

Who Will Come Out On Top?

Kirk and Duckworth race to the Senate

by Lily Peterson



Sen. Mark Kirk. Photo provided by Creative Commons.

Election season is just around the corner, and it is not just the Presidential election! This year, on November 8, 2016, Illinois will elect one member to the U.S. Senate. Jr. Senator Mark Kirk, the Republican candidate, is running for re-election. Representative Tammy Duckworth, the Democratic candidate, is running against him for this hotly contested seat.

According to [nbcchicago.com](#), Kirk is considered the most vulnerable Republican up for re-election. Kirk tends to vote for some non-traditional Republican beliefs. His voting record shows he tends to vote more liberal on social issues and more conservative on foreign policy.

The Human Rights Campaign (HRC), the nation's largest LGBTQ+ civil rights organization, announced on March 11, 2016 that its Board of Directors voted to endorse Mark Kirk for re-election.

HRC President Chad Griffin said, "Senator Kirk's leadership on the Equality Act sends a strong message that fairness and equality are bipartisan values. Senator Kirk has fought for us, and we are proud to support him in his re-election campaign."

According to [chicagotribune.com](#), Kirk originally supported presidential candidate, Donald Trump; however, on June 7, 2016, Kirk stated he "cannot and will not support Trump." He cited Trump's "past attacks on Hispanics, women, and the disabled like me," as reasons why he no longer supports Trump.

Tammy Duckworth, Kirk's opponent, is currently serving as representative for the 8th district of Illinois. For two years, 2009-2011, she served as the Assistant Secretary of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs for the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. Duckworth is a disabled veteran and served from 1992-2014.

Duckworth's voting record shows she has supported traditionally Democratic issues such as: women's reproductive rights, immigration reform, and health care reform. Following Duckworth's primary win, both President Obama and Vice-President Biden formally endorsed Tammy Duckworth for Senate. According to [huffingtonpost.com](#), Vice-President Joe Biden said, "When her nation calls, Tammy Duckworth answers, and I'm proud to support her in this next mission: running for the U.S. Senate,"

According to a [Huffington Post](#) poll, Duckworth is in the lead with 42.9% of the vote, and Kirk with 36.0%. Third party candidates, Kenton McMillen, Scott Summers, Chad Kopple, Chris



Rep. Tammy Duckworth speaking at an event. Photo provided by Creative Commons.

Aguayo are running, but do not have a large percent of votes.

Although the majority of students at DHS cannot vote, it's still good to be informed on what is going in our state and our country. The Presidential election is more widely covered than the Senate election, Sophomore Maria Holloway-Racine said, "I don't think enough students know about the Senatorial election. Obviously, the Presidential election is really important, but this senate election is also really important and will bring a lot of changes."

The upcoming November election holds big changes for both our state and our country. Close to 70% of seats in the Senate are up for re-election. For this election, now more than ever, it is important for citizens to exercise their right to vote.