CONFIDENTIAL MEMORANDUM

TO: AMERICAN POTENTIAL FUND

FROM: TONY FABRIZIO, DAVID LEE, & TRAVIS TUNIS

RE: NOEM OR JOHNSON ARE REAL THREATS TO THUNE IN GOP
                PRIMARY; THUNE SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRAT ELECTION BILL COULD
                BE POLITICALLY DEADLY

DATE: JANUARY 13, 2022

Fabrizio, Lee & Associates recently completed a survey of *n*=400 likely 2022 Republican Primary voters (RPV) in South Dakota (See methodology statement and key demographics on last page). In a hypothetical Republican primary matchup for U.S. Senate, Gov. Kristi Noem leads Sen. John Thune by a significant margin, a sign his path to re-nomination may not be an easy one. Rep. Dusty Johnson is also very popular with South Dakota RPV and would pose a serious challenge for Thune. Furthermore, Thune's support for Chuck Schumer and Bernie Sanders' voter bill is incredibly unpopular and would make his re-election all the more difficult.

South Dakota RPV are Unquestionably Pro-Trump and Anti-Biden

The job approval ratings of Presidents Trump and Biden are polar opposites among GOP primary voters in South Dakota. President Trump is approved of by a huge 84%, including 62% who *strongly* approve. Conversely, President Biden is more than 80-points underwater, as only 8% approve of the job he is doing while a staggering 91% disapprove of his job performance, nearly all of whom *strongly* disapprove. President Trump's support would be invaluable in a South Dakota Republican primary, while being tied to President Biden could be electorally fatal.

Generally speaking, do you approve or disapprove of the job [Joe Biden is doing/Donald Trump did] as President?		
	Biden	*Trump*
TOTAL APPROVE	**8**	**84**
TOTAL DISAPPROVE	**91**	**15**
Strongly approve	4	62
Somewhat approve	4	22
Somewhat disapprove	6	4
Strongly disapprove	85	11
DK/Refused (DO NOT READ)	<1	1

Noem and Johnson's Images Far Outpace Thune's among South Dakota GOP Primary Voters

Kristi Noem, Dusty Johnson, and John Thune have near universal name I.D. with the South Dakota Republican Primary electorate. However, the difference in the percent that view each person favorably and unfavorably differs significantly. More than 4-in-5 RPV view Kristi Noem favorably, including 65% who have a *very* favorable opinion. Johnson has a 70% favorable rating, with 37% viewing him *very* favorably. John Thune has the lowest net favorable image of the 3, with only 62% of RPV viewing favorably, and 37% *very* favorably. Furthermore, 1-in-3 GOP primary voters have an unfavorable opinion of Senator Thune, double the number of RPV who view Noem negatively and 8-points higher than Johnson's negatives.

Now I am going to read you a list of names. Will you please tell me if you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of each person? If you have no opinion or have never heard of the person, just say so. (RANDOMIZE LIST)								
	TOTAL FAVOR-ABLE	**TOTAL UNFAVOR-ABLE**	Very Fav	Smwt Fav	Smwt Unfav	Very Unfav	No Opin	Never Heard Of
Kristi Noem	**82**	**16**	65	17	4	12	1	<1
Dusty Johnson	**70**	**25**	37	33	15	10	5	1
John Thune	**62**	**33**	37	26	15	18	4	1

Noem's Superior Image Propels her to a 9-Pt Lead; Thune Fails to Break 50% against Johnson

If the Republican primary were held today and Kristi Noem challenged John Thune, she would lead by a 49% - 40% margin, well outside the margin of error. Noem would only need to win over a sliver of the 10% undecided to break the 50% mark. Not only is she up by 9-points overall, but among "definite" voters for either candidate, Noem leads Thune, 41% - 31%.

John Thune leads Dusty Johnson, 47% - 30%, but fails to hit the critical 50% threshold. Furthermore, the undecideds in this ballot have a double-digit negative image of Thune (38% fav/53% unfav), indicating Johnson could close the gap considerably. Thune is leading, but Dusty Johnson has the strong name I.D. to make it a real race.

If the Republican primary election for U.S. Senator were held today and the candidates were (ROTATE) John Thune and [Kristi Noem/Dusty Johnson], for whom would you vote?		
	v. Noem	*v. Johnson*
TOTAL OPPONENT	**49**	**30**
TOTAL THUNE	**40**	**47**
Definitely Opponent	41	15
Probably Opponent	9	15
Probably Thune	9	17
Definitely Thune	31	30
Undecided	10	23

Support for Democrats' Election Bill could be Deadly for Thune among GOP Primary Voters

John Thune's support for Schumer and Sanders' liberal Democratic voter bill would put the Senator at odds with 70% of the South Dakota GOP primary electorate. That is how many people say they would be less likely to vote for Thune if they knew he supported that bill. And most of those voters (60%) say they would be *MUCH* less likely to vote for John Thune. Even a majority of Thune's own voters against Noem (52%) and Johnson (66%) would be less likely to vote for him if he supports the election bill. If he decides to vote "Yes" on this bill, John Thune could pay dearly at the ballot box.

If you knew that John Thune supports Chuck Schumer and Bernie Sanders' liberal Democratic voter bill that will nationalize elections and change laws that have served us since 1887 and been a blueprint for elections across the world for over 100 years, would that make you more or less likely to vote for JOHN THUNE? If it would have no impact on your vote, just say so.			
	Overall	*Thune Voters v. Noem*	*Thune Voters v. Johnson*
TOTAL MORE LIKELY	**13**	**18**	**10**
TOTAL LESS LIKELY	**70**	**52**	**66**
Much More Likely	11	15	8
Somewhat More Likely	2	3	2
Somewhat Less Likely	10	14	14
Much Less Likely	60	38	53
No Impact	16	29	23
DK/Refused (DO NOT READ)	1	1	2

KEY DEMOGRAPHICS

Education

High School or Less	21%
Some College	40%
College+	39%

Race/Ethnicity

White	94%
Native American	2%
Latino/Hispanic	2%
African American/Black	1%
Asian American	<1%
DK/Refused (DO NOT READ)	<1%

Age

18-44	16%
45-54	15%
55-64	24%
65+	45%

Gender

MALE	**51%**
FEMALE	**49%**
Female, working outside the home	29%
Female, homemaker	19%
Female/Refused	1%

DMA/Key County

SIOUX FALLS DMA	**68**
Minnehaha County	14
Lincoln County	6
RAPID CITY DMA	**29**
MINOT DMA	**1**
SIOUX CITY DMA	**1**