Memorandum

Date: April 21, 2016
To: Interested Parties
From: Andrew Myers and Matt Johnson

Overwhelmingly Connecticut Voters Favor Changing State Law to Allow Tesla Motors to Sell Electric Vehicles Directly to Consumers

According to the results of our recent statewide survey of 600 likely 2016 voters, an overwhelming majority of Connecticut voters (76 percent) favor changing state law to allow Tesla Motors to sell their products directly to consumers. Notably, as voters learn the specific details of the arguments from both sides of the debate on this issue, support for changing existing law remains remarkably stable, never falling below 70 percent - even after messaging from both sides. Indeed, initially among every demographic subgroup in the survey not one posts less than 60 percent support for changes, even in partisan terms. Initially, 80 percent of registered Democrats favor changing the law, as do 73 percent of registered independents and 72 percent of registered Republicans.

Underscoring voters’ support for changing existing law and creating a competitive automobile marketplace, just under two thirds (63 percent) say they would oppose a compromise plan that weakens the changes to automotive sale laws by limiting, or capping, the number of stores Tesla Motors could operate.

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1 These findings are based on a survey of 600 likely November 2016 general election voters in Connecticut. Calling took place from April 12-17 2016, and interviews were conducted by professional interviewers supervised by Myers Research | Strategic Services staff. The data were stratified to reflect the projected geographical contribution to the total expected vote. The margin of error associated with these data at a 95 in 100 percent confidence level is +/- 4.0 percent. The margin of error for subgroups is greater and varies.
Key Findings - Tesla Motors

The survey also provides a clear wakeup call for incumbents. Indeed, the data throughout this survey paint a portrait of a change electorate brewing. Voters’ fiscal sensitivity remains salient, and the budget and tax battles, coupled with the still sluggish economy, have fueled their anger and produced a palpable sense of frustration that legislators refuse to break from the status quo and consider new ways of doing business and creating new jobs. Hence, the General Assembly as a whole earns deeply negative job reviews, with 73 percent of voters giving them just fair or poor ratings, as well as majorities giving negative job reviews to their own district’s state representative and state senator. Most concerning for incumbents, however, is that when asked if they would reelect their representative or senator, pluralities favor someone new, as seen in the graph above.

What is most striking about the angry, change electorate we observe, is that voters do not blame one person or party for the current budget mess. Rather, 6-in-10 voters (62 percent) say they are all to blame – Democrats and Republicans. Notably, regardless of an individual’s party, voters are casting a wide net of blame that defies their own self-reported partisan leanings.

The bottom line is that an overwhelming supermajority of Connecticut voters want to change existing laws to allow Tesla Motors to sell automobiles in Connecticut. That support is broad and deep, with not a single audience opposing a change in the law. It is likely that every incumbent will face an angry, change electorate come November and legislators who stand in the way of this change do so at what could potentially be a real risk to their prospect for reelection.