>

Ad 1:

Meet Pat Toomey, Pennsylvania's most right-wing congressman.

Toomey: My voting record is pretty hard to distinguish from Rick Santorum's.

Toomey called Sarah Palin a spectacular governor. And Toomey opposed a woman's right to choose.

Toomey: I support legislation in Pennsylvania that would ban abortion and I suggest we would have penalties for doctor's who perform them.

Pat Toomey, he's not on our side.

**Civil Rights; Character, negative**

The Difference:

Congressman Toomey and his friends on Wall Street has spent millions on attack ads like these. Why? Big businesses have given Toomey a blank check because he believes they shouldn't pay any taxes. None.

Toomey: Let's not tax corporations. I believe the solution is to eliminate corporate taxes altogether.

I'm Joe Sestak and I approve this message because I support cutting taxes for the middle class, not the oil companies.

**Economy, taxes**

Zero:

Do you think corporations pay their fair share? Pat Toomey thinks corporations shouldn't pay any taxes.

The middle class is struggling, but Toomey think its oil companies and Wall Street bank who should pay no taxes, zero. No wonder Toomey's been called Wall Street's Congressman.

Pat Toomey, he's for them, not for us.

**Economy**

Leading:

Duty, Service. Joe Sestak has lived his life by those values. 31 years protecting America, leading the fight against terrorism. Trusted to command 15,000 of our sons and daughters in combat. Now he's running to serve Pennsylvania, standing up to the bosses in both parties, a decorated veteran, fighting for us. Admiral Joe Sestak.

**Character, positive**

Timeline:

Pat Toomey a trader on Wall Street who went to Congress and voted for Wall Street, then got rich as Wall Street's top lobbyist. Joe Sestak served in the Navy for 31 years. Sestak led a carrier battle group with 15,000 sailors in combat and became a 3 star admiral. So for Pennsylvania, compare a lifetime of serving our country versus a lifetime of serving Wall Street.

**Character, positive (and negative)**

Fortune:

Congressman Toomey, he sided with Wall Street voting for unfair trade deals with China. They made a fortune while Pennsylvania lost 90,000 jobs. But Toomey wants even more trade deals. In his book, Toomey said he doesn't care if American workers lose their jobs to cheap Chinese imports. Pat Toomey just doesn't get it.

**Jobs/Labour**

Seniors Speak Out:

Congressman Pat Toomey wants to privatise Social Security.

Seniors: Privatise? I don't have another retirement plan. I couldn't live without social security. I know you're a Wall Street guy but we don't want Social Security going to Wall Street. That's fine if you're a rich guy like Pat Toomey, but I couldn't afford that. Mr Toomey you're wrong for Pennsylvania; yeah, I don't think you get it.

Pat Toomey, I don't think you get it.

**Senior Citizens; Character negative**

Security:

The stock market crash. If social security had been privatised, seniors would have seen their retirement wiped out. But Congressman Pat Toomey, still support privatising social security. See Toomey has represented Wall Street his entire life, so Toomey puts Wall Street profits ahead of protecting Pennsylvania seniors. Pat Toomey, he'd take the security out of Social Security.

**Senior Citizens**

Belle:

I'm Joe Sestak and this is Belle (dog). My family loves Belle, but she can make a mess and we have to clean it up. I think about Belle when I see Congressman Toomey's ads attacking. It made me sick to bail out the banks but I had to clean up the mess left by these guys (Bush, Toomey). They let Wall Street run wild. Now Pat Toomey is attacking me for cleaning up his mess.

**Government Performance, Economy**

Independence:

Joe Sestak, I served in the Navy for 31 years but opposed the war in Iraq. I worked for President Clinton but stood up to the establishment and my own party to take on Arlen Specter. I'm Joe Sestak and I authorise this message because I'll always be an independent voice. I'll stand up to party bosses, to Wall Street, to Washington because we need a change. I'll never forget, it's about serving the public.

**Character, positive, national defence**

Endorsements:

Confused by all the political ads, nearly all newspapers in Pennsylvania endorsed Joe Sestak. Admiral Sestak has the courage needed to be independent. The Inquirer writes that Sestak has moderate, reasonable ideas, while Pat Toomey is allied with the Wall Streeters. Toomey represents the most extreme views. Joe Sestak will fight for the middle class. This Tuesday vote for change, Joe Sestak.

**Character, positive and negative**

**Pat Toomey (Republican):**

<https://www.youtube.com/user/ToomeyForSenate>

Sestak: 'I want to be this President's strongest ally'

Since Joe Sestak went to Washington, we've suffered skyrocketing unemployment, record spending and debt and a health care disaster.

Want to change Washington? Pat Toomey does.

**Economy, Debt, Government Performance**

Clear Choice:

For Senate, Joe Sestak or Pat Toomey. Two good men, with very different ideas. Joe Sestak voted for the Wall Street bailout, Pat Toomey opposed it. Sestak supports government run healthcare, Toomey says no. Sestak wants foreign terrorist leaders tried in civilian courts, Toomey wants terrorists tried in military courts. This year Pennsylvanians have a good clear choice.

(Toomey: Conservative, Sestak: Liberal)

**Government performance, National Defence (War)**

\$1 Trillion

Joe Sestak voted for record national debt, then he said this about the stimulus bill,

'It's the minimum amount needed, I would have voted for one trillion dollars'

That's liberal, that's Joe Sestak

**Debt, government performance**

Death Tax:

Joe Sestak voted for trillions in higher taxes and he even wants to bring back the death tax, letting the IRS take half your savings when you die. That's liberal, that's Joe Sestak.

**Taxes, government performance**

Extreme One-Party:

Want to stop the extreme spending from Washington's one-party rule? Pat Toomey has been called a taxpayer hero who puts principles ahead of party-line obedience.

More Jobs, less government.

**Big government, taxes**

Health Insurance:

Joe Sestak voted for government run healthcare, but he went much further. Sestak voted to permit banning all private health insurance. That's really liberal, that's Joe Sestak.

**Character, negative; government performance, health care**



Cap and Trade:

Joe Sestak voted for the cap and trade energy tax. Experts say it will kill thousands of central Pennsylvania jobs and cause skyrocketing gas prices. That's liberal, that's Joe Sestak.

**Character, negative; government performance, taxes**

Toomey Focus:

Just a few months ago, Chris and I had our third child. There's really nothing like the wonder of a new baby to focus your attention on the future. I'll always be optimistic about America but I worry about the direction we're heading. Too much debt, not enough jobs. And the Washington politicians are making it worse. I'm Pat Toomey and I approve this message because I know we can do better, and I have a pretty good reason for wanting to.

**Economy, debt**

## **MONTANA 2012**

**Denny Rehberg (Republican)**

<https://www.youtube.com/user/Montanans4Rehberg>

Elsie:

When my Dad was first elected, I was too little to know what it meant, but I do now. He goes to work every week, 2,000 miles away, but he hasn't changed. He works so hard and sleeps in his office, drives the same old jeep and never misses Halloween. My Dad says he works so hard because he loves Montana. That's one of the reasons I love my Dad.

**Character, positive**

Obama-vision:

All in for Obama-vision. Brought to you by Jon Tester. Why Obama-vision?

Test: I think Barack brings a kind of vision for this country that we need. Tester voted 57 times for higher taxes, higher taxes on small business and an energy tax, even the death tax. And spent your money on pay raises, Obamacare, bailouts, bonuses for Wall Street executives. Jon Tester, all in for Obama-vision.

