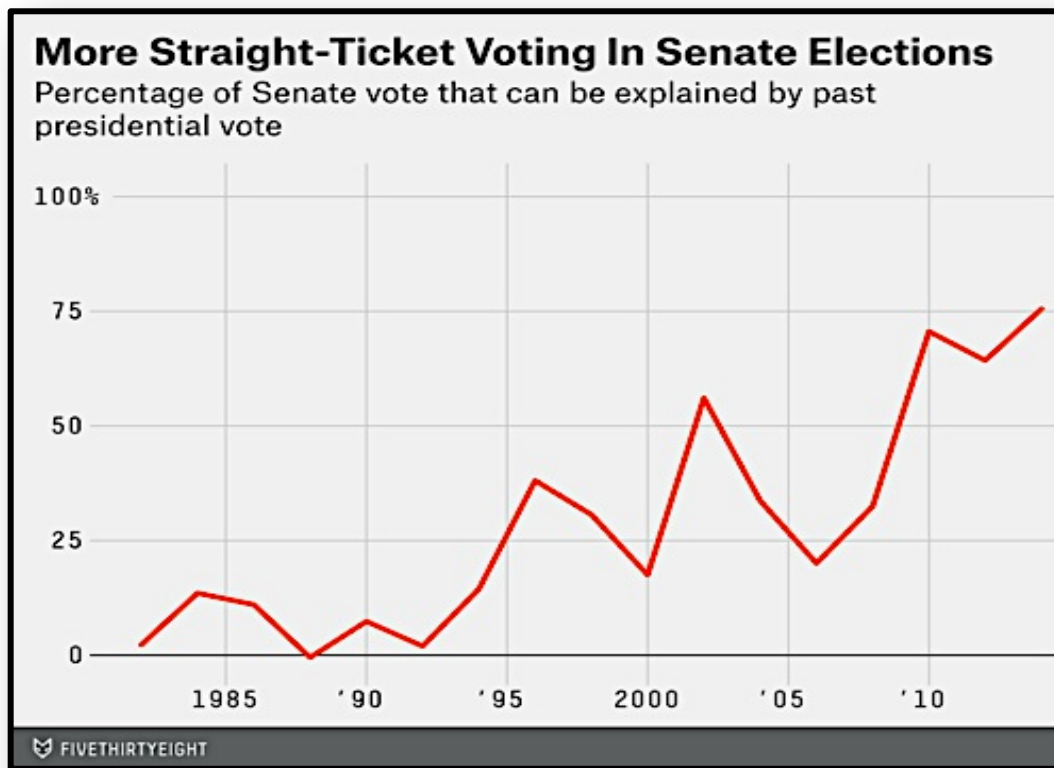


Polling News & Notes

Overlooked Recent Polling and Insights • December 11, 2014

The 2014 Senate Elections Were The Most Nationalized In Decades: A recent *Fivethirtyeight.com* post argues the 2014 Senate elections were the most nationalized in decades, continuing the growing trend of “straight-ticket voting” when voters support the same party for every position on the ballot. The opposite was true just a few decades ago. In the 1980s, there were many Republican senators from states that voted for a Democratic presidential candidate, and Democratic senators from states that voted for a Republican presidential candidate. This year, 76% of the election outcomes mirrored past presidential election results. 2002 and 2010 are the only other recent elections where this was above 50%.



Fivethirtyeight.com says there is no definitive way to anticipate a growing link between presidential and senatorial elections, and it is unclear if this trend will continue. However, if the trend continues in 2016, it could mean a bumpy road for Democrats. Republicans must defend more seats – 24 compared to only ten Democratic seats – but nineteen GOP seats are in states that went for the Republican presidential candidate in 2012 or elected a Republican to the Senate in 2014 (AL, AK, AZ, AR, FL, GA, ID, IN, IA, KS, KY, LA, MO, NC, ND, OK, SC, SD, UT). Most Democratic seats will be in reliably blue states in all but at least two seats – those in Colorado and Nevada – could be in play since these states are more purple than blue and were carried by President George W. Bush in 2000 and 2004.