

State of the Race

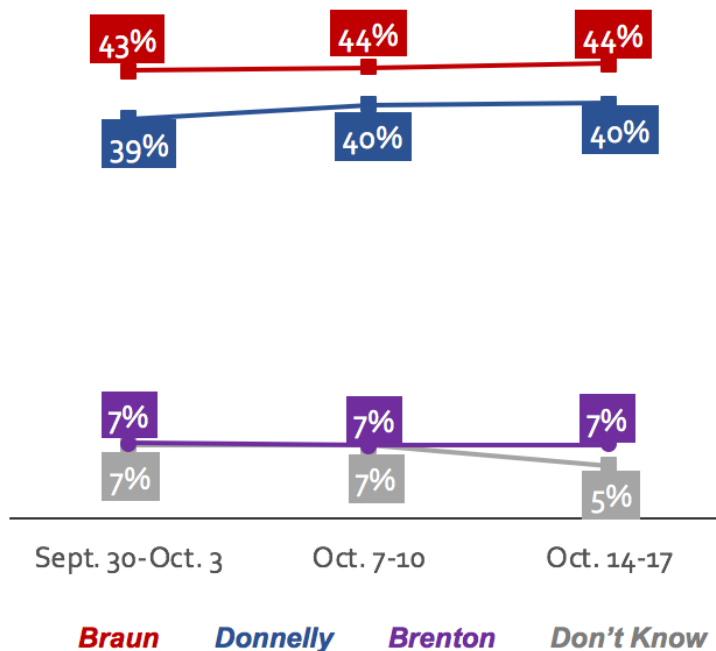
To: Interested Parties
From: Jon Kohan & Josh Kelley, Strategists, Mike Braun for Indiana
Date: 10/22/18
RE: The Final Two Weeks

With Election Day only two weeks away, the Indiana US Senate race looks very different from where it did prior to Joe Donnelly joining the radical left's effort to stop Judge Kavanaugh. Mike Braun has been riding a three-week straight polling surge, behind an aggressive paid media campaign, a record setting fundraising quarter, and a dominant ground campaign. Senator Donnelly swung wildly in his first debate and has since released multiple commercials that look like the desperate pleadings of a career politician whose job prospects are circling the drain.

Mike Braun is surging in the polls

Since Senator Donnelly committed the equivalent of political suicide by voting against Justice Kavanaugh a little more than two weeks ago, the bottom has fallen out of his campaign. For three weeks straight Senator Donnelly's image has worsened, while his ballot performance has languished – barely hitting 40%.

Our most recent brushfire conducted Oct. 14-17 of 800 likely voters (49% cell/51% landline) had Braun leading Donnelly 44%-40%, Brenton 7%, undecided 5%, balance refused to state.



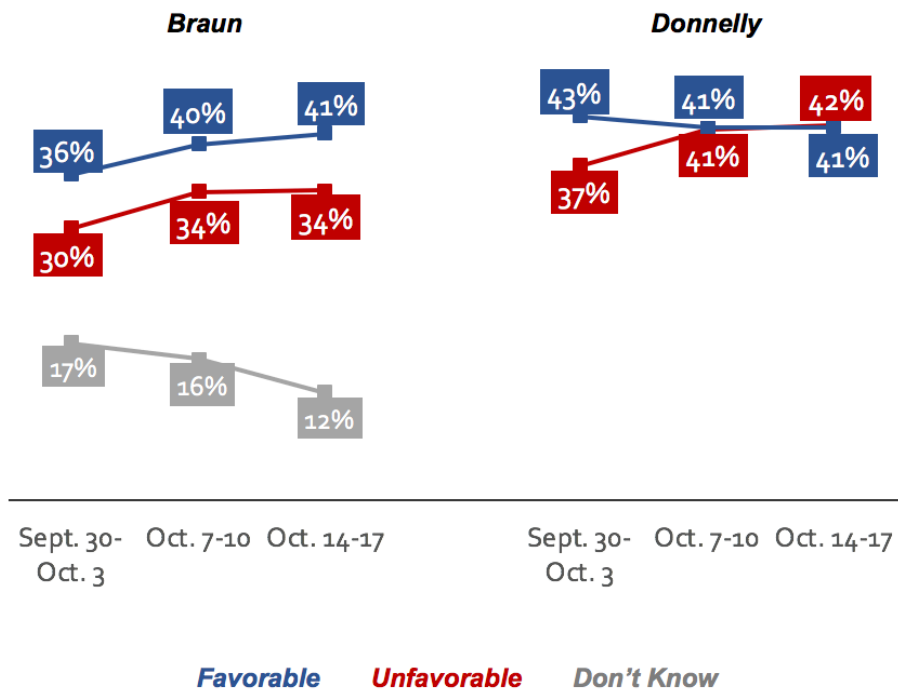
Courtesy of Linda DiVall, American ViewPoint

Braun's lead strengthens when focused on groups that will be key to victory on Election Day. Braun leads with those having the highest level of enthusiasm for voting, high propensity voters, and those having an opinion of both candidates.

