

MEMORANDUM

TO: Conservative SuperPACs and Major Donors
FROM: Rick Shaftan, Atlantic Media & Research
RE: NC-9 Survey, May 2019
DATE: May 31, 2019

MCCREADY UP 41-39 OVER BISHOP DESPITE SEVEN POINT GOP GENERIC EDGE

Atlantic Media & Research completed 358 surveys of registered voters who said their chances of voting in the September Special Election for Congress were "definite" or "very likely" on May 20-23 and May 28-30, 2019.

Response rates were very low, indicating turnout will be key in this election. The theoretical margin of error is +/- 5.2 percent in 95 percent of cases on a 50 percent response.

Calls were made by live callers from our facilities in Nags Head, North Carolina. 58 percent of completed surveys were to cellphone numbers while 42 percent went to landlines. Among those definitely voting, 54 percent completed surveys on cellphone numbers and 46 percent on landlines.

SUMMARY

There's been little movement in this race since December despite a big Republican Primary and a new candidate. As was the case with Mark Harris before him, Dan Bishop underperforms the generic ballot. The difference between the two elections is that Harris ran worse in the immediate Charlotte suburbs, while Bishop underperforms more in the East where he is less known.

The biggest problem Republicans face is a poorly motivated electorate, and a result of a nominee defined by his support for HB2, legislation even his own party threw overboard.

To win this election, the Bishop team needs to make HB2 a plus because if not the race will be a referendum on "hate" and Bishop will lose. The open-endeds, which we will not discuss in detail in this memo, make that clear.

McCready leads Bishop 41-39, very similar to his 46-43 lead over Harris in our December survey. But we're putting more stock in the

numbers from "definite" voters (70 percent of the sample), where McCready holds a 44-40 lead.

The GOP leads 46-38 in the generic ballot, similar to the 45-36 lead in December, but slightly down with definite voters which is a cause for concern.

Also nearly identical to December were responses to the question whether voters wanted their member to "support the Trump Agenda" or "resist the Trump Agenda", which shifted from 51-39 support in December to 51-37 in May, but again that drops to 51-42 with those definitely voting.

The President was 41-42 net unfavorable in December (8 percent mixed, who are strongly Republican). This has shifted to 41-40 net positive, 13 mixed, again leaning strongly Republican), although these numbers are identical to December with definite voters.

May respondents were also slightly more polarized than those from December. This is in part caused by a different screen. The December survey asked if voters participated in the 2018 election while the May survey asked the chances of voting in the September Special Election, resulting in a significantly lower response rate. The polarization expands even more with those definitely voting.

15 percent of respondents are self-described liberals, 29 percent moderate and 51 percent conservative. Among those definitely voting 16 percent are liberal, 28 percent moderate and 52 percent conservative. That's a change from 14 percent liberal, 34 percent moderate and 45 percent conservative in December.

BALLOT TEST

	May 2019	Dec 2018	Change	May Def.
Dem Dan McCready	41.0%	46.0%	- 5.0%	43.6%
Rep Dan Bishop *	39.4%	42.7%	- 3.3%	39.6%
Lib Jeff Scott	2.0%	-----	-----	1.2%
Green Allen Smith	0.8%	-----	-----	0.4%
Undecided	16.8%	11.3%	+ 5.5%	15.2%

* Mark Harris in December with no third parties

McCready's lead expands among those definitely voting, while votes for the Libertarian and Green candidates dropped significantly. Democrats are slightly more energized at this point in the race.

McCready leads 46-34 with women while Bishop is up 45-36 with men. Bishop drops the most among men definitely voting, where he is up just 44-42 (he is down 45-35 with women definitely voting).

27 percent of voters are under 50 and McCready leads 41-30 there, while Bishop leads 44-41 among those 50 and up, which drops to 43-42 among those definitely voting. McCready is up 48-29 with those under 50 who are definitely coming out (but that's just 22 percent of the definites.)

Bishop leads 50-33 with the 52 percent who attend weekly services, while McCready is up 57-21 with the 21 percent who never attend, again, tightening among definites to 47-35 with the first group and opening up to 65-19 with the second group.

With this electorate, 71 percent of those over 75 years of age attend weekly services, about half of those 35-74 and a third of those under 35. The numbers are slightly higher with African-Americans.

McCready wins liberals 93-0 and moderates by 58-22. Bishop wins "somewhat" conservative voters by just 51-19 (25 percent of respondents) and "very" conservative voters by 74-10 (26 percent of the total.) Clearly he needs to solidify that base, a lot.

GENERIC BALLOT

	May 2019	Dec 2018	Change	May Def.
Democrat	38.3%	36.0%	+ 2.3%	39.2%
Republican	45.5%	45.0%	+ 0.5%	44.8%
Undecided	16.2%	19.0%	- 2.8%	16.0%
GOP Edge	+ 7.2%	+ 9.0%	- 1.8%	+ 5.6%

The tightened generic ballot with definite voters also illustrates the greater level that Democrats are energized. Democrats lead 45-39 with women while men carry Republicans by a whopping 52-32 margin. Republicans lead with all age groups but 18-34 where Democrats are up by 45-32. The GOP leads 55-30 with those who attend weekly services while Democrats are up 57-25 with those who never attend.

