



October 3, 2016

To: Interested Parties
From: Ben Tulchin, Ben Krompak and Kiel Brunner; Tulchin Research
Re: **California Congressional District 49: Polling Finds Real Opportunity for Democratic Pickup As Applegate Now Leads Issa**

From September 28-30, 2016, Tulchin Research conducted a survey among 400 likely November 2016 voters in California's 49th Congressional District to assess the state of the race between Democrat Doug Applegate and Republican incumbent Darrell Issa. Our poll finds that **Applegate now leads Issa in the horserace** and has a real opportunity to win in this Republican-leaning coastal district. Applegate has made progress in introducing himself to voters in the district and he benefits from an improved political environment since the first presidential debate, while Issa's continued support of Donald Trump makes the incumbent more vulnerable. Here we present a summary of our key findings.

Applegate Currently Leads Issa in the Horserace

The most impressive finding in this survey is that Applegate – a first-time candidate in a district where Republicans have a double-digit advantage in voter registration – now leads Issa by a four-point margin. Applegate is currently attracting the support of 46 percent of voters to 42 percent who support Issa and 12 percent who remain undecided. It is additionally noteworthy that Applegate has taken the lead here with only limited paid communications to voters.

CA-49 Vote: Applegate Takes the Lead	
Doug Applegate	46%
Darrell Issa	42%
Undecided	12%
Applegate – Issa	+4

Trump is a Drag on Issa and the Republican Ticket

This survey was conducted *after* the first presidential debate and finds a very favorable political environment for Democrats in this coastal Southern California district. Despite the Republican registration advantage, Hillary Clinton leads Donald Trump by a 14-point margin (49%-35%).

California Congressional District 49: Presidential Horserace	
Hillary Clinton	49%
Donald Trump	35%
Clinton – Trump	+14

Trump is extremely unpopular in this socially moderate and largely college-educated district and presents a real problem for down ballot Republicans and particularly for candidates like Issa who are supporting Trump and refusing to repudiate him. Trump is viewed negatively by a better than 2-to-1 margin, with 65 percent of voters saying they view him unfavorably – including 55% who view him *very* unfavorably – to just 31 percent who hold a favorable opinion of him (-34 net favorable). In contrast, voters are much more evenly divided in their attitudes toward Hillary Clinton and view her unfavorably by a margin of just 4 points (47% favorable to 51% unfavorable) – **a net 30 points better than Trump**. Additionally, President Obama is quite popular (55% favorable to 42% unfavorable, +13 net favorable) despite the district's historically Republican inclination.

California Congressional District 49: Favorability Ratings		
Donald Trump	<i>Total Favorable</i>	31%
	<i>Total Unfavorable</i>	65%
	<i>Favorable - Unfavorable</i>	-34
Hillary Clinton	<i>Total Favorable</i>	47%
	<i>Total Unfavorable</i>	51%
	<i>Favorable - Unfavorable</i>	-4
Barack Obama	<i>Total Favorable</i>	55%
	<i>Total Unfavorable</i>	42%
	<i>Favorable - Unfavorable</i>	+13

In conclusion, Democrats have a legitimate opportunity to turn this district blue in 2016. With limited paid communication, Doug Applegate has taken the lead and benefits from a highly favorable political climate in his challenge to Darrell Issa. Issa, an eight-term Republican incumbent, is currently attracting just 42 percent of the vote – and his support of a deeply unpopular Donald Trump makes him highly vulnerable. Applegate now has a real opportunity to win if Democrats can keep the pressure up on Issa over the final weeks of the campaign.

Survey Methodology: From September 28-30, 2016, Tulchin Research conducted a telephone survey among 400 likely November 2016 general election voters in California's 49th Congressional District. The survey was conducted by live professional interviewers calling both landlines and cell phones. The margin of error is +/- 4.9 percentage points.