**Taxes, economy, big government**

Stakes:

Don't be distracted by political attacks, America faces big challenges. Our debt is soaring; we've lost thousands of jobs, yet Senate Democrats want higher taxes, more spending. That's why we need Denny Rehberg in the Senate. He'll cut wasteful spending, reduce taxes, and get our fiscal house in order.

The stakes are high Montana, I urge you to send Denny to the Senate and we'll get America back on track.

**Debt, taxes, big government**

About:

That's what this election is about. It's not about hairstyles? No. It's about Jon Tester voting for Obama's vision, 95% of the time. Well Denny Rehberg votes with us. Tester voted to tax social security benefits, Denny said no way. Tester voted for Obama, which Denny will repeal.

Tester and Obama may not be twins, but they might as well be.

### **Taxes, Senior Citizens**

Just

Jon Tester's false attacks? That's just Jon. But the way he says one thing and does another? That hurts Montana. Take Coal, Tester voted for Obama's regulations, causing a coal fired power plant in Billings to close, layoff workers.

Rehberg: I voted against Obama's regulations because clean coal means good paying jobs for Montanans and millions for our school systems, communities and families.

### **Jobs, Education, Government Performance**

Stand:

The difference is night and day. Denny Rehberg protected kids from George Bush's health insurance cuts, opposed every bailout, Democrat and Republican. Denny stands up for Montana.

Jon Tester voted for Obama's energy tax and anti-coal regulations, hurting families, coasting Montana jobs. How can Jon Tester vote with Obama even when it hurts us?

### **Health Care, Economy, Jobs**

Actions:

Talk is cheap, but Jon Tester's actions are costly.

Now Test voted against Bull Mountain (coal mine) and the jobs it created. Tester voted for Obama's regulations that's forcing a Billings company to mothball its coal fired power plant, threatening jobs. With Jon Tester talk is cheap but Jon Tester's support of Obama costs Montana jobs.

### **Jobs, Performance of Government**

Engine

Our engine of economic growth? Small business. Starts with a dream, to be your own boss. You work long hours, meet payroll, grow; create jobs. But senseless federal regulation strangles small business. I'm Denny Rehberg, and I approve this message because I'll eliminate unnecessary regulation and force Washington bureaucrats to study the impact their rules have on job creators, so Federal red tape no longer gets in the way of good Montana jobs.

### **Jobs, Big Government, Government Performance**

Hide:

Jon Tester's false attacks, Washington baloney. The Denny I know protected Social Security and Medicare. Why the baloney? To hide Tester's 95% support of Obama, his support of higher taxes on social security benefits and his plan to increase the retirement age. For Pete's sake, Jon Tester's plan will increase Social Security taxes and the retirement age. Shame on you Jon Tester.

### **Senior Citizens, Taxes**

Giants:

Jon Tester takes Montana beef with him to Washington in his suitcase, then he brings Washington baloney back to Montana.

Tester: I opposed those Wall Street bailouts.

Baloney Jon Tester. Tester voted for the bailouts of the mortgage giants who caused the housing crisis; voted to raise his own pay but voted 57 times for higher taxes. Jon Tester, higher taxes for you, pay raises for him, bailouts for them.

**Taxes, Government Performance**

Twins:

Having trouble telling us apart. Check out Jon Tester and Barack Obama. Tester votes for Obama 95% of the time. He voted for Obama's failed stimulus bill that used our tax dollars to give bonuses to Wall Street executives. Tester voted for Obama's healthcare law that raised taxes and cut Medicare. Jon Tester and Barack Obama, they might not be twins but they might as well be.

**Government Performance, Taxes, Senior Citizens**

Vision:

Why does Jon Tester vote with Obama 95% of the time. Why did Tester vote for Obama's healthcare law? His failed stimulus bill? Even a job killing energy tax? Why has Jon Tester traded our values for Obama's?

**Taxes, Performance of Government**

Lost:

Obama: The private sector is doing just fine.

President Obama just doesn't get it. Montana has lost thousands of manufacturing and construction jobs, everyday too many Montanans have to look for work. I'm Denny Rehberg and I approve this message because I'll stand up to the obstructionists; so we can develop Montana's energy resources responsibly and jump start our economy. The Keystone Pipeline would alone create 1,200 jobs. Not jobs for Republicans or Democrats but Montanans.

**Economy, Jobs, Performance of Government**

Worse:

Newspapers across Montana say Tester's attack on Denny Rehberg is not true. The Billings Gazette, says Denny's voted did not eliminate funding for breast cancer screening. The Missoulian, says Denny's budget still had funds for cancer prevention programs and the Independent Record, says Denny has directly funded the agency that pays for breast cancer screening. Jon Tester, false attacks are wrong but playing politics with cancer is even worse.

**Character, positive; Health Care**

Heart:

When Jon Tester says Denny Rehberg doesn't care about cancer victims, he's playing politics with a deadly disease. For 30 years, Denny has helped me battle cancer from breast cancer, now to thyroid cancer because Denny has a good heart and understands that what cancer does to everyone is touches. I know because Denny's my son.

**Character, positive; Health Care**

Palden:

Five years ago we legally adapted our daughter in Nepal. Our own embassy accused us of Visa fraud and they weren't going to let us bring Palden home. We needed help, so I called Denny Rehberg. He didn't know us, but he met us on Thanksgiving Day.

He stood by us for 9 months, while we fought the government and won. Now with Denny's help we're just a typical Montana family.

**Big Government; Character, positive**

Rancher:

A lot of people talk about bringing their values to Washington, but few do. I'm Denny Rehberg and I approve this message because I'm not driven by what's best for Republicans or Democrats, but I'm guided by what's best for Montana. That's why I voted to protect the children's health insurance program from George Bush's cuts, against President Obama's healthcare law and against every single bailout, Republican and Democrat. In the Senate, I'll do the same.

**Health Care, Performance of Government**

Baloney 2:

Jon Tester takes Montana beef with him to Washington in his suitcase, but he brings Washington baloney back to Montana. Tester voted for Obama's healthcare plan. Baloney. He even used tax dollars for Wall Street bonuses. Washington baloney. Jon Tester, your attacks are baloney. The Denny I know voted against pay raises for Congress. The Denny I know will serve as a check and balance to Obama's liberal agenda.

**Taxes, Performance of Government**

Bologna:

Same dialogue as Baloney 2

**Taxes, Performance of Government**

Honest:

Tester: You've got to have honest leadership.

But Jon Tester's dishonest attacks hide his votes for higher taxes, 55 times; to raise his own pay; to spend your tax dollars for Wall Street executives; give Obama his way with your money 95% of the time. Denny Rehberg cut taxes and opposed bailouts; voted against pay raises, because its your money not theirs

**Taxes, Performance of Government**

**Jon Tester (Democrat):**

[www.youtube.com/user/jontester](http://www.youtube.com/user/jontester)

Unprecedented Ethics and Accountability:

Jon Tester promised us he'd be a different kind of Senator and he is. He's a man of intelligence and integrity and his actions prove it every single day. He posts his schedule online so we know whom he is meeting with. He's cracked down on lobbyists and refused their trips and had retired Montana judges conduct ethics audits to make sure he's following his own rules. See for yourself and you'll know too. Jon Tester is working for Montana every single day.

