



June 25, 2020

TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Ben Greenfield, [Change Research](#)
RE: **McCarthy Stronger Than McSally In Head-to-Head Against Kelly**

A new poll of 946 likely general election voters in Arizona finds businessman Daniel McCarthy more competitive against Democrat Mark Kelly than incumbent Senator Martha McSally, and with much more upside potential as voters get to know the candidates. The poll, conducted on behalf of 314 Action Fund, finds that despite only 26% of voters having an opinion of McCarthy, he is currently two points closer to Kelly than McSally is in a head-to-head matchup, thanks to McSally's weakness among both Republicans and independents. That gap grows significantly wider after voters read a brief biography and a message about each Republican, with McCarthy ending up five points closer than McSally, and McSally's vote share actually decreasing on the informed ballot while McCarthy's rises.

Kelly Leads McCarthy by 6, McSally by 8

Initially, Kelly holds a 50-42 lead over McSally and a 50-44 lead over McCarthy. Kelly is able to hold such a wide lead even in a purple state because he's consolidated Democrats, while McSally is struggling with Republicans: 97% of Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents support Kelly, but only 84% of those who are or lean Republican say they'll vote for McSally. McCarthy would have the support of 90% of Republicans and Republican-leaners if the election were held today, despite only 38% of these voters knowing enough about him to have an opinion.

After Voters Are Introduced To Candidates, McCarthy Is 5 Points Closer Than McSally

Each respondent was shown a brief biography of all three candidates, as well as a message about each of the Republicans. At the end of the survey, McSally trailed Kelly by 12, while McCarthy was within 7. While McSally's vote share barely moves with Republicans and Republican-leaners, she loses 7 points among independents who don't lean toward either party. McCarthy gains 5 points with this same group over the course of the survey, and also gains 2 points with those who are or lean Republican. This suggests that he has room to grow with voters on both the right and the center as they get to know him, while the much better known McSally has a weak hold on many of the voters currently in her column.

McSally Has Favorability Problems With Republicans, Independents

McSally's lagging numbers owe largely to Republican voters' lukewarm feelings about their junior Senator. 21% of Republicans and Republican-leaning independents view McSally unfavorably -- and 14% view her very unfavorably. This is in addition to a plurality of pure independents, 31%,

who view her very unfavorably. By comparison, Daniel McCarthy does very well among Republicans after they're introduced to him: 79% of Republicans and Republican-leaning independents view him favorably, only 7% unfavorably.

McSally's attempts to hang on to support among the state's conservative Republicans while winning over voters in the center who want an independent Senator have clearly come up short, and her reelection bid is looking increasingly like a long shot. While Mark Kelly appears to be doing a far better job winning Arizonans over, he will have to work much harder if Daniel McCarthy is his opponent in November.

Change Research surveyed 946 likely general election voters in Arizona on behalf of 314 Action Fund from June 20-23. The survey was conducted online, using Change Research's Dynamic Online Sampling Engine. Post-stratification was done on age, gender, race, education, and 2016 presidential vote.