



To: Interested Parties

From: Katie Miller, Chair of Stand for Us PAC

Re: Defeating Senate President Craig Blair in West Virginia's SD-15

Date: May 15, 2024

In a stunning upset last night in West Virginia, Senate President and Lieutenant Governor Craig Blair was defeated in his primary in Senate District 15 by political outsider Tom Willis. How did it happen? How did an establishment force like Blair – who has served in the West Virginia legislature since 2002, in the state Senate since 2012, and as Senate President since 2021 – possibly lose his seat in a landslide to someone who has never held elected office?

It's simple: Craig Blair caved to the far-left on illegal immigration and turned his back on the people of West Virginia...and Stand for Us PAC held him accountable. Over the last month, Stand for Us spent over \$400,000 to defeat Blair, with the majority of our resources going to informing the Senate President's constituents about how he led the charge to strengthen a federal program that uses taxpayer dollars to subsidize health care for illegal immigrants.

Blair's story should serve as a reminder to Republicans across the country that providing safe harbor to the illegal immigrants who are invading our country and endangering our communities is a fireable offense.

Background On The 340b Program

There was not a single piece of contrast or negative creative that we deployed against Blair in which we did not highlight his support of 340b, a federal program that has been abused in recent years by liberal states to subsidize health care for illegal immigrants.

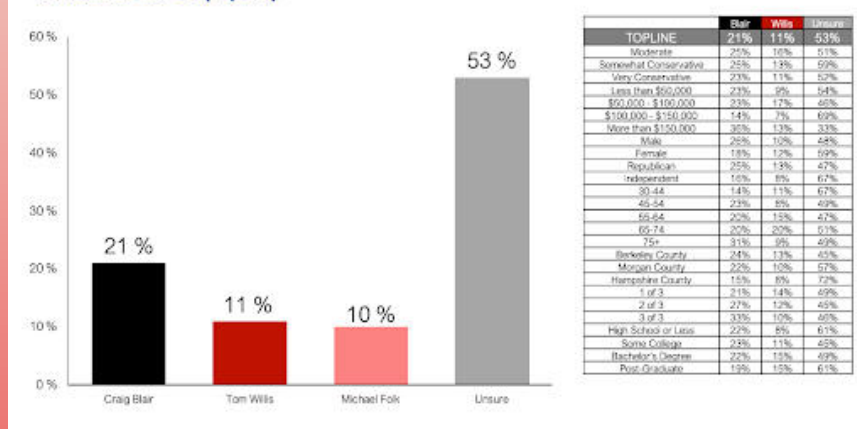
This past year, those on the far-left put their weight behind bills to strengthen the 340b program in state legislatures across the country. Some GOP leaders like Glenn Youngkin stepped up and rejected such measures. Craig Blair, however, was the architect of West Virginia's version of the legislation.

Our Strategy

Our first survey of the SD-15 race, which was conducted in early April, showed Blair with a +12 favorable rating and an 11-point lead on the ballot over his nearest challenger, Tom Willis. Blair was also boosted by a three-way race in which his main competitor was splitting the opposition vote, as Willis was polling just one point ahead of Michael Folk.

Initial Ballot (April) —

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Therefore, our strategy was two-fold: 1) Launch a sustained assault against Blair on the issue of immigration before he could respond and stunt growth to his image and ballot share, and 2) relentlessly promote Willis so he could take advantage of the opening presented by our attacks on Blair.

Beginning on April 15, we spent heavily on mail, digital display, texting, and phone calls to tear down Blair and prop up Willis. After two weeks, when we saw Blair's slow response, we kept our foot to the pedal and finished out the closing two weeks of the race by adding radio and digital videos to our media mix.

Examples of digital videos:

- [Blair/Willis contrast digital ad](#)
- [Blair negative digital ad](#)

Example mailer:



Example digital display ad:

CRAIG BLAIR HAS ABANDONED WEST VIRGINIANS...



