

ABRAMS

GOVERNOR

August 3, 2011

To: Interested Parties

From: Lauren Groh-Wargo, Campaign Manager, Abrams for Governor

Re: Kansas Abortion Results and Takeaways for Georgia

Abortion access and women's liberty are on the ballot this year in Georgia. In his first year, Governor Kemp's priority was signing one of the most extreme and dangerous abortion laws in the country, a law that prevents women from getting life saving healthcare. His cruel bill sets women up to be investigated and criminalized if they miscarry; threatens to jail doctors who provide life saving care; and forces rape and incest victims to file police reports to access care. His law bans abortion before most women know they are pregnant, stripping women of their freedom and dictating the private medical decision of women and their families. This election is a contrast between having a governor who will fight to protect women's reproductive freedom, versus a Governor bent on controlling women's bodies for his own political gain.

On August 2nd, Kansas voters went to the polls to determine the fate of abortion rights in the state. In the first real-world election where choice was on the ballot since the decision in *Dobbs*, Kansas voters overwhelmingly rejected a constitutional amendment to strip away Kansans' right to an abortion, 58.8%-41.2%. To many observers this was a stunning result - Kansas has long been a conservative state, and in 2020 President Biden lost the state 41.5%-56.2%. Kansas infamously has not elected a Democratic Senator since 1932 - the longest such drought in the nation.

Factors Leading to Victory

There are two key factors that allowed for this major victory. First off, turnout surged immensely on the Democratic side. This election coincided with Kansas' regularly scheduled primaries. In 2018, 153,865 Democrats voted in the Democratic gubernatorial primary. In 2022, this number surged to 276,383 people, an 80% increase, despite the fact that the primary was a sleepy affair with a Democratic incumbent. Additionally, about 190,000 non-affiliated voters turned out for this election specifically (Kansas has closed primaries), which broke overwhelmingly towards the pro-choice side (a "no vote") and came somewhat disproportionately from Democratic-leaning areas of the state.

The other element contributing to this win is persuasion - even assuming that 100% of Democrats and non-affiliated voters voted No (an unlikely outcome), that means that

75,000+ Republicans also voted against the amendment, which is a minimum of 17% of Republican voters.

Anatomy of a Win

There are several key bellwethers in Kansas that are indicative of the results. Chief among these is Sedgwick County, home to Wichita and its suburbs and the second largest county in the state. It is typically within around 1 point of the statewide results - Biden lost it 42.6%-54.4%, similar to his 41.5%-56.2% defeat statewide. In this election, abortion rights prevailed 57.7%-42.3%, similar to the 58.8%-41.2% margin statewide. Johnson County, the largest county in the state, located in the Kansas City suburbs, is slightly Democratic leaning. Biden won it 52.7%-44.5%, while in this election it went 68.4%-31.6% for No.

There are also two counties with large state universities that can serve as a measure of youth enthusiasm - Douglas County, home to Kansas University, and a longtime Democratic Bastion, and Riley County, home to Kansas State University, which is usually highly competitive. In 2020, these counties went 68.0%-28.9% and 50.7%-46.1% for Biden, respectively. In this election, the numbers were 81.2%-18.8% and 68.4%-31.6%. Democratic turnout also surged more in these counties - there was an 118% increase in Democratic primary turnout in Riley and a 107% increase in Douglas.

Even in strongly Republican areas there were huge gains. President Biden lost Butler County 28.2%-69.6%, the second largest loss for him by raw votes in the state. No only lost 49.6%-50.4%, a 21.4 percentage point increase. Similarly, in Hamilton County, located in the far western rural portion of the state, Biden lost 16.4%-81.3%. No managed to get to 44.4%-55.6%, an increase of 28 percentage points.

Takeaways for Georgia

The Supreme Court's actions have dramatically altered the national environment. This is not only a great sign for Democratic Governor Laura Kelly's prospects to win reelection this fall in Kansas, but for Democrats across the country.

This includes Georgia - while there may not be a constitutional amendment on the ballot this fall, abortion most certainly is. We have the opportunity to fire Brian Kemp, an extreme incumbent Republican who pushed for and signed into law a dangerous and very extreme abortion ban, and replace him with Stacey Abrams, a champion for Georgia's women and reproductive freedom.

Georgia is notably far more Democratic and progressive than Kansas. Polling tells us that Kemp's radical anti-abortion laws are wildly unpopular with Georgia voters. In the AJC's recent poll, Georgia voters oppose overturning Roe 39%-54%, Kemp's six week ban 36%-54%, and a total ban on abortion 21%-72%.

Our internal polling is consistent with what the AJC poll shows when it comes to the motivational impact of abortion on this election. Georgia Democrats are almost completely unified in telling pollsters that abortion is important and motivational to them in 2022; 83% telling the AJC that the issue is at least very important to them. In contrast, abortion is a relatively tepid motivator for conservative Republicans, in the AJC poll just 56% indicate the issue is extremely or very important to them this year.

Overall our internal research has shown:

- 1) Abortion is a bigger motivator for GA Democrats than it is for GA Republicans.
- 2) Independent voters in GA are overwhelmingly pro-choice and Kemp's record of criminalizing abortion is very damaging among them.
- 3) A measurable block of GA Republican voters defect from Kemp's hard right orthodoxy on abortion and oppose Kemp's anti-choice agenda.

Georgia's women and those who love them have the ability to fight for reproductive freedom, liberty from interference into private medical decisions and the full scope of health care. The gubernatorial race is already close, the incumbent is below 50%, and Kemp's extreme and unpopular attacks on women are disqualifying to a substantial majority of voters. The time to act is now - this race can be won, provided that we invest in the people of Georgia and ensure that they can hear about how Stacey Abrams will deliver for Georgians, stop Kemp's far right, extreme agenda, and how Kemp's radical tenure has already and will continue to endanger women across the state.