

**POLLING MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** INTERESTED PARTIES  
**FROM:** RYAN STEUSLOFF - WPA OPINION RESEARCH  
**SUBJECT:** MISSISSIPPI REPUBLICAN PRIMARY RUNOFF ELECTION POLLING  
**DATE:** JUNE 12, 2014

The following memo highlights the key findings for Chris McDaniel for Senate. The Republican primary runoff election brushfire of 500 likely Republican Primary runoff voters was conducted June 9-10, 2014. The full sample has a margin of error equal to  $\pm 4.4\%$ .

**Executive Summary**

As we enter the final two weeks of the Mississippi Republican primary, it is clear Chris McDaniel is well positioned to win on June 24<sup>th</sup>. Whether one looks at polling, history or the message of both campaigns, it is clear that Thad Cochran is running from behind and growing increasingly desperate.

**Recent Polling**

- **Public polling for the Republican primary runoff election shows that Chris McDaniel is the frontrunner.**
  - Public polling by Chism Strategies shows McDaniel with a majority of support at 51% and a three point lead over Cochran.
  - Polling conducted by Strategic National is even more encouraging, showing McDaniel with a majority of support at 52% and a six point lead over Cochran.

<i>Pollster</i>	<i>McDaniel</i>	<i>Cochran</i>	<i>Lead</i>
<i>Chism Strategies (D)</i>	51%	48%	McDaniel +3%
<i>Strategic National (R)</i>	52%	46%	McDaniel +6%

- **Polling conducted by WPA Research further indicates that McDaniel is in a strong position to win the Republican primary runoff election.**
  - McDaniel holds an eight point lead over Cochran on the ballot and is just barely below 50% on the ballot.
  - McDaniel's definite support (43%) is currently higher than Cochran's total support (41%).

	<i>Likely Runoff Voters</i>
<i>Total McDaniel</i>	49%
<i>Total Cochran</i>	41%
<i>Definitely McDaniel</i>	43%
<i>Probably McDaniel</i>	5%
<i>Lean McDaniel</i>	2%
<i>Undecided</i>	10%
<i>Lean Cochran</i>	1%
<i>Probably Cochran</i>	2%
<i>Definitely Cochran</i>	38%

- McDaniel holds strong leads among numerous key subgroups, including very conservative voters, strong Republicans, and Independents.

	<b>Overall</b>	<b>Very Conservative</b>	<b>Strong Republican</b>	<b>Independent</b>
<b>Total McDaniel</b>	49%	60%	49%	51%
<b>Total Cochran</b>	41%	31%	43%	39%

### **Recent History Suggests that a Runoff Favors the Challenger**

Over the past 12 years, runoffs have been generally unkind to incumbents. [Aaron Blake of the Washington Post analyzed](#) seven runoffs involving incumbents from 2002 to 2014, and in only two races did the incumbent manage to increase his or her vote share more than the challenger. Runoffs from this year have been especially unkind to incumbents, with Texas Rep. Ralph Hall and Lt. Governor David Dewhurst easily defeated by their primary opponents. The few instances of an incumbent defeating a challenger in a runoff have often come in situations where national groups rallied heavily behind the incumbent and the runoffs were over much longer periods of time than the three weeks between the primary and runoff elections in Mississippi.

### **Campaign Messaging Indicates that Cochran is Operating from a Position of Weakness**

While the polling and historical evidence indicate that McDaniel is the front runner, it is clear even from Thad Cochran's campaigns rhetoric. To put it bluntly, when an entire campaign is banking on courting Democrats to vote in a Republican runoff, the campaign is in trouble.

Even one of Thad Cochran's biggest supporters, Henry Barbour, has admitted that Cochran faces a difficult hill to climb in the runoff, saying they are "going to get up and rethink" their message, and "really organize from the ground up." He has taken to appealing to Democratic voters to support Cochran, claiming "If [Democratic voters] want to have a say in the kind of United States Senator that we're going to have represent us, they need to vote in this runoff."

### **About Wilson Perkins Allen Opinion Research**

Since 1998, WPA Opinion Research has been a leading provider of political polling for campaigns from Governor and U.S. Senate to Mayor and City Council in all 50 states and several foreign countries. In the 2011-2012 election cycle, even with Obama at the top of the ticket, more than 65% of WPA direct campaign clients won.

WPA has been nationally recognized for our efforts to provide cutting edge research to help our clients win. The American Association of Political Consultants (AAPC) awarded a "Pollie" to WPA for our Predictive Analytics. The award highlighted WPA's Adaptive Sampling and Predictive Analytics methodologies which allowed us to buck national GOP polling trends and deliver industry-leading results.

In rankings released by Nate Silver's [fivethirtyeight.com](#) of 2008 election data, Wilson Perkins Allen Opinion Research was statistically tied as the most accurate partisan pollster.