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Governor's Race Very Competitive Survey of Voters in New Hampshire

To: Interested Parties

From: Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research

The race for New Hampshire governor could not be more competitive as the two major party candidates split the vote with 44 percent each. However, Colin Van Ostern is currently less well known (62 percent recognition, compared to 90 percent for Chris Sununu) and has more upside potential. After voters hear about his commitment to early childhood education, Van Ostern improves to a 49 to 42 percent lead over Sununu.

The following memorandum outlines key findings from a survey of 500 likely voters in the 2016 general election for Governor. The survey was commissioned by the Save the Children Action Network and carries a margin of error of +/- 4.38 points at a 95 percent confidence interval.

Key Findings

- **Governor's race could not be closer.** Forty-four percent support Democrat Colin Van Ostern; 44 percent support Republican Chris Sununu and 6 percent fall to the Libertarian candidate. When the third party candidate's supporters are asked their second choice, voters still basically divide evenly, 47 percent Van Ostern, 46 percent Sununu.

	Initial Vote
Colin Van Ostern	44
Chris Sununu	44
Max Abramson	6
Undecided	6

- **Hillary Clinton enjoys a comfortable margin here.** Hillary Clinton beats Donald Trump 46 to 38 percent in a four-way trial heat. This margin echoes recent public polling in New Hampshire.¹

¹A WBUR/MassINC survey (9/27-9/29) showed Clinton leading 42 to 35 percent (+7). A Monmouth survey (9/17-9/20) showed Clinton leading 47 to 38 percent.

- **Van Ostern has a higher ceiling.** Chris Sununu enjoys a 28-point advantage over Colin Van Ostern in name recognition (90 percent and 62 percent respectively) and only manages to split the vote. The Democrat here has much higher potential to grow his vote share.
- **Van Ostern improves his vote share after voters learn about his commitment to early childhood education.** After voters were read a series of statements testifying to Van Ostern's support for early childhood education, he jumps to a 49 to 42 percent lead over Sununu.
- **This electoral surge reflects New Hampshire voters' support for this issue.**
 - A 70 percent majority support Van Ostern's plan to pay for full-day kindergarten by increasing the tax on cigarettes by 10 cents.
 - An 80 percent majority of voters believe the next New Hampshire governor should make early childhood education a very high priority or a somewhat high priority.
 - Nearly six in ten (59 percent) voters agree with the statement: "It is estimated that every dollar spent on early childhood education saves taxpayers 7 dollars in the long run. It's smarter to invest taxpayer money in the early stages of a child's education so that we don't have to spend more for remedial education and repeating grades later."

Conclusion

This race promises to remain close over the final month, but Colin Van Ostern enjoys more upside potential and can improve his chances by reaffirming his commitment to early childhood education.