



MASON-DIXON
POLLING & STRATEGY

WASHINGTON, DC - 202-548-2680
JACKSONVILLE, FL - 904-261-2444

MASON-DIXON® FLORIDA POLL



SEPTEMBER 2018
2018 SENATE RACE

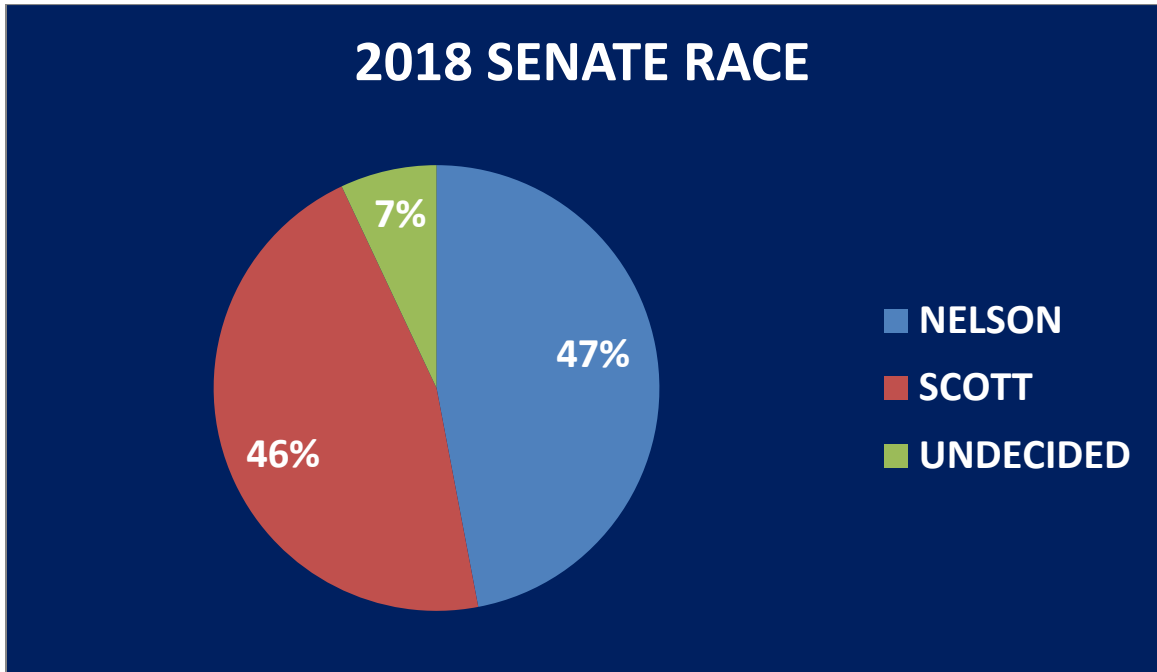
EMBARGO: Newspaper Publication - Thursday, October 4, 2018
Broadcast & Internet Release – 6 am, Thursday October 4, 2018

© Copyright 2018

Tracking public opinion in Florida since 1984

**FLORIDA SENATE RACE REMAINS CLOSE
BUT SLIGHT SHIFT PUTS NELSON AHEAD BY A SINGLE POINT**

The Senate race between incumbent Democrat Bill Nelson and term-limited Republican Governor Rick Scott remains tight. Statewide, Nelson has now assumed a marginal 47%-46% lead over Scott, a shift in the Democrat’s favor since July when Scott had pulled out to a 47%-44% advantage.



The long-term trend line shows no decisive changes over the past year, which suggests that party turnout levels will likely decide the outcome.

<u>2018 SENATE RACE</u>	<u>NELSON</u>	<u>SCOTT</u>	<u>UND</u>
February 2017	46%	41%	13%
October 2017	44%	44%	12%
February 2018	45%	44%	11%
July 2018	44%	47%	9%
September 2018	47%	46%	7%

The major demographic splits that have been present in all earlier polling remain. However, two shifts appear to be primarily responsible for Nelson’s rebound.

Nelson remains strong among women (54%-38%), Democrats (84%-9%) and black voters (84%-5%). Scott still has a sizeable advantage with men (56%-38%), Republicans (85%-10%) and whites (57%-37%).

Nelson continues to run ahead among voters under the age of 50 (51%-42%), while Scott maintains a lead among those who are 50 and over (48%-45%).

