

FINAL POLL: GOP Gov. Kevin Stitt Set to Win 2022 Re-Election

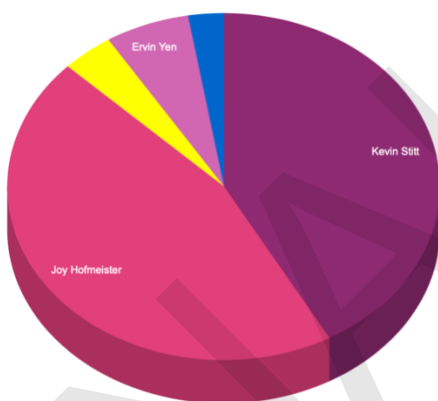
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Poll Memo for Immediate Release | November 4, 2022

To: Citizens of Oklahoma
 Re: Oklahoma Statewide Survey, November 1 – 3, 2022
 MoE 4% +/-, n = 729 / 31,128 Live Answers
 From: Tomahawk Strategies, Inc. [Oklahoma]

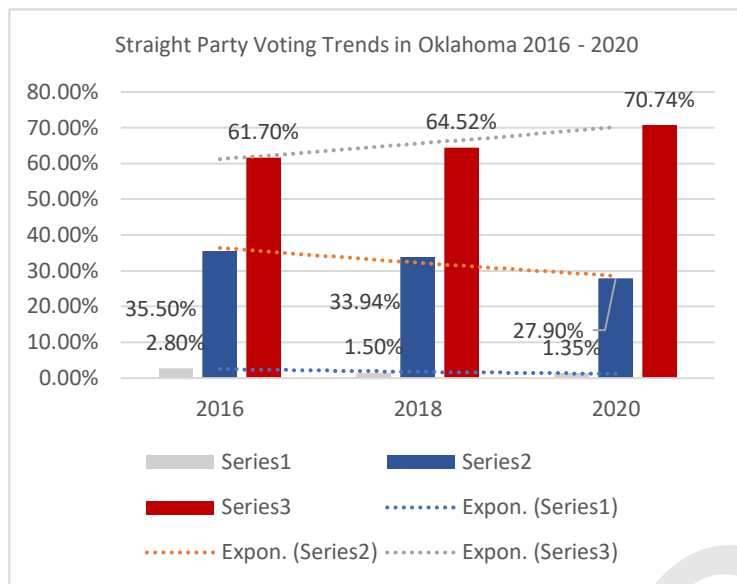
Contrary to recent polling data suggesting Governor Stitt will lose, we [Tomahawk Strategies, Inc.] detect a path showing victory for the Governor and most Republicans down the ballot. Our survey was conducted November 1 – 3, 2022 of *likely voters* for the November 8th general election and statistically scores a 4% margin of error.

The Governor's race is certainly closer than it should be in a state that has 487,708 more registered Republicans than Democrats, but most of the content released from the media or pollsters to-date do not seem to talk about the *unlikely voter*. Among Republicans, some consider them a *President Trump* voter; and among Democrats, those *unlikely voter(s)* may be a considered *Bernie Sanders* voter. In either case, they are voters who get energized every so often.



For starters, let's look at the *likely voters* as we know they will vote rain, sleet, snow, shine, or tornado. Since Oklahoma's general election is a winner-take-all [i.e., no runoff necessary to win] the race is clearly narrowed to the top two contenders – Republican Kevin Stitt and Democrat Joy Hoffmeister. Stitt is at 41.90% and Hoffmeister's at 45.3% with the remaining 12.80% collectively go to the other two candidates *or* remain unsure. **If this is true, then Hoffmeister is ahead by 3.40%, again, among the *likely voters*.**

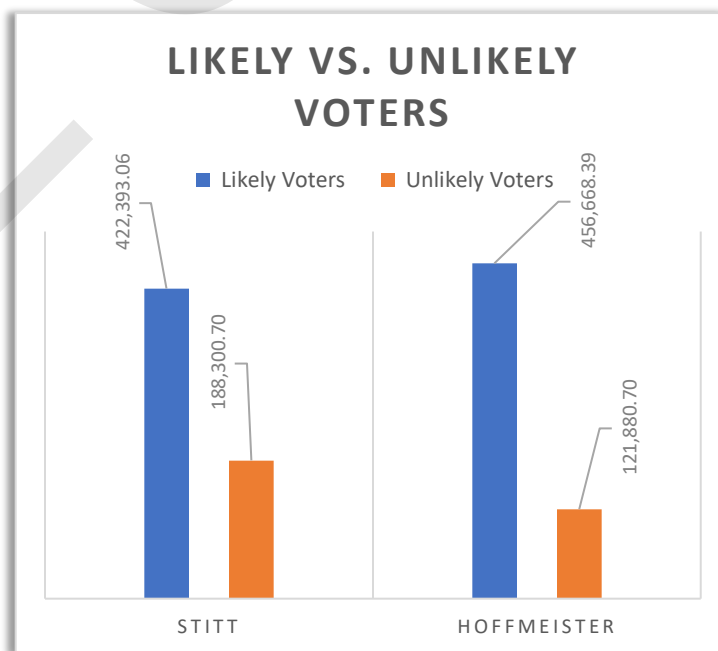
But what about the *unlikely voters* no one is talking about? According to our analysis, in addition to the 1,008,098 *likely voters* in Oklahoma, there are 369,205 moderate propensity *unlikely voters*, which have proven they will vote to some degree. Historically, during a midterm election cycle, not as many show up. However, given Hoffmeister holds a 3.40% advantage among *likely voters*, she has a 34,275 count advantage, but once you factor in the *unlikely voters*, who will predominantly vote straight party, she loses ground. Furthermore, Certification Reports from the Oklahoma State Election Board show the trend of straight party voting steadily increasing in each general election. Notably since 2016, the *intensity* of that increase favors Republicans.



