

NC Congressional District 11

Republican Primary Voter Survey Data

To: David Avella, Chairman GOPAC
From: Jim Blaine, Differentiators Data
Re: North Carolina CD-11 Survey Data

Summary

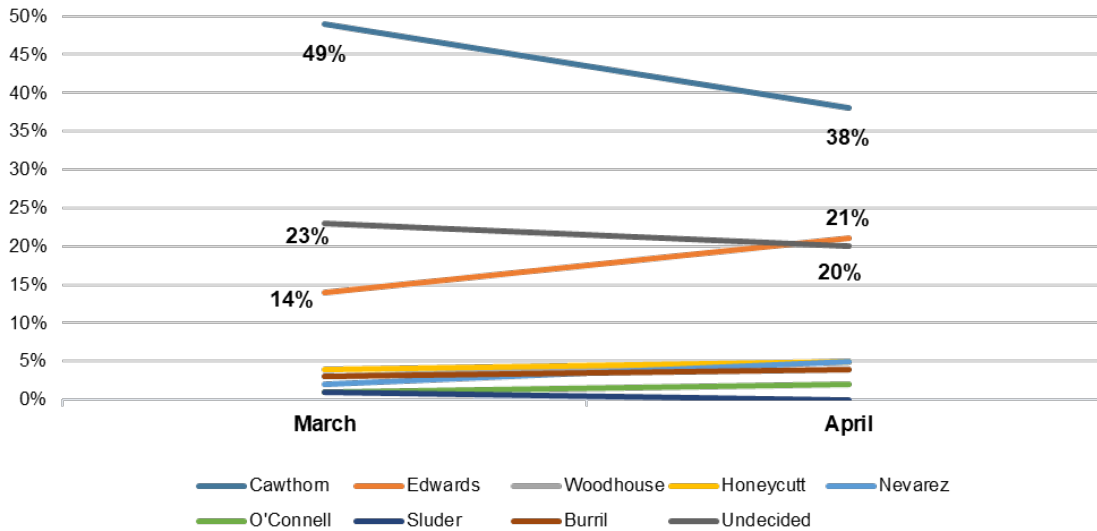
Differentiators Data conducted a second survey of likely GOP Primary voters in North Carolina's 11th Congressional District on April 25th and 26th for GOPAC to determine what, if any, impact the recent wave of negative publicity has had on Congressman Madison Cawthorn's re-election prospects. Our initial March survey was a sample of 500 likely GOP Primary voters with a margin of error of +/- 4.5%. In April we surveyed 400 likely GOP Primary voters, with a margin of error of +/- 4.9%. Both surveys were 1/3 live landline, 1/3 live cell phones, and 1/3 text to web.

Our early March survey showed Cawthorn well-positioned for re-election. But a lot has changed in the past six weeks. Negative stories about his personal behavior have seriously undermined Cawthorn's standing with GOP primary voters in all the most important image and job performance measures. As the chart below shows, Cawthorn's net favorability rating collapsed from +35 to just +9, while his net job approval rating fell from +38 to +14 and his net re-election numbers turned upside down, moving from +8 to -12.

| NC-11 | Cawthorn Name ID | | Job Performance | | Vote to Re-elect | |
|-------|------------------|-------------|-----------------|------------|------------------|-----|
| | Favorable | Unfavorable | Approve | Disapprove | Yes | No |
| March | 64% | 29% | 66% | 28% | 54% | 46% |
| April | 51% | 44% | 54% | 40% | 39% | 61% |

Unsurprisingly, the image damage Cawthorn suffered among GOP primary voters carried over to a substantial decline in support on the GOP primary ballot. As the following chart and graph illustrate, Cawthorn's lead in the primary shrunk by 18 points between GOPAC's March and April surveys.

