

## **2016 Election Playbook**

### **A. Presidential Outlook**

#### **1. Overview**

With just days until Election Day 2016, Democratic Presidential Nominee Hillary Clinton appears to have a slight lead in a tightening race. Currently, Real Clear Politics' national average<sup>1</sup> has Clinton holding a 1.7-point lead over Republican Presidential Candidate Donald Trump. Over the past several weeks, Trump has seen his poll numbers improve but he still faces an uphill path to 270; the number of electoral votes needed for victory. Polling in several swing states such as Florida, North Carolina, and Ohio had been trending towards Clinton after the widely distributed videos and renouncements of support from Republican office holders. However, Republicans appear to have increased support for Trump. Additional speculation arose against Secretary Clinton after FBI Director James Comey's letter to Congress, further adding concerns about Secretary Clinton's emails. Strongly conservative states such as Arizona, Georgia, and Texas that Clinton was vying for now appear out of reach. Further, the early voting seems to reflect this speculation with more than 24.4 million people<sup>2</sup> having already voted and 12.4 million in battleground states. In Florida and Ohio, Republicans are outperforming Democrats in early voting while Democrat's early voting numbers are down from 2012 in North Carolina, a state Mitt Romney won in the 2012 general election. A positive for Secretary Clinton is that Bloomberg<sup>3</sup> shows independents leaning her direction at a 39 to 35% clip, while enjoying the built-in advantage Democrats enjoy with the Electoral College. Like elections past, this race will be decided in Florida and Ohio. Trump must win the traditionally red states, including North Carolina, that Mitt Romney won in 2012, and add Florida and Ohio to get to 253. These states plus Pennsylvania would put him at 273. Without Pennsylvania, Trump would have to win a combination of states such as traditionally blue state Michigan or likewise Wisconsin along with states such as Iowa, New Hampshire, Nevada and Maine's 2<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District. In short, Trump must break through the blue wall in Michigan, Pennsylvania, or Wisconsin for a path to victory.

<sup>1</sup> Real Clear Politics. "General Election: Trump vs. Clinton." Accessed November 2, 2016.  
[http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/president/us/general\\_election\\_trump\\_vs\\_clinton-5491.html](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/president/us/general_election_trump_vs_clinton-5491.html).

<sup>2</sup> Bradner, Eric, Cohen, Marshall. "Early voting update: Black vote declining with 24.4 million ballots cast." Accessed November 2, 2016. <http://www.cnn.com/2016/11/01/politics/early-voting-update-black-vote-decreasing/>.

<sup>3</sup> McCormick, John. "Clinton Narrowly Beats Trump With Independents in Bloomberg Poll." Accessed November 2, 2016.  
<http://www.bloomberg.com/politics/articles/2016-11-02/independents-poll>.





## 2. States to Watch

### a. Florida

Signs are pointing more and more towards a toss-up in crucial battleground state Florida. Democrats have once again registered more new voters than Republicans. In an internal memo<sup>4</sup> circulated by Secretary Clinton's Florida state director Simone Ward, she notes that Democrats registered 259,000 new voters while Republicans registered 206,000; a 5-point gap. Ward goes on to say that the state has become more diversified and Florida's electorate has gone from 67% white in 2012 to 64% this year. However, Republicans are beating Democrats in early voting, after Obama built a lasting early-voter lead during the same period in 2012. Further, the New York Times/Siena Upshot poll<sup>5</sup> performed October 25<sup>th</sup> through the 27<sup>th</sup> showed Trump leading by 4 points while polling<sup>6</sup> released Wednesday from CNN and Quinnipiac from October 27<sup>th</sup> through November 1<sup>st</sup> show Clinton with slight leads. To illustrate just how close the race in Florida is, the Real Clear Politics average<sup>7</sup> shows Trump with a .7-point advantage.

### b. North Carolina

The tide may have turned in favor of Trump after previously trending in Clinton's direction prior to Director Comey's letter in the same state Mitt Romney won in 2012. Polling in North Carolina previously reported Clinton leading anywhere from 1 percentage point to as high as 7 percentage points between October 20<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>. Monmouth Polling<sup>8</sup> had Clinton up 47 to 46 % while the New York Times Upshot/Siena College poll<sup>9</sup> showed Clinton with a 7-point lead. However, WRAL-TV/SurveyUSA<sup>10</sup>, which showed Clinton with a 2-point lead a month ago, now shows Trump with a 7-point lead. Further, early voting numbers are down considerably from 2012 among Democrats. Also, with the addition of a new CNN poll showing Clinton up 3 percentage points in North Carolina, the Real Clear Politics' average<sup>11</sup> currently shows a tie.

