

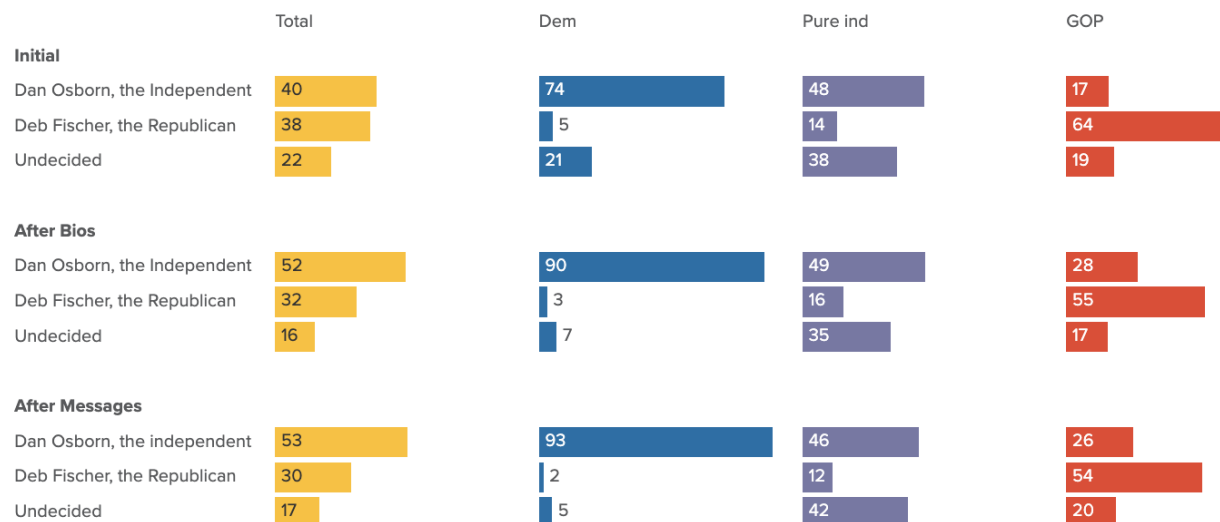


November 20, 2023

TO: Nebraska Railroaders for Public Safety
FROM: Ben Greenfield, Change Research
RE: Nebraska Survey Results

A new survey of 1,048 likely 2024 voters in Nebraska shows independent Dan Osborn beginning with a 2-point lead over Senator Deb Fischer, which grows to 20 points after voters read brief bios of the candidates, and to 23 points after they read arguments for both candidacies. Voters are quite unhappy with Senator Fischer, with Nebraskans of all political stripes viewing her as untrustworthy and ineffective. Osborn is an ideal alternative: a candidate they can trust to address their economic concerns, who aligns with their moderate views on abortion and medical marijuana – and, crucially, who is not saddled with allegiance to the two political parties that Nebraskans view as doing nothing to help them in Washington.

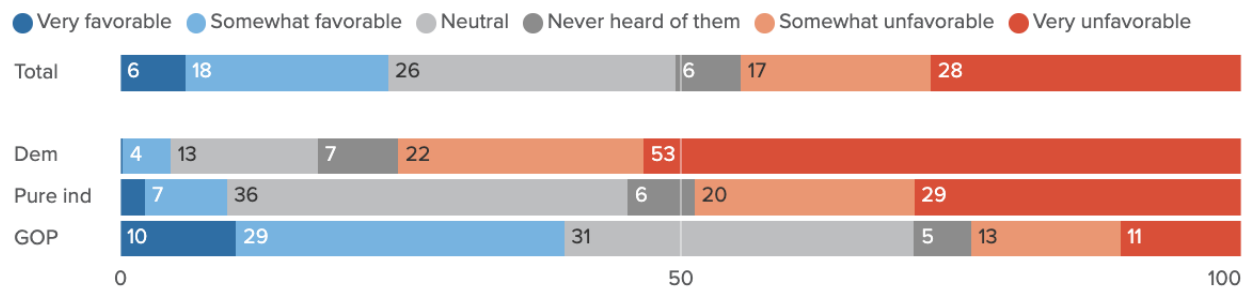
Osborn's initial 2-point lead grows to 20 when voters learn about him. Initially, Osborn leads 40-38, despite most voters having never heard of him. After respondents read bios of both candidates, Osborn gains 12 percentage points, while Fischer loses 6. In this post-bio ballot, Osborn has consolidated the support of Democratic voters, while maintaining his huge lead with independents. In addition, he has narrowed Fischer's 64-17 lead among Republicans to just 55-28. These numbers stay mostly steady among each group after respondents read arguments for both candidacies. All of this suggests that the Fischer-weary voters of Nebraska are extremely drawn to Osborn's background and vision, and that the arguments against him are not effective at chipping away at his appeal.



