



TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Andrew Baumann, Global Strategy Group
DATE: July 22, 2020
RE: **NEW POLL: Lulu Seikaly, Changing Partisan Patterns, and Trump's Free-Fall Put TX-03 Firmly in Play**

A poll of likely 2020 general election voters in TX-03 shows that TX-03 is very much in play in November. Joe Biden leads Donald Trump by two points in this district, Democratic voters are significantly more motivated to vote, Lulu Seikaly is within striking distance of Van Taylor even as fewer voters know who she is, and the race moves to a dead heat after a balanced simulated debate between the candidates.

While TX-03 has been considered a Republican stronghold for years, it is, by far, the most educated district in the country held by a Republican and the rapidly changing population of the North Dallas suburbs, combined with the shifting allegiances of college-educated suburban Texas voters, a high-turnout presidential year, and a strong candidate in Lulu Seikaly, means that TX-03 is firmly in play.

Despite little Democratic investment and infrastructure in this district in 2018, Beto O'Rourke came within three points of beating Ted Cruz here – and the demographics are friendly to Democrats.

TX-03 is the most educated district held by a Republican in the country and we are projecting that 57% of the 2020 electorate will have a college degree. This district is also rapidly become more diverse as new voters move into the area. Of the 522,155 voters who were registered in the district as of November 30th, 2019, 147,257 had registered since the registration deadline in 2016 and 62,028 had registered since the registration deadline in 2018 – that latter number is larger than Van Taylor's margin of victory in 2018. In 2014, the electorate here was 84% white, but we are projecting that in 2020 it will be just 71% white, and have a demographic profile eerily similar to that of CA-49, which Mark Levin flipped in 2018.

Finally, primary elections this year already demonstrate surging Democratic enthusiasm and changing partisanship. In the 2016 primaries, Republicans outvoted Democrats in Collin County by more than 76,000 votes (116,676 votes in the Republican primary vs. 40,034 in the Democratic primary). In the 2020 primaries, that flipped to a 15,000-vote advantage for Democrats as Democratic turnout more than doubled and GOP turnout dropped precipitously. The Fort Worth Star-Telegram called the results "shocking" and noted that "something unusual is happening" in the Dallas suburbs – something our survey confirms.

KEY SURVEY FINDINGS:

- **The political terrain in TX-03 has become much more favorable for Democrats as Trump trails by two after winning by 14 in 2016.** Joe Biden has a two-point lead over Trump in the race for president (47% Biden/45% Trump), including a seven-point lead among self-identified independents (46% Biden/39% Trump). This is driven by Trump's unpopularity (44% favorable/52% unfavorable) – particularly acute among independents (39% fav/54% unfav). Republicans have just a three-point lead on the generic ballot for Congress (42% Democrat/45% Republican). Perhaps even more important, Democrats are significantly more motivated to vote this November (98% of Democrats are very motivated vs. 88% of Republicans). Looking at the 90% of voters who are very motivated (they rate their motivation as a 9 or 10 out of 10), Democrats actually have a one-point advantage on the generic ballot (46%/45%) and Biden leads by four (50%/46%).

- **Despite being totally unknown outside of the Democratic base, Seikaly is within striking distance.** Seikaly is familiar to just 18% of voters – almost all of whom are Democrats who learned about her in the primary (34% familiarity among Democrats). Despite this low level of familiarity, Seikaly is behind Taylor by only six points (37% Seikaly/43% Taylor, with 5% going to Libertarian Christopher Claytor). And the race is a statistical tie among very motivated voters (41% Seikaly/43% Taylor/5% Claytor). An incumbent at 43% against an unknown challenger is a huge warning sign.
- **After a simulated debate with equal communication from each candidate, the race tightens to a dead heat.** Following the initial ballot, voters heard profiles of equal length about both Seikaly and Taylor (with Taylor’s based on information from his website), and an even number of negative messages against both candidates (with negatives against Seikaly based on hits from the leaked NRCC memo). Following this simulated debate, Seikaly is within three points (42% Seikaly/45% Taylor/3% Claytor), with 10% undecided. And among very motivated voters, the race is nearly dead even: 44% Seikaly/45% Taylor/2% Claytor – with 9% undecided.

ABOUT THIS POLL

Global Strategy Group conducted a telephone survey of 400 likely general election voters in TX-03 from July 17-20, 2020. The margin of error at the 95% confidence level is +/- 4.9%. The margin of error on sub-samples is greater.