**Character, positive**

Montana Beef, Montana Proud:

Jon Tester doesn't pack much when he goes back to Washington but he always takes his Montana roots. In Washington, Jon's standing up for Montana values, reducing the deficit and making sure kids can afford to go to college, protecting Social Security

and Medicare, protecting the second amendment and taking care of veterans. Making the US Senate look a little more like Montana.

### **Deficit/Debt, Education, Senior Citizens**

Living Up to our Promises:

The very first hearing I went to a vet stood up and said, I'm a disabled vet and my mileage reimbursement is 11 cents a mile. So, we went to work and got it up to a little over 40 cents a mile so that veterans could afford to get to their healthcare. We put these clinics (VA) in a lot more places (towns in Montana). It's about making sure that we live up to the promises we made to our vets when they signed up.

### **Health Care, Military**

Always There for Those Who Served:

I was the first in my family to join the military, first woman who be commissioned in the Army from the Blackfeet reservation too. Senator Tester came to a ceremony to honour my service. That's how Jon is, he has a good heart and he's always there for those who have served. He helped fund the rural veterans healthcare act, and he's fought for women veterans who have been victims of sexual assault. Jon Tester listens and he always stands up for Montana's veterans.

### **Military, Health Care**

Combine:

Being out here gives me perspective. The combine doesn't care if you're a senator, if it wants to break down, it breaks down. In Montana, we know what's important, like cutting government waste, protecting our freedoms, putting Main Street ahead of Wall Street. Sitting out here, makes the partisanship back there seem pretty ridiculous.

### **Big Government**

The American Way:

Jon grew up on this land, worked alongside his folks. Sharla lived just down the road working with her parents too. For generations Montanans have lived this way. We hope that our grandkids will too. We're not unique; this is the story of Montana. Hard work, responsibility. Out here it's not hard to understand that things are bigger than us. We care about what we leave our kids, reducing the deficit, better schools, making sure kids can afford to go to college, better care for our veterans, protecting Social Security and Medicare, protecting clean air and water and protecting our way of life. Caring about the next generation as the people who came before us, that's the Montana way. Worrying about the next generation needs to be the American way too.

### **Education, Debt/Deficit, Military, Senior Citizens**

Fighting for Veterans: Jon and Tomy

Our son Tomy was injured by an IED in Afghanistan. Jon Tester reached out and spent time with us, no reporters, Jon just making sure Tomy had the care he deserved. Throughout Tomy's rehab Jon kept calling Tomy, motivating him. We know that's what Montanans do for each other, for Tomy it's made a difference. Tomy told Jon, next time he sees him, they're going to go for a walk.

### **Military**

Always:

Why are out of state corporate Super-PACs attacking Jon Tester? Because Jon always puts Montana first. Jon was the only Democrat who voted against both the Wall Street and auto bailouts. Jon took on the Obama administration to delist wolves, saying that's what's right for Montana. Jon voted for the keystone pipeline to create jobs and energy security and voted in favour of a balanced budget amendment. Jon Test, doing what's right for Montana, always.

### **Performance of Government, Jobs**

Everytime:

Those out of state SuperPACs don't know anything about me or Montana. Let's take them on a little tour of our state: I took on the Obama administration to put Montana back in charge of wolves. I voted to build the Keystone Pipeline. I voted for a balanced budget amendment and I opposed all those Wall Street bailouts, and got rid of those ridiculous EPA farm dust regulations. Look across our state, I do what's best for Montana always.

### **Big Government, Jobs, Performance of Government**

Not For Sale:

In Montana's early years, big corporations brought politicians get their way, but a century ago Montana pass a law to protect our elections. Citizens United overturned it and the corporations are back with Congressman Dennis Rehberg with no accountability and little disclosure, because they know Rehberg supports their agenda: tax breaks and tax loopholes for outsourcing our jobs. Tell Congressman Rehberg, Montana is not for sale.

### **Performance of Government, Jobs**

Protecting America:

Protecting American begins here at Montana Air National Guard, Great Falls. When their mission was on the line, Jon Tester stepped up, he fought to keep their mission right here at Mang and won. But Congressman Dennis Rehberg, he actually voted against keeping the F-15s at Mang, threatening hundreds of jobs. Talk about wrong priorities. If Congressman Rehberg had his way, Great Falls economy would have flown away for good.

### **Military, Jobs, Economy**

Barbershop:

Look another out of state ad for Congressman Rehberg. They've got it all wrong. Sure I don't agree with Jon Tester on everything but he's standing up for Montana and he's responsibly reducing the debt, protecting senior, veterans, farmers and ranchers. Voted no to the auto and Wall Street bailouts. Voted to protect farms and ranchers from the death tax. And Jon still farms the land his grandparents settled. He's as Montana as it gets and it shows too.

### **Debt/deficit, Senior citizens, Military, Agriculture, Taxes, Performance of Government**

## **MAINE 2012**

### **Charlie Summers (Republican)**

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCI3unpgNRzWFVuTYqulgDtQ>

Truth:

Why can't Angus King be honest with us? King: There was no deficit Governor Baldacci says King left a Maine a huge deficit and tax burden. Now Angus King wants to raise taxes in Washington.

I'm Charlie Summers. We need to cut wasteful spending, reduce our debt and stop raising taxes. This is a key difference in this race and why I've approved this message.

**Debt, taxes, big government**

Reality Matters:

I'm Charlie Summers and we need to get spending under control and focus on balancing the budget so we can protect the things that really matter to us like Social Security and Medicare. Our seniors have paid into the system all their working lives. They've earned those benefits and deserve them. In the Senate, I'm going to protect and preserve Social Security and Medicare. We need to fight for things that really matter, that's why getting spending under control, is so important.

**Senior Citizens, Debt**

Taxes:

Angus King left Maine with the highest tax burden. Now he wants to raise taxes on small business. Democrat Cynthia Dill supports Obama's plan to raise taxes. I'm Charlie Summers. Maine families and businesses are struggling in this tough economy. Some people think we need to raise taxes. That's the worst thing we can do. We need to cut wasteful spending, reduce our debt and stop raising taxes. This is a key difference in this race.

**Taxes, economy, deficit**

Understands:

I think Maine needs a Senator who understands what people are going through because he's lived it. About 15 years ago, I lost my first wife and I had to become both a father and a mother to an 8 and 11 year old. I've served in Iraq, Afghanistan; I've run my own small businesses. I remember lying awake at night worrying how I was going to pay the bank back. Many people are struggling today and I hope when they look at me, they'll see a little bit of themselves and they'll know they'll always have someone to fight for them.

**Military, Economy**

Meet Charlie Summers:

Meet Charlie Summers, Small businessman, veteran, leader. As regional head of the small business administration Charlie Summers fought for Maine small businesses, as Secretary of State, Charlie Summers fought to reduce teen driving facilities and prevent texting while driving. In the Senate, Charlie Summers will vote to reduce spending, repeal Obamacare and help small business create jobs. That's why the U.S. Chamber of Commerce has endorsed Charlie Summers for U.S Senate.

**Government Performance, Jobs, Debt**

Leadership:

President Obama's policies are an economic disaster. His reckless spending is threatening our future and our children's. I'm Charlie Summers. We need to cut spending, repeal Obamacare and balance the Federal budget but we must protect things that are vital. I served in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and I know how critical Maine's shipyards are to our national defence and our economy. We need to help our small business grow so they can create more jobs.

