



MEMORANDUM

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TO: INTERESTED PARTIES

FROM: GLEN BOLGER

RE: KEY FINDINGS – GOP PRIMARY SURVEY IN VIRGINIA’S
SECOND CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

DATE: FEBRUARY 8, 2016

The Bottom Line

Randy Forbes has a statistically significant double-digit lead on the Republican primary ballot test in the newly-drawn Second Congressional District of Virginia. Forbes has high name identification and a strong image. Opponent Scott Taylor has good name ID, but trails by nineteen points on the ballot test. An attack-defense question on the issue of Forbes moving districts works very well in the Congressman’s favor.

Key Findings

1. ***Randy Forbes has a significant name ID and image advantage over his primary opponent.***

Randy Forbes is very well-known in the defense-oriented area of Hampton Roads. He has 87% name ID, with 42% favorable and 6% unfavorable among GOP primary voters. Scott Taylor has 52% name ID, with 26% favorable and 2% unfavorable.

2. ***Forbes has a nineteen point lead on the ballot test against Taylor.***

Forbes leads 43% to 24% over Taylor, with 33% undecided. That clearly is good news for Forbes, but the news is even better in the crosstabs, as his lead expands among key turnout groups. Some key findings from the crosstabs:

- Forbes leads 50%-19% among core primary voters – the 30% of the electorate who are both strong Republicans and very conservative.
- Among base Republicans who are strongly favorable to the Tea Party, Forbes leads 57%-14%.

- Among base GOPers who are religious conservatives, Forbes leads 54%-16%.
- Among base GOPers who are strongly supportive of the NRA, Forbes leads 52%-22%.

Thus, among key groups on the more conservative wing of the Republican party, Forbes expands his overall lead by double digits.

3. ***An attack/defense question on the Taylor message that Forbes should not move to the district to run finds that GOP primary voters are more focused on the Forbes experience and leadership for the region on Armed Services than on the Taylor attack.***

Here's the question and results:

As you may know, Randy Forbes currently represents the Tidewater area of Virginia, including Chesapeake. Forbes may run for Congress in this district, which he does not live in, because the courts have drawn new district lines that have made his district over sixty percent Democratic.

23% **(Some/other)** people say that Randy Forbes would be a carpetbagger to run for Congress from this district. They say he has spent sixteen years representing a different part of Virginia and has no business coming here to run for Congress. They say having an outsider rather than a local person in Congress would be bad for our area.

...while...

61% **(Other/some)** people say that Randy Forbes is chairman of the House Armed Services Seapower Subcommittee, and having him represent an area that relies so heavily on defense is important. They say we need to keep Randy Forbes in Congress so he can continue to fight for our national security, for jobs, and for the men and women who serve in our armed forces here in Hampton Roads. They say Forbes' leadership on defense issues would be good for our area.

Methodology

The survey was conducted February 2-3, 2016 in the new Second Congressional District of Virginia. Public Opinion Strategies completed 400 interviews with likely Republican primary voters, including 80 with cell phone respondents. The survey has a margin of error of $\pm 4.9\%$ in 95 out of 100 cases.