Polling was conducted online from November 13-16, 2023. Using Dynamic Online Sampling to attain a representative sample, Change Research polled 1,048 likely November 2024 voters in Nebraska. Post-stratification was performed on age, gender, race/ethnicity, region, and 2020 presidential vote. You can see a full methodology statement [here](#), which complies with the requirements of AAPOR's Transparency Initiative. Members of the Transparency Initiative disclose all relevant details about our research, with the principle that the public should be able to evaluate and understand research-based findings, in order to instill and restore public confidence in survey results.

Fischer's favorability is deep underwater, especially with independents. Underlying Fischer's weak numbers on the ballot questions is the fact that only 24% of Nebraskans view her favorably—just a single point higher than the number who view Joe Biden favorably. Notably, only 10% of pure independents – those who do not lean toward either party – view Fischer positively, highlighting her vulnerability against an opponent who is similarly free from partisan affiliations.

How favorable are your feelings about Deb Fischer?

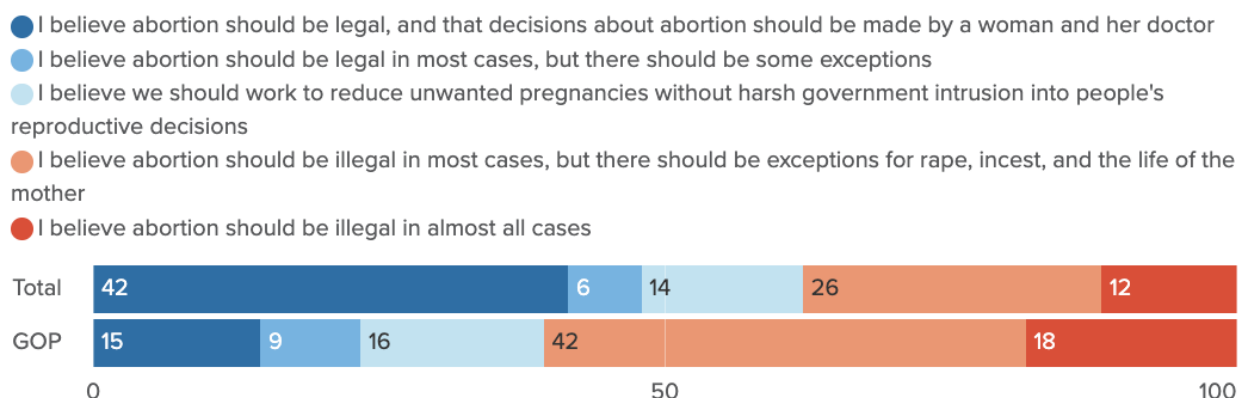


Open-ended responses highlight the degree of bipartisan dissatisfaction with Fischer across party lines. The following responses are all from Republicans:

- “Have a hard time trusting her. Not completely honest”
- “Hypocrite not trustworthy”
- “Hasn't done anything”
- “Has done little to address the issues Nebraskans care about.”
- “it's time for a change.”
- “I feel y [sic] it's time for her to step aside, and let the younger generation takeover!”

Nebraskans are much closer to Dan Osborn's views on abortion and medical marijuana than they are to Deb Fischer's. Only 38% of likely voters believe that abortion should be illegal in most or all cases – these voters comprise the core of the Republican base. The remaining 62% either believe that abortion should be legal in most or all cases (48%), or simply want the government to stay out of these decisions (14%). Importantly for this race, four in ten voters who identify as Republican believe that abortion should be legal and/or that government should stay out of these decisions.

Which of the following best describes your position on abortion?



An even greater majority – 71% – of Nebraskan voters support legalizing medical marijuana in the state. The majority of voters of both parties support it, as do those who lean toward neither party.

