To: Interested Supporters
From: Kelly Kirschner for Congress
Date: September 2026
Re: Florida's 16th Congressional District Benchmark Poll Findings

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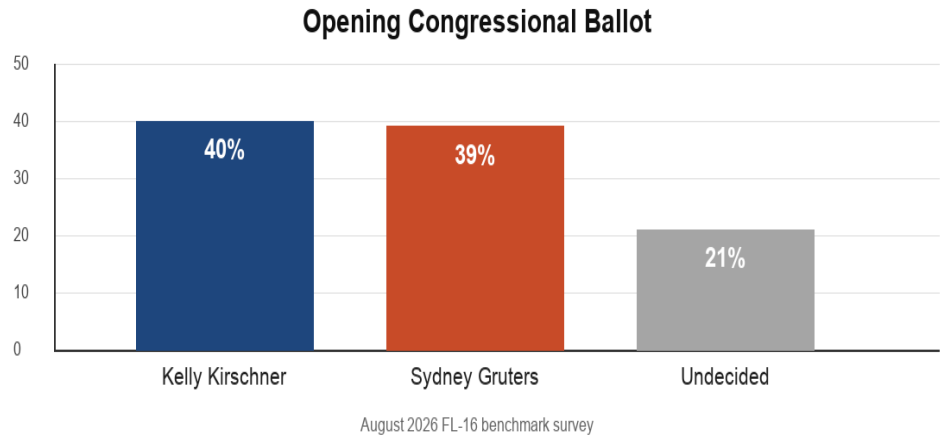
Recent benchmark polling in Florida's 16th Congressional District shows Kelly Kirschner in a highly competitive position despite a Republican-leaning electorate. Kirschner leads Sydney Gruters 40% to 39% on the opening ballot, with 21% undecided. The data show a clear path to victory.

Key Findings:

- **The race begins as a toss-up, with more than one in five voters still in play.** Kirschner leads 40% to 39% even as Republicans lead the generic congressional ballot 49% to 43%.



- **Information moves the race toward Kirschner.** After voters hear the candidate biographies, he leads 47% to 44%.
- **Kirschner is already assembling a viable Suncoast coalition.** He wins NPAs 46% to 19%, earns 13% among Republicans, leads 43% to 33% in Pinellas, and is essentially even in Manatee, 41% to 42%. After information, his support reaches 65% among NPAs and 57% in Pinellas.
- **Reform and affordability define the agenda.** Corruption in government (41%) and inflation or cost of living (40%) are the district's top two concerns. Kirschner's message is very convincing to 48% districtwide, including 56% of NPAs and 46% of non-MAGA Republicans.
- **Gruters is vulnerable to a unified insider-accountability case.** Majorities express serious doubts about her financial or political relationships.

Why Early Investment Matters:

FL-16 is winnable, but voters are still forming their views. Kirschner begins ahead in a district where the Republican brand starts with a six-point advantage, and the poll demonstrates that early definition expands his lead. Resources now can introduce him as the practical reformer, connect Gruters to insider influence and rising costs, and reach the decisive NPA and persuadable voters.

Survey of 400 likely FL-16 registered and likely voters who self-described themselves as likely to vote in the 2026 general election. The poll was conducted by SEA Research & Design from August 25–29, 2026 via live phone interviewers and supplemented with TTW (Text To Web) online surveys*. The voter model was: 34% Democratic, 47% Republican and 19% NPA. Manatee County 53%; Pinellas County 35 and other counties 12%. Margin of error at +- 4.9.*