<sup>4</sup> Caputo, Mark. "Clinton campaign memo details get-out-the-vote plan, election advantages in Fla." Accessed October 24, 2016." Accessed November 2, 2016. <http://www.politico.com/states/florida/story/2016/10/clinton-campaign-memo-details-get-out-the-vote-plan-election-advantages-in-fla-106651>.

<sup>5</sup> Cohn, Nate. "Latest Upshot Poll Shows Trump With a Lead in Florida." Accessed November 2, 2016. <http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/10/30/upshot/florida-poll.html>.

<sup>6</sup> Diaz, Daniella. "Polls: Clinton, Trump neck-and-neck in Florida; new results in NC, PA and Ohio." Accessed November 2, 2016. <http://www.cnn.com/2016/11/02/politics/presidential-polls-2016-election-hillary-clinton-donald-trump/>.

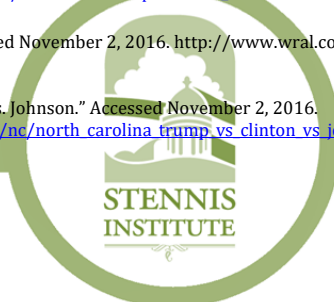
<sup>7</sup> Real Clear Politics. "Florida: Trump vs. Clinton vs. Johnson vs. Stein." [http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/president/fl/florida\\_trump\\_vs\\_clinton\\_vs\\_johnson\\_vs\\_stein-5963.html](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/president/fl/florida_trump_vs_clinton_vs_johnson_vs_stein-5963.html).

<sup>8</sup> Monmouth University. "Prez, Gov Races Close; GOP Edge for Senate." Accessed November 2, 2016. [https://www.monmouth.edu/polling-institute/reports/MonmouthPoll\\_NC\\_102416/](https://www.monmouth.edu/polling-institute/reports/MonmouthPoll_NC_102416/).

<sup>9</sup> Cohn, Nate. "Clinton Leads by 7 Points in North Carolina Poll." Accessed October 25, 2016. [http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/10/25/upshot/north-carolina-poll.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2016/10/25/upshot/north-carolina-poll.html?_r=0).

<sup>10</sup> WRAL. "WRAL poll: Trump charges ahead in NC." Accessed November 2, 2016. <http://www.wral.com/wral-poll-trump-charges-ahead-in-nc/16183780/>.

<sup>11</sup> Real Clear Politics. "North Carolina: Trump vs. Clinton vs. Johnson." Accessed November 2, 2016. [http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/president/nc/north\\_carolina\\_trump\\_vs\\_clinton\\_vs\\_johnson-5951.html](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/president/nc/north_carolina_trump_vs_clinton_vs_johnson-5951.html).





### **c. Ohio**

Ohio may be Trump's best chance at winning a swing-state despite popular Republican Governor John Kasich's refusal to support Trump and the campaign's decision to cut ties with the Ohio GOP Chairman. Currently, Republicans hold a 4.7%<sup>12</sup> edge in early voting and polling has steadily favored Trump. Further, Real Clear Politics' average<sup>13</sup> has Trump up 3.3 points.

### **d. Pennsylvania**

Pennsylvania has not voted Republican since 1988 and that traditions looks to continue. A Bloomberg poll<sup>14</sup> taken in early October of Pennsylvania showed Clinton with a strong lead in the state, up 9%, in part due to the Philadelphia suburbs rejecting Mr. Trump in large numbers; 80% of Philadelphia suburb voters saying the 2005 tape bothered them. Since that time, polling has consistently shown Clinton ahead but her lead has narrowed, evidenced by the Real Clear Politics' average<sup>15</sup> now showing Clinton's lead down to 3.4%.

