

Wisconsin has been a swing state in recent presidential elections. The Senate race there could help determine control of the Senate. The incumbent Republican is a climate change denier. The challenge highlights his support for climate action.

Ron Johnson (R). Johnson, the incumbent, has a 7% lifetime LCV score, meaning he voted against the environment 93% of the time. His campaign website touts his “standing with Wisconsin farmers, manufacturers, and families against the EPA’s water rule to regulate small ponds, ditches, and creeks on private property, affecting 92 percent of the land in Wisconsin and driving up costs and killing jobs due to added government regulation.” There’s not much about policy issues on the campaign website, however. He recently [told](#) a GOP group that “I don’t know about you guys, but I think climate change is - as Lord Monckton said - bullsh*t.” He has also said society could “easily adapt” to changes in climate. At a debate with Barnes, he doubled down on his support for fossil fuels “Eighty percent of our energy comes from fossil fuels right now. And that’s not going to change anytime soon because wind and solar are not reliable.”

Mandela Barnes (D). Barnes, the challenger, is the lieutenant governor. His campaign bio puts a spotlight on climate change:

“Governor Evers recognized Mandela’s expertise and years of work on environmental issues by appointing him as chair of the Governor’s Task Force on Climate Change. The Task Force brought together a diverse coalition of farmers, environmental advocates, Indigenous leaders, and business executives to produce 55 concrete strategies for how Wisconsin can begin to address the climate crisis.”

Barnes’s economic priorities are also connected with climate and energy. His website pledges:

“Mandela will champion renewable energy like wind and solar power and promote American energy independence by working to launch a national ‘green bank,’ a model that has shown to be successful in other countries to fund clean energy projects and create tens of thousands of good paying jobs.”

“Mandela will fight for commonsense solutions to tackle climate change that make Wisconsin’s agriculture, transportation, energy, and food systems more sustainable, while creating jobs and opportunity across the state.”

Johnson is considered to have an edge in the race, but Mandela does have a real shot at winning. The outcome there will have national significance, given how tightness of the

contest for control of the Senate.