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**TO** Interested Parties

**FROM** Paul Maslin and Rick Sklarz  
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**RE:** Wisconsin Supreme Court Election Survey Results

**DATE** February 13, 2019

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A recently completed survey<sup>1</sup> among 600 Wisconsin voters likely to vote in the April 2019 election for Supreme finds Judge Lisa Neubauer occupies a strong position over her opponent, Judge Brian Hagedorn, as the active phase of the campaign commences.

### Context

Recent Wisconsin Supreme Court elections have shown that the current political climate can have a substantive impact on a judicial race. This survey—conducted January 9-14—highlights that Scott Walker and Donald Trump remain deeply unpopular in the state and that former Scott Walker appointee Judge Brian Hagedorn will have an uphill climb in his run for the Wisconsin Supreme Court because of his strong ties to Scott Walker. Specifically, the survey result found the following:

- Donald Trump has a 56% unfavorable rating, including 50% who rate him “very” unfavorably.
- Scott Walker’s unfavorable mark is at 55% (43% “very” unfavorable), both the lowest we have seen in the past several years.
- Republicans in the State Legislature have a 53% negative rating. Again, independent voters have moved against all of these prominent Republicans.

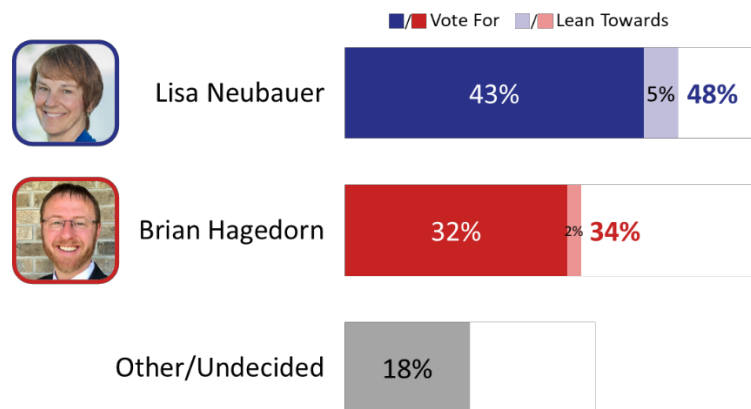
### Candidates

Lisa Neubauer and Brian Hagedorn begin this race unknown to most Wisconsinites, and with three-quarters of the electorate undecided about the choice between them. Given this low name recognition and high undecided, each candidate has an opportunity to define themselves early in this campaign if they possess sufficient resources to do so. When survey respondents were provided positive information about both—half the sample heard positive paragraphs and the other half received positive statements—Neubauer takes a solid 14-point lead over Hagedorn and she is just two points shy of 50 percent. (**See Figure 1**)

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<sup>1</sup> **Survey Methodology:** From January 9-14, 2019, FM3 conducted a survey of 600 randomly-selected Wisconsin voters likely to cast a ballot in the statewide April election. Interviews were conducted via landline and cell/mobile telephone by live interviewers. The full sample margin of error is +/-4.0% at the 95% confidence level; the margin of error for population subgroups will be higher. Due to rounding, some percentages may not sum to 100%.

**Figure 1: Vote for Supreme Court Justice After Positive Candidate Information**



As a result, while there is little doubt that while both candidates have judicial experience, Wisconsin voters regard Neubauer as the candidate who will be a fair, impartial and independent member of the Supreme Court, giving her a clear advantage when contrasted against Hagedorn’s close association with Scott Walker and partisan background.

This data strongly indicates that with sufficient resources Lisa Neubauer has an excellent chance to win this race. The current context is excellent and appear unlikely to change much over the next month and a half. Lisa Neubauer’s background as a judge plus the endorsements she has won from judges appointed by both Republican and Democratic governors as well as both Republican and Democratic law enforcement officers and prosecutors is more attractive than Hagedorn’s more partisan story.