



For Immediate Release:

GOP Groups Keeping Senate Contests Close

Republicans Have Ad Advantage in Iowa, Kentucky Senate Races; Dems Ahead in Michigan, Louisiana

(MIDDLETOWN, CT) September 30, 2014 – Two weeks ago, the Wesleyan Media Project reported that Democrats had dominated advertising in the most competitive Senate races in the first part of September. But over the past two weeks, Republicans have built ad advantages in Iowa, Kentucky, Colorado and Alaska thanks to spending by outside groups. In all four of those states, over 40 percent of pro-Republican ad airings were sponsored by groups between September 12 and September 25. Table 1 shows ad volumes and spending in the top Senate races, ranked by total ad volume.

In Iowa, for instance, ads favoring Republican Joni Ernst outnumbered ads favoring Democrat Bruce Braley by 1,500 during the past two weeks, with over 60 percent of the pro-Republican ads coming from outside groups. And in Kentucky, 56 percent of the ads favoring Republican Mitch McConnell were sponsored by groups, which gave him a 600 ad advantage over his Democratic opponent during the past two weeks.

“Independent group ad sponsors have kept Republicans competitive in a number of the tightest Senate races over the past two weeks,” said Erika Franklin Fowler, co-director of the Wesleyan Media Project. “This is a big change from earlier this month when Democrats were leading nearly everywhere. Pro-Democratic ad advantages in Kentucky, Colorado and North Carolina have all but evaporated, and Iowa went from near parity to a big pro-Republican lead.”

Table 1: Ad Volume and Spending in Top Senate Races

State	Total Ads	Pro-Dem Ads	Pro-GOP Ads	Dem % Group	GOP % Group	Pro-Dem \$s	Pro-GOP \$s
IA	11,323	4,905	6,418	29.34%	61.83%	1.7 M	2.7 M
NC	10,403	5,205	5,198	25.69%	44.15%	3.3 M	4.2 M
MI	8,461	5,097	3,364	57.72%	44.17%	3.3 M	2.1 M
KY	7,481	3,411	4,070	8.77%	56.29%	1.5 M	2.4 M
CO	7,007	3,405	3,602	28.08%	56.61%	2.5 M	2.7 M
LA	6,708	4,332	2,376	6.44%	4.08%	1.6 M	0.9 M
AK	5,695	2,727	2,968	33.33%	40.53%	0.4 M	0.4 M
AR	5,160	2,725	2,435	23.12%	52.48%	1.3 M	1.4 M
GA	4,945	2,780	2,165	1.01%	15.24%	1.7 M	1.6 M
VA	3,225	2,085	1,140	69.26%	0.00%	1.6 M	0.5 M

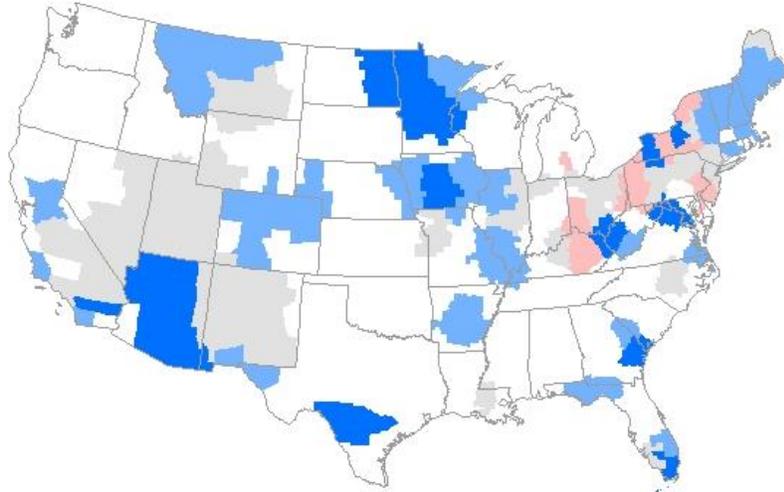
Figures are from September 12, 2014, to September 25, 2014. Numbers include broadcast television. Cost estimates are for air time purchased only, and do not include production and other costs. CITE SOURCE OF DATA AS: Kantar Media/CMAG with analysis by the Wesleyan Media Project.

