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To: Interested Parties

Subject: Ohio Back To Battleground Status in 2020

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A new Public Policy Polling survey of Ohio voters finds that the state- which Donald Trump won by 8 points in 2016- is set to return to its traditional battleground status in 2020.

Trump trails a generic Democrat 48-47 for reelection in the state. Particularly troubling for him is a 51-37 deficit with independent voters. Suburban areas have tended to be a swing vote in Ohio elections but- matching the national trends- they now lean toward voting Democratic by a 53-40 margin over Trump next year. Trump doesn't get more than 47% against any named Democratic opponent – he trails Joe Biden 48-46, and he's tied with Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren at 47% each. Trump only has leads against two of the lesser-known Democratic candidates: he leads both Kamala Harris and Pete Buttigieg 47-43 with 10% of voters undecided in those particular matchups.

Ohio's return to swing state status is a function of Trump's unpopularity in the state. Only 47% of voters have a favorable opinion of him, to 51% with a negative one. The ratio is even worse for Trump when it comes to voters who have strong feelings about him- just 38% say they have a 'very favorable' opinion of him, to 45% who have a 'very unfavorable' opinion of him.

It makes sense that Ohio is closely divided when it comes to next year's election. Right now FiveThirtyEight's national poll tracker finds Trump to have a 42/54 approval split. That -12 net standing represents a 10 point net drop for him compared to election day 2016 when he lost the popular vote by 2 points. Given Trump's 8 point victory in Ohio last time, a similar 10 point drop in Ohio to what he's seen nationally would put him slightly underwater with voters in the state as our new poll finds.

Ohioans narrowly support an impeachment inquiry into Trump, 49/47. These numbers are meaningful not just for Ohio but for the country as a whole, because it shows that even in states that voted pretty strongly for him last time there is still significant support for moving forward with the impeachment process, suggesting there's not a lot of political liability for Democrats in doing so. There is majority support for impeachment with both pivotal independent voters (54/41) and suburban voters (57/40).

Overall the findings of this poll suggest that Ohio should be closely contested next fall and that 2016 may have been just a brief blip from the state's status as one of the most competitive battleground states in the country.





Public Policy Polling surveyed 776 Ohio voters on October 10th and 11th on behalf of Innovation Ohio. 60% of surveys were completed by telephone and 40% were completed by text message. The survey's margin of error is +/-3.5%.