But Nelson has widened his lead among Hispanics by over 10-points (55%-37%) – he led by only 44%-39% in July. He has also pulled ahead among voters with no party affiliation (46%-43%) – he previously trailed by 47%-43%.

Nelson’s strength remains in Southeast Florida (62%-33%), but Scott continues to hold a wide margin in North Florida (56%-34%). Southwest Florida still backs Scott, but his margin on his home turf has slipped from 59%-33% to 53%-38% -- (red tide & green algae?)

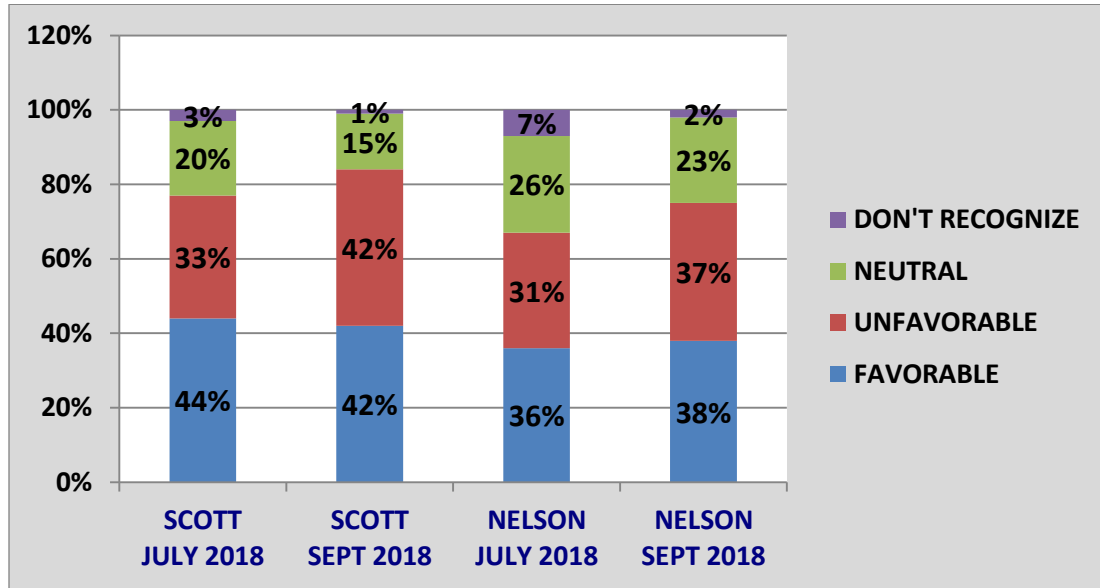
The decisive “I-4 corridor” slightly leans to Scott (48%-46% overall). But there is a split among the two regions within it. Scott is ahead in Central Florida (51%-43%) and Nelson is up in Tampa Bay (49%-45%).

But these results also show that Nelson’s strength comes from voter groups that are less reliable than others in lower turnout mid-term elections – particularly minority and younger voters. The gubernatorial campaign of Andrew Gillum and two hotly contested congressional races in Hispanic districts in Miami-Dade County could play major roles in increasing minority turnout.

However, this poll was conducted during the week of the Brett Kavanaugh Supreme Court confirmation hearings, which may have sparked Republican voter interest and closed the enthusiasm gap between Democrats and the GOP. It could explain why Nelson may have had larger leads in several other polls conducted prior to last week, while this one shows him still in a toss-up contest. At least for the moment, the Supreme Court battle is casting a shadow in Florida.

Currently, both candidates have about an equal split in favorable/unfavorable name recognition – with Scott’s at 42%-42% and Nelson’s at 38%-37%. But, the tightening of the race may be attributable to Scott’s 9-point increase in unfavorable recognition (from 33% to 42%) making his now 5-points higher than Nelson’s.

NAME RECOGNITION SHIFTS



Opinion of President Donald Trump in Florida remains about even -- 44% favorable/46% unfavorable. This makes Trump a neutral factor, other than serving as a motivator for partisan turnout on both sides.

STATEWIDE NAME RECOGNITION

Do you recognize the name _____?

(IF YES) Do you have a favorable, unfavorable or neutral opinion of _____?