The geographic comparison of advantages in House and Senate races is displayed in Figure 1. Across all Senate races, Democrats hold a slim advantage, with 45,000 pro-Democratic ads airing in the past two weeks compared to 42,000 pro-Republican ads airing during the same time period, as Table 2 reveals.

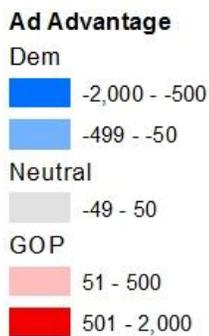
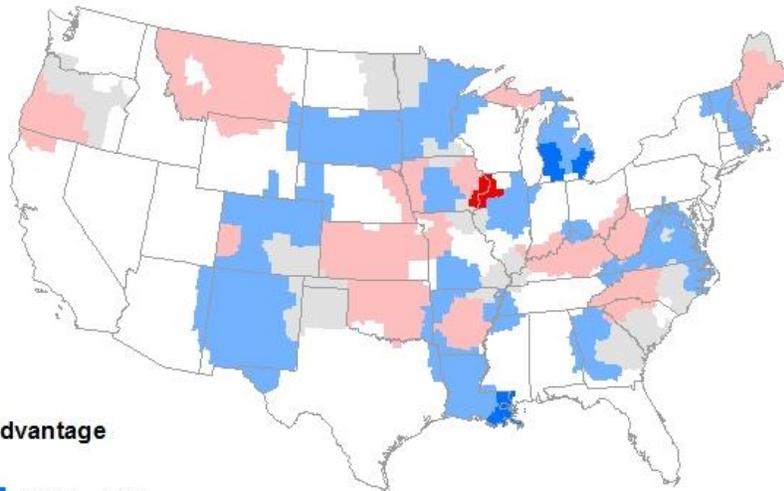
The Democratic ad advantage in races for the U.S. House, however, is considerable, with almost 37,000 pro-Democratic ads airing in the past two weeks, 17,000 more than the 20,000 ads favoring Republican candidates.

Figure 1: Advertising Balance in U.S. House and U.S. Senate Races (Sept 12, 2014 - Sept 25)

US House



US Senate



Source: Kantar Media/CMAG
September 30, 2014



“The trend we noticed at the beginning of September continues: Democrats are outmatching, outdoing and outgunning Republicans in House races,” said Travis Ridout, co-director of the Wesleyan Media Project. “The impact of this disparity is still not clear, but Democrats and their allies are certainly working hard to avoid the midterm curse in 2014.”

At the same time, advertising in gubernatorial races favors Republicans. Over 53,000 pro-Republican ads have aired in the past two weeks compared to just under 47,000 pro-Democratic ads.

Table 2: Ad Totals First Two Weeks of Traditional Campaign by Race Type and Sponsorship

2010 Midterms

Pro-Democratic Advertising					
	Cand.	Party	Coord.	Group	Total
Governor	39,102	13,724	0	5,994	58,820
US House	37,670	1,761	831	796	41,058
US Senate	26,477	3,639	0	1,484	31,600

Pro-Republican Advertising					
	Cand.	Party	Coord.	Group	Total
Governor	39,633	7,158	0	7,979	54,770
US House	16,077	3,058	2,388	6,263	27,786
US Senate	26,889	1,285	3,226	7,475	38,875

2014 Midterms

Pro-Democratic Advertising						
	Cand.	Party	Coord.	Group	Total	% Change
Governor	25,209	12,235	0	9,469	46,913	-20.2%
US House	24,921	9,413	93	2,464	36,891	-10.1%
US Senate	24,425	8,132	1,568	10,890	45,015	42.5%

Pro-Republican Advertising						
	Cand.	Party	Coord.	Group	Total	% Change
Governor	31,981	12,367	0	8,770	53,118	-3.0%
US House	11,339	7,297	1,001	762	20,399	-26.6%
US Senate	16,525	3,564	5,940	16,332	42,361	9.0%

Totals are from September 12, 2010, to September 25, 2010, and September 12, 2014, to September 25, 2014. Numbers include broadcast television.

