

TREASURE STATE 2020 POLL RESULTS: THE MONTANA U.S. SENATE RACE

Tabular data and analysis provided by:

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Notes: The survey was in the field from September 14 – October 2, 2020. Rows in tables may not sum to 100% exactly due to rounding. The margin of error, adjusted for design effects due to weighting, is +/-3.9 percentage points. Percentages are for weighted respondents as explained in the methods documentation.

Table 1: Senate Vote among Likely and Active Registered Voters

Daines	Bullock	Other	Don't Know	Total Row Respondents
47%	49%	1%	3%	1,609

Based upon the margin of error in our sample, Senator Daines receives between 43 and 51 percent support from our respondents, with 47 percent as the average estimated level of support. Any incumbent below 50 percent this close to the election is certainly in a bit of trouble. Governor Steve Bullock receives support from between 45 and 53 (mean of 49) percent of respondents. The gap between the two candidates is within the poll's margin of error. In our 2018 poll, incumbent Democratic Senator Jon Tester polled at 46 percent, with Republican Matt Rosendale at 43 percent, during roughly the same time period. However, in the 2018 race a Libertarian candidate drew 3 percent of respondent support—so it is hard to say whether Governor Bullock is outperforming Senator Tester.

Table 2: Senate Vote by Party among Likely and Active Registered Voters

Party	Daines	Bullock	Other / Don't Know	Total Row Respondents
Democrat	3%	97%	1%	441
Republican	88%	8%	4%	698
Independent	29%	67%	4%	335
Other	20%	73%	7%	103

Senator Daines is in trouble for two reasons. First, only 88 percent of Republican respondents indicate they will vote for him—better than Republican Matt Rosendale's 83 percent from 2018 but about the same level of support former Republican Congressman Denny Rehberg attracted when he lost to Democratic Senator Jon Tester in 2012. Conversely, Governor Bullock receives 97 percent of the Democratic vote—nearly identical to Senator Tester's Democratic support in 2018.

Second, Senator Daines is performing poorly among independent voters, with only 29 percent saying they will vote for him (versus 67 percent for Democratic Governor Steve Bullock). By comparison, 30 percent of independents indicated a willingness to support Republican Matt Rosendale in 2018. Only 3 percent of respondents overall this year say they don't know for whom they would vote, which is half as many as 2018. Daines must grab some of these voters to win, even if Republicans come home on Election Day.

Table 3: Senate Vote by Gender among Likely and Active Registered Voters

Gender	Daines	Bullock	Other / Don't Know	Total Row Respondents
Female	45%	51%	4%	744
Male	49%	47%	4%	818

The gender gap persists but is smaller in our poll than what we observed in the 2018 Senate race. Women prefer Bullock by 6 points (51 to 45 percent), while men split between Daines and Bullock. In 2018, Democratic Senator Jon Tester was favored by 13 points among women, while Republican Matt Rosendale was favored by 6 points among men.

Table 4: Senate Vote by Age among Likely and Active Registered Voters

Age	Daines	Bullock	Other / Don't Know	Total Row Respondents
18-29	35%	60%	5%	202
30-39	41%	53%	6%	236
40-49	47%	48%	5%	230
50-59	49%	50%	2%	252
60-69	52%	45%	4%	331
70+	52%	44%	4%	359

Among older voters, Senator Daines has an edge. Republicans typically do well with older voters, but in 2018 Senator Tester had a slight advantage among these voters. Among voters between 40 and 59, respondents are evenly split between the candidates. Governor Bullock dominates voters between the ages of 18 and 29 by 25 points—about 3 times the advantage Senator Tester enjoyed in 2018. This is where Bullock is vulnerable, as the youngest voters historically have been the least likely to turn out. However, voter turnout as high as it was in the primary could bode well for Bullock.

Table 5: Senate Vote by Education among Likely and Active Registered Voters

Education	Daines	Bullock	Other / Don't Know	Total Row Respondents
Less than high school	54%	46%	0%	55
High school/GED	49%	46%	4%	960
Associate/junior college	43%	48%	9%	194
Bachelor's degree	42%	56%	2%	308
Graduate degree	24%	74%	2%	46

The education gap that emerged in 2016 persists in this poll. Voters with at least a college degree support Bullock, while those with a high school diploma or less prefer Steve Daines. However, Steve Daines is doing better among voters with a bachelor's degree than Matt Rosendale did in 2018 (down only 14 points versus 28 points), while Bullock is doing better among those with a high school or associate degree than Tester did (nearly even among these voters whereas Senator Tester was down 7 and 15 points, respectively).

Table 6: Senate Vote by Presidential Vote among Likely and Active Registered Voters

Vote for President	Daines	Bullock	Other / Don't Know	Total Row Respondents
Trump	87%	7%	6%	818
Biden	2%	97%	1%	701
Other / Don't Know	29%	53%	18%	87

Biden voters are Bullock Voters, while Steve Daines only retains the support of 87 percent of voters who indicate they will vote for President Trump. This may explain Senator Daines' repeated efforts to tie himself closely to the President. The cost of this strategy is demonstrated by the support (53 percent) Bullock receives from other voters. Again, a high-turnout election will certainly favor Bullock, as independents are less likely to turn out, all else being equal.