### **e. Utah**

Further shaking up the map, Trump is in a dead heat<sup>16</sup> with 3<sup>rd</sup> party home-state candidate Evan McMullin in the predominantly Mormon state Utah. McMullin is performing well in some Western states, speculatively based on his Mormon background and conservative plank. However, his only path to the Presidency requires the unlikely circumstance of the election being thrown into the House of Representatives due to neither Clinton nor Trump reaching 270.

### **f. Arizona**

Democrats have targeted Arizona, a state that since 1948 has voted Democratic only once, as a priority as evidenced by First Lady Michelle Obama's recent deployment to campaign in Phoenix and a large TV push by the Clinton campaign in the closing days of the election. However, current polling shows Trump

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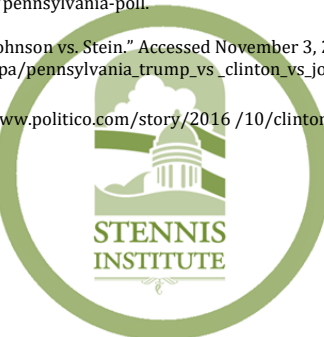
<sup>12</sup> Bradner, Eric, Cohen, Marshall. "Early voting update: Black vote declining with 24.4 million ballots cast." Accessed November 2, 2016. <http://www.cnn.com/2016/11/01/politics/early-voting-update-black-vote-decreasing/>.

<sup>13</sup> Real Clear Politics. "Ohio: Trump vs. Clinton vs. Johnson vs. Stein." Accessed November 2, 2016. [http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/president/oh/ohio\\_trump\\_vs\\_clinton\\_vs\\_johnson\\_vs\\_stein-5970.html](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/president/oh/ohio_trump_vs_clinton_vs_johnson_vs_stein-5970.html).

<sup>14</sup> McCormick, John. "Clinton Dominates in Key Philadelphia Suburbs, Bloomberg Poll Finds." Accessed November 2, 2016. <http://www.bloomberg.com/politics/articles/2016-10-13/pennsylvania-poll>.

<sup>15</sup> Real Clear Politics. "Pennsylvania: Trump vs. Clinton vs. Johnson vs. Stein." Accessed November 3, 2016. [http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/president/pa/pennsylvania\\_trump\\_vs\\_clinton\\_vs\\_johnson\\_vs\\_stein-5964.html](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/president/pa/pennsylvania_trump_vs_clinton_vs_johnson_vs_stein-5964.html).

<sup>16</sup> Schreckinger, Ben. "Trump's window is closing." <http://www.politico.com/story/2016/10/clinton-trump-election-countdown-polls-230212>. Accessed October 24, 2016.





slightly ahead. Last week, a CBS News/Yougov poll<sup>17</sup> had Trump ahead 2 points while a poll over the weekend by Emerson<sup>18</sup> showed Trump up 4 points.

### **g. Wisconsin**

If Trump fails to win Pennsylvania, his path to 270 will likely go through Wisconsin. Currently, Clinton enjoys a Real Clear Politics' advantage<sup>19</sup> of over 5 points and has never trailed in surveys of the state. A poll released Wednesday by Marquette<sup>20</sup> has Clinton leading in the Badger state by 6 percentage points. However, Clinton has poured money into the state in recent days and the Trump campaign has seen surveys showing him performing very well in rural areas.

### **h. Michigan**

The Trump campaign is making a late play for Michigan although Real Clear Politics' polling average<sup>21</sup> shows a 5.7-point Clinton lead and Trump has never led a survey in the state. Last night, Former President Bill Clinton made a surprise visit<sup>22</sup> to Detroit potentially signaling the Clinton campaign has cause for concern in the state.

### **i. New Hampshire**

New Hampshire could become a key state if Trump wins Florida, North Carolina and Ohio but fails to win Pennsylvania. A Trump win in Hampshire could lead to neither candidate making it to 270, resulting in the race being put in front of the House of Representatives. Currently, Real Clear Politics' average<sup>23</sup> shows Clinton with a lead of 3.3 percentage points and she has not yet trailed in a survey.

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<sup>17</sup> Salvanto, Anthony. "CBS battleground poll: Partisans divide on news of FBI, emails." Accessed November 2, 2016. <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/cbs-battleground-poll-partisans-divide-on-news-of-fbi-emails/>.

