



From: Minami Yoshizawa, Public Policy Polling

To: Interested Parties

Subject: Warning Signs for DeWine With His Approval Rating and Favorability Underwater; Trump Endorsement Could Upend GOP Primary

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A new Public Policy Polling survey of likely Republican primary voters in Ohio finds significant warning signs for Governor Mike DeWine. The poll shows Republican primary voters are divided over DeWine's job performance, with 40% approving of the job he is doing and 41% disapproving. His approval rating when it comes to handling the Covid-19 pandemic is also underwater by 4 points (40-44). DeWine's favorability rating is even lower, with 43% of voters having an unfavorable opinion of him and 36% having a favorable opinion. Meanwhile, Donald Trump enjoys a 59-point net favorability rating among likely Republican primary voters (76-17).

Trump's endorsement continues to be a powerful factor when it comes to winning Republican primaries. After hearing that Trump prefers a different candidate for the Republican nomination because DeWine has not been loyal enough to him, a majority (55%) of those surveyed say they would vote for a candidate endorsed by Trump over DeWine (25%).

Trump has yet to endorse a candidate in this race, but former Congressman Jim Renacci, who is challenging DeWine in the Republican primary, is seeking to align himself with Trump and his allies. DeWine is currently leading by 5 points in a head-to-head with Renacci (38-33), but 29% of voters remain unsure who to vote for. Of these undecided voters, DeWine is underwater in favorability by 26 points (19-45). Renacci is still relatively unknown among voters, with a majority (55%) of likely Republican primary voters unsure if they have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of him. If voters who have yet to hold an opinion of Renacci decide they like him, then DeWine's re-election bid looks slimmer than ever.

In another troubling sign for DeWine, if DeWine wins the Republican primary, 44% of voters say they would prefer a conservative-leaning independent candidate in a hypothetical general election.

Public Policy Polling surveyed 626 likely Republican primary voters in Ohio on behalf of the Democratic Governors Association (DGA) from January 25-26, 2022. The margin of error is +/- 3.9%. 50% of interviews for the survey were conducted by telephone and 50% by text message.

