We're now two months from election day. This is a challenging electoral cycle for the Democrats, given inflation, the continuing effects of COVID, the economic impact of the war in Ukraine, and other woes. With turnout possibly boosted by the overruling of *Roe v. Wade* and other developments, Democrats do have a good chance of holding control of the Senate, depending on how they run individual races and whether there's any improvement in public opinion on Biden.

When I took a look at the race in post in July, there were four races rated as toss-ups: Arizona, Georgia, Nevada, and Pennsylvania. The Democrats need to win at least three of the four. There were three other states that could also be considered in play: Wisconsin (leaning slightly Republican), New Hampshire (leaning Democratic), and North Carolina (learning Republican). As I noted then, given how close this many states were, even a small shift in the national political winds could make a big difference in terms of control of the Senate.

How have these races changed in that past two months? Of the toss-up states, the clearest movement has been in Pennsylvania, which is now classified as leaning toward the Democratic candidate. There are also signs that the Arizona race may be leaning in favor of the Democrat, though that's less clear. The states that were leaning in July all still seem to be leaning the same way. In short, the Senate remains very much up for grabs.

You've heard this before, but here's a reminder of why Senate control matters for environmental policy even if Republicans take control of the House, There are two major reasons. The first is appointments. As Obama learned in his second term, Mitch McConnell is not about to give a Democratic president much space to appoint agency officials and lower court judges, let alone Supreme Court Justices. That would augur poorly for staffing environmental agencies like EPA and for shifting the lower courts in a more regulation-friendly direction. Second, given that it looks unlikely Democrats will hold the House, committee hearings in a Democratic Senate might be the only forum in which scientists and environmental advocates would be allowed to speak. It would also be the only place where government officials would have a chance to defend their policies.