Democrats lead very liberal voters by 92-0 and somewhat liberal voters by 86-0. They are up 51-29 with moderates while Republicans lead by 60-21 with somewhat conservative voters and by 82-9 with very conservative respondents.

CANDIDATE VERSUS GENERIC BALLOT

	May 2019	Dec 2018	Change	May Def.
McCready/Dem	+ 2.7%	+ 10.0%	- 7.3%	+ 4.4%
Bishop/Harris/Rep	- 6.1%	- 2.3%	- 3.8%	- 5.2%

Whereas in December McCready benefitted from personal strength versus the generic, the May contest is more about Bishop's weakness versus the generic ballot. At the time of the December survey, Harris was still a viable candidate. Bishop needs to go on offense, say what he is for, and contrast that with his leftist neo-Socialist opponent.

McCready voters not generic Democrats probably lean that way anyway. They are somewhat anti-Trump and somewhat pro-Cooper, generally identify as "moderate" and 64 percent are McCready favorables. They are more likely to have homes worth less than the district average and more likely to be registered Democrats.

73 percent of generic Republicans not currently voting for Bishop identify as conservative with 39 percent saying they are "very" conservative. Bishop needs to consolidate that base now.

NAME ID

		May 2019	Dec 2018	Change	May Def.
Dan McCready	Fav	29.3%	32.3%	- 3.0%	32.8%
	Unf	15.9%	17.0%	- 1.1%	17.6%
	Mix	4.2%	5.0%	- 0.8%	6.0%
	No Op.	39.4%	36.6%	+ 2.8%	35.2%
	ID	88.8%	91.0%	- 2.2%	91.6%

McCready has remained virtually constant between December and today, even more so among those definitely voting in the September contest. He is 32-10 with women and just 27-22 with men. McCready is also a weak 18-15 with voters under 50 and 26-18 with those who attend weekly services. He is 52-4 with generic Democrats and only 10-28 negative with generic Republicans. Bishop has a lot of room to grow here.

McCready is competitive because he has strong favorables on the left side of the equation: 58-4 with liberals, 43-10 with moderates. But he's only 13-24 with conservatives and 11-27 with VERY conservative voters. This has to change.

		May 2019	Dec 2018	Change	May Def.
Dan Bishop/	Fav	17.1%	24.0%	- 6.9%	17.6%
Mark Harris	Unf	13.5%	31.7%	-14.2%	18.4%
	Mix	1.4%	8.0%	- 6.6%	1.6%
	No Op.	35.6%	26.4%	+ 9.2%	33.2%
	ID	67.5%	90.0%	-22.5%	70.8%

Bishop starts off the base with high negatives among those definitely voting, and it's heavily focused on HB2. Bishop cannot win this election unless he turns around HB2 and makes his support a plus. He is 16-14 with women and 18-13 with men, dropping to 18-20 and 18-17 with definites. He is 23-12 with those who attend weekly services and 7-19 with those who never do.

		May 2019	Dec 2018	Change	May Def.
Donald Trump	Fav	40.8%	41.3%	- 0.5%	40.8%
	Unf	39.9%	42.0%	- 2.1%	42.0%
	Mix	12.9%	8.3%	+ 4.6%	11.2%
	No Op.	6.4%	8.3%	- 1.9%	6.0%

Trump's numbers with definite voters were similar to December, with some boost in those with a mixed opinion on Trump. That group leans heavily Republican. We terminated calls to anyone who said they hadn't heard of Donald Trump.

Trump is 43-33 with men and 38-47 with women. He is 50-33 among those 75 and up, 42-39 with those 35-64 (consistent throughout) and 27-53 among those under 35. He is 50-30 (15 mixed) with those who attend weekly services and 23-61 (9 mixed) with those who never attend. He is a surprisingly strong 18-63 among African-American respondents, from 9-60 in December.

Trump is 77-2 with generic Republicans (20 mixed) and 4-82 with generic Democrats (4 mixed). He is 26-48 with those on the fence. Trump is 2-98 with liberals, 21-56 with moderates (12 mixed), 52-22 with somewhat conservative voters (19 mixed) and 77-8 with very conservative voters (14 mixed).

		May 2019	Dec 2018	Change	May Def.
Roy Cooper	Fav	27.7%	36.3%	- 8.6%	28.8%
	Unf	23.2%	28.7%	- 4.5%	25.2%
	Mix	8.4%	4.3%	+ 4.1%	9.6%
	No Op.	33.5%	26.0%	+ 7.5%	30.4%
	ID	92.7%	95.3%	- 2.6%	94.0%

Cooper has faded over the past few months, as those with a mixed opinion, who lean Republican, grow. He is a weak incumbent with strong and intense negatives.

