WisDems: Trump continues to bleed support in crucial battleground state of Wisconsin

Posted on Wednesday, Apr 15, 2020

>> WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop](#).

Jill Karofsky's decisive [10.6% victory](#) over the Trump-backed candidate, Dan Kelly, shows that Wisconsin voters are continuing to move away from the president. Following a massive sweep in 2018 where Democrats won every statewide election, an [Assembly seat once held by Scott Walker](#), and a state Senate seat that had [been in Republican control for 17 years](#), President Trump's prospects of capturing the badger state continue to dwindle.

[Trump first endorsed Kelly on January 14th](#) at a rally in Milwaukee, undoubtedly giving him the support of the RNC and other national groups who worked behind the scenes to help elect him and gave him an [early fundraising advantage](#). Historically, incumbent justices don't lose re-election. The last two instances of this happening were in [2008 and 1967](#).

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Democratic Party turned their entire field team into a digital operation weeks before the election, prioritizing public safety over the election as organizers strictly told voters to vote absentee. The state Republican party took the opposite approach, telling Wisconsinites to risk their lives at the polls. Their greatest cheerleader in this endeavor was Donald Trump.

Prior to the April 7th election. Trump repeatedly claimed that mail-in-ballot elections are ripe with fraud and should not be allowed, despite him and his wife voting absentee. The RNC, RPW, and GOP legislators echoed his call, casting aside public safety and arguing the election must happen in person.

On April 6th, at his nationally televised press conference, Trump reiterated his

support for Kelly. The next day, [he tweeted three times](#) encouraging people to go to the polls to vote for his chosen candidate. Despite this push and Kelly's strong ties to the GOP establishment, the damage Trump has done to Wisconsin reared its head in a fierce backlash with Kelly losing by more than 10 points.

Looking at a mix of blue suburbs, GOP strongholds, and purple regions in the state, while excluding the Democratic strongholds of Dane and Milwaukee county, it is clear that every area is moving away from the president. The traditional GOP strongholds of Ozaukee, Washington, Waukesha, and Marathon, the purple counties that includes the Kenosha, Racine, Brown, Outagamie, Winnebago, as well as the smaller blue counties of Lacrosse, Eau Claire, and Rock continued to bleed Republican support and consolidate for Democrats. This has been true in 2018 midterms, the 2019 Supreme Court race, and now the 2020 Supreme Court race.

Considering that Trump won Wisconsin by roughly 23,000 votes in 2016, it is clear every single ballot is going to count, and he has only bled support since becoming president. Between his trade wars that contributed to Wisconsin [losing 10% of its dairy farms](#), [losing over 4,000 manufacturing jobs](#), and [costing the average family over $1,000](#) in 2019, as well as his attacks on the health care system, his dismissive approach to proper gun safety legislation, and his demeanor that is particularly off-putting in the suburban counties, Trump is continuing to bleed support headed into the 2020 election.

Lastly, Trump's chaotic and incomplete response to the COVID-19 epidemic and the dire impact it has had on the economy has wiped out his only argument for re-election. To date, [over 300,000 Wisconsinites have filed for unemployment insurance](#). Voters recognize that had he taken the pandemic seriously from the outset, the United State would not be at its current death toll and the economy would not have floundered the way it has to date.

This is evident in the fact that Dan Kelly received 692,956 votes while Trump only received 617,116 votes in his primary. The steep drop off shows that tens of thousands conservative voters could not find it with themselves to vote for Trump while they voted for the Republican candidate.

Please see below for a full breakdown of the changing voter trends in the aforementioned counties. All results are listed as Lib/Dem-Con/GOP, i.e. 44-56 is 44% for the liberal/Democrat and the 56% is for the conservative/Republican.