

TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Andrew Baumann, Global Strategy Group
DATE: June 29, 2018
RE: **MN-02 Survey Findings: Environmental Messaging Puts Jason Lewis in Significant Danger**

A new survey conducted by Global Strategy Group of likely 2018 voters in Minnesota's 2nd Congressional District shows Congressman Jason Lewis in a tight race for his seat. Lewis won by a slim two-point margin in 2016, and currently leads a generic Democratic candidate by just one point. With the primary not until August, the survey used a generic progressive challenger throughout the poll.

Facing an already tight race, Lewis risks alienating undecided voters and moderates in Minnesota by continuing to support Trump's anti-environment policies. Plans to cut EPA funding, reduce clean air and water regulations, and open public lands to oil and gas drilling are opposed by sizable majorities of voters in Minnesota's 2nd Congressional District.

Most important, after voters are presented with a short series of critiques of Lewis's positions on a range of environmental issues (along with one message on healthcare or taxes), a progressive challenger moves to a sizeable 9-point lead against the Congressman. These messages have a particularly strong impact among key blocs of voters including independents and non-college voters.

KEY SURVEY FINDINGS:

Lewis starts out in a weak position facing a difficult environment. This district prefers a generic Democrat by 4 points when compared to a Republican, and Lewis's single point lead in a named ballot is the equivalent of a statistical tie. Both Republicans in Congress (37% favorable to 48% unfavorable) and President Trump (41% favorable to 54% unfavorable) are unpopular. Moreover, fewer voters are favorable towards Lewis (38%) than unfavorable (41%).

Environmental groups and the EPA are popular, but anti-environmental actors like Scott Pruitt and the Koch Brothers are decidedly not. "Environmental groups" are viewed favorably by a 60% to 23% margin and the EPA has strongly positive ratings as well (56% favorable to 34% unfavorable). Meanwhile, EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt¹ is well underwater at 18% favorable to 38% unfavorable and the Koch Brothers are known by more than half the electorate and very unpopular, at 20% favorable vs. 44% unfavorable.

Lewis's positions on environmental issues are deeply unpopular. Many of the policies proposed and/or enacted by anti-environment Republicans like Lewis in Washington – led by efforts to open the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and our public lands to oil and gas companies – 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 health care plan that Republicans tried to pass through Congress last year	38	53	-15
The Republican plan to reduce funding for the EPA by 30%	39	54	-15
The Republican plan to allow oil and gas companies to drill in national public lands	38	54	-16
The Republican plan to reduce clean air and water regulations	36	54	-18
The Republican plan to allow oil and gas companies to drill in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska	38	56	-18

Environmental and health concerns raise serious doubts about voting for Jason Lewis. Several messages that critique Lewis for his environmental records resonate strongly with voters – generating doubts with majorities of the electorate, including among more right-leaning non-college voters. These messages resonate as strongly as a critique against Lewis 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, especially among the working-class core of this suburban district.

Doubts about Voting for Lewis

	Total Doubts	Total Doubts among Non-college Voters
[HEALTH CARE] Jason Lewis 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.	59	64
[POLLUTION AND HEALTH] Jason Lewis 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.	59	65
[POLLUTION AND HEALTH COSTS] First, Jason Lewis 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 Jason Lewis wants to gut common-sense limits on air and water pollution, which will lead to more disease and even higher health care costs.	60	62

Environmental messaging shifts the race significantly toward the Democratic candidate. After respondents hear a short series of messages critiquing Lewis for his environmental positions (plus a critique on either the health care or tax bill), the original Democratic margin expands 10 points, from -1 to +9.

Vote Shift After Messaging			
	Initial Vote	Post- Messaging	Net Shift
Democratic Candidate	42	45	+3
Jason Lewis	43	36	-7
<i>Difference</i>	-1	+9	+10

Lewis' losses are particularly large among independent voters, women and non-college voters. The environmental messaging generates particularly large gains among some key electoral blocs. After messaging, the Democratic candidate's margin improves by a net 20 points among independents, a net 13 points among women and by a net 13 points among non-college voters.

ABOUT THIS POLL

Global Strategy Group conducted a survey from November June 11-21, 2018 with 400 likely 2018 voters in Minnesota's 2nd 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.