PUBLIC OPINION STRATEGIES

turning questions into answers

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: INTERESTED PARTIES

FROM: GLEN BOLGER/TORIE BOLGER

RE: KEY FINDINGS – NORTH CAROLINA CD 8 GOP PRIMARY BRUSHFIRE

DATE: FEBRUARY 14, 2024

Methodology

Public Opinion Strategies conducted 300 interviews among likely Republican primary voters in North Carolina Congressional District 8. The survey was completed February 9-12, 2024, and has a margin of error of +5.66% in 95 out of 100 cases.

Key Findings

1. ***This Republican primary is about illegal immigration and border security.***

   When asked what one issue is most important to them in deciding how to vote in the Republican primary for U.S. Congress, nearly half (45%) of voters said illegal immigration and border security. This is a ten point increase from the December 2023 survey.

   Illegal immigration and border security dominates with key primary groups. These key groups include base GOP/age 65+ (62%), men 55+ (59%), base GOP/very conservative (54%), women 55+ (52%), and religious conservatives (49%).

   Illegal immigration and border security is at the forefront of these voters' minds and should be the focal point of the campaign. Only one other issue hits double digits; inflation and the cost of living at 15%.

2. ***Mark Harris' support for amnesty and creating pathways to citizenship for illegal immigrants is a major weakness for him.***

   Over half (54%) of voters say they would be less likely to vote for Mark Harris after learning his issue position. Even more damaging, fully 43% say they are <u>much</u> less likely to back him because of this. Intensity is against Mark Harris on illegal immigration, which is the driving issue for these voters.

3.   ***John Bradford is making significant gains on his image rating, while the only thing increasing for Mark Harris is his unfavorables.***

Back in December, John Bradford's image was 28% name ID/10% favorable/2% unfavorable. Now, he sports a 50% name ID/26% favorable/5% unfavorable. He continues to grow his name ID and favorables, while keeping his unfavorables well below double digits.

Conversely, Mark Harris started out with 72% name ID/39% favorable/10% unfavorable. Currently, he is at 79% ID/39% favorable/21% unfavorable. His negatives doubled, while his favorables remain stagnant. The more voters learn about Mark Harris, the less positive they are about him.

4.   ***This race is trending towards a run-off.***

This is a three person race between John Bradford, Mark Harris, and Allan Baucom. No candidate is at or above 30% on the ballot. Harris' vote dropped six points since December and will continue to fall as his unfavorables continue to rise.

The race is statistically tied among voters who have an opinion of both Bradford and Harris.

Ballots for the candidates:

	December 2023	**February 2023**	**D/S**
John Bradford	6%	11%	**+5**
Mark Harris	33%	27%	**-6**
Allan Baucom	7%	12%	**+5**
Don Brown	3%	6%	**+3**
Leigh Brown	3%	6%	**+3**
Chris Maples	3%	3%	**0**
Undecided	46%	33%	**-13**

The negative inflow is starting to impact Harris. However, Baucom's movement must be stopped as well in order for Bradford to continue to grow his vote.