Governor Larry Hogan

The Challenge

Only one Republican Governor in the history of Maryland had ever been re-elected. In addition to a tough overall political environment in 2018, Governor Hogan had to overcome a demographic disadvantage, with Maryland's voter registration comprised of 55% Democrats.

The Key to Victory

To be successful in a blue state, Hogan had to avoid being placed in a partisan box. Through ongoing issue testing and SMART message testing, the campaign was able to focus on Governor Hogan's successes for the state of Maryland and capitalize on Hogan's popularity to remind voters that he was a different kind of Republican. By doing so, the campaign was able to keep voters out of their partisan corners and give themselves permission to vote for someone who they viewed as a "good guy."

Right Then, Right Again

After successfully forecasting the five-point margin of victory for Governor Hogan in 2014, the partners at Ragnar Research accurately forecasted a double-digit victory over Democrat opponent Ben Jealous. Ragnar Research's targeted messaging helped Governor Hogan win groups that Republicans traditionally struggled with, including 50% of women, 31% of African Americans, and 26% of Democrats.

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