**Government Performance, Jobs, Debt**

**Angus King (Independent)**

<https://www.youtube.com/user/2012AngusKing>

Unique:

His is a unique life, active citizen, governor, businessman, neighbour, husband and father, teacher, the laptops, the ice storm, the economic growth. A respected, likeable leader. He listens to people and they listen to him. Angus King, they still make them like they used to.

**Character, positive**

I know Angus:

Angus King is the real deal. I think Angus is more like the people in Maine and he understands the people in Maine. I really support the idea of having that independent, entrepreneurial spirit as a voice in Washington DC. More important to the successful future of this country, is a successful independent candidate for office. If anyone can make a difference in Washington, I think Angus King is the person who can do it.

**Character, positive**

There They Go Again:

There they go again. Out of states who care nothing for Maine have another deceptive ad on the air, this one says I raised taxes and left a deficit. Neither is true. When I was governor we cut taxes 18 times and there was no deficit. Paying the bills, fixing the roads and putting money in the rainy day fund isn't wasteful spending. These guys are desperate. I think the idea of a Senator is that they don't own has them scared. I'm Angus King, I balanced the budget and I approve this message.

**Taxes; Deficit; Performance of Government**

Stakes:

The stakes in this election are huge. It will help decide if this nation resides in gridlock or if we can finally take action on jobs, the deficit, taxes and energy. Olympia Snowe is leaving because Washington is broken amazingly my Republican opponent disagrees. As an independent, I'll work to bring people together and forge common sense solutions. The choice is clear, more of the same or a fresh start.

**Character, positive**

Independent:

My Republican opponent and I disagree on lots of things. Charlie signed a no taxes ever pledge that will make it impossible to solve the deficit. He doubts climate change science and favours taxpayer subsidies for Big Oil and thinks Washington isn't broken. I want to bring common sense to the budget, get us off foreign oil with



cleaner energy made in this country. Yes, Charlie, Washington is broken. That's the choice, more of the same or a new independent direction.

**Performance of Government; Debt/Deficit; (Energy), Taxes**

Neighbours Say:

When I first saw the ad on television I thought that people should know the truth that Angus King shows very effective leadership here in the town of Roxbury. He put Maine people to work. My taxes went down, and I can hunt here. What more do I want? Angus is good man, he is a good leader and I think he will make a great Senator for Maine. Thank you Angus. I like it.

**Jobs; Taxes; Character, positive; Performance of Government**

The Real Angus King:

I'm the real Angus King. When I was governor, we cut taxes, fixed some really bad roads, conserved some really great places for our kids and even got the parties to work together every now and then. They may think we were born at night up here, but it wasn't last night.

**Taxes, Performance of Government**

Think Independent:

It's hard to find a leader in this country, who think independently and gets things done. We have a leader like that in Maine. As governor he lowed taxes, fixed roads and schools, protected open spaces and got the highest bond rating ever.

Hi, if you're looking for someone who can get things done and shake up Washington, you've come to the right place.

**Taxes; Character, positive**

**ALASKA 2014:**

**Democrat Mark Begich:**

[www.youtube.com/user/MarkBegich](http://www.youtube.com/user/MarkBegich)

Works for Alaska:

When we were young, our father loved to bring us here to this spot. When things seem impossible, I do what he would have done like when I took on Obama to open up drilling in the Artic. I also took him on to protect our gun rights and to save Alaska schools from 'No Child Left Behind'. And I'm fighting like hell to fix the healthcare law to it works for Alaska. I'm Mark Begich, and I approve this message because I will work with anyone, anywhere to do what's right for Alaskans.

**Performance of Government, Health Care, Jobs**

Work With Anyone:

What was Mark Begich's real record a mayor? Over 9,000 new jobs. He eliminated a \$33 million deficit and invested in police, fire fighters and schools. Then as Senator, he took on Obama to fix Alaska's VA, to protect our schools from "No Child Left Behind", and is taking responsibility for fixing the health care law so that it works for Alaska. I'm Mark Begich, and I approve this message because I will work with anyone, anywhere to do what's right for Alaskans.

**Debt/Deficit; Jobs; Education; Health Care; Performance of Government**

Bella:

When my husband, Jay Hammond was in office, he wasn't party oriented. I was impressed with that fact that Mark Begich wanted to work across party lines because it reminded me of Jay's attitude (Jay Hammond former Republican governor). I know what kind of job it is; it is hard but he's doing an excellent job. I support Mark wholeheartedly.

**Character, positive**

Margie:

We have over 3,000 telecommunications jobs in Alaska and Mark Begich has fought to protect them. As CEO of one of Alaska's largest companies, I worked with Mark when he helped transform the Anchorage economy as mayor. He's done the same thing as Senator, helping us expand our telecom industry, and I like how he works with Lisa. We're one of the only states with both Senators on the appropriations committee. We can't afford to lose that. I voted for Lisa, now I'm voting for Mark.

**Jobs; Performance of Government**

Two Views:

Hi I'm Mark Begich's mom.

And I'm his wife.

And we can tell you how Mark has always been frugal.

She means cheap.

When he was 10, he sold greeting cards and saved every penny.

When he was 50, he liked \$10 shirts.

He voted against President Obama's \$10 trillion tax increase.

Cut a million dollars from his office budget.

And blew the whistle on an automatic pay raise for Senators.

Cheap. Frugal. Cheap. Industrious.

**Performance of Government; Taxes**

Reprise:

He took on Obama to get drilling in the Artic. To keep our F16s and Eielson and to get local health care for veterans, and he voted against Obama's 10 trillion dollar tax increase. Mark Begich wins the fights for Alaska. Dan Sullivan let violent offenders off with light sentences and let Alaska's pension fund get ripped off by a New York financial firm putting the permanent fund at risk. Dan Sullivan didn't stand up for Alaskans.

**Health Care; Military; Crime; Performance of Government; Jobs**

Dan Sullivan Let Alaska Get Ripped Off:

What kind of attorney general was Dan Sullivan? First, it was letting violent criminals off with light sentences. Again and again, as little as 14 months for sexual assault. Now Sullivan is claiming credit for savings pensions but it was a pensions case where he made a bad deal with a New York financial firm for only 20 cents on the dollar. He left Alaska get ripped off. Dan Sullivan didn't stand up for Alaskans.

**Crime; Performance of Government**

Woodpile:

I'm Mark Begich and you might have seen this outsider ad attacking me of chopping wood and ducking under airplanes. It was paid for by the billionaire Koch brothers. They're spending millions to try and buy a Senate seat, but they could have used the money to keep the Flint Hills refinery open and not laid off the workers. Those workers and Alaskans all over this state are the people I care about.

**Jobs**

Opponents:

Now that the primary is over remember how Dan Sullivan's opponents described him? 'Someone who can't remember one fishing license to the next', 'one tax form from the next', and 'We've got a jar of mayonnaise that's been here longer than you.' About the billionaire Koch brothers supporting Dan Sullivan? Joe Miller: Where is the money coming from and why is it being given? Dan Sullivan for Senate?

Mead Treadwell: 'If you're going to represent Alaska, it helps to know Alaska.'

