

To: Interested Parties
From: John Yob
Date: October 22, 2020
Re: Michigan's 3rd Congressional District

Polling History

Strategic National was one of the only firms in the country to correctly poll the 2016 Michigan General Election because we identified a few weeks out a trend that 0 of 4 voters - voters who had never voted in a Presidential election - were inspired to vote for President Trump. Therefore we added them to our voter pool whereas other pollsters left them out. [Click here to view the 2016 story.](#)

It is important to account for current trends rather than basing models only on history in order to accurately poll the electorate. In 2020, the main trend that we see in our polling is a significant shift in the percentage of voters in unweighted raw data who self identify as Democrats.

Weighting

We typically weight polling samples by political party very little, if at all. Usually allowing the party identification to float gets us a sample that is most reflective of a given cycle's final result. But since the raw samples are coming back substantially more Democrat than history suggests, we are releasing two sets of topline data.

The first is a floating model that takes a random sample. The sample came back at +4 Democrat in the 3rd congressional district. Although Kent County has gone Democrat on a few occasions in recent years, it would still be perceived as unusual to release a poll showing a +4 Democrat party advantage in the 3rd Congressional District.

Therefore we are also releasing a weighted version of the sample as Republican +4. Again it must be emphasized that the random sample was Democrat +4 and therefore there is a very good chance that the party identification at this point in time in the 3rd Congressional District is indeed closer to Democrat +4.

Results

Regardless of which of these two party breakdown models that you believe accurately represents this moment in time, Democrat Hillary Scholten is at this point favored to win the election. She would be the first Democrat to hold this seat since the Watergate era.

The Democrat +4 ballot test has Scholten at 50% and Meijer at 42% of the vote. Only 8% of respondents say they are undecided. The candidate image also shows a large disparity between Scholten and Meijer. 49% of respondents have a favorable opinion of Scholten while 30% have an unfavorable opinion (+19). For Meijer, 37% have a favorable opinion and 39% have an unfavorable opinion (-2).

The Republican +4 ballot test has Scholten and Meijer both with 46% of the vote. Only 7% of respondents say they are undecided. Scholten performs better than Meijer in the candidate image questions. 46% of respondents have a favorable opinion of Scholten while 33% have an unfavorable opinion (+13). For Meijer, 42% have a favorable opinion and 37% have an unfavorable opinion (+5).

The poll was conducted October 15-17, surveyed 400 likely General Election voters and has a 4.9% margin of error.

How Can this Be?

The reality is that 40-41% of the voters claim to have already voted and therefore this campaign was likely won or lost in September. For whatever reason, the Meijer campaign allowed Hillary Scholten to outspend him on television almost 2-1 in the month of September, with Scholten and her allies spending \$767,000 to Meijer and his spending \$418,000 according to the Michigan Campaign Finance Network. She successfully branded Meijer as a “rich kid” son of a billionaire and herself as a more moderate Democrat.

It is inconceivable why the son of one of Michigan’s wealthiest families was outspent by a Democrat in West Michigan in the most important month of this election cycle. National Republicans and Super PACs are attempting to make up for lost time in October with heavy TV buys to define Scholten as liberal on environmental and immigration issues. It could be too late now that nearly half the electorate has voted.

Conclusion

Regardless of which model you believe to be more accurate, this is not a good indicator for Republicans in West Michigan. If Democrats win this West Michigan congressional district for the first time since Watergate, we will look back at the month of September as the reason we lost. Meijer should have had the funds to more than compete with Scholten’s TV spending and control the narrative when it mattered. It has been clear for many months that a record number of voters would vote early by mail due to the pandemic and easier access to absentee ballots. Meijer may still win this election, but the strategic failure in September unnecessarily put this seat at risk and cost donors hundreds of thousands of dollars in October that would have been better spent to elect John James or President Trump.

Poll Results

MI-3 General Election Results (+4 Democrat)

Conducted: October 15-17, 2020

Number of Respondents: 400

MoE: ±4.9%

Q. How likely are you to vote in the General Election this November?

Certain to vote	96%
Likely to vote	3%
50/50 chance	1%
<hr/>	
Total	100%

**Now I would like to ask your opinion of a few people who are active in politics.
Let's begin with President Donald Trump.**

Q. Do you have a Favorable or Unfavorable opinion of Republican Donald Trump?

Very Favorable	33%
Somewhat Favorable	10%
No Opinion	5%
Somewhat Unfavorable	2%
Very Unfavorable	50%
<hr/>	
Total	100%

Q. Democrat Joe Biden

Very Favorable	29%
Somewhat Favorable	25%
No Opinion	7%
Somewhat Unfavorable	5%
Very Unfavorable	34%
<hr/>	
Total	100%

Q. Republican Peter Meijer

Very Favorable	20%
Somewhat Favorable	17%
No Opinion	24%
Somewhat Unfavorable	15%
Very Unfavorable	24%
<hr/>	
Total	100%

Q. Democrat Hillary Scholten

Very Favorable	28%
Somewhat Favorable	21%
No Opinion	21%
Somewhat Unfavorable	9%

Very Unfavorable	21%
Total	100%

Q. And if you were to vote in the 2020 election would you prefer to do it by mail or in person?

Already voted by mail	41%
Plan to vote by mail	9%
Plan to vote in person	47%
Not sure	3%
Total	100%

Q. If the General Election for President was held today, would you vote for Republican Donald Trump or Democrat Joe Biden?

