

# MARIST POLL™

## **POLL MUST BE SOURCED:**

### **NBC News/Marist Poll**

#### **INDIANA:**

#### **Heightened Enthusiasm for the Midterms... Donnelly & Braun Highly Competitive for Senate Trump Approval Rating Improves**

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#### **This NBC News/Marist Poll Reports:**

In the countdown to Election Day, Republicans maintain their advantage on the question of congressional control and the generic congressional ballot question in Indiana. Incumbent Senator Donnelly is in a tight race to hold his senate seat for the Democrats. This as President Donald Trump's job approval rating is boosted in the Hoosier State.

75% of Indiana registered voters, up from 68% in September, say this year's midterm elections are very important. Both Democrats (85% an increase from 77%) and Republicans (78% up from 71%) are energized. More than six in ten independents (63%) report a high level of enthusiasm for next week's elections.

Nearly half of Indiana registered voters (49%) prefer a Congress controlled by Republicans. 42% favor a Congress controlled by Democrats. Nine percent are unsure. Previously, the Republicans (45%) were +5 points over the Democrats (40%) on the question of congressional control. 15% at the time were unsure.

More than nine in ten Democrats (92%) and Republicans (92%) prefer their own party in power. Independents divide. 39% of independent voters, an increase from 33%, prefer a legislature controlled by Republicans, and 42% want a Democratic Congress, little changed from 41%. 19%, down from 26%, are still unsure.

A previous 24-point gender gap has notched down to 18 points. While a majority of men (55%)

continue to favor a Republican Congress, women now divide. In September, women favored a *Democratic* Congress by 7 points, they currently split with 45% saying they want the Democrats in charge and 44% hoping to keep the Republicans in power.

On the generic congressional ballot question the Republicans are a net +6 over the Democrats statewide. 49% of voters support the Republican candidate in their district, and 43% back the Democrat. Six percent are undecided. This is similar to the previous poll, when the Republicans (47%) had a similar 5-point advantage on the congressional generic ballot over the Democrats (42%).

Though still prominent, the gender gap has narrowed on this question. A 15-point gender gap currently exists, down from 25 points previously. Men (53%) are more likely to support the Republican on the ballot than are women who divide (47% for the Democrat and 45% for the Republican). The Democrats had a 7-point advantage among women in the previous NBC News/Marist Poll of Indiana.

“On control of Congress and voters’ preferences for their district, Indiana voters are showing their red state credentials,” says Dr. Lee M. Miringoff, Director of The Marist College Institute for Public Opinion.

70% of registered voters say President Trump’s nomination of Brett Kavanaugh to the U.S. Supreme Court will impact their vote. This includes 38% who report they are more likely to vote for a congressional candidate who supported the nomination and 32% who say they are more likely to back a candidate who opposed the appointment. 27%, including 25% of Democrats, 19% of Republicans, and a plurality of independents (37%), say the nomination makes no difference to their vote.

In the race for U.S. Senate in Indiana, Democrat Joe Donnelly (45%) and Republican Mike Braun (42%) are competitive among likely voters statewide including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate or who have already voted. Libertarian candidate Lucy Brenton receives 7%, and 5% are undecided. 14% of likely voters are persuadable, that is, they are undecided or have a candidate preference but say they may vote differently. In the September NBC News/Marist Poll of Indiana, the same margin separated Donnelly (44%) and Braun (41%) among the likely electorate. Eight percent backed Brenton, and 6% were undecided. The gender gap in this Indiana Senate race is only 7 points. Men divide. 45% for Braun to 44% for Donnelly. Among women, Donnelly edges Braun 46% to 40%.

Among registered voters overall, 43% back Donnelly, 40% are for Braun, and 9% support Brenton. This is little changed from September. 12% of Indiana’s registered voters say they have already cast a ballot.

54% of likely voters with a candidate preference, up from 49%, say they strongly support their choice for Senate. 54% of Donnelly's supporters and 57% of Braun's backers say they will not waver in their commitment to their candidate.

"Indiana is one of the ten states Trump carried in 2016 that has a Democratic Senator trying to hold the seat for their party," says Dr. Lee M. Miringoff, Director of The Marist College Institute for Public Opinion. "Although Donnelly has a numeric three point edge over Braun, the proportion of persuadable voters is nearly five times greater than the margin that separates the candidates."

In a head-to-head contest between Donnelly and Braun, Donnelly receives 48% to 46% for Braun among likely voters statewide. In September, Donnelly (49%) had a 6-point lead over Braun (43%) in this two-way matchup. Among registered voters, Donnelly (47%) and Braun (45%) are in a statistical dead heat. In September, Donnelly had a 6-point lead over Braun among registered voters.

While Donnelly's favorable rating is little changed from last time, his negatives have bumped up during the course of the campaign. 46% of likely voters have a favorable impression of Donnelly. 38%, an increase from 31%, have an unfavorable one, and 16%, down from 21%, have either never heard of Donnelly or are unsure how to rate him.

Likely voters divide about Braun. Here as well, Braun's unfavorable score has increased since earlier in the campaign. 41% of likely voters have a favorable opinion of Braun, little changed from 39% in September. An identical 41% now have an unfavorable opinion of him, up from 32%. 19%, down from 29%, have either never heard of Braun or are unsure how to rate him.

President Trump has experienced a boost in Indiana. 48% of Indiana residents, including 50% of likely voters, approve of the job Trump is doing in office. This includes 31% who strongly approve. 40% of Hoosiers disapprove, including 30% who strongly disapprove. 13% are unsure. Last month, Indiana residents divided about the president's job performance. 44% approved, and 47% disapproved.