

CAR Polling Report
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Q Poll takes early look at the Connecticut's 2010 Statewide Races
Bysiewicz leads among Democrats in the race for Governor; Simmons leads among Republicans looking to unseat Dodd

One day after Governor Rell announced she will not seek reelection, The Quinnipiac University Polling Institute (Q Poll) released an early look at the 2010 gubernatorial election that included Governor Rell as the Republican candidate. While the survey did not include potential Republican candidates who have emerged since the governor's announcement, the survey does offer insight into the Democrats' search for a candidate for the State's top spot.

Quinnipiac also released polling numbers on the Senate race, showing former Congressman Rob Simmons still leads the pack of potential Republican candidates for the 2010 contest. The polling numbers show U.S. Senator Chris Dodd continuing to struggle to improve his approval ratings, but offers some positive signs that supporters of health care reform are in his camp.

The Race for Governor

Among announced Democratic candidates, Secretary of State Susan Bysiewicz runs best against Rell, trailing by six points (46 – 40 percent). Both business executive Ned Lamont and Stamford Mayor Dan Malloy get 33 percent of the vote when matched against Rell.

But while Bysiewicz does well against Rell in a general election toss-up, the Democratic nomination is still very much up for grabs. Lamont has only recently announced that he is exploring potential candidacy and brings a great deal of personal wealth to his campaign. Malloy's 33 percent is significant for a candidate with low statewide name recognition.

Bysiewicz gets a 43 – 11 percent favorability rating, with 44 percent who do not know enough about her to form an opinion. Lamont is rated favorably by 31 percent. Twenty-four percent have an unfavorable impression of him and 43 percent do not know enough about him. Malloy gets a 21 -10 percent favorability rating with 67 percent saying they do not know enough about him. In a Democratic primary matchup, Bysiewicz gets 26 percent to 23 percent for Lamont, and nine percent for Malloy. One-third of Democratic voters are undecided.

The Senate Race

In a Republican primary matchup Simmons gets 28 percent of the vote, followed by McMahon (17%), and Tom Foley (9%). No other candidate received more than 5 percent of the vote. Thirty-six percent of registered Republicans are undecided. In addition to leading the pack, Simmons does the best in matchups against Sen. Christopher Dodd, getting 49 percent of the vote to Dodd's 38 percent. Linda McMahon, the former World Wrestling Entertainment executive edges Dodd 43 to 41 percent.

Re-election is definitely going to be an uphill battle for Senator Dodd. The most recent Q Poll shows more than half of Connecticut's voters disapprove (54%) of the job he is doing in office, compared to 49 percent disapproving in a September survey. And, when asked if Senator Dodd deserves to be re-elected voters say no, 53 to 39 percent.

Still the poll offers some hope to the Dodd campaign. Voters who give health care as the most important issue in the 2010 senatorial election support Dodd while voters who believe the economy will be at the center of the election are more likely to support a Republican candidate. If the economy continues to improve and health care becomes a critical issue in the campaign Dodd could do well.

Senator Joseph Lieberman

Connecticut voters say they approve of the job Senator Lieberman is doing in office by a margin of 49 to 44 percent. Lieberman's approval is highest among Republicans (74%) followed by

independents (52%). Democrats are significantly less happy with the Senator. Sixty-two percent of Democratic voters say they disapprove 62 of the job he is doing in office while 31 percent approve. More than half of the State's voters (51%) see the Senator's views on issues as closer to those of the Republican Party than to the views of the Democratic Party.

For this survey, Quinnipiac University talked to 1,236 Connecticut registered voters between November 3 – 8, 2009. The margin of error for a sample of this size is +- 2.8 percentage points. The survey includes 474 Democrats. The margin of error for questions asked only of Democrats, like the primary question, is \pm 4.5 percentage points. The sample also includes 332 Republicans. The margin of error for questions asked only of Republicans is \pm 5.4 percentage points.