NC-11 BALLOT TREND



| Poll Date | Cawthorn | Edwards | Woodhouse | Honeycutt | Nevarez | O'Connell | Sluder | Burril | Undecided |
|-----------|----------|---------|-----------|-----------|---------|-----------|--------|--------|-----------|
| March | 49% | 14% | 3% | 4% | 2% | 1% | 1% | 3% | 23% |
| April | 38% | 21% | 5% | 5% | 5% | 2% | 0% | 4% | 20% |

The big question remains: Will Madison Cawthorn lose the primary on May 17th? The short answer: maybe.

The Case for Madison Cawthorn Losing

First, by every metric, Cawthorn’s campaign trajectory is terrible. Every day seems to bring news of another self-inflicted wound. And the Congressman’s latest citation for carrying a loaded handgun into the Charlotte airport raises the prospect that he is *intentionally* engaging in behavior that places him in a negative light with voters. Unlike the other candidates in the primary, fully 95% of the district’s voters have an opinion about Congressman Cawthorn. There is no pool of undecided voters he can reach into to win new supporters, and the supporters he has lost are unlikely to return to him over the next three weeks. 61% of voters say they would not vote to re-elect Cawthorn. And 50% of voters agree with this statement: “*With there always being some sort of negative news regarding Madison Cawthorn and his personal life, it may be better for another candidate to win the Republican Primary for Congress.*”



Second, State Senator Chuck Edwards is starting to emerge as the only viable alternative to Cawthorn. The 41% of voters who have a favorable opinion of Edwards are almost three times that of any other challenger. With 45% of voters either unaware of Edwards or yet to hear enough about Edwards to form an opinion of him, he has plenty of room to grow his image and he could end the campaign with higher favorables than Cawthorn. While all other challengers' support remained at or below 5% on the ballot in both the March and April surveys, Edwards grew his support by 50% – from 14% to 21%. Typically, undecided voters break toward challengers and nonviable candidates lose voters to true contenders as an election nears. With 20% of voters still undecided and 20% of voters currently favoring one of the six other Cawthorn challengers polling at or below 5% in the survey, Edwards has two large potential pools from which to draw new supporters.

Third, the race is closer in certain key subsets of voters. With voters who participated in all 4 of the most recent GOP primary elections, Cawthorn leads Edwards 32% to 29%. With voters who participated in 2 or more or 3 or more of the past 4 primaries, Cawthorn leads 35% to 25%. Most importantly, among voters who have an opinion of both Edwards and Cawthorn, Edwards lead 32% to 31%.

If Cawthorn is going to lose, it will be Edwards who beats him. But with voting starting today, Edwards' campaign or an allied outside group must raise his name awareness among primary voters and do it quickly to capitalize on the opportunity.

The Case for Madison Cawthorn Winning

The case for Cawthorn hanging on and surviving this primary can be boiled down to three simple points:

First, the threshold to win a first primary outright in North Carolina is 30% of the vote. Cawthorn is above 30% on the ballot now, his re-elect number sits at 39% and 31% of voters have a “very favorable” opinion of Cawthorn. In other words, every measure indicates Cawthorn has a high floor with GOP primary voters – probably between 35% and 40% – and will finish well above the 30% threshold necessary to avoid a runoff, which means one of his challengers will have beat him in the first round to win the race.

Second, the large field is dividing the support of voters who would like to replace Cawthorn. With decided voters, Cawthorn sits at 38%, 4% points behind his opponents, who collectively have 42% of decided voters (half of the 42% is with Edwards, and the other half is divided up among the other six challengers). The field shows no signs of uniting behind one candidate in a common cause of defeating Cawthorn and barring such a unity effort the divisions play to Cawthorn's advantage.

Third, time is on Cawthorn's side. North Carolina has a lengthy and heavily-utilized early voting period that begins today (April 28th.) If there were another few weeks before the election, Edwards could likely raise his name identification and consolidate the anti-Cawthorn vote. But with the election starting in earnest today, Cawthorn will be banking votes to pad his lead while Edwards is still working to raise his profile in order to consolidate the Cawthorn opposition.