



From: Dave Rexrode, Executive Director
To: Interested Parties
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Subject: Louisiana Runoff History

By the end of voting on Saturday, 1.34 million Louisianans cast their ballot in the race for Governor, an increase of more than 20% over 2015. In doing so, the voters made it clear that they are looking for new leadership and a departure from the failed liberal policies of Governor John Bel Edwards.

A few key facts that are important for those watching the race to understand:

- Since Louisiana adopted the open primary system in 1975 **NO governor has been re-elected in a run-off election**, and that trend will continue in 2019.
- Nearly **52% of all voters cast a ballot for a Republican candidate** for governor. Unlike 2015, Republicans are coming out of the primary united and are ready to end the failed administration of John Bel Edwards. Moreover, Edwards underperformed when compared to his 2015 runoff results, losing vote share in 62 of 64 parishes.
- Governor Edwards spent over \$8 million on television ads touting his “record” and voters weren’t buying what he was trying to sell. Louisiana’s economy is ranked dead last in the south, thousands of jobs have left the state, and the people recognize that the state is falling further behind. His allies spent an additional nearly \$7 million running attack ads against Eddie Rispone and Ralph Abraham. **Combined, they spent a staggering \$15.2 million on media alone in an attempt to get to 50% in yesterday’s primary, as they recognize that no governor has ever won re-election in a run-off election**. For months they promoted “polls” and “internal strategy memos” that showed they would win outright. They didn’t because a majority of voters recognize that Governor Edwards has failed and want new leadership.
- Leading race handicapping organizations immediately recognized the perilous position John Bel Edwards finds himself in by failing to avoid a runoff. The Cook Political Report and Larry Sabato’s Crystal Ball both moved the race from “Lean Democrat” to “Toss Up” following the primary results.

Over the next five weeks observers should expect to see an increasingly desperate effort from Governor Edwards and his allies as they scramble to overcome the disaster that was the primary election. They are going to throw the kitchen sink at Eddie Rispone because they know the governor cannot win on his failed record.

The Republican Governors Association will continue to be heavily engaged in the run-off election and are proud to stand with Eddie Rispone, the next Governor of Louisiana.