Voted to subsidize illegal immigrant health care



Refused to oppose gender transitions for **MINORS**



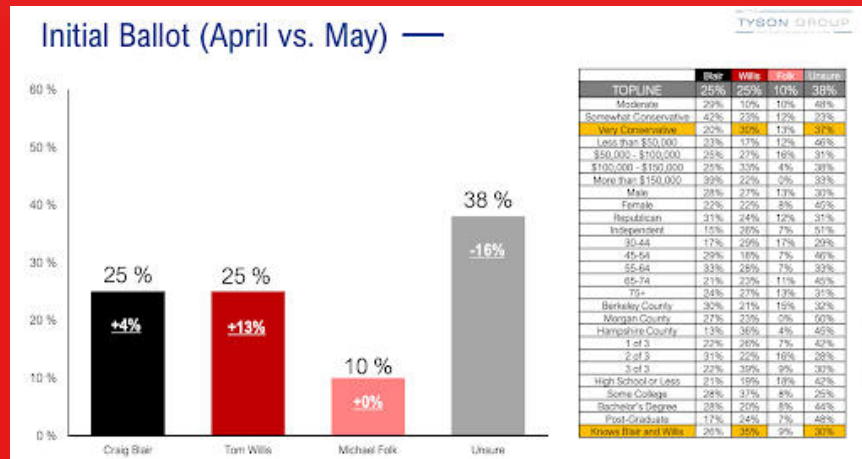
WE CANNOT LET CRAIG BLAIR'S FAILED LEADERSHIP CONTINUE

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The Results

Despite Blair benefitting from over \$130,000 in outside spending, our early start, spending advantage, and dogged focus on exposing the Senate President for his soft-on-illegal-immigration record allowed us to neutralize his image and paved the way for Willis to grow his ballot share.

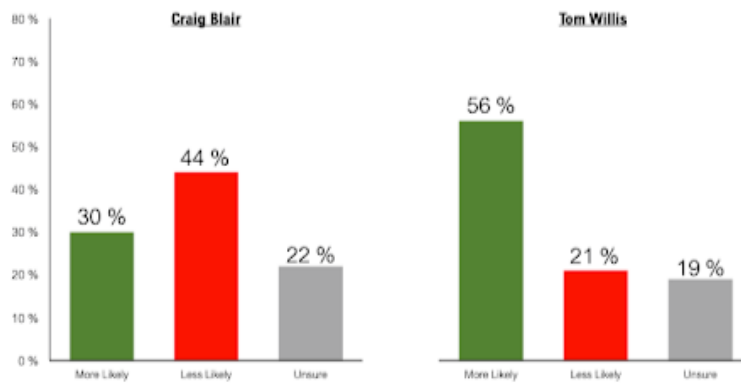
Our efforts were clearly working by the time we fielded our third and final poll of the race between May 1 and May 3. This last survey showed Willis tied with Blair and winning voters who knew both candidates by nine points.



The reason for Blair' struggles with voters who knew both candidates in early May was illustrated in what we found when we asked voters if they had seen, read, or heard anything about the candidates and whether that information made them more likely to support each candidate.

More or Less Likely (May 2024) —

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Those who had seen, read, and heard about Blair were abandoning the Senate President 44%-30%, while those who were receiving information on Willis were breaking for the outsider 56%-21%. Our paid media blasting Blair and praising Willis turned the tide of this race and allowed Willis to roll to a historic, double-digit victory.

Other Republicans Should Take Notice

We only had a month from our first expenditure to Election Day and we were still able to oust a well-established Senate President by a double-digits. That should make clear to Republicans across the country considering voting for legislation to strengthen the 340b program or allow non-citizen voting that they will not be safe no matter how powerful they are. Stand for Us isn't going anywhere and the results of our efforts have only emboldened us to increase our initial investment so we can hold more so-called conservatives accountable for refusing to crack down on illegal immigration. Republicans are now on notice that they support 340b or non-citizen voting at their own political peril.

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