<sup>18</sup> Bloomberg. "Trump Leads in Arizona, Georgia, Missouri; Clinton Has Colorado Edge: Emerson Polls." Accessed November 2, 2016. <http://www.bloomberg.com/politics/trackers/2016-11-02/trump-leads-in-ariz-ga-mo-clinton-has-colo-edge-emerson>.

<sup>19</sup> Hohmann, James. "The Daily 202: Why Trump believes he can win Wisconsin – and why he's probably wrong." Accessed November 2, 2016. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/power-post/paloma/daily-202/2016/11/02/daily-202-why-trump-believes-he-can-win-wisconsin-and-why-he-s-probably-wrong/58193376e9b69b6085905de3/>.

<sup>20</sup> Kludt, Tom. "Wisconsin poll: Clinton leads, Senate race tight." Accessed November 2, 2016. <http://www.cnn.com/2016/11/02/politics/wisconsin-poll-marquette-trump-clinton-feingold-johnson/>.

<sup>21</sup> Real Clear Politics. "Michigan: Trump vs. Clinton vs. Johnson vs. Stein." Accessed November 3, 2016. [http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/president/mi/michigan\\_trump\\_vs\\_clinton\\_vs\\_johnson\\_vs\\_stein-6008.html](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/president/mi/michigan_trump_vs_clinton_vs_johnson_vs_stein-6008.html).

<sup>22</sup> Wimbly, Randy. "Bill Clinton makes secret campaign stop for Hillary in Detroit." Accessed November 3, 2016. <http://www.fox2detroit.com/news/local-news/215217426-story>.

<sup>23</sup> Real Clear Politics. "New Hampshire: Trump vs. Clinton vs. Johnson vs. Stein." Accessed November 3, 2016. [http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/president/nh/new\\_hampshire\\_trump\\_vs\\_clinton\\_vs\\_johnson\\_vs\\_stein-6022.html](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/president/nh/new_hampshire_trump_vs_clinton_vs_johnson_vs_stein-6022.html)





### 3. Looking Ahead

A Clinton victory will almost certainly prompt House Republicans<sup>24</sup> to further investigate Clinton. Also, some Senate Republicans<sup>25</sup> have signaled they would push for a vote on Supreme Court nominee Merrick Garland while others<sup>26</sup> have said that in the event of a Clinton victory they may hold the vote up Clinton's entire first term. However, if Democrats win the Senate they have threatened to use the nuclear option<sup>27</sup> and approve Garland or Clinton's nominee by a simple majority. Clinton has said<sup>28</sup> her first 100 days would include working with Congress on an infrastructure bill and immigration reform. On the other hand, if Trump wins, he will rescind Merrick Garland's nomination in favor of someone with more conservative credentials. Further, in his first 100 days, Trump says<sup>29</sup> he would renegotiate NAFTA, pull out of TPP negotiations, repeal and replace Obamacare, impose tougher requirements on lobbyists and propose a constitutional amendment to impose term limits.

## B. Race for the Senate

### 1. Overview

Senate Republicans have been on the defensive since the onset of the 2016 cycle. Mississippi Senator Roger Wicker was chosen to head the powerful National Republican Senatorial Committee that raises money on behalf of Republican US Senate candidates. They have been tasked with defending a map with 24 Republican held seats up for grabs compared to 10 for the Democrats. Currently, Republicans hold a 54-44-seat lead<sup>30</sup> in the Senate with 2 Independents caucusing with the Democrats. Larry Sabato's Crystal ball<sup>31</sup> has moved Pennsylvania into the

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<sup>24</sup> Weigel, David. "House Republicans are already preparing for 'years' of investigations of Clinton." [https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/house-republicans-are-already-preparing-for-years-of-investigations-of-clinton/2016/10/26/e153a714-9ac3-11e6-9980-50913d68each\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/house-republicans-are-already-preparing-for-years-of-investigations-of-clinton/2016/10/26/e153a714-9ac3-11e6-9980-50913d68each_story.html).

<sup>25</sup> Everett, Burgess. "Flake says it might be Garland time." Accessed. November 3, 2016. <http://www.politico.com/story/2016/10/jeff-flake-merrick-garland-vote-supreme-court-230109>.

