

Pharos Research Group

North Dakota Polling Report

10/19/12-10/21/12



Analysis

Pharos Research Group did a live call poll of 807 likely voters in North Dakota from October 19, 2012 through October 21, 2012. The breakdown was 402 men, 405 women, representing a 49.9%/50.1% split. There were 219 self-identified Democrats, 336 self-identified Republicans and 252 Independents representing a 27/42/31 split.

The numbers read like this: in the general election for President, 39.28% of respondents indicated an intention to vote for President Barack Obama, while 49.44% indicated a preference for Republican nominee Willard "Mitt" Romney. In the United States Senate race, 49.19% prefer the Democratic, former Attorney General Heidi Heitkamp, while 47.96% chose Republican nominee, Congressman Rick Berg. In the open House race, Democrat Pam Gulleon trails Public Service Commissioner Kevin Cramer, 42%-54%, while in the race for Governor, Jack Dalrymple, the incumbent, who ascended to office in January 2011 when popular former Governor John Hoeven was sworn in as a US Senator, is leading Democratic State Senator Ryan Taylor, 63%-32%.

Compared to the previous three polls, we see a widening lead for the challenger in the Presidential race. While the widening lead is incremental, barring an unforeseen development, Romney should carry the state comfortably in three weeks.

In the Senate race, the race has tightened significantly against previous polls we have released. Some of this is a function of the Republican tilt of the state, some is a function of a barrage of advertising in the low cost state. We continue to consider this state a true toss-up, as Heitkamp remains personally quite popular, while Berg's bruising election to the House in 2010 has left a residual bad taste in the minds of many in the state. Add in that despite the lean of the state on a legislative and Presidential level, Hoeven is the only Republican to win a US Senate seat in North Dakota since 1980, when Mark Andrews won a single term, and that both Byron Dorgan and Kent Conrad had tough first races, and this race will be competitive right up to election day.

In the House race, while Gulleon is an attractive candidate, running a professional campaign, Cramer has held statewide elective office and retains a large name identification edge from his failed races for this seat in the past, and has none of the negative cachet which seems to be holding Berg back. This race is not

particularly competitive, nor is it likely to become so, barring a major gaffe or scandal involving Cramer.

In the Governor's race, Taylor while personally attractive, appears to be running into a combination of a perception of competence and personal popularity for Dalrymple and a partisan trend-line which has not seen a Democrat win the statehouse since 1988. This race is not competitive and is exceptionally unlikely to become so.

REPORT

S3) CODE SEX 1= Female 2=Male

1= 405 50.19%

2= 402 49.81%

S4) Thinking of the last four general elections (the Presidential Elections in 2004 and 2008 and the Congressional Elections in 2006 and 2010), how many of those elections did you vote in?

CODE: ENTER NUMBER

2= 108 13.38%

3= 339 42.01%

4= 360 44.61%

S5) Are you registered as a Democrat or a Republican or are you an Independent?

CODE 1= Democrat, 2= Republican, 3= Independent

1= 219 27.14%

2= 336 41.64%

3= 252 31.23%

P1) Thinking about the election for President, if the election were held today would you vote for (rotate) Barack Obama or Mitt Romney? (Probe for undecided, ask lean)

CODE 1= Obama, 2= Romney, 3= Undecided

1= 317 39.28%

2= 399 49.44%

3= 91 11.28%

P2) Thinking about the election for the US Senate, if the election were held today would you vote for (rotate) Heidi Heitkamp or Rick Berg? (Probe once for undecided, ask lean)

CODE 1= Heitkamp, 2= Berg, 3=Undecided

1= 397 49.19%

2= 387 47.96%

3= 22 2.73%

P3) Thinking about the Democratic nominee for President, Barack Obama, do you have a generally favorable or unfavorable opinion of him?

CODE 1= Favorable, 2= Unfavorable

1= 339 42.01%

2= 459 56.88%

P4) Thinking about the Republican nominee for President, Mitt Romney, do you have a generally favorable or unfavorable opinion of him?

CODE 1= Favorable, 2= Unfavorable

1= 402 49.81%

2= 381 47.21%

P5) Thinking about the Republican nominee for the US Senate, Rick Berg, do you have a generally favorable or unfavorable opinion of him?

CODE 1= Favorable, 2= Unfavorable

1= 378 46.84%

2= 405 50.19%

P6) Thinking about the Democratic nominee for the US Senate, Heidi Heitkamp, do you have a generally favorable or unfavorable opinion of her?

CODE 1= Favorable, 2= Unfavorable

1= 446 55.27%

2= 271 33.58%

P7) Thinking about jobs, which of the Presidential candidates do you feel would be best equipped to deal with the prolonged high unemployment?

CODE 1= Obama 2= Romney

1= 345 42.75%

2= 438 54.28%

3= 24 2.97%

P8) Thinking about the economy as a whole, do you think the country is on the right track or the wrong track?

CODE 1= Right, 2= Wrong

1= 262 32.47%

2= 547 67.78%

P9) Thinking about your prospects for the next four years personally, do you think that if your preferred candidate is elected, you will be doing better or worse than you are now?

CODE 1=Better, 2= Worse

1= 499 61.83%

2= 160 19.83%

3= 150 18.59%

P10) In the election for the US House of Representatives, do you intend to vote for (rotate) Kevin Cramer or Pam Gulleon?

CODE 1= Gulleon, 2= Cramer

1= 342 42.38%

2= 438 54.28%

3= 27 3.35%

P11) In the election for Governor, do you intend to vote for (rotate) Jack Dalrymple or Ryan Taylor?

CODE 1= Taylor, 2= Dalrymple

1= 258 31.97%

2= 507 62.83%

3= 42 5.20%

PARTICULARS: 807 Likely Voters, surveyed by live calls October 19, 2012 through October 21, 2012. Landline and cellphone mix (85-15). Margin of error +/- 3.44%