CITE SOURCE OF DATA AS: Kantar Media/CMAG with analysis by the Wesleyan Media Project.

Compared to 2010, advertising is down in House and gubernatorial races but is up in Senate contests—and up considerably on the Democratic side. The volume of Senate ads favoring Democrats has increased 42 percent over the comparable period in 2010.

Table 3 shows the top House races, ranked by total ad volume over the past two weeks. At the top of the list is Georgia’s 12th congressional district, followed by Arizona’s 2nd district and West Virginia’s 3rd district. Interestingly, outside groups have stayed out of many of these top races, reserving their firepower for the Senate.

Table 3: Ad Volume and Spending in Top House Races

District	Total Ads	Pro-Dem Ads	Pro-GOP Ads	Dem % Group	GOP % Group	Pro-Dem \$s	Pro-GOP \$s
Georgia-12	4,051	2,611	1,440	0.00%	0.00%	0.8 M	0.46 M
Arizona-02	3,819	2,318	1,501	47.45%	7.46%	0.79 M	0.53 M
WV-03	2,982	1,886	1,096	12.46%	18.61%	0.46 M	0.32 M
Florida-02	2,917	1,708	1,209	46.43%	0.00%	0.53 M	0.31 M
Illinois-12	2,269	1,401	868	0.00%	0.00%	0.59 M	0.54 M
Montana-01	2,202	1,397	805	0.00%	0.00%	0.11 M	0.11 M
California-52	2,158	1,208	950	0.00%	0.00%	0.64 M	0.72 M
Arizona-01	2,125	1,434	691	0.00%	0.00%	1.06 M	0.67 M
Minnesota-07	2,023	1,532	491	0.00%	0.00%	0.67 M	0.34 M
New York-24	2,005	1,315	690	0.00%	0.00%	0.3 M	0.22 M

Figures are from September 12, 2014, to September 25, 2014. Numbers include broadcast television. CITE SOURCE OF DATA AS: Kantar Media/CMAG with analysis by the Wesleyan Media Project.

In races for governor, the Republican ad advantage revealed in Table 2 can be entirely accounted for by heavy Republican advertising in Florida and Texas. In Florida, ads favoring incumbent Republican Rick Scott outnumbered those favoring Democrat Charlie Crist by almost 5,000, between Sept. 12 and 25, and in Texas, ads favoring Republican Greg Abbott were double the number of ads favoring Democrat Wendy Davis during this period.

But there were more ads favoring Democrats than ads favoring Republicans in many states, including Illinois, Wisconsin, New York, Georgia, Maine, and Pennsylvania.

Many gubernatorial candidates have been highly dependent on groups for ad support. For instance, in Michigan, almost all of the ads favoring Democratic candidate Mark Schauer that have aired in the past two weeks came from a single outside group—the Democratic Governors Association.

Table 4: Ad Volume and Spending in Top Gubernatorial Races

State	Total Ads	Pro-Dem Ads	Pro-Rep Ads	Dem % Group	GOP % Group	Pro-Dem \$\$	Pro-GOP \$\$
FL	20,111	7,744	12,367	0.15%	0.00%	4.07 M	6.64 M
TX	10,330	3,447	6,873	0.00%	0.00%	2.24 M	2.93 M
IL	7,793	4,947	2,846	3.48%	0.00%	4.17 M	3.5 M
WI	7,374	4,670	2,704	26.66%	12.13%	1.36 M	1.01 M
MI	6,767	2,297	4,470	100.00%	45.32%	1.14 M	2.3 M
KS	5,024	2,296	2,728	44.99%	58.91%	0.85 M	1.17 M
NY	4,926	3,003	1,923	0.00%	22.98%	2.18 M	0.88 M
GA	4,625	2,364	2,261	1.18%	10.84%	1.43 M	0.99 M
ME	3,281	1,388	1,350	51.15%	64.81%	0.46 M	0.32 M
PA	3,263	1,660	1,603	3.31%	0.00%	1.58 M	1.23 M
SC	2,883	1,125	958	0.00%	0.00%	0.33 M	0.38 M
CO	2,460	2,043	417	46.30%	57.07%	1.35 M	0.39 M
CT	2,312	1,427	885	54.30%	36.05%	1.48 M	0.89 M
IA	2,134	1,014	1,120	0.00%	0.00%	0.25 M	0.38 M
MN	1,974	1,657	317	14.79%	86.75%	0.65 M	0.29 M

