



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on October 10, 2018

Kavanaugh Hearings Blunted Democrat “Blue Wave”

Disgust over how the confirmation hearings of Justice Brett Kavanaugh were handled by Democrats on the Senate Judiciary Committee is just now showing up in polls taken following those hearings. [CNN’s poll released on Monday](#) showed severe damage being done to the most critical part of the electorate the Democrats were hoping to capture in the upcoming midterm elections: independent voters. When asked, “Do you approve or disapprove of the way the Democrats in the U.S. Senate handled Kavanaugh’s confirmation hearing?” 58 percent of independent voters disapproved, compared to just 30 percent who approved — a jaw-dropping 28-percent margin.



An NPR/PBS *NewsHour*/Marist poll taken during the hearings showed any “wide Democratic enthusiasm advantage that has defined the 2018 campaign up to this point has disappeared.” In a previous poll in July, there was a 10-point gap between the number of Democrats and Republicans saying that the November midterm elections were “very important.” That gap is down to two points, a statistical tie, according to the poll. Lee Miringoff, director of the Marist Institute that conducted the poll, said “The results of [the Kavanaugh] hearings, at least in the short run, is the Republican base was awakened.”

According to a poll taken by Quinnipiac University just before the hearings began, the Democrat advantage in a generic vote had been cut in half compared to a similar poll taken just two weeks earlier. The September 12 survey showed Democrats with a 52-38 percent lead over Republicans, a 14-point gap. Two weeks later, in the survey taken September 27-30, that advantage had shrunk to seven points, 49-42.

In its weekly poll released on Wednesday, Rasmussen Reports found that the Democrat advantage over Republicans in a generic poll had vanished altogether: 45-45. The previous week, Democrats held a five-point lead over Republicans, 47-42.

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In order for the Democrats to gain control of the House in November, they must pick up 23 seats. On paper that not only looks possible, but likely. According to the *Cook Political Report*, 38 Republican-held seats are rated as “toss-up” or worse, with another 27 seats in the “lean Republican” category, meaning Republicans have a temporary advantage but the races are competitive. Helping along, wrote Dan Balz in the *Washington Post*, is the history of midterms: “The party that holds the White House almost always loses seats in midterm elections, especially during a president’s first term, and especially when a president’s rating is below 50 percent.”

But that history is increasingly becoming irrelevant thanks to the Democrats themselves. Not only was



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their behavior during the Kavanaugh hearings disgusting, their penchant for shooting themselves in their political foot is also helping Republicans. For instance, their behavior during the funeral service of Senator John McCain was, according to the liberal *New Yorker* magazine, “the biggest resistance meeting yet”:

Donald Trump’s name was never mentioned. It didn’t have to be. The funeral service for John Sidney McCain III, at the Washington National Cathedral, on this swampy Saturday morning, was all about a rebuke to the pointedly uninvited current President of the United States, which was exactly how McCain had planned it.

Turning a somber time of reflection and prayer into a political resistance meeting reminded Monica Showalter of the *American Thinker* of another time when a funeral was turned into a political rally, and it cost the Democrats in the midterms. Wrote Showalter:

[Paul] Wellstone was a well-liked Democratic senator from Minnesota who died in a plane crash in 2002. In the midst of public turmoil back in Washington, what with Bush Derangement Syndrome going full blast and midterms eleven days away, his funeral ended up amounting to a political rah-rah session, a “pep rally” and a “partisan foot-stomp” for the Democratic Party instead of a memorial to a man who was supposedly loved by Democrats.

What it showed was that midterms were more important to Democrats than honoring a man who had died. For the rest of us, it was just disgusting.

Eleven days later, the Democrats, rather than gaining in Congress, lost two Senate seats and eight House seats. With all the momentum currently on the side of Republicans, a similar result in less than 30 days is appearing to be more and more likely.

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