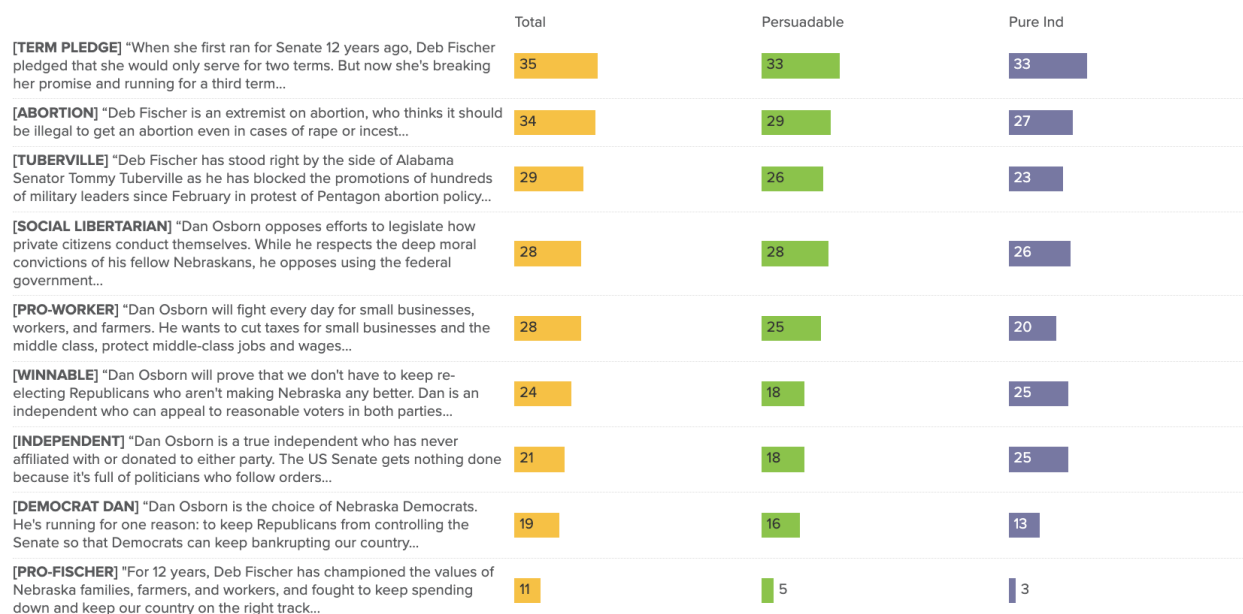
The majority of voters in both parties are fed up with both parties' performance in Washington, and want to see independent voices elected. Favorability towards both Democrats and Republicans in Washington is under 25%. Just 45% of Republican voters and 5% of pure independents feel favorable about Washington Republicans. Mitch McConnell's numbers are even worse: just 5% of voters feel favorable toward him, including only 9% of Republicans. These numbers underscore the degree to which Nebraskans are hungry for a candidate who will not just take orders from Senate leadership and continue the status quo in Washington.

The survey shows that an independent alternative is far more appealing. Voters were shown a statement indicating that more independent voices are needed to deliver for Nebraskans the way that the state's nonpartisan unicameral legislature does. Respondents overwhelmingly agree with the statement, with 56% agreeing and just 29% disagreeing.

Voters are persuaded by messages about Fischer's term pledge, abortion and support of Tuberville, as well as by Osborn's messages about abortion and being pro-worker. The most resonant anti-Fischer message is about her broken term-limit pledge; this message was most effective with all voters, as well as pure independents and persuadables (those who either began supporting Osborn or remained undecided throughout the survey). These groups were slightly less persuaded by the anti-Fischer messages on abortion and her support for Tommy Tuberville.

When it comes to pro-Osborn message, the most appealing to those in the center is one about his social libertarianism. The message about his pro-worker stances is also effective, but slightly less so with pure independents.

Equally encouraging: the message painting Osborn as a Democrat in independent clothes was not particularly effective, other than with the Republican base – at least in the context of this survey, where voters were able to weigh Osborn's credentials against this attack. In the real world, where few voters are familiar with Osborn and the attack can be deployed without rebuttal, it might land more effectively.



Conclusion: there is a clear path for Dan Osborn to defeat Deb Fischer. Nebraskans are unhappy with their senior Senator and eager for a new path forward. Though this seat would not be in play for a Democrat, Dan Osborn is a candidate who shares Nebraskans' independent spirit as well as their views on some of the top issues facing the state and the nation. His identity as an unaffiliated candidate who will not follow orders from either party is a major plus that will help him with voters of all political stripes.

Osborn is largely unknown, and voters are strongly drawn to him as soon as they hear about his background, vision, and political independence. It is crucial to introduce as many voters to Osborn before the opposition has a chance to define him in negative terms. Nebraska voters are lukewarm about Deb Fischer, and the survey makes it clear that they do not need their arms to be twisted to vote against her. They simply need a good alternative. The first step is to show voters who Osborn is; from there, we can continue to remind them that Fischer is a candidate of the broken promises, gridlock, and ineffectiveness that makes them dislike Washington.