Figures are from September 12, 2014, to September 25, 2014. Numbers include broadcast television.
CITE SOURCE OF DATA AS: Kantar Media/CMAG with analysis by the Wesleyan Media Project.

Negative Advertising Common; Democrats Stress Personal Characteristics in Attacks

The bulk of the advertising over the past two weeks has been negative, as Table 5 shows. Negativity is most common in Senate races, where 48.6 percent of ads solely mentioned an opponent. Another 25.6 percent of Senate ads were contrast ads, mentioning both the favored candidate and an opponent. An equal percent of ads were positive, mentioning solely the favored candidate. Negativity was only slightly less common in gubernatorial and House races.

In comparison with the 2010 and 2012 election cycles, the most recent two weeks of the 2014 campaign is more negative for gubernatorial ads (up to 45 percent compared to 39 percent in 2010). House and Senate ads are slightly less negative (another change from two weeks ago which showed airings much more negative over recent cycles). The 41 percent of House ads classified as negative for the September 12 to September 25 period, for example, is the lowest negativity in the three-cycle comparison. Senate ads are less negative than in 2012, but more negative than in 2010.

Positive spots in Senate races are at their lowest rate across all three cycles (down to 26 percent from 37 percent in 2010 and 29 percent in 2012). “All told, lumping contrast and pure attack ads together, voters are seeing an attack on a candidate in 2 of every 3 ads in gubernatorial and House races. And they are seeing attacks on candidates in 3 of every 4 Senate ads,” said Michael Franz, co-director of the Wesleyan Media Project.

Table 5: Tone of Advertising over Time by Race Type

		Negative	Contrast	Positive
2010	Governor	38.68%	16.28%	39.39%
	US House	43.13%	19.61%	34.57%
	US Senate	40.77%	19.52%	36.91%
2012	Governor	42.46%	9.85%	47.69%
	US House	47.70%	20.49%	31.82%
	US Senate	53.03%	18.38%	28.59%
2014	Governor	45.04%	21.12%	33.83%
	US House	41.53%	24.10%	34.37%
	US Senate	48.61%	25.60%	25.79%

Percentages are from September 12 to September 25 from all three cycles. Totals in 2014 are based on ongoing Wesleyan Media Project coding, and 2010 and 2012 totals are from prior Wesleyan Media Project coding of Kantar Media/CMAG ad airings.

Table 6 shows the nastiest Senate races over the past two weeks, ordered by the percentage of ads that are positive. Louisiana tops the list, with no positive ads, followed by Colorado with just 6.5 percent positive ads and Alaska at 12 percent positive. If one looks at just purely negative ads, then Michigan is at top, with 66.8 percent of ad airings classified as negative.

Table 6: Least Positive U.S. Senate Races

State	Positive	Contrast	Negative
Louisiana	0.0%	66.6%	33.4%
Colorado	6.5%	28.2%	65.3%
Alaska	12.0%	31.9%	56.1%
Kentucky	15.3%	31.1%	53.6%
Iowa	16.5%	20.1%	63.4%
Michigan	19.4%	13.8%	66.8%
Virginia	21.1%	34.1%	44.8%
Minnesota	21.6%	43.6%	34.8%
New Hampshire	21.6%	33.0%	45.4%
Georgia	24.5%	45.8%	29.7%
Kansas	27.7%	38.3%	33.9%
North Carolina	32.0%	13.8%	54.2%
Arkansas	33.3%	4.5%	62.3%
Oregon	42.7%	3.2%	54.1%

Figures are from September 12, 2014, to September 25, 2014. Numbers include broadcast television.