	<u>RECOGNIZE FAVORABLE</u>	<u>RECOGNIZE UNFAVORABLE</u>	<u>RECOGNIZE NEUTRAL</u>	<u>DON'T RECOGNIZE</u>
Rick Scott	42%	42%	15%	1%
Bill Nelson	38%	37%	23%	2%
Donald Trump	44%	46%	10%	-

QUESTION: If the 2018 election for Florida’s U.S. Senate seat were held today, would you vote for Bill Nelson, the Democrat, or Rick Scott, the Republican?

	<u>NELSON</u>	<u>SCOTT</u>	<u>UNDECIDED</u>
STATE	47%	46%	7%

<u>REGION</u>	<u>NELSON</u>	<u>SCOTT</u>	<u>UNDECIDED</u>
North Florida	34%	56%	10%
Central Florida	43%	51%	6%
Tampa Bay	49%	45%	6%
Southwest Florida	38%	53%	9%
Southeast Florida	62%	33%	5%

<u>SEX</u>	<u>NELSON</u>	<u>SCOTT</u>	<u>UNDECIDED</u>
Men	38%	56%	6%
Women	54%	38%	8%

<u>AGE</u>	<u>NELSON</u>	<u>SCOTT</u>	<u>UNDECIDED</u>
18-34	56%	40%	4%
35-49	48%	43%	9%
50-64	44%	50%	6%
65+	45%	47%	8%

<u>RACE/ETHNICITY</u>	<u>NELSON</u>	<u>SCOTT</u>	<u>UNDECIDED</u>
White	37%	57%	6%
Black	84%	5%	11%
Hispanic	55%	37%	8%

<u>PARTY REGISTRATION</u>	<u>NELSON</u>	<u>SCOTT</u>	<u>UNDECIDED</u>
Democrat	84%	9%	7%
Republican	10%	85%	5%
Independent	46%	43%	11%

HOW THE POLL WAS CONDUCTED

This poll was conducted by Mason-Dixon Polling & Strategy, Inc. of Jacksonville, Florida from September 24 through September 27, 2018. A total of 815 registered Florida voters were interviewed statewide by telephone. All indicated they were “likely to vote” in the November general election

Those interviewed were randomly selected from a phone-matched Florida voter registration list that included both land-line and cell phone numbers. Quotas were assigned to reflect voter turnout by county.

The margin for error, according to standards customarily used by statisticians, is no more than ± 3.5 percentage points. This means that there is a 95 percent probability that the "true" figure would fall within that range if all voters were surveyed. The margin for error is higher for any subgroup, such as a gender or age grouping.

DEMOGRAPHICS

PARTY REGISTRATION:

Democrat	311 (38%)
Republican	301 (37%)
Independent or Other	203 (25%)

AGE:

18-34	136 (17%)
35-49	196 (24%)
50-64	225 (28%)
65+	250 (31%)
Refused	8 (1%)

RACE/ETHNICITY:

White/Caucasian	543 (66%)
Black/African American	113 (14%)
Hispanic or Cuban	135 (17%)
Other	18 (2%)
Refused	6 (1%)

SEX:

Male	365 (45%)
Female	450 (55%)

REGION:

North Florida	180 (22%)
Central Florida	155 (19%)
Tampa Bay	145 (18%)
Southwest Florida	100 (12%)
Southeast Florida	235 (29%)

FLORIDA POLL REGIONS

NORTH FLORIDA: Voters interviewed in Escambia, Okaloosa, Santa Rosa, Bay, Calhoun, Franklin, Gulf, Liberty, Walton, Washington, Holmes, Jackson, Gadsden, Hamilton, Jefferson, Lafayette, Leon, Madison, Suwannee, Taylor, Wakulla, Baker, Bradford, Clay, Columbia, Duval, Nassau, Putnam, St. Johns, Flagler, Union, Alachua, Dixie, Gilchrist and Levy counties.

CENTRAL FLORIDA: Voters interviewed in Brevard, Lake, Marion, Orange, Osceola, Seminole, Citrus, Sumter, Volusia, and Indian River counties.

TAMPA BAY: Voters interviewed in Hernando, Hillsborough, Pasco, Pinellas and Polk counties.

SOUTHWEST FLORIDA: Voters interviewed in DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, Manatee, Sarasota, Charlotte, Collier and Lee counties.

SOUTHEAST FLORIDA: Voters interviewed in Okeechobee, St. Lucie, Martin, Palm Beach, Broward, Miami-Dade and Monroe counties.