**Performance of Government**

**Republican Dan Sullivan:**

[www.youtube.com/user/DanSullivan2014](http://www.youtube.com/user/DanSullivan2014)

I'll Stand Up to Barack Obama:

I'm Dan Sullivan. Our country is on the wrong track and its Barack Obama's failed policies that put us there. As your Senator, I'll stand up to Barack Obama and federal overreach unleashing Alaskan energy to create jobs. I'll be honoured by your vote.

**Performance of Government, Jobs**

Stand Up:

I'm Dan Sullivan. Our country is on the wrong track and its Barack Obama's failed policies that put us there. There's nothing wrong with America that can't be fixed by what's right with Alaska. As your Senator, I'll stand up to Barack Obama and federal overreach, unleashing Alaskan energy to create jobs and fighting wasteful spending, strengthening America's national security while taking care of our veterans.

**National Security, Jobs, Debt/Deficit, Performance of Government**

Meghan:

I'm Meghan Sullivan. You've seen a lot of ads attacking my family so I wanted you to know the facts. Alaska has been my family's home for generations. My Dad is teaching my sisters and me to handle a rifle, fish and to be strong, independent, honest women. We learned a lot about sacrifice from his service in Afghanistan and we're all proud of his to protect Alaskan women from domestic violence. Dad will be a great Senator for Alaska.

**Character, Performance of Government**

Leader:

I served with Dan Sullivan in the United States Marine Corps. Dan Sullivan is one of those leaders who led by example. Dan trained hundreds of Alaskan Marines to be ready for combat in cold weather conditions. Alaska needs a fighter and I see that in Dan Sullivan. This country, let alone this state was built by people like Dan Sullivan. When times got tough, he didn't take no for an answer. He cares about his fellow

Alaskans, he cares about his fellow countrymen. If Dan says something he's going to do, I believe him because I trust him.

**Character, positive**

He's on Alaskans Side:

During this campaign Mark Begich has attacked me for my work to protect women from domestic abuse, to force Wall Street to return hundreds of millions to Alaska's teachers, even leaving my home in Alaska to fight terrorism after 9/11. Why is Mark so despise? Because EPA overreach, Obamacare, gun rights, amnesty, spending. Mark Begich is with Obama and I'm with you. I'm Dan Sullivan and I approve this message because I'm on Alaska's side.

**Performance of Government, Debt/Deficit, Crime, Jobs**

Condi Rice: America Needs Dan Sullivan

Our nation and the world face serious threats to our national security and who we send to Washington really matters. Dan Sullivan's national security experience will make our country safer. After 9/11 Dan left his home in Alaska to help fight the war on terror, working with me in the White House and in the State Department and deploying to the Middle East as a Marine. These are challenging times; America needs Dan Sullivan.

**National Security, Character, positive**

Lisa Murkowski:

We're all tired of the negative ads and I'm especially disappointed by the dishonest attacks on Dan Sullivan. I need a partner in the Senate who will work to advance Alaska's interests, not the Obama agenda. Alaska needs Dan Sullivan.

**Performance of Government**

Votes With Obama 97 Per Cent Of The Time:

Mark Begich votes with Obama 97% of the time, for Obamacare, trillions in new debt, job killing EPA regulations.

Obama: 'I'm not on the ballot this month but make no mistake but these policies are on the ballot.'

Mark Begich is with Obama.

**Jobs, Debt/Deficit, Performance of Government**

Energy:

On energy, Mark Begich and I just see things differently. He thinks Obama's EPA should make decisions for Alaska and despite all his promises we've moved backwards on ANWR energy development. As your DNR commissioner, I stood up to Obama's EPA and fought to open ANWR. From Point Thompson to Cook Inlet, were unleashing new energy and creating good paying jobs. I'm Dan Sullivan and I approve this message because I'll stand up to Barack Obama get real results for Alaska.

**Performance of Government, Jobs**

Committed:

My new is Jamilla George. I know first hand how committed Dan Sullivan is to protecting Alaskan women from domestic violence because I worked with him to do it. Because of Dan's work offenders got longer prison sentences, and abused women

are getting the legal representation they need to restart their lives. Mark Begich is shamefully and falsely attacking our work to try and hurt Dan. That's stooping pretty low, even for Mark Begich.

**Crime, Character, negative**

Mark Begich: Wrong for Alaska:

Mark Begich has an embarrassingly liberal record. In Anchorage, Mark Begich raised property taxes and increased spending by nearly 50%. Shameful. In Washington, Mark Begich has voted with Obama 97% of the time adding trillions to the national debt. Shameful. Mark Begich cast the deciding vote for Obamacare, cutting \$716 billion from Medicare. Mark Begich is shamefully wrong for Alaska.

**Performance of Government, Senior Citizens, Debt/deficit**

Our Values:

As a certified firearm instructor and hunter, I'm very frustrated with Mark Begich. He does not represent Alaskans or our values. How do you vote for Barack Obama's anti-gun judges and still say you support the second amendment. Its crazy to think that Alaska has a Senator that votes with Barack Obama 97% of the time. Mark Begich does not represent Alaska. As a hunter, I trust Dan Sullivan.

**Performance of Government**

Cory Davis, Lame Tricks:

I'm Cory Davis, as a four time X-Games medallist, I know something about snow machines and that's why I had a good laugh when I saw Mark Begich pretending to ride one. Begich acts like Mr Alaska when he wants our vote but the truth is he votes for Obama and his DC friends, not Alaska. I'm tired of the phony politicians and Mark Begich's lame tricks. This is why I'm with Dan Sullivan. He gets things done for Alaska.

**Performance of Government, Character, negative**

Message:

After 9/11 our family left our home in Alaska so my husband, Dan Sullivan, could defend our country. First in the White House under Condoleezza Rice then deploying overseas as a U.S. Marine. Now Mark Begich is attacking Dan for that service. As someone whose family has been in Alaska for thousands of years, I have a message for Mark Begich: Alaskans respect military service, we don't attack it.

**Military/National Security, Character, positive**

Respect:

As Alaska's attorney general, Dan Sullivan led the choose respect initiative to protect women from domestic violence. Alaska has a big problem with domestic violence. Dan Sullivan showed tremendous leadership in this area. There are many women out there who have an advocate in their lives because of what Dan Sullivan has done. What Alaska women can know about Dan Sullivan is that he has got their back. I think Dan Sullivan will be an excellent Senator.

**Crime, Performance of Government**

Alaska's Teachers:

I'm Leslie Moore, I teach seventh grade here in Anchorage. After the financial crisis, my pension took a big hit. It was a difficult time for Alaska's teachers but Attorney

General Dan Sullivan fought back forcing a Wall Street firm to pay for their malpractice, returning almost half a billion dollars to the retirement fund for Alaskans. Dan Sullivan stood up for me, and every Alaskan teacher. He'll make a great Senator.

### **Performance of Government**

Alaska Agreement:

Millions of dollars of negative ads are flooding into Alaska paid for by Washington special interests. Pretty soon you going to want to do this to your TV (shoots television with handgun). I proposed a plan to stop all the mudslinging from outsiders so we can keep this election focused on the issues. Unfortunately, Mark Begich said no. I'm Dan Sullivan and I approve this message because Mark Begich should tell his DC friends to stay out of Alaska.

### **Character, negative**

Running:

The Marine Corps shaped who I am. Integrity. Honour. Results. This is who we are as Alaskans. An independent spirit, optimism and a drive to get the job done. Too often we find Washington DC is standing in our way, taking our jobs, our rights, our energy. Its time for Alaska to fight back. That's why I am running.