CITE SOURCE OF DATA AS: Kantar Media/CMAG with analysis by the Wesleyan Media Project.

The focus of the attacks is different across parties, as Table 7 shows.

“What is striking is that Democratic candidates in Senate races are attacking more on the basis of their opponents’ personal characteristics than are Republican candidates, parties or interest groups,” said Travis Ridout, co-director of the Wesleyan Media Project. “Just under 40 percent of the negative ads aired by Democratic candidates in the past two weeks attacked the personal characteristics of their Republican opponents, while 100 percent of Republican candidate ads focused on policy.”

Table 7: Policy v. Personal Focus of Attacks by Party and Sponsor in Senate Ads

		Personal	Policy	Both
Pro-Dem	Candidate	39%	47%	14%
	Groups	0%	80%	20%
	Party/Coord.	0%	92%	7%
Pro-GOP	Candidate	0%	100%	0%
	Groups	7%	81%	12%
	Party/Coord.	10%	75%	15%

Figures are from September 12, 2014, to September 25, 2014. Numbers include broadcast television. Percentages are based on ongoing Wesleyan Media Project coding of Kantar Media/CMAG data.

Table 8 shows the most negative gubernatorial races. Wisconsin is at the top, with only 3.7 percent of ads coded as positive. New York and Connecticut also have few positive ads. Maryland’s gubernatorial race has the greatest percentage of negative ads—those that only mention an opponent—at 82.1 percent.

Table 8: Least Positive Gubernatorial Races

State	Positive	Contrast	Negative
Wisconsin	3.7%	34.8%	61.5%
New York	5.5%	39.0%	55.5%
Connecticut	8.3%	26.0%	65.7%
Minnesota	12.7%	61.0%	26.3%
Maryland	13.1%	4.8%	82.1%
Illinois	14.6%	13.1%	72.3%
New Hampshire	19.0%	33.4%	47.6%
Florida	25.7%	6.0%	68.3%
Pennsylvania	26.2%	21.7%	52.1%
Arizona	26.5%	16.6%	56.9%
Iowa	28.4%	20.7%	50.9%
Maine	31.5%	61.7%	6.7%
Arkansas	32.2%	52.1%	15.7%
Georgia	33.1%	61.0%	5.9%

Figures are from September 12, 2014, to September 25, 2014. Numbers include broadcast television.

CITE SOURCE OF DATA AS: Kantar Media/CMAG with analysis by the Wesleyan Media Project.

Republican Governors Association Top Spender Among Outside Groups

The top group spender in federal and gubernatorial races over the past two weeks was the Republican Governors Association, which aired over 5,100 ads at an estimated cost of \$2.4 million (Table 9). This was less, however, than the group spent during the two-week period from August 29-September 11, when they spent an estimated \$2.7 million to purchase almost 6,400 ads. Freedom Partners Action Fund was the second group on the list, with 3,163 ad airings. It was followed closely by Crossroads GPS and NextGen Climate Action Committee, each with just over 3,000 airings.

Table 9: Top Group Sponsors Over Past Two Weeks

Sponsor	Type/Disclose?	# Ads	Est. \$s	Races
Republican Governors Association	527/Yes	5,129	2.42 M	Gov: AR, AZ, CO, KS, ME, MI, NE, OK, GA
Freedom Partners Action Fund	Super PAC/Partial	3,163	1.69 M	Sen: AK, AR, IA, KS, NC, OR; NH02
Crossroads Grassroots Policy Strategies	501c4/No	3,110	1.95 M	Sen: AK, AR, CO, MI
NextGen Climate Action Cmte	Super PAC/Yes	3,083	2.22 M	Sen: CO, MI, NH; Gov: FL
Democratic Governors Assn	527/Yes	2,922	1.48 M	Gov: MD, MI
Senate Majority PAC	Super PAC/Yes	2,251	1.48 M	Sen: AR, CO, IA, KY, LA, NC, NH
American Crossroads	Super PAC/Yes	2,158	1.08 M	Sen IA
U.S. Chamber Of Commerce	501c6/No	1,775	1.49 M	Sen: CO, IA, NC, NH; AZ02, CA07, CO06, NY19, NY21, VA10, WV03
Kentucky Opportunity Coalition	501c4/No	1,472	0.96 M	Sen: KY
Virginia Progress PAC	Super PAC/Yes	1,444	0.94 M	Sen: VA
NRA Political Victory Fund	PAC/Yes	1,330	1 M	Sen: AR, CO, GA, IA, KY, LA, NC
Carolina Rising	501c4/No	1,323	1.53 M	Sen: NC
NEA Advocacy Fund	Super PAC/Yes	1,276	0.98 M	Sen: AK, CO, NC
Greater Wisconsin Cmte	501c4/No	1,245	0.59 M	Gov: WI
House Majority PAC	Super PAC/Yes	1,216	0.47 M	AZ02, FL02, WV03

