



Memo – Nebraska Republican Primary Election Polling

TO: Perre Neilan, Neilan Strategy Group
FROM: Matt Mitchell, Data Targeting
DATE: February 25, 2022

SUMMARY

The survey was conducted by Data Targeting from February 8-11, 2022 using a combination of interactive voice response phone calls and online surveys which were solicited via SMS text messages. Survey respondents are active registered, likely Republican voters in the state of Nebraska, who confirmed their party registration before taking the survey. A combined total of 1,168 respondents completed the survey either online or over the phone, and the survey's results have a margin of error of +/- 2.9% over a confidence interval of 95%.

Our survey would suggest that, for the moment, this is a 3 person race for the Republican nomination for Governor, with Jim Pillen and Charles Herbster very close together and Brett Lindstrom potentially a spoiler. Trump's endorsement of Herbster breaks stronger for him than Pete Ricketts's endorsement does for Pillen, but at a 34-26 margin on the informed ballot, Herbster's path to victory remains far from a slam dunk with Trump's endorsement alone.

On the geographic cross tabs, I'm most interested in a few things: 1) Congressional District 3, which is the most Republican-voter rich of Nebraska's congressional seats and where Herbster saw the biggest surge in support after respondents were exposed to Trump's endorsement and 2) If Lindstrom can maintain a significant base of support in and around Omaha and particularly in CD2 and if so, whether Pillen or Herbster would suffer the most from losing those votes Lindstrom is currently holding. Lindstrom pulled 25% support from respondents who live in CD2 and – if he can hold that support that is more than enough to complicate the other two men's paths to victory. Going forward, I will be very interested to see if Pillen and Herbster will be able to hack into that Lindstrom vote as they continue to pour money into raising name ID.

Finally, on the issue questions, I'm not surprised to see Republicans oppose raising the minimum wage and legalizing cannabis by double digit margins. In Nebraska those 18-20% margins might still be enough to prevent such amendments from winning voter approval, not to mention a compelling reason for Republican elected officials to withhold their support.



Responses to our name recognition questions were not surprising with Donald Trump holding a 71% favorability rating and Pete Ricketts at 69%. The uninformed gubernatorial ballot test question showed Herbster with 27%, Pillen 26% and Lindstrom at 21%. When told Pillen was endorsed by Ricketts and Herbster was endorsed by Trump, Herbster's numbers moved to 34%, while Pillen remained at 26% and Lindstrom at 19%.

The hiring of undocumented workers at the family business is potentially problematic for a candidate as 34% of respondents were less likely to vote for them. However, a candidate who paid property taxes late more than 400 times left 50% of these Republicans less likely to support that candidate.

It will be interesting to see how these campaigns take advantage of these vulnerabilities and respond to any potential attacks. We would suggest going in the field again no later than 35 days before the May 10 primary election when early voting starts.