### **Jobs, Performance of Government**

## **LOUISIANA 2014**

### **Republican Rob Maness**

<https://www.youtube.com/user/RobManessForSenate>

Resilient:

Louisianans are tough. We never give up, no matter the odds. We're people of faith, heart, courage, resilience. When the chips were down and we thought we were done, we joined together and proved them wrong. I'm retired Colonel Rob Maness and I approve this message because we can overcome the Washington politics in this campaign and we can do it together. A little real Louisiana can fix a lot of wrong in Washington. Let's do this Louisiana.

### **Character, positive; Performance of Government**

Other Guy:

I'm sick of nasty political ads!

We've got to vote for the other guy for Senate, Herman Rob Maness.

Colonel Maness will protect our gun rights, secure our borders. He's the only one with guts to stand up to Obama. Let's send Washington politics a message.

### **Immigration (National Security); Crime; Performance of Government**

Truck:

After driving all of Louisiana's 64 parishes, my truck reminds me of our country run by Obama: running on empty, needs a tune-up and a good wash. Washington politicians can't fix our problems or our trucks. Thanks to them, we've got crushing deficits, porous borders and Obamacare. As Louisiana's Senator, I'll always put Louisiana over Washington and I'll make Obamacare roadkill.

## **Health Care, National Security, Debt/Deficit, Crime; Performance of Government**

Gator:

I'm Rob Maness and here in Louisiana you learn to be tough. One moment of weakness and the alligators can eat you alive. When I get to Washington, I'll stand up to the big spenders, I'll fight to repeal Obamacare and I'll protect our gun rights. I'm Colonel Rob Maness and I approve this message because Louisiana needs a senator that will stand up to the career politicians and the alligators.

**Health Care, Crime, Debt/Deficit; Performance of Government**

### **Democrat Mary Landrieu:**

<https://www.youtube.com/user/MaryLandrieu4Senate>

What's Right:

We've all heard about 97%. Well, I'm Mary Landrieu and I'd like to tell you what that number really means. It means I voted against raising the retirement age to 70. It means I fought for better health care for veterans, to end tax breaks for shipping jobs overseas, to enforce equal pay for women and to stop insurance companies from denying coverage. I approve this message because that's a 100% record of fighting for Louisiana.

**Senior citizens; Civil Rights/Equality; Health Care; Performance of Government**

Their Best:

Every morning I say a prayer for kids. I just want them to be happy and to do their best. Bill Cassidy is a doctor but he still voted in Congress to cut \$86 million from Louisiana schools, to pay for a tax break for millionaires like himself. I don't know what kind of doctor would do that to my kids. I'm Mary Landrieu and I approve this message because kids should never pay the price for a millionaire's tax cut.

**Education; Performance of Government**

Not Cool:

Here's Bill Cassidy trying to sound cool online talking about the economy but he doesn't tell you he voted against raising the minimum wage, against enforcing equal pay for women. He even said we should close some Louisiana colleges and turn them into prisons. No, not cool.

**Education; Equality; Jobs; Performance of Government**

Whoa:

On May 31<sup>st</sup> Bill Cassidy gave a speech that was nearly incoherent, but his record is crystal clear, voting to cut social security benefits to pay for a tax break for millionaires like himself. Do we want to lose Mary Landrieu's clout for this?

**Senior citizens; Performance of Government**

Worth Fighting For:

This is the Louisiana that Washington will never understand. It is why after Katrina and Rita, I got us billions to rebuild. We've worked to keep our economy strong by saving Fort Polk, restoring our coast and ending the moratorium on offshore drilling.

Now as chairman of the Energy Committee, Washington has to listen to Louisiana whether they like it or not. I'm Mary Landrieu and I approve this message because Louisiana is worth fighting for.

**Performance of Government, Economy, Jobs**

Never Understand:

I'm a registered nurse who built nursing businesses in 12 states. We treat far too many women who are victims of assault and domestic violence. That's why I'll never understand why Congressman Bill Cassidy voted against the bipartisan Violence Against Women Act and against affordable preventative care for women. Bill Cassidy is a doctor, he should know better. I'm Mary Landrieu and I approve this message because I'll always stand up for the women on Louisiana.

**Equality/Civil Rights, Health Care; Performance of Government**

Four CEOs:

We've all built companies that employ thousands of Louisianans. We're three Republicans and a Democrat and we're all supporting Mary Landrieu. Because of Mary, Louisiana got billions in oil royalties, to rebuild after Katrina and Rita. We've got over 50 deep-water drilling rigs. She took on the President to get that done. Now she's chairman of the Energy Committee, and we can't afford to lose that.

**Performance of Government, Jobs**

Walked Miles:

When you're in the military, you remember who walked the extra mile with you, and Senator Mary Landrieu has walked miles with us. She saved Fort Polk from being closed, and strengthened bases at Barksdale and Belle Chasse. Senator Landrieu is the one who got our troops vehicles to withstand roadside bombs saving lives. And she helped turn around young lives with the National Guard Youth Challenge. That's why I'm with Mary.

**Performance of Government, Military**

Rig Service:

My name is Travis Borne and I've walked boats like this for 20 years. People in Washington have no idea what rig servicing is about. They should come down here and see what Mary Landrieu has been fighting for. After the spill we had only 12 deep-water rigs going in the Gulf but she took on the President to make it easier to drill. That's led to over 60 rigs today and thousands of jobs. Now she's chairman of the Energy Committee and we'd be crazy to lose her. I'm with Mary.

**Jobs, Performance of Government**

Hard Job:

Being an electrician is a hard job for someone by age. I've had a spinal fusion and have had burns on over 40% of my body. I'm retiring soon and I'll need social security. Bill Cassidy voted in Congress to raise the retirement age to 70 and to cut benefits to pay for a tax break for millionaires like himself. Someone like me, cannot work that long. I'm Mary Landrieu and I approve this message because no one should have to suffer to pay for a millionaire's tax cut.

**Senior Citizens; Performance of Government**



**Republican Bill Cassidy:**

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCumamw48HaIRUbM3KbNc2qw>

Take A Stand:

This December 6<sup>th</sup>, this is our chance to turn our country around by bringing our values to Washington, to unleash the energy industry, to repeal and replace Obamacare and to secure the border with no amnesty. This only happens if we vote to stop Barack Obama. The rest of America did just that in the November election, now it's our turn to take a stand.

**Health Care; National Security (immigration); Performance of Government; Jobs**

Represent You:

Obama: Before the end of the year, we're going to take whatever lawful actions I can take. Cassidy: That's Barack Obama promising executive amnesty for millions here illegally. And remember Mary Landrieu, Barack Obama, 97%. As your Senator, I will fight his amnesty plan.

**National Security (immigration); Crime; Performance of Government**

Energy:

In Louisiana we all know that better energy, create better jobs with better benefits. In Congress I have fought to expand oil and gas exploration and the jobs it brings. I oppose Barack Obama's moratorium, his climate czar and his regulations. They tied this industry down. Remember America needs these jobs; Louisiana needs these jobs; our families need these jobs. Let's get Washington out of the way.

**Jobs; Performance of Government**

Worst:

Barack Obama has failed us. He's hostile toward energy jobs, will not secure the border, threatens to grand amnesty and is forcing Obamacare down our throats. Mary Landrieu votes with Obama 97% of the time. A vote for her is a vote for him. I'll be your Senator, a conservative who stands up to Obama, not his rubber stamp. On November 4<sup>th</sup>, it's your turn to stand up to Obama. Take a stand.