Figures are from September 12, 2014, to September 25, 2014. Numbers include broadcast television. CITE SOURCE OF DATA AS: Kantar Media/CMAG with analysis by the Wesleyan Media Project. Disclosure information from the Center for Responsive Politics.

\$90 Million in Dark Money Spending

A Wesleyan Media Project analysis, in partnership with the Center for Responsive Politics, reveals that an estimated \$233 million has been spent by outside groups in House, Senate and gubernatorial races this election cycle, starting January 1, 2013; \$90 million of that is in the form of dark money—money whose sponsors do not have to be disclosed by law (Table 10). Just in the past two weeks, groups have spent an estimated \$33 million, with \$10 million in dark money spending.

“This breakdown reveals a trend toward more full-disclosure super PAC spending in the fall campaign,” said Michael Franz, co-director of the Wesleyan Media Project. “In the period before September 12, 55 percent of ad airings were from full-disclosure groups. In the last two weeks, that number is 62 percent. Full disclosure spending is better than dark money, such that voters can examine donor records to determine the financial basis of a group’s electioneering. But even in such cases, many super PACs are still largely unknown to most voters.”

Table 10: Estimated Group Spending by Disclosure Type

	Spending Last Two Weeks	Spending 2013-14 Cycle
Dark Money	10.07 M	90.56 M
Partial Disclosure	2.46 M	5.93 M
Full Disclosure	20.52 M	136.51 M
Total	33.04 M	233.01 M

Figures in the second column are from September 12, 2014, to September 25, 2014, while figures in the third column are from January 1, 2013, to September 25, 2014. Numbers include broadcast television. Dollar amounts reflect estimated cost of airtime.

CITE SOURCE OF DATA AS: Kantar Media/CMAG with analysis by the Wesleyan Media Project. Disclosure information from the Center for Responsive Politics.

Taxes Top Issue for Dems; Republicans Talk Obamacare

Table 11 displays the issue priorities by party. Taxation is the most frequently mentioned issue in ads favoring Democrats, with 28 percent of ads mentioning the issue. Jobs and Social Security are mentioned in 15 percent of ads favoring Democrats, and 14 percent of pro-Democratic ads mention education, Medicare and the environment. Because ads can mention more than one issue, percentages can total to more than 100 percent.

Republican issue priorities are quite different. Twenty-seven percent of Republican ads mention the Affordable Care Act or Obamacare, an issue that Democrats virtually ignore. Jobs are the second most frequently mentioned issue by ads favoring Republicans, followed by budget deficits, immigration, taxation and veterans. Table A1 provides a more nuanced breakdown of issue priorities by party in the most competitive races.

Table 11: Issue Priorities by Party in Senate Races

	Pro-Dem		Pro-GOP
Taxes	28%	ACA/Obamacare	27%
Jobs/Employment	15%	Jobs/Employment	25%
Social Security	15%	Deficit	15%
Education	14%	Immigration	14%
Medicare	14%	Taxes	13%
Environment	14%	Veterans	13%
Veterans	12%	Education	10%
Government Ethics	8%	Gov't spending	9%
Women's health	7%	Medicare	9%
Abortion	6%	Energy	9%

Figures are from September 12, 2014, to September 25, 2014.

Numbers include broadcast television.