It is reasonable to anticipate a Republican choosing to vote straight party, votes Republican; the same generally holds true for Democrats and Libertarians.

In the chart (left), we see trends for straight party voting in Oklahoma favoring Republicans [Series 3] have increased by +12.60%, while Democrats [Series 2] have decreased by -27.24%. Further, straight party voting as a whole, i.e. the entirety of the voting populous, has also been trending up. In 2016, 36% of the state voted straight party. In 2018, 40% of the state voted straight party,

and in 2020, 45% of the state voted straight party. Understanding this variable is critical when analyzing the trend of *unlikely voters* in the final countdown of the election. As mentioned, if the *likely voter* universe consisting of 1,008,098 voters and the *moderate propensity unlikely voters* universe consists of 369,205, then we are looking at a turnout of somewhere between 1.2 – 1.4 million. Not all of the *moderate propensity unlikely voters* will turnout. Thus, the closer we are to a 1.2m, the better the outcome for Hoffmeister. The closer that count reaches 1.4m, the better the outcome for Governor Stitt. Considering those universes, polling, and our analysis, here's a snapshot of the impact between *likely voters* and *unlikely voters* [see chart shown to the right].



It's not the *likely voters* who will win the election for Governor Stitt. It will become the *unlikely voters*, and in our analysis – we believe the end result will be:

Governor Stitt wins with 45.57%, Joy earns an impressive 43.17%, and the balance goes to the other two candidates. This is on the basis of 1,340,198 total vote turnout.

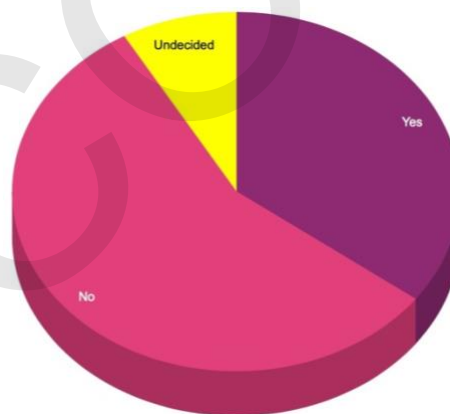
Similarly close, the State School Superintendent race is leaning Democrat +4.1%, which is one-tenth of a percent beyond the margin of error indicating Nelson has a better chance of defeating

Walters than Hoffmeister does defeating Governor Stitt. Nelson is at 48.70%, Walters is at 44.60%, and the unshures are 6.70%. Though with relentless execution, Walters could get the win.

As a control, we tested the Lt. Governor's race. Republican Matt Pinnell is at 48.70%, his Democrat opponent is at 39.40%, Libertarian is at 7.30%, and 4.50% remained unsure. Considering his advertising advantage over his opponent(s), we fully anticipate to see Lt. Gov. Pinnell to comfortably cruise in with a victory of 54-56% of the vote. It's possible Lt. Gov. Pinnell increases his margin of victory if there is a higher than normal turnout. If Pinnell ends up underperforming his previous election, which was ~61%, the most likely factor would be the negativty bias distributed through millions of dollars spent in advertisements against the Governor.

And in every other down-ballot race statewide, Republicans win overwhelmingly.

While Governor Stitt has been critical of the Biden Administration's failures, Stitt's campaign theme of the "*Turnaround is Working*" appears to have missed the mark with many voters. We asked voters if they believed the state, not the U.S., but if Oklahoma was headed in the right direction. After weighting *undecideds* proportionately, roughly 61.52% of respondents believe we're headed in the wrong direction, compared to 38.48% of respondents saying we are headed in the right direction. We believe this question highlights the inability of the average voter to separate state and federal policies, leading many to conflate Gov. Stitt's messaging that *things are working*, with everyday realities such as record-high prices for fuel, medicine, groceries, and poor education scores, among many other factors.



Though Stitt has largely delivered on his policy mandates, our polling suggests Gov. Stitt's support would be higher had he focused on his record fighting the Biden Administration's harmful policies. Given record challenges, voters may have been more receptive to Governor Stitt focusing his messaging on his leadership resisting federal directives for extended lockdowns, business and school closures, as well as energy policies that harm core Oklahoma industries. As an example, a recent poll conducted in Florida showed voters there share similiar sentiments regarding direction of their state. However, Governor DeSantis campaigned on a larger theme of Keeping Florida Free. These core messaging decisions could have presented voters with a greater inherent contrast between Joy's Democratic allegiences, better forecasting the stark future differences.

In closing, one thing is certain – Republicans are crossing over to vote against the Governor. Additionally, negative advertising in political campaigns is effective, especially to the tune of \$20+ million dollars, and the Governor's campaign has missed critical messaging opportunities.

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