**Jobs; Performance of Government**

Words:

A few words from Mary Landrieu on Obamacare...

Landrieu: If I had to vote for the bill again, I would vote for it tomorrow.

On voting with Barack Obama 97% of the time...

Landrieu: I'm very happy for the President to defend what I think is an extraordinary record.

And if you dare disagree with her?

Landrieu: ...and if they don't like it, they can un-elect us because I'm up for re-election.

**Performance of Government; Health Care**

Yes We Can:

(Crowd chanting yes we can at a campaign rally for Obama).

He promised to change America but he's changing for the worse. Mary Landrieu goes right along with it, she votes with Obama 97% of the time, for Obamacare, for

amnesty for illegals, for \$700 billion in Medicare cuts. Bill Cassidy stands up to Barack Obama because he represents you.

**Senior Citizens; Performance of Government; Crime (immigration); Health Care**

Two Obamas:

One Obama in Washington is enough for Louisiana has two, because Mary Landrieu supports Barack Obama 97% of the time. She voted for Obamacare and still supports it, for amnesty for illegals, for \$700 billion in cuts to Medicare. Mary Landrieu doesn't represent you, she represents Barack Obama. Bill Cassidy stands up to Obama.

**Performance of Government; Senior Citizens; National Security (immigration); Health Care**

Fence:

Our border is wide open for illegal immigrants to cross-undetected everyday. Mary Landrieu voted against hiring more border patrol agents and event called a border fence 'dumb'. No wonder Mary Landrieu favours amnesty and supports Barack Obama 97% of the time. Bill Cassidy supports a border fence and he opposes amnesty.

**National Security (immigration); Performance of Government**

Sold Us Out:

Senator Landrieu I voted for you before, but when you voted for Obamacare, I knew I had made a mistake. Cancelled health plans, now big rate increases and still you refuse to repeal it. You just try to scare us with nonsense about Social Security, Medicare and veterans. We're voting for Bill Cassidy. He stands up to Barack Obama and he'll vote to repeal and replace Obamacare.

**Health Care; Performance of Government; Senior Citizens**

Border:

NBC News: People pouring over the southern U.S. border by the tens of thousands.

Fox News: A financial, public health and law enforcement risk to the U.S.

Cassidy: The border is a mess. Barack Obama and Mary Landrieu support amnesty, which makes it worse.

Now Obama threatens to grant amnesty by executive order. He doesn't care what Americans think. I oppose amnesty; we must secure that border now. Mary Landrieu represents Barack Obama, I represent you.

**Performance of Government; National Security (immigration)**

Watch This:

Its just another Obamacare lie. Landrieu: Over time, premium costs go down. Wrong. Just days go we learn that Louisiana's insurance rates will go up by double digits, but Senator Landrieu still supports Obamacare. Doctor Bill Cassidy stands up to Barack Obama. He'll vote to repeal and replace Obamacare.

**Health Care; Performance of Government**

## **KENTUCKY 2014:**

### **Democrat Alison Grimes:**

<https://www.youtube.com/user/alisonforkentucky>

#### Alison Needs You:

I'm Alison Lundergan Grimes, Kentucky's Secretary of State and with your help and support, the first female Senator from the Commonwealth of Kentucky. November 4<sup>th</sup> is almost here and your choice matters. You will be the ones who bring this race home. They deserve an independent voice that wants to put the people of Kentucky back to work and finally get Washington working again.

#### **Character, positive**

#### Feel Safe:

Something good can still happen here. When you're young and living in a home with domestic violence, it's all that you know. Alison Lundergan Grimes brought Democrats and Republicans together so that victims of domestic violence can vote without their address being made public. I grew up in a home like this, I know that Alison's law will help my mom feel safe. We deserve a Senator who can work this way.

#### **Civil Rights/Equality; Performance of Government**

#### Wendell:

When I was in the Senate, Democrats and Republicans worked together. Mitch McConnell, he doesn't understand the problems, he's just been against everything, Mr No. Alison will reach out. She won't vote to send jobs overseas, like Mitch McConnell is. Alison can work with both sides. I believe in Alison. She is the right person at the right time.

#### **Character, positive; jobs**

#### Clinton:

Bill Clinton: What's being a senator about anyway? One candidate believes it's about getting new jobs, good jobs, and a chance for middle class parents to give their kids a good life. Nobody can tell me it's not a senator's job to create jobs and I choose Alison because she will work with people from both parties to do what's right for you. Send Alison to the Senate.

#### **Jobs; Character, positive**

#### Rally:

Mitch McConnell is the biggest problem in Washington. After 30 years, Kentucky is ready for a senator that will put politics aside, and put the people of this state first. We need a senator that will raise the minimum wage, ensure equal pay for equal work and job training for our veterans. Mitch McConnell voted no on all of this. Washington is broken, and Kentucky needs a new senator.

#### **Civil Rights/Equality; Jobs; Military**

#### Where Was He?

First we learn Mitch McConnell skipped hundreds of committee meetings. Where was he? He didn't show up to vote for troop funding, the Farm Bill and the VA on

days he found time to attend a lobbyist fundraiser and was on two TV shows. He skipped a meeting on rural jobs, but toasted the Chinese Vice President on 'China's great achievements.' And the rest of the time, he created gridlock. 30 years is long enough.

### **Performance of Government; Agriculture, Jobs**

Skeet Shooting:

Mitch McConnell wants you to think I'm Barack Obama. This is the same guy who thought Duke basketball players were UK, or who is attacking me on coal after doing next to nothing while we've lost thousands of coal jobs. He even said it's not his job to bring jobs to Kentucky. I'm not Barack Obama; I disagree with him on guns, coal and the EPA and Mitch. That's not how you hold a gun.

### **Jobs; Performance of Government**

More Important:

Listen to Mitch McConnell,

McConnell: I've been on the Agriculture Committee my entire time. And arguably and even more important, the Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee.

Those committees are important to Kentucky, yet Mitch McConnell has skipped hundreds of committee meetings on agriculture, veterans, energy and defence. He only showed up 7% of the time. If you did that, you'd get fired, so should he.

### **Performance of Government**

It's Time:

As Secretary of State, I've worked with businesses large and small and I know what it takes to bring good jobs to Kentucky. I worked to pass landmark legislation guaranteeing military votes would be counted, bringing Republicans and Democrats together. As a volunteer lawyer for victims of domestic violence, I know how to fight for those with no voice and win. I'm Alison Lundergan Grimes and I approve this message because Washington is broken, and needs a new senator.

### **Jobs; Civil Rights; Performance of Government**

### **Republican Mitch McConnell:**

<https://www.youtube.com/user/McConnellForSenate>

Farmers:

Mitch McConnell, fighting for Kentucky farmers. The tobacco bout would not have been possible without Mitch McConnell's leadership and experience. Mitch McConnell brought Republicans and Democrats together to do the right thing for Kentucky. Mitch protected all Kentucky farmer's from Barack Obama's 'Death Tax'. Senator McConnell is a fighter for the farmers. There is no way to put a value on McConnell's experience. Mitch McConnell's leadership makes a big difference to those of us in agriculture and to the entire state of Kentucky.