CITE SOURCE OF DATA AS: Kantar Media/CMAG with analysis by the Wesleyan Media Project.

Ads favoring House Democrats mentioned many of the same issues as ads favoring Senate Democrats, though House ads were more focused on veterans, Medicare and budget deficits (Table 12). Ads favoring House Republicans were quite similar to ads favoring Senate Republicans. Obamacare was again the top issue, followed by jobs and budget deficits.

Table 12: Issue Priorities by Party in House Races

	Pro-Dem		Pro-GOP
Taxes	27%	ACA/Obamacare	27%
Medicare	18%	Jobs/Employment	18%
Veterans	17%	Taxes	16%
Deficit	15%	Deficit	14%
Education	12%	Gov't Spending	14%
Social Security	11%	Medicare	9%
Jobs/Employment	11%	Gov't Ethics	9%
Gov't Shutdown	10%	Military	8%
Gov't Spending	9%	Business	8%
Gov't Ethics	8%	Veterans	6%

Figures are from September 12, 2014, to September 25, 2014.

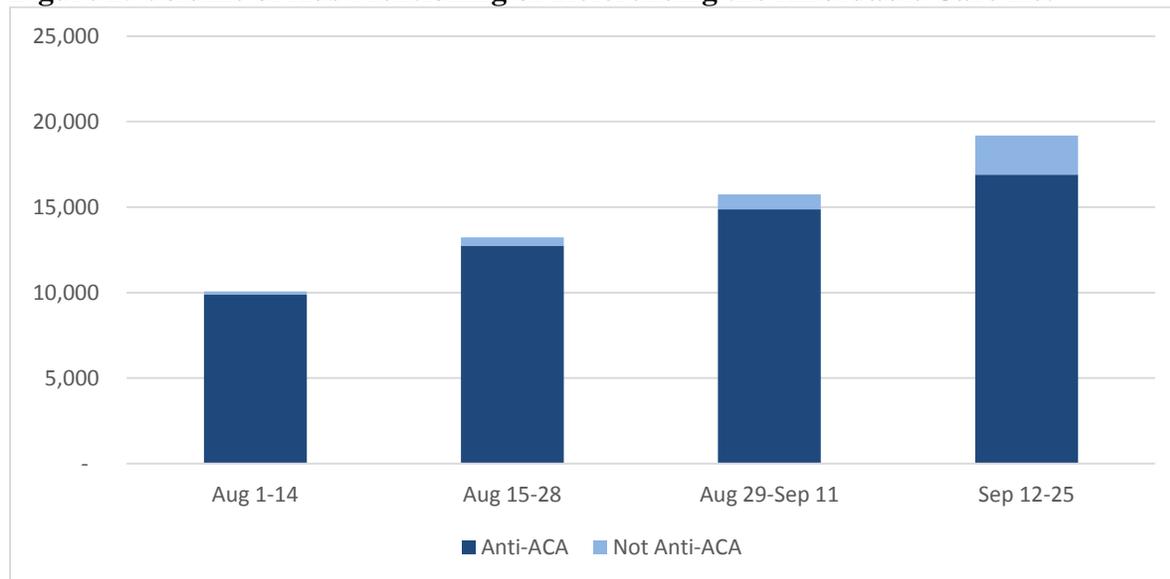
Numbers include broadcast television.

CITE SOURCE OF DATA AS: Kantar Media/CMAG with analysis by the Wesleyan Media Project.

Affordable Care Act Ads Continue to Rise

In the last two weeks, references to the Affordable Care Act have continued to rise (Figure 2), with increases in both anti-Obamacare attacks and those that obliquely tout the law. The latter are primarily references noting a candidate's "standing up to insurance companies," "covering pre-existing conditions," or "passed a law."

Figure 2. Volume of Ads Mentioning or Referencing the Affordable Care Act



CITE SOURCE OF DATA AS: Kantar Media/CMAG with analysis by the Wesleyan Media Project.