Cooper is 36-19 with women but a strong 19-28 net negative with men. He is only 21-20 with voters under 50, a 23-27 negative those who attend weekly services and only 35-15 with those who never go. He is 50-3 with generic Democrats and 8-44 with generic Republicans.

Cooper is 51-2 with liberals, 37-17 with moderates, 19-26 with somewhat conservative voters and 11-43 with those very conservative.

One bright spot for Cooper is a slight boost in favorables among African-Americans, from 42-4 in December to 47-6 today.

		May 2019	Definites	R Prim	V. Cons
Thom Tillis	Fav	14.3%	16.0%	26.2%	24.7%
	Unf	23.2%	25.6%	24.3%	9.7%
	Mix	5.0%	5.6%	4.7%	3.3%
	No Op.	38.8%	37.2%	35.5%	47.3%
	ID	81.3%	84.4%	90.6%	85.0%

Tillis suffers from low favorables and high negatives, even with Republican Primary voters (those who voted in either of the 2016 primaries, or the 2018 primary), and with very conservative voters. He is 27-29 with respondents who voted in either of the 2016 primaries AND the 2018 primary, a group more likely to resemble the 2020 primary electorate with a likely uncontested presidential.)

Tillis is a net negative with both men and women, among all age groups but voters 75 and up, and is 17-17 with those who attend weekly services. It's hard to think of another U.S. Senator with such a low favorable rating in a part of the state they need to win.

A MAJORITY WANTS THEIR HOUSE MEMBER TO SUPPORT THE TRUMP AGENDA

By a 51-37 margin, a majority of voters want their house member to support the Trump agenda versus those who want a vote to "resist" it. Men support this by a strong 60-31 while women are slightly split against (43-44). It's supported by all age groups except those under 35 (36-48 against), and get stronger with age. Those over 75 back it by 62-37. People attending weekly services are in favor by 62-27 while those who never attend are 32-57 the other way.

Not surprisingly, Generic Republicans want their member to support the Trump Agenda by a 96-1 margin. What is surprising is the near-unanimity here. Generic Democrats are 5-84 against and liberals 0-86. Moderates oppose it by 33-50. Those somewhat conservative back it by 70-23 and very conservative voters by 87-9.

Voters who want their member to support the Trump Agenda are backing Bishop by 74-5 while those on the "resist" side are for McCready by 87-1. Those in the middle are currently voting 51-12 for McCready. Bishop is currently running 11 points behind the generic ballot among

those who want their house member to support the Trump Agenda, while McCready is paralleling the "resist" vote.

SOME DEMOGRAPHICS, ETC. WE FEEL LIKE SHARING

The median voter age is 57.5, 58.3 with those definitely voting. 14.8 percent of respondents described their ethnicity as African-American and virtually the same 15 percent in December.

54 percent of households had a registered Democrat in the house, 41 percent had a Republican and 43 percent an undeclared voter. That's up from 47 percent Democrat, 44 percent Republican and 47 percent undeclared in the December survey, but again illustrates the motivated vote. The overall file numbers are 49 percent Democrat, 45 percent Republican and 45 percent undeclared.

The increased Democratic numbers can either be read as a sampling error and that the results are better for Bishop than they seem, or an indication of greater interest in this race among Democrats, which seems more likely based on the rest of the data.

26 percent of respondents are in Union County, 22 percent Mecklenberg, 16 percent Robeson, 15 percent Cumberland, 8 percent Richmond, 6 percent Scotland, 3 percent Bladen, 3 percent Anson.

Top cities were: Charlotte 18 percent, Matthews 10 percent, Monroe 8 percent, Fayetteville 8 percent, Waxhaw 6 percent, Lumberton 6 percent, Rockingham 5 percent, Laurinburg 5 percent, Hope Mills 4 percent, Indian Trail 4 percent.

59 percent are in the Charlotte DMA, 22 percent in Florence/Myrtle Beach, 15 percent in Raleigh/Durham, 3 percent in Wilmington.

13 percent of voters are 18-34, 15 percent 35-49, 29 percent 50-64, 25 percent 65-74 and 17 percent 75 and up with 2 percent refusing. 51 percent are women and 49 percent are men.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Despite being down in the numbers, this is Dan Bishop's race to lose. It's all about turnout, and whether the message can drive it. So far, it's not working.
2. Bishop needs to consolidate his conservative base, and boost his numbers in the rural parts of the district. His current "Good Dan, Bad Dan" ad running in the Myrtle Beach/Florence market isn't cutting it.

3. The open-endeds show HB2 as Bishop's biggest negative, but he's not getting the plus side of this issue. Republicans need to expand the narrative beyond bathrooms to men on girls sports teams, radical pro-abortion policies and the extreme anti-American cultural agenda McCready and his allies endorse.
4. Embracing Trump and the Trump Agenda will go a long way, but it takes actions more than rhetoric. Voters are looking for a champion to take on the left. Bishop did it when he sponsored HB2. But he needs to show why these fights are important, and why he's running for Congress to carry on that fight.

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