

To: Interested Parties

From: GBA Strategies

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Justin Nelson Poll Results

A poll of likely voters shows that Texas Attorney General Ken Paxton starts his re-election bid in a weak position and his indictment presents a significant vulnerability that Democrats can capitalize on. In a simulated campaign where voters hear about both Paxton and Justin Nelson, the final result is a very close race with a narrow Nelson lead.

The following are key findings from a survey of 500 likely voters in the November 2018 general election in Texas. The survey carries a margin of error of +/-4.4 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence interval. It was conducted between October 9-12, 2017 via landlines and cellphones.

Key Findings

- **Despite Texas' Republican leanings, voters are split on President Donald Trump with more intensity on the anti-Trump side.** An equal 49 percent approve and disapprove of the job President Trump is doing. However, intensity is against him, as 43 percent strongly disapprove while only 35 percent strongly approve.
- **Attorney General Ken Paxton receives relatively weak ratings.** Paxton starts with an unimpressive 30 percent favorable - 29 percent unfavorable rating.
- **Paxton starts with a narrow lead against a largely unknown opponent.** Paxton carries 46 percent of the electorate in the initial vote with Justin Nelson garnering 40 percent. After undecided are asked which way they lean, Paxton leads 50 – 43 percent. Given Texas' Republican leaning and Nelson being unknown, this is a weak starting point for Paxton.
- **Paxton's corrupt behavior is very damaging and moves Justin Nelson into the lead.** When voters are informed about Paxton's indictment, 62 percent say it raises serious doubts about him. After voters hear positive statements about both candidates and learning about Paxton's indictment, the race moves from a 7-point Paxton advantage to a 5-point Nelson lead (49 - 44 percent). The additional information dramatically shifts Independents to Nelson's side, while he also makes inroads with Republicans. Even after voters hear attacks against Nelson, he maintains a 1-point lead.

Bottom line: This race is winnable for Justin Nelson.