Over the last four weeks, pro-Republican airings in U.S. Senate races have hammered away at the Affordable Care Act to varying degrees across the country. Over 2,400 airings in Kentucky alone have referenced the ACA in the last four weeks (roughly 32 percent). Nearly eight out of every ten pro-Republican ads in West Virginia and almost nine out of every ten in Virginia feature an anti-ACA attack. Iowa and North Carolina are the two races with the fewest pro-Republican ads mentioning the law. Pro-Democratic airings, on the other hand, rarely discuss the law, with West Virginia being a notable exception, where Democrat Natalie Tennant has used a personal story about her daughter's health to express support for limits on the ability of insurance companies to deny coverage, though she also notes that "health care reform wasn't done right."

"Discussing attention to the health care law in the aggregate hides the vast partisan differences in focus," said Erika Franklin Fowler, co-director of the Wesleyan Media Project. "Not only is Obamacare the top issue in Republican ads, but in many of the top races, anti-ACA attacks make up roughly a third or more of total GOP airings."

Table 13: Senate Airings Referencing the ACA by Party Lean

	Pro-GOP	Pro-Dem
Kentucky	31.8%	0.0%
West Virginia	79.5%	91.9%
Arkansas	45.3%	3.9%
Iowa	18.8%	0.0%
Virginia	87.1%	0.0%
Colorado	31.7%	0.0%
Minnesota	68.8%	17.1%
North Carolina	13.5%	0.0%
Louisiana	22.1%	0.0%
Alaska	20.2%	0.0%
New Hampshire	63.5%	0.0%

Figures are from August 29, 2014, to September 25, 2014. Numbers include broadcast television.
CITE SOURCE OF DATA AS: Kantar Media/CMAG with analysis by the Wesleyan Media Project.

About This Report

Data reported here do not cover local cable buys, only broadcast television and national cable buys. All cost estimates are precisely that: estimates. Content information is based on ongoing Wesleyan Media Project coding and analysis of Kantar Media/CMAG video, which is 93% complete for Senate ads, 63% for House ads, and 82% overall for the time period discussed. Disclosure categorization information on interest groups comes from the Center for Responsive Politics.

The Wesleyan Media Project provides real-time tracking and analysis of all political television advertising in an effort to increase transparency in elections. Housed in Wesleyan's Quantitative Analysis Center – part of the Allbritton Center for the Study of Public Life – the Wesleyan Media Project is the successor to the Wisconsin Advertising Project, which disbanded in 2009. It is directed by Erika Franklin Fowler, assistant professor of government at Wesleyan University, Michael M. Franz, associate professor of government at Bowdoin College and Travis N. Ridout, associate professor of political science at Washington State University. Laura Baum is the Project Manager.

The Wesleyan Media Project is supported by grants from The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, the MacArthur Foundation and Wesleyan University. Data provided by Kantar Media/CMAG with analysis by the Wesleyan Media Project using Academicclip, a web-based coding tool. The Wesleyan Media Project is partnering in 2014 with both the Center for Responsive Politics, to provide added information on interest group disclosure, and Ace Metrix, to assess ad effectiveness.

The Center for Responsive Politics is the nation's premier research group tracking money in U.S. politics and its effect on elections and public policy. Nonpartisan, independent and nonprofit, the organization aims to create a more educated voter, an involved citizenry and a more transparent and responsive government. CRP's award-winning website, OpenSecrets.org, is the most comprehensive resource available anywhere for federal campaign contribution and lobbying data and analysis.

Periodic releases of data will be posted on the project's website and dispersed via Twitter @wesmediaproject. To be added to our email update list, [click here](#).

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About Wesleyan University

Wesleyan University, in Middletown, Conn., is known for the excellence of its academic and co-curricular programs. With more than 2,900 undergraduates and 200 graduate students, Wesleyan is dedicated to providing a liberal arts education characterized by boldness, rigor and practical idealism. For more, visit www.wesleyan.edu.

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About the MacArthur Foundation

The MacArthur Foundation supports creative people and effective institutions committed to building a more just, verdant, and peaceful world. In addition to selecting the MacArthur Fellows, the Foundation works to defend human rights, advance global conservation and security, make cities better places, and understand how technology is affecting children and society. More information is at www.macfound.org.