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MEMORANDUM

TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Jeff Horwitt and Mark Bunge
DATE: September 17, 2018
RE: Key Findings from Polling in IL-6

This memorandum outlines the key findings from a telephone survey among a cross section of 402 likely general election voters in Illinois's 6th congressional district conducted on behalf of Casten for Congress. The survey was conducted from September 8 to 10, 2018, including both cell and landline interviews, and has a margin of error of ± 4.9 percentage points.

Summary: Despite spending millions of dollars, including efforts by his corporate special interests to prop him up, Peter Roskam is losing, not gaining ground. For the first time, our post-Labor Day survey finds Sean Casten overtaking Peter Roskam, with a 47%-to-44% lead. And this is after Roskam and his corporate special interest backers have lobbed a series of misleading attack ads against Casten that independent fact-checkers have called "absurd" and "riddled with holes."

- 1. After spending millions, Peter Roskam remains underwater both personally and professionally, and on both measures his standing is getting worse, not better.** Just 33% of voters view Peter Roskam positively, while 39% have negative feelings about him. Roskam's job rating stands at just 42%, while 43% disapprove. In our July survey, his numbers on both measures were better than they are now.
 - And even though Roskam and outside groups have tried to rehabilitate his image, 6th District voters are much more likely to say what they have heard recently about Roskam makes them less favorable (33%) rather than more favorable (19%).
- 2. Conversely, voters are just beginning to learn more about Sean Casten, and they like what they are learning about his business background and bringing an independent, common-sense approach to Washington for a change.** While Roskam is underwater, Sean Casten is becoming better known and is viewed more positively than negatively, even in the face of coordinated GOP attacks. Overall, 30% of 6th District voters have positive feelings toward Casten, while 18% are negative, a 12-point positive margin, compared with Roskam's negative six points. And unlike Roskam, voters are more likely to say they have heard more rather than less favorable things about Casten recently.
- 3. Try as he can, Peter Roskam just cannot escape the fact that he has failed to be the independent check on Donald Trump that voters want, and Trump's negatives are as high as we have seen them over the course of the campaign.** Casten's advantage over Roskam on being independent-minded and not just following a party line has jumped from three points to 12 points since July. Nearly three in five

voters (58%) view Donald Trump negatively, including 52% who view him very negatively. On both measures, these are the worst ratings we have recorded for Trump over the course of our polling in IL-6 this cycle.

4. Despite enjoying the benefits of an entrenched incumbent, and a huge financial advantage in paid communications (up until now), Peter Roskam has failed both at rehabilitating his own image and at impugning Sean Casten’s character. In fact, his millions and those of his corporate special interest benefactors, have not bought any return on investment, and if anything he is falling further behind.

- In our April benchmark poll, Peter Roskam had an insignificant 45%-to-44% lead over then mostly unknown Sean Casten. In July, after more than \$1 million spent on efforts to rehab his image, Roskam still led by the same insignificant one point—46% to 45%. Now, post-Labor Day and with fewer than 60 days to go, we show Sean Casten with his first lead, still within the margin of error, but ahead of incumbent Roskam by 47% to 44%.
- Among voters who say they are certain to vote, Casten’s lead is larger (49% to 43%). Even though Casten is a first-time candidate who voters are still being introduced to, Casten voters are more likely to say they strongly support their candidate (62%) than are Roskam voters (56%). And the proportion of Casten voters who strongly support him has jumped 18 points since July.

Bottom line: Our polling continues to match the assessments of leading nonpartisan congressional handicappers and polls, including the Cook Political Report, Larry Sabato’s Crystal Ball, Inside Elections, *CQ*, and the *New York Times*’ Upshot, showing that this race is neck and neck. The bad news for Roskam, which he is well aware of, is that for an incumbent to be well below 50% post-Labor Day suggests a race that is slipping away.

The only way Roskam and his special interest backers will be successful is if the Casten campaign does not have the resources available to continue introducing Sean Casten to voters, and refuting the many more absurd and desperate charges to come.