<sup>26</sup> Everett, Burgess. "Cruz: GOP may block Supreme Court nominees indefinitely." Accessed November 3, 2016. <http://www.politico.com/story/2016/10/cruz-supreme-court-blockade-230363>

<sup>27</sup> Lesniewski, Niels. "Tim Kaine Predicts Possible 'Nuclear Option' Over Supreme Court Nomination." <http://www.rollcall.com/news/politics/tim-kaine-nuclear-option-merrick-garland>.

<sup>28</sup> Horsley, Scott. "The First 100 Days: What Clinton And Trump Want To Get Done." Accessed November 2, 2016. <http://www.npr.org/2016/10/27/499489585/the-first-100-days-what-clinton-and-trump-want-to-get-done>

<sup>29</sup> Deutsche Welle. "Trump lays out plan for first 100 days in 'Gettysburg Address.'" Accessed November 3, 2016. <http://www.dw.com/en/trump-lays-out-plan-for-first-100-days-in-gettysburg-address/a-36123295>.

<sup>30</sup> Senate.gov. "Party Division in the Senate, 1789-Present." Accessed November 3, 2016. <http://www.senate.gov/history/partydiv.htm>.

<sup>31</sup> "2016 Senate." University of Virginia Center for Politics. <http://www.centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/2016-senate/> Accessed October 25, 2016.





Democratic column giving Democrats 48 seats to Republicans 47 with 5 toss-ups. Of these 5 toss-ups, Evan Bayh (D-IN) looks poised to win his race while Missouri, New Hampshire, and Nevada seem to be true toss-ups with all 3 within 2 percentage points in the Real Clear Politics' average. Real Clear Politics also has North Carolina within 2 percentage points but Senator Burr seems to have solidified his lead in recent weeks.

## 2. States to Watch

### a. New Hampshire

The race for Senator Kelly Ayotte's (R-NH) seat has been a back and forth affair between her and New Hampshire Governor Maggie Hassan (D-NH). Senator Ayotte is currently leading in the Real Clear Politics' average<sup>32</sup> by 2.5 points after being up 10 points in the summer. Further, a poll<sup>33</sup> released this morning by WBUR has Senator Ayotte ahead 6 points going into the final days of the campaign.

### b. Pennsylvania

Katie McGinty (D-PA) is challenging incumbent Senator Pat Toomey (R-PA) for his seat. Toomey consistently led the race up until mid-summer at which point McGinty began to overcome Toomey. The trend towards McGinty has extended into the present with McGinty holding a Real Clear Politics' average<sup>34</sup> advantage of 5 points.

### c. Indiana

Former Senator Evan Bayh (D-IN) returned to his home state to run for Senator against Republican Representative Todd Young. As a former Senator, Bayh enjoyed double-digit leads against Young after his late jump into the race. However, the Hoosier state has seen big money buys in negative ads against both candidates and Bayh's lead has been reduced to a virtual tie. In the latest Real Clear Politics' average<sup>35</sup>, Bayh is up 2.3 points although the latest poll out of the state from Monmouth has the race tied.

### d. Nevada

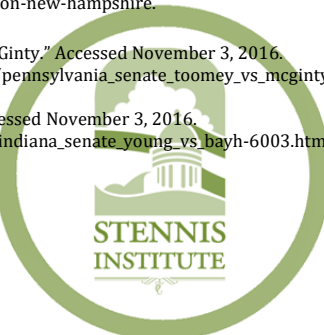
Polling in Nevada between Republican Congressman Joe Heck and Democratic Nevada Attorney General Catherine Cortez Masto has seen big fluctuations, one reason is possibly due to Nevada being extremely difficult to poll.

<sup>32</sup> Real Clear Politics. "New Hampshire Senate - Ayotte vs. Hassan." Accessed November 3, 2016. [http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/senate/nh/new\\_hampshire\\_senate\\_ayotte\\_vs\\_hassan-3862.html](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/senate/nh/new_hampshire_senate_ayotte_vs_hassan-3862.html).

<sup>33</sup> Brooks, Anthony. "WBUR Poll: Trump Edges Ahead Of Clinton In N.H." Accessed November 3, 2016. <http://www.wbur.org/politicker/2016/11/03/trump-clinton-new-hampshire>.

