



M E M O R A N D U M

TO: THE ROUNDS FOR SENATE TEAM
FROM: GLEN BOLGER
RE: KEY FINDINGS: AUGUST BRUSHFIRE SURVEY
DATE: AUGUST 14, 2014

Methodology

The survey of a random sample of 500 likely voters in South Dakota was conducted by Public Opinion Strategies. The survey was conducted August 11-13, 2014, and included 125 interviews among cell phone only respondents. It has a margin of error of $\pm 4.38\%$ in 95 out of 100 cases.

Key Findings:

1. *National political headwinds are blowing in Mike Rounds' favor.*

- Just 18% of South Dakota voters say the country is headed in the right direction; fully three-in-four voters (75%) say the country is off on the wrong track.
- President Obama has a terrible job approval rating in the state. Just 29% of voters approve of his performance as president, while 68% disapprove – 51% of them strongly.

2. *The former governor is a popular figure in South Dakota.*

- Rounds' name ID is 97%, and he boasts an impressive image rating: 56% of South Dakota voters have a favorable impression of him, including 43% of Democrats. Just 31% of voters have an unfavorable impression of Rounds.
- Seventy-five percent (75%) of voters have heard of Rick Weiland, and his image rating is comparably weak: just 32% of voters have a favorable impression of Weiland, and 17% have an unfavorable impression.
- Former Senator Larry Pressler's name ID is 83%. Forty-two percent (42%) of voters have a favorable impression of Pressler, while 22% have an unfavorable impression.
- Independent candidate Gordon Howie's name ID is just 45%, and his image is upside-down: just 8% of voters have a favorable impression of him, while 17% have an unfavorable impression.

3. *Rounds leads big in the South Dakota U.S. Senate race.*

- Rounds earns the support of nearly half (49%) of likely voters in South Dakota. Democrat Rick Weiland clocks in at just 24%, and Larry Pressler is running a distant third, capturing 15% of the vote. Just 4% of voters support Gordon Howie, and 7% say they are undecided.
- Forty-one percent (41%) of Independents back Rounds, as do nearly a quarter of Democrats (23%).
- Rounds' lead is consistent across South Dakota: he earns 49% in both the West and East River regions of the state.

The Bottom Line

Mike Rounds is in the driver's seat in this campaign. South Dakota voters know him and like him, and they are averse to President Obama and the direction in which he is taking the country. Consequently, Rounds has a commanding lead on the ballot test, bolstered by his support from Independents and Democrats. While the race may tighten as Election Day approaches, Rounds is well on track to becoming the next U.S. Senator from South Dakota.