

## MEMORANDUM

**From:** Deep Root Analytics  
**To:** Interested Parties  
**Subject:** Virginia House District 82 After Action Report

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In Virginia's 2023 state legislative elections, Deep Root partnered with JLK Political, Content Creative Media, and Medium Buying to build a winning strategy for Virginia's 82<sup>nd</sup> State House District in which the Republican incumbent candidate won with a margin of 78 votes—less than three-tenths of a percent over her Democratic challenger.

This strategy involved effective targeting, audience activations, strategic media placement, and message discipline.

### VA HD-82 District Profile

Virginia's 82<sup>nd</sup> State House District encompasses Petersburg City, Dinwiddie County, Prince George County, and Surry County making up a total of roughly 64,000 registered voters in the district.

Gov. Glenn Youngkin won this district by 2% in his 2021 victory. The latest data modeling conducted by Deep Root Analytics showed Democrats enjoying a 16-point advantage in party preference and a 14-point advantage in net ballot projections.

Looking at party framework, the district is composed of 38% Democratic-leaning voters, 32% Republican-leaning voters, and 29% Independent-leaning voters.

Republican incumbent Del. Kim Taylor was first elected in the 2021 election and was facing a tough re-elect fight in 2023. Taylor faced off against Democrat Kimberly Pope Adams, a former auditor with the Virginia Department of the Treasury.

### Strategic Audience Building

In order to successfully build a plan for Taylor's campaign, the team engaged with Deep Root Analytics to build a set of four custom audiences that would be used for targeted communications with voters in the district.

Those audiences included:

- **GOP Likely Voters: 14,731 Voters**
  - 65% over the age of 55
  - 58% Male
  - 74% Rural
- **Swing Women Likely Voters: 9,544 Voters**
  - 60% under the age of 34
  - 90% Single
  - 55% within Independent Party Frameworks
- **Persuadable Left Leaning Likely Voters: 14,304 Voters**
  - 56% over the age of 45
  - 63% Female
  - 86% Single
- **Swing Likely Voters: 15,416 Voters**
  - 61% under the age of 34
  - 62% Male

Together, these audiences would build the foundation for Kim Taylor's path to victory in HD-82 and allow the campaign's team to strategically target these subsets of the electorate with specific messaging campaigns to get Taylor's message out to voters, as well as respond and contain attacks leveled from the opposition.

## The Issue of Abortion & Response

As we have seen since the Supreme Court's Dobbs decision, Democrats have attempted to leverage the issue of abortion to own the message of the day in a campaign cycle and ride that wave to electoral victories. Republican candidates in Virginia faced an onslaught of this messaging push from their Democratic opponents and other outside organizations.

In the 82<sup>nd</sup> State House District, the Adams campaign went up on television on September 12 with an ad entitled "[Tricked Women](#)." The message from the ad was:

*I'm Kimberly Pope Adams, candidate for delegate and I sponsored this ad. If Republicans like Kim Taylor have their way, Virginia will be the next state to pass an extreme abortion ban. Her family ran and funded a crisis pregnancy center tricking women into carrying non-viable pregnancies. An abortion ban would hurt so many more; putting women and doctors in jail and even could deny care to 10-year-old rape victims. We cannot allow Kim Taylor to ban abortion in Virginia.*

The Taylor campaign was quick to respond and not let this erroneous attack from the opposition go unanswered. By September 14<sup>th</sup>, the Taylor campaign was up on broadcast with an ad entitled "[Personal Issue](#)" which featured Kim Taylor speaking directly to voters in the district in response to Adams' attack. The message from the ad was:

*You've probably seen the ads. The ones trying to make you believe I'm some kind of radical on abortion. The truth—my opponent supports extreme abortion laws; including allowing abortion up until the very moment of birth. That's just wrong. I empathize with the women afraid for the future of their reproductive health. Virginians reject extreme positions on both sides of this personal issue. I'm Kim Taylor, candidate for delegate and I sponsored this ad because it's important, you know, where I stand.*

Using Deep Root's media analytics tools, the campaign's media team at Content Creative Media and Medium Buying were able to target Taylor's response ad directly toward the Swing, Swing Women, and Persuadable Left Leaning Voters audiences—three groups of voters who are more prone to be moved in the election by the issue of abortion.

On broadcast and cable mediums, the team was able to identify specific programming that these audiences were most likely to be watching and captured tens of thousands of impressions among these audiences to ensure the response resonated within the most vital sections of the electorate.

On digital and OTT/CTV mediums, the team directly targeted voters from these three critical audiences to precisely and effectively deliver Taylor's message to our target voters.

## Containing & Resetting the Election's Chess Board

With Kim Taylor's to-camera response, which displayed for voters the care and compassion that she has around the issue of abortion, paired with the campaign's quick response, precise targeting, and strategic media placement—the team was able to contain the abortion attack ad levied by the Adams' campaign and reset the playing field back to a position where Taylor was in control of the messaging for the remainder of the election.

Adams let her abortion attack ad run through October 2<sup>nd</sup>. Taylor let her response ad run through October 18<sup>th</sup> to continue to let the message sink in that the opposition was not direct with voters in their attack.

From that point, Taylor led the way on messaging by hitting on issues that were impactful for the everyday lives of the residents of the district—Bidenomics, increasing taxes, crime, and broadband access.

The Taylor campaign team re-focused their efforts on messages they knew voters would back them up on and expanded their targeting to include the GOP Likely Voters audiences. This drove home the message that this election was a choice between an effective legislator, focused on delivering results for the families and voters of the district, or a cookie-cutter Democrat who would hold the party line at all costs.

Elections come down to controlling the narrative and turning out your voters—two things that the Taylor campaign was able to perform so successfully that they could overcome a D+16 disadvantage and pull off a historic victory.

### House of Delegates District 82

Full Results	Monday Results		
All Ballots	Election Day	Early In-Person	Early Mail

All ballots, both those cast early and on Election Day

<span style="color: red;">■</span> Kim Taylor* (R) ✓	14,286	50.05%
<span style="color: blue;">■</span> Kimberly Pope Adams (D)	14,208	49.78%

31 of 31 precincts reporting  
0 early votes outstanding