### **Agriculture; Performance of Government**

Vote for Mitch McConnell:

You see Kentucky is under attack from Barack Obama's administration and we need to fight back. We've got people who are hurting out there and need us, but we hold our values every single day. There is only one way to begin to do in a different direction. Obama needs Grimes, Kentucky needs McConnell.

**Performance of Government**

Commercials:

You know a lot of people try to tell me, how to do my commercials.

We see you between two trucks. McConnell: That sounds dangerous.

Hey Mitch, what about using a talking baby? McConnell: That's been done before.

How about you and bloodhounds? McConnell: That's not going to work.

Maybe it's enough to say Mitch fights for Kentucky.

**Character, positive**

Moore:

How did I get to know Mitch McConnell? Simple, he got to know me. He's been a regular at my deli counter for years and he always asks about my family, especially my mom. We talk sports, the economy and dinner. Mitch gets so much done for our state, and he still takes time to listen and care. This is why I'm proud to call him my senator and my friend.

**Character, positive**

Hypocrisy:

Alison Grimes talks about raising the minimum wage but Grime has a problem.

'The restaurant Grimes family owns doesn't always practice what she preaches. Servers at Huge Jass Buggers, yup you heard that right, make just \$2.13 an hour. Despite all of talk, Grimes worked as the lawyer for her family's restaurant. That's Hypocrisy, that's Alison Grimes.

**Character, negative**

Represents Me:

Alison Grimes wants me to think I'm not good enough, that I couldn't get a job unless Washington passed more laws, that I can't graduate college without raising your taxes. She wants me to believe that strong women and strong values are incompatible. She thinks I'll vote for the candidate who looks like me rather than the one who represents me. As a strong Kentucky woman I'm voting for Mitch McConnell. I'm voting for Mitch McConnell because he believes in me and he works for us.

**Taxes; Size of Government**

My Voice:

I'm a life-long Democrat but when I look at Senator McConnell I know he shares me values and I know he's fighting for our jobs and communities. I'm a Democrat and he's a Republican, but the parties have nothing to do with the value of the people in Kentucky. I don't vote for the party, I vote for the person who is going to stand strong for my values. I'm a lifelong blue-collar union man who is for Mitch McConnell, and have been for Mitch McConnell because he is my voice.

**Jobs, Performance of Government**

Debbie Smith:

Debbie Smith was a victim of sexual assault whose case went unsolved for years due to a backlog of DNA testing. Inspired by her victim's advocacy work, Mitch McConnell co-sponsored the Debbie Smith Act, which secures millions to expedite DNA testing. He has been a true champion on the issue, working across party lines. His commitment to this legislation speaks to his devotion to women, to crime victims of their families.

**Civil Rights/Equality, Crime, Performance of Government**

Answer Anything:

Alison Lundergan Grimes refusal to say who she's voted for, for President is now the non-answer heard around the country (various TV pundits discussing why she didn't answer and questioning if she has the ability to lead in the Senate).

**Character, negative**

Dr Sandy:

As a doctor, I see how Obamacare hurts patients' access to care. As a mom, I know it hurts families. My son has diabetes and our insurance was cancelled under Obamacare. Like many we now pay more for less coverage. Mitch McConnell is working for common sense health care reform that starts with repealing Obamacare. Mitch is leading the fight because he cares about patients and families, like mine.

**Health Care; Performance of Government**

Walker:

Here in eastern Kentucky actions matter and the President's actions are killing coal jobs. Now Alison Grimes says she's for us but she takes big money from people who want to destroy coal and it's insulting for politicians like Alison Grimes to make us promises that we know she cannot keep because her party won't let her. Actions and experience matter, and the person fighting for our coal jobs is Mitch McConnell.

**Jobs; Performance of Government**

This Fall:

Alison Grimes says this election is not about her support of Barack Obama and his failed policies. Barack Obama himself said a vote for Alison is a vote for his policies. Obama needs Grimes and Kentucky needs Mitch McConnell.

**Performance of Government**

Chris:

I was a coal miner for 13 years but like so many others I got laid off because of the war on coal. My choices were to learn a new career or leave Kentucky. Senator McConnell secured millions of dollars to retrain Kentucky coal miners so we can learn new skills and get good jobs. It was my lifelong dream to be a paramedic and help my community. Thanks to Mitch McConnell I'm getting that training to help fulfil that dream. Senator McConnell has used his experience and clout to fight for coal miners like me and our families.

**Jobs; Performance of Government**

Absences:

‘Would you serve for 4 years if you win? Grimes: I guess, I hope, that’s the term. Sound familiar? Obama: I will serve out my full six-year term. Obama and Grimes both broke their promises in order to campaign for higher office. Each had little experience then stopped showing up for work. Worse, Grimes still takes her taxpayer funded salary while her parking space at the state capital sits empty day after day.

**Performance of Government; Character, negative**

Williams:

In 2010, I was working on the farm, got sick and had to go to the hospital. With the mix-up in paperwork, Medicare wasn’t paying our bills. We were threatened by bill collectors and we were so upset. We reached out to Senator McConnell. Mitch contacted Medicare, and with his experience you bet they listened. Mitch got this mess sorted out for us. Mitch fought for us and gave us piece of mind.

**Senior Citizens; Performance of Government**

Convince:

Alison Grimes thinks shooting a gun will convince you that she’s not like Barack Obama, but Grimes twice supported Obama’s platform for Obamacare, for the War on Coal, for Obama’s foreign policy and ironically for gun control. Oh and you know who else did a publicity stunt for firing a gun? Barack Obama. Obama needs Grimes; Kentucky needs Mitch McConnell.

**Performance of Government; Jobs; Foreign Policy**

Leader:

It was just brilliant manoeuvring by McConnell. He’s the guy who is going to get concessions from the White House. Mitch McConnell who is just as tough as Obama. Mitch McConnell is the person is the end, who more than anyone else, got this deal to the finish line. The forth-consecutive year that Senate Minority leader Mitch McConnell has negotiated a deadline deal. Senator McConnell, Mitch McConnell, was the adult here. What would have happened here had he not been there?

**Performance of Government**

No Experience:

The media call her ads false and misleading, but Alison Grimes keeps attacking. Now on attendance, Grimes must not understand that as a Senate leader Mitch doesn’t just serve on committees, he can appoint committee members, making sure Kentucky’s voice is heard. It’s a power Grimes won’t have. As for McConnell’s attendance, 99%. Alison Grimes: No experience, false and misleading attacks.

**Performance of Government; Character, negative**

Serious Times:

These are serious times. (News reporting of ISIS, the National Debt, unaccompanied children crossing the Texas/Mexico border, the potential for Obamacare to be a ‘train wreck’). In Kentucky, we have a proven leader. When so many in Washington cannot do the job, Kentucky has a Senator who can. Obama needs Grimes, Kentucky needs Mitch McConnell.

**National Security; Debt/Deficit; Performance of Government**

After All That:

In 2008, Alison Grimes supported Barack Obama and his liberal platform. (War on coal imagery, Kentucky miners lose 2,000 jobs last year, exploding U.S. debt, Jobs Report more bad news for Obama, Vladimir Putin, Benghazi, Chaos in the Middle East, The IRS scandal, the VA scandal, Obama's Lie of the year on Obamacare). After all this, Grimes still supports Obama. Is there any doubt how she would vote in Washington?

**Jobs; Foreign Policy; Health Care; Performance of Government**