Democrat Joe Biden	52%
Republican Donald Trump	41%
Undecided	7%
Total	100%

Q. If the General Election for U.S. Congress was held today, would you vote for Republican Peter Meijer or Democrat Hillary Scholten?

Democrat Hillary Scholten	50%
Republican Peter Meijer	42%
Undecided	8%
Total	100%

Demographics

Type of Phone

Landline	60%
Cellphone	40%

Total	100%
-------	------

Age

18 to 35	21%
36 to 49	25%
50 to 64	28%
65 or older	26%

Total	100%
-------	------

Gender

Male	48%
Female	52%

Total	100%
-------	------

Party

Republican	31%
Democrat	35%
Independent/Something Else	30%

Don't Know	4%
Total	100%

Type of Republican

Trump/America First	75%
Traditional/Establishment	9%
TEA Party	3%
Social Conservative	7%
Libertarian	3%
Some Other Part/Don't Know	4%
Total	100%

General Vote History

0	6%
1	10%
2	10%
3	18%
4	56%
Total	100%

Political Ideology

Very conservative	17%
-------------------	-----

Somewhat conservative	21%
Moderate	31%
Liberal	23%
Unsure	7%
<hr/>	
Total	100%

County

BARRY	9%
CALHOUN	17%
IONIA	8%
KENT	66%
MONTCALM	1%
<hr/>	
Total	100%

MI-3 General Election Results (+4 Republican)

Conducted: October 15-17, 2020

Number of Respondents: 400

MoE: ±4.9%

Q. How likely are you to vote in the General Election this November?

Certain to vote	96%
Likely to vote	3%

50/50 chance	<1%
--------------	-----

Total	100%
-------	------

**Now I would like to ask your opinion of a few people who are active in politics.
Let's begin with President Donald Trump.**

Q. Do you have a Favorable or Unfavorable opinion of Republican Donald Trump?

Very Favorable	37%
----------------	-----

Somewhat Favorable	10%
--------------------	-----

No Opinion	5%
------------	----

Somewhat Unfavorable	2%
----------------------	----

Very Unfavorable	46%
------------------	-----

Total	100%
-------	------

Q. Democrat Joe Biden

Very Favorable	28%
----------------	-----

Somewhat Favorable	23%
--------------------	-----

No Opinion	6%
------------	----

Somewhat Unfavorable	6%
----------------------	----

Very Unfavorable	37%
------------------	-----

Total	100%
-------	------

Q. Republican Peter Meijer

Very Favorable	23%
Somewhat Favorable	19%
No Opinion	22%
Somewhat Unfavorable	14%
Very Unfavorable	23%
<hr/>	
Total	100%

Q. Democrat Hillary Scholten

Very Favorable	26%
Somewhat Favorable	20%
No Opinion	20%
Somewhat Unfavorable	9%
Very Unfavorable	24%
<hr/>	
Total	100%

Q. And if you were to vote in the 2020 election would you prefer to do it by mail or in person?

Already voted by mail	40%
Plan to vote by mail	9%
Plan to vote in person	48%
Not sure	3%
<hr/>	

Total	100%
-------	------

Q. If the General Election for President was held today, would you vote for Republican Donald Trump or Democrat Joe Biden?

Democrat Joe Biden	48%
--------------------	-----

Republican Donald Trump	45%
-------------------------	-----

Undecided	7%
-----------	----

Total	100%
-------	------

Q. If the General Election for U.S. Congress was held today, would you vote for Republican Peter Meijer or Democrat Hillary Scholten?

Republican Peter Meijer	46%
-------------------------	-----

Democrat Hillary Scholten	46%
---------------------------	-----

Undecided	7%
-----------	----

Total	100%
-------	------

Demographics

Type of Phone

Landline	60%
----------	-----

Cellphone	40%
-----------	-----

Total	100%
-------	------

Age

18 to 35	21%
36 to 49	25%
50 to 64	28%
65 or older	26%

Total	100%
-------	------

Gender

Male	48%
Female	52%

Total	100%
-------	------

Party

Republican	38%
Democrat	34%
Independent/Something Else	25%
Don't Know	3%

Total	100%
-------	------

Type of Republican

Trump/America First	74%
Traditional/Establishment	10%
TEA Party	3%
Social Conservative	7%

Libertarian	3%
Some Other Part/Don't Know	4%
<hr/>	
Total	100%

General Vote History

0	6%
1	9%
2	10%
3	18%
4	56%
<hr/>	
Total	100%

Political Ideology

Very conservative	20%
Somewhat conservative	23%
Moderate	28%
Liberal	22%
Unsure	6%
<hr/>	
Total	100%

County

BARRY	9%
CALHOUN	17%

IONIA	8%
-------	----

KENT	66%
------	-----

MONTCALM	1%
----------	----

Total	100%
-------	------