

TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Andrew Baumann, Global Strategy Group
DATE: June 29, 2018
RE: **CA-25 Survey Findings: Environmental Messaging Puts Steve Knight in Significant Danger**

A new survey conducted by Global Strategy Group of likely 2018 voters in California's 25th Congressional District shows Congressman Steve Knight in a tight race for his seat. The two-term incumbent holds a slim 5-point lead over Katie Hill, with 15 percent of voters still undecided in their support.

Facing an already tight race, Knight risks alienating undecided voters and moderates in California's 25th District by continuing to support Trump's anti-environment policies. Plans to reduce clean air and water regulations, and open public lands and the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas drilling are opposed by sizable majorities of voters in this district.

Most important, after voters are presented with a short series of critiques of Knight's positions on a range of environmental issues (along with one message on healthcare or taxes), Hill moves to a 6-point lead over Knight. These messages are effective across demographic groups and are particularly effective in moving registered no party preference voters toward Hill.

KEY SURVEY FINDINGS:

Knight does not start out in a strong position. This district prefers a generic Democrat by one point when compared to a Republican, despite Knight's win in 2016. Knight must also struggle with the significant unpopularity of Republicans in Congress (37% favorable to 47% unfavorable) and working with a President whose ratings are underwater (43% favorable to 49% unfavorable).

Environmental groups are popular, but anti-environmental actors like Scott Pruitt and the Koch Brothers are decidedly not. "Environmental groups" are viewed favorably by a 49% to 25% margin in this district. Meanwhile, EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt¹ is well underwater at 14% favorable to 41% unfavorable and the Koch Brothers are very unpopular, at 9% favorable vs. 33% unfavorable.

Knight's positions on environmental issues are deeply unpopular. Many of the policies proposed and/or enacted by anti-environment Republicans like Knight in Washington – led by efforts to open our public lands and the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil and gas companies and – are quite unpopular, even more than the highly unpopular Republican health care plan.

¹ Asked with the label "EPA Administrator"

Support for Trump Policies

	Support	Oppose	Net Support
The Republican plan to reduce funding for the EPA by 30%	35	49	-14
The Republican plan to reduce clean air and water regulations	35	54	-19
The health care plan that Republicans tried to pass through Congress last year	30	52	-22
The Republican plan to allow oil and gas companies to drill in national public lands	31	58	-27
The Republican plan to allow oil and gas companies to drill in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska	29	65	-36

Environmental and health concerns raise serious doubts about voting for Steve Knight. Several messages that critique Knight for his environmental record resonate strongly with voters – generating doubts with majorities of the electorate. These messages resonate almost as strongly as a critique against Knight for his vote on the healthcare bill, and there are clear opportunities to tie the health impacts of the incumbent’s anti-environmental actions to his vote on health care.

Doubts about Voting for Knight

	Total Doubts
[HEALTH CARE] Steve Knight supported the Republican health care plan that, would have ended protections for pre-existing conditions, cut Medicare, and, according to AARP, imposed an age tax on older Americans, charging people age 50 to 64 premiums that are up to five times more than what younger consumers pay.	60
[POLLUTION AND HEALTH] Steve Knight wants to gut commonsense protections like the Clean Air and Water Acts and allow big corporations to spew more toxic pollution into our air and water. Doctors say that will lead to more asthma, heart and lung disease and even cancer - especially among children and seniors.	57
[POLLUTION AND HEALTH COSTS] First, Steve Knight supported a plan that sabotaged the Affordable Care Act and is already causing health care premiums to increase by up to 50% in some parts of the country. Now Steve Knight wants to gut common-sense limits on air and water pollution, which will lead to more disease and even higher health care costs.	57

Environmental messaging shifts the race significantly toward the Democratic candidate. After respondents hear a short series of messages critiquing Knight for his environmental positions (plus a critique on either the health care or tax bill), Hill moves ahead of Knight with a 6-point advantage.

Vote Shift After Messaging			
	Initial Vote	Post- Messaging	Net Shift
Katie Hill	40	45	+5
Steve Knight	45	39	-6
<i>Difference</i>	<i>-5</i>	<i>+6</i>	<i>+11</i>

Knight's losses are particularly large with key electoral blocs. The environmental messaging generates large gains for Hill across almost every major electoral bloc, but is particularly large among the district's crucial no party preference voters (at net 18-point gain). She also makes double digit gains among both men and women and both older and younger parts of the electorate.

ABOUT THIS POLL

Global Strategy Group conducted a survey from November June 11-21, 2018 with 400 likely 2018 voters in California's 25th Congressional District. The results have a margin of error of +/-4.9% and care has been taken to ensure that the survey is weighted to reflect the makeup of the projected 2018 voter universe.