



**MEMORANDUM**

TO: INTERESTED PARTIES

FROM: PATRICK LANNE -- PUBLIC OPINION STRATEGIES

SUBJECT: VIRGINIA CD-02 POLL RESULTS

DATE: JUNE 17, 2010

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Public Opinion Strategies recently conducted a district-wide survey of 400 likely voters on behalf of Scott Rigell for Congress. The poll was conducted on June 14-15, 2010 and has a margin of error of +/- 4.9% in 95 out of 100 cases. The purpose of this memo is to review some of the key findings of that poll.

***Key Findings***

T ***By all traditional measures, Nye is a wounded incumbent.***

Congressman Glenn Nye opens the general election campaign in a very weak political position. His personal image, 45% favorable – 31% unfavorable, falls far below the 3-to-1 positive ratio for which incumbents strive. A plurality – forty-eight (48%) percent – would prefer to give a new person a chance with just thirty-three (33%) percent opting to re-elect Nye.

As recent national surveys have noted, the overall political environment is challenging for the freshman Democrat. Sixty-three (63%) percent of 2<sup>nd</sup> District voters believe the country is headed off on the wrong track, sixty-eight (68%) percent disapprove of the way Congress is handling its job, and the President's job approval rating is a net negative: 44% approve – 51% disapprove. There is no doubt that the political environment is undercutting Nye's political strength; his re-elect score is significantly negative among those voters who are upset with the status quo in Washington, DC: wrong track voters (19%-65%), Obama disapprovers (13%-70%), and Congress disapprovers (25%-58%).

T ***Scott Rigell leads the ballot test.***

Another troubling sign for Nye: he begins the general election well-under the fifty (50%) percent threshold on the ballot test. Indeed, Rigell actually leads on the ballot test: (41%-35% with Kenny Golden polling 4%); among voters who rate their election interest as a "10," or "very interested," Rigell's lead over Nye expands: (45%-35%). While much has been written about divisions in the GOP base following a competitive and hard fought primary, Scott leads by wide margins among Republicans (77%-11%), strong Tea Party supporters (70%-10%), and self-described conservatives (60%-20%).

Looking forward, undecided voters appear poised to break toward Scott Rigell.

Undecided voters are negative about the direction of the country (24%-65%), a majority disapprove of Obama (36%-53%) and Congress (25%-68%), and Nye's re-elect is significantly negative (10%-48%).

***Bottom Line***

Scott Rigell is well-positioned to reclaim this Congressional seat for Virginia Republicans. His message of private sector economic growth, fiscal responsibility and Congressional reform has resonated loudly across the district and propelled him into the lead on the ballot test over an incumbent Congressman.

Moreover, the political environment is ripe for a successful challenger campaign in Virginia's Second Congressional District. Voters are upset with the direction the all-Democratic government is taking the country and looking for "checks and balances" in Washington, DC. This political environment has sapped Glenn Nye of any political strength, and he shows all the signs of an endangered incumbent.

With voters rejecting Nye's record in Congress, we can expect Nye and his allies in Washington to wage an aggressive negative campaign against Rigell.