

# MEMORANDUM

**TO: INTERESTED PARTIES**  
**FROM: ROB AUTRY**  
**DATE: JUNE 14, 2021**  
**RE: KEY FINDINGS FROM SURVEY OF LIKELY REPUBLICAN PRIMARY VOTERS  
ON THE U.S. SENATE CONTEST IN NORTH CAROLINA**

Meeting Street Insights conducted a live interviewer telephone survey of likely Republican primary voters in North Carolina on June 9-10, 2021. A total of 500 primary voters statewide were interviewed using a mix of cell phone and landline interviewing and the survey has a margin of error of  $\pm 4.38$  percentage points.

## THE BIG PICTURE

Former Governor Pat McCrory's initial ballot lead completely evaporates when Republican primary voters learn that President Trump endorsed Ted Budd for U.S. Senate. President Trump's endorsement of Congressman Ted Budd is a game-changer which yields a 45% positive swing for Ted Budd. As Republican primary voters become aware of Trump's support for Budd (80% are not even aware of it yet), Budd is well positioned to become the Republican nominee for U.S. Senate in North Carolina.

## KEY FINDINGS

**#1 / Pat McCrory remains the better known candidate, but Ted Budd is on the move, quickly surpassing Mark Walker.** Former Governor McCrory has a 58% favorable – 14% unfavorable image rating, while Ted Budd is at 28% favorable – 4% unfavorable and Mark Walker is at 23% favorable – 3% unfavorable. McCrory's and Walker's image ratings in our survey are nearly identical to what the McCrory Campaign reported back in April in their survey (POS April 6-8, 2021 Poll – McCrory: 58% fav – 13% unfav / Walker: 20% fav – 4% unfav). But, since their April poll, Budd's name identification has risen 14 points and favorables have climbed 12 points.

**#2 / The news about President Trump's endorsement of Ted Budd is only starting to make waves in the state.** Only one-in-five are aware of President Trump's endorsement of Ted Budd (20%), while the vast majority of Republican primary voters have not yet heard the news (80%).

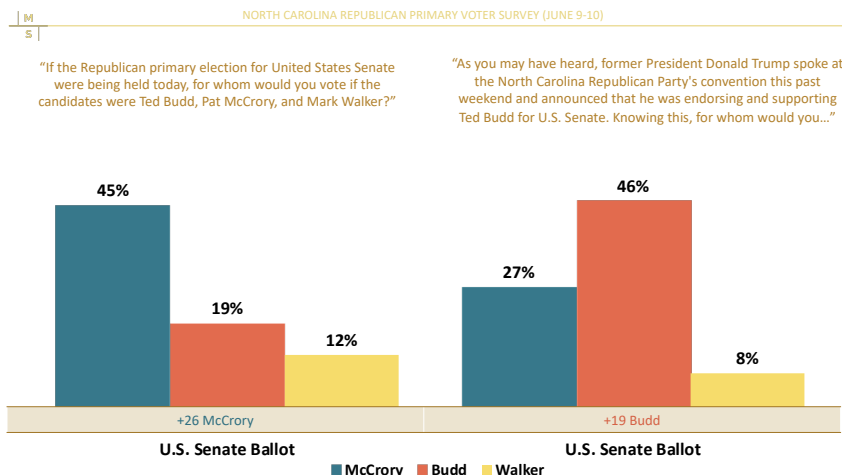
- It should be noted that Donald Trump is still the most popular figure among Republican primary voters – and it's not even close. Fully 87% of likely primary voters view him favorably (72% strongly favorable), and only 10% are unfavorable.



**#3 / McCrory also continues to lead on the U.S. Senate Republican primary ballot test.** The initial ballot test shows McCrory getting 45% of the primary vote, followed by Budd at 19% and Walker at 12% (23% undecided). Again, the McCrory Campaign’s April poll provides insights into how the race is clearly developing. Back in April, McCrory was at 48% on the ballot, followed by Walker at 13% and Budd at 9%. Budd is the only candidate who has seen his ballot number grow in the past two months – more than doubling, in fact.

- Among the nearly one-third of the electorate that has heard of all three Republican candidates, the race is tight and clearly shaping up to be a two-candidate contest: 38% are voting for McCrory, 31% for Budd, and 18% for Walker.

**#4 / The ballot match-up changes dramatically when Republican primary voters hear that President Trump is supporting and endorsing Ted Budd.** When we asked Republican primary voters for whom would they vote if they knew “President Donald Trump spoke at the North Carolina Republican Party’s convention this past weekend and announced that he was endorsing and supporting Ted Budd for U.S. Senate,” Ted Budd surges to a 19-point lead over McCrory and a 38-point lead over Walker (46% Budd – 27% McCrory – 8% Walker – 18% undecided). This one piece of information turns McCrory’s 26-point lead into a 19-point deficit.



- Fully 30% of McCrory’s initial supporters move to back Ted Budd after hearing about Trump’s endorsement; 34% of Walker’s initial supporters do the same.
- Trump’s endorsement pushes Budd to a 25-point lead among core primary voters (Base Republicans who are very conservative) and puts him 11 points ahead of McCrory in the former Governor’s region base, the Charlotte media market.

**#5 / Finally, President Trump’s message about this race resonates strongly with these voters.** We asked Republican primary voters if they agree or disagree with President Trump who, “told North Carolina Republicans that, when choosing a Republican candidate, quote, you can’t pick people that have already lost two races and do not stand for our values, end quote.” Fully 67% of primary voters agree with Trump, with 47% definitely agreeing. More than two-thirds of undecided voters (68%) agree with Trump’s words.