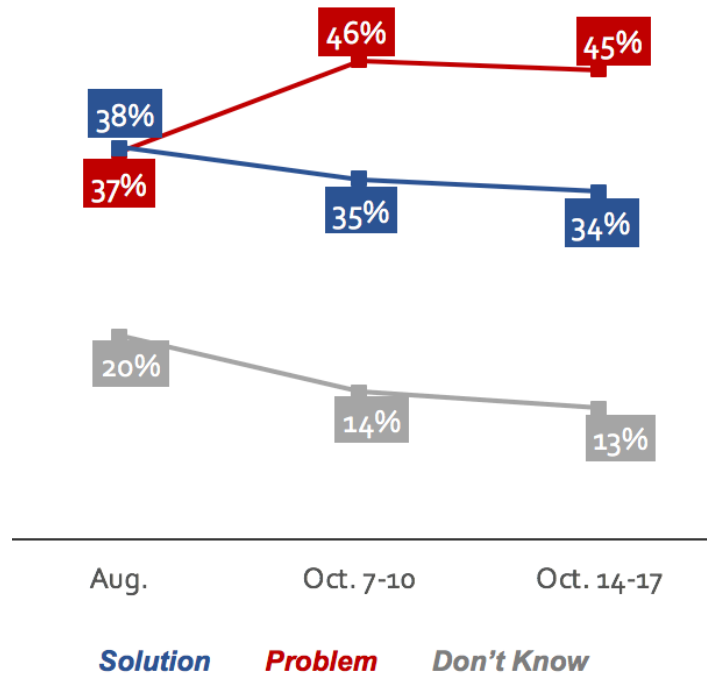
	Braun Advantage		
	Early Oct.	Oct. 7-10	Oct. 14-17
Total	+4%	+4%	+4%
10 Enthusiasm	+9%	+8%	+6%
High Prop. Vtrs	+12%	+7%	+7%
Opinion Both	+9%	+9%	+7%

Senator Donnelly’s vulnerability is increasingly apparent due to 3 factors.

- His inability to forge greater than 40% ballot strength.
- Approval ratings have eroded the last two weeks with as many approve as disapprove.
- Donnelly now has a net unfavorable rating while Braun holds a net favorable rating.



The whip cream on the top of Senator Donnelly’s complete collapse is that he is increasingly viewed as part of the problem in Washington, DC – not part of the solution. Indiana voters do not believe Senator Donnelly is part of the common sense middle, they see that he has joined the obstructionist liberals who do not represent Hoosier values.



Senator Donnelly is desperate to save his failing campaign

Senator Donnelly’s message and strategy have become desperate. Senator Donnelly’s unhinged debate performance was just the start of his desperate attempts to save his political career. Hoosiers need look no further than his recent advertising to prove the point:

- Three weeks ago, Senator Donnelly started running an angry commercial where he tried to hide his past involvement in his family company that shipped jobs to Mexico.
- Next, he released a ridiculous ad where he attacked his fellow liberals as “socialists” while pretending to talk tough on immigration.
- But last week really takes the cake, when his latest commercial shows him brandishing a Mexican made axe while he pretends to chop wood. Whether he meant to impersonate the HBO hit series VEEP or not – he clearly looked like a clown as he vainly tried to cloak his out of touch voting record behind...just wait...his support for President Bush.

As Senator Donnelly waffles across the state of Indiana, it’s never been clearer that he is a desperate politician who is willing to say or do anything to keep his taxpayer funded salary.

Mike Braun has the resources to fund an aggressive paid media campaign in the final weeks

Mike Braun recently outraised Senator Donnelly in the third fundraising quarter bringing in \$5.6 million – a combination of \$3.2 million dollars from over 10,000 grassroots supporters and a \$2.4 million personal investment. Mike Braun has continued to hit record fundraising targets in the first three weeks of October.

The record success of Braun's October fundraising efforts and commitment of an additional \$1.5 million in personal resources has allowed the campaign to reserve over \$2.2 million in statewide television ads. Mike Braun's record fundraising and fully funded aggressive paid media campaign makes it clear he has the momentum in this race.

Indiana Grassroots Republicans are energized to retire Senator Donnelly

Hoosiers ready to send a doer like Mike Braun to Washington and Republican activists throughout the state have joined forces to execute one of the most robust grassroots initiatives in the country. The Indiana Republican Party and the Republican National Committee have been laying the groundwork to defeat Joe Donnelly for nearly two years by making a record investment in a data-driven ground game. This cycle to date, grassroots activists have made over 1.5 million voter contacts, talking to Hoosiers every day who are ready to retire Joe Donnelly.

Conclusion

Joe Donnelly's vote against Judge Kavanaugh crystallized the growing sentiment among Hoosiers that Senator Donnelly stands with the radical left in Washington, not with us. Even as time distances voters from the Kavanaugh vote, Donnelly remains defined by the perception that he is a career politician and will say anything to keep his job.

Mike Braun is well positioned to hold his lead and defeat Senator Donnelly. Hoosiers have embraced his message as a job creator, outsider and doer who is ready to go to Washington and deliver solutions for Hoosiers: solutions on the issues Hoosiers care about, like reforming healthcare, bringing back good jobs, fixing our broken immigration system, and confirming conservative judges.