<sup>34</sup> Real Clear Politics. "Pennsylvania Senate - Toomey vs. McGinty." Accessed November 3, 2016. [http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/senate/pa/pennsylvania\\_senate\\_toomey\\_vs\\_mcginty-5074.html](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/senate/pa/pennsylvania_senate_toomey_vs_mcginty-5074.html).

<sup>35</sup> Real Clear Politics. "Indiana Senate - Young vs. Bayh." Accessed November 3, 2016. [http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/senate/in/indiana\\_senate\\_young\\_vs\\_bayh-6003.html](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/senate/in/indiana_senate_young_vs_bayh-6003.html).





Currently, Heck is ahead by 1.7 points in the Real Clear Politics' average<sup>36</sup> although little more than a week ago, a poll by Gravis had Masto up 6 points.

#### **e. North Carolina**

Incumbent Senator Richard Burr (R-NC) has seen his lead over former North Carolina House of Representative member Deborah Ross (D-NC) stabilize over the past few weeks. Burr is now leading in Real Clear Politics' average<sup>37</sup> by 1.6 percentage points.

#### **f. Missouri**

Current Democratic Missouri Secretary of State Jason Kander is locked into a tight race with freshman Senator Roy Blunt (R-MO). The race is essentially a toss-up with the Real Clear Politics' average<sup>38</sup> showing Blunt ahead .6 percentage points. While relatively little polling has been done in Missouri, the polls made available over the past month are within a couple percentage points either direction.

### **3. Looking Ahead**

2018 is set to be a boon for Republicans with Democrats defending 27 Senate seats while Republicans will defend only 8 seats.

## **C. Congressional Outlook**

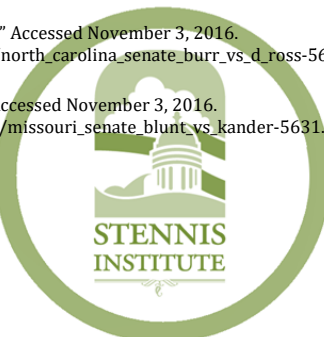
Republicans look to easily maintain their majority in the House of Representatives. As recently as a week ago, Democrats were hopeful of big gains in the Republican's House majority but in the wake of FBI Director Comey's letter, those hopes may be a distant reach. The big question is will House Speaker Paul Ryan (R-WI) retain his speakership after the election? The Freedom Caucus has signaled that they may challenge the Speaker, at which point he would need support from Democrats to retain his speakership. On the other hand, the Freedom Caucus could potentially leverage their strength into plum committee positions under Speaker Ryan.

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<sup>36</sup> Real Clear Politics. "Nevada Senate - Heck vs. Cortez Masto." Accessed November 3, 2016. [http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/senate/nv/nevada\\_senate\\_heck\\_vs\\_cortez\\_masto-5982.html](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/senate/nv/nevada_senate_heck_vs_cortez_masto-5982.html).

<sup>37</sup> Real Clear Politics. "North Carolina Senate - Burr vs. Ross." Accessed November 3, 2016. [http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/senate/nc/north\\_carolina\\_senate\\_burr\\_vs\\_d\\_ross-5693.html](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/senate/nc/north_carolina_senate_burr_vs_d_ross-5693.html).

<sup>38</sup> Real Clear Politics. "Missouri Senate - Blunt vs. Kander." Accessed November 3, 2016. [http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/senate/mo/missouri\\_senate\\_blunt\\_vs\\_kander-5631.html](http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/2016/senate/mo/missouri_senate_blunt_vs_kander-5631.html).



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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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In 2011, Camp worked as North MS field director for Lynn Fitch's successful campaign for Mississippi Treasurer. In the summer of 2013, Camp clerked at BGR Group; a D.C.-based governmental relations firm consistently described as a powerhouse. BGR Group is a global leader in governmental affairs, strategic communications and investment banking. Following his graduation from the University of Mississippi in 2014, Camp took over field operations in North MS for Thad Cochran. After Cochran's successful bid for reelection, Camp was invited to intern in Senator Cochran's DC office. Following his internship, Camp moved back to BGR Group where he served as a researcher and writer for the firm's clients. Camp is a native of Corinth, MS and currently resides in Starkville, MS where he is pursuing his Master's in Public Policy and Administration.

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