TO **Interested Parties**

FROM **Chris Wilson, Ashlee Rich Stephenson, WPA Intelligence**
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DATE **August 27, 2018**

RE: **Political Peril Facing Red State Democrats On SCOTUS Obstruction**

WPA Intelligence and Definers Public Affairs collectively set out to understand the raw political impact of the nomination of Judge Brett Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court of the United States. With hearings and a vote pending, it's clear that obstruction of Judge Kavanaugh will be a political albatross for Democratic Senate incumbents in the lead-up to November 6.

Bottom line: support for Judge Kavanaugh's nomination is highest in four states that President Trump won by double-digits in 2016 and where incumbent Democratic senators are particularly vulnerable:

- North Dakota (80%)
- Montana (71%)
- West Virginia (71%)
- Missouri (67%)

Senators in those states stand to pay a political price if they join national Democratic party leaders and oppose Kavanaugh.

In fact, in every state we modeled, more likely voters support the nomination of Judge Kavanaugh than voted for these Democrats when they were last elected in 2012.

The following chart reports the number of likely voters, along with their respective percentages as a makeup of the entirety of the anticipated 2018 electorate, in the ten (10) states with Democratic senators up for re-election that President Trump won in 2016.

State	SCOTUS Nomination				Historical Election Results		
	More Likely Support %	More Likely Support Count	More Likely Oppose %	More Likely Oppose Count	2016 MoV	2012 Pres MoV	2012 Sen MoV
North Dakota	80%	295,830	20%	73,885	36%	20%	1%
Montana	71%	484,968	29%	200,068	21%	14%	4%
West Virginia	71%	867,560	29%	362,501	42%	27%	24%
Missouri	67%	2,768,374	33%	1,373,145	19%	10%	16%
Indiana	64%	2,837,723	36%	1,625,913	19%	11%	6%
Ohio	56%	4,430,599	44%	3,544,452	9%	2%	5%
Michigan	55%	4,087,941	45%	3,287,815	0%	10%	21%
Florida	51%	7,090,053	49%	6,773,563	1%	1%	13%
Pennsylvania	47%	3,973,120	53%	4,488,116	1%	5%	9%
Wisconsin	47%	2,562,276	53%	2,941,606	1%	7%	6%

State	SCOTUS Nomination		Winning D Vote Total in 2012
	Support %	Support Count	
North Dakota	80%	295,830	160,752 (Heitkamp)
Montana	71%	484,968	234,465 (Tester)
West Virginia	71%	867,560	394,532 (Manchin)
Missouri	67%	2,768,374	1,484,683 (McCaskill)
Indiana	64%	2,837,723	1,268,407 (Donnelly)
Ohio	56%	4,430,599	2,654,901 (Brown)
Michigan	55%	4,087,941	2,732,886 (Stabenow)
Florida	51%	7,090,053	4,521,534 (Nelson)
Pennsylvania	47%	3,973,120	2,943,289 (Casey)
Wisconsin	47%	2,562,276	1,544,274 (Baldwin)

The question we asked more than 7,000 voters in these states was:

> *Thinking about President Trump's nominee to the Supreme Court, Judge Kavanaugh, are you more likely to vote for a U.S senator who supports the President's Supreme Court nominee, more likely to vote for a U.S. senator who opposes the President's nominee, or is a U.S. senator's position on whether they support the President's nominee to the Supreme Court not something that will affect your vote?*

These responses were then used to train a predicted model and score every voter in each state on their likelihood to support a candidate who supports Kavanaugh or a candidate who opposes him.

Statement of Methodology

Thousands of responses were collected via Interactive Voice Response (IVR) calls. Responses were then matched to a consumer data enhanced voter file which contains data on vote history, voter demography, socio-economics, political behavior, and consumer behavior.

A variety of machine learning techniques were tested to find the best fitting model including penalized regressions, boosted and bagged decision trees, adaptive boosting, polynomial fits using support vector machines, and random forest ensemble models. In this case, stochastic gradient boosting provided the best performing model.

Based upon this model we scored the full consumer data enhanced national voter file for the probability that each voter supports or opposes the nomination of Judge Kavanaugh to the Supreme Court. Modeled voters totals may not match states' BOE (Board of Elections) reported totals due to state' various "inactive voter" definitions and related policies.