



TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Brock McCleary, President
Date: May 11, 2015
RE: Key Poll Findings – Pennsylvania Statewide Poll

Direction of Pennsylvania

Most likely voters in Pennsylvania feel that things in the state are off on the wrong track (59%). More than two thirds of voters in the Northern Tier (68%) and Pittsburgh/Southwest regions (67%) say that things are on the wrong track. The most optimistic voters are found in the Philadelphia/Southeast region (36% right direction).

Senate 2016 Candidate Images

Senator Pat Toomey is showing favorable gains with respect to voter perception of the first-term incumbent. More than half of likely voters have a favorable opinion of Toomey (54% favorable, 32% unfavorable). He is viewed favorably in every region of the state (Northern Tier: 45% favorable, Philadelphia/Southeast: 52%, Pittsburgh/Southwest: 55%, Scranton/Lehigh Valley: 53%, South Central: 60%) as well as among Republicans (72% favorable), self-identified Conservatives (73% favorable), Independents (54% favorable) and Moderates (49% favorable). The Republican's favorable standing with unconventional constituencies may affirm the Senator's inclination to chart a more moderate course at times.

Allentown Mayor Ed Pawlowski (20% favorable, 19% unfavorable) and Montgomery County Commissioner Josh Shapiro's (19% favorable, 18% unfavorable) images are marked by low hard name identification (60% and 62% not sure, respectively). Although Pawlowski's name identification is higher in his home region of Scranton/Lehigh Valley, his image is actually a net negative there (21% favorable, 33% unfavorable). Former Congressman and 2010 candidate Joe Sestak's image is essentially 1-to-1 (33% favorable, 32% unfavorable) and he holds a significant hard name identification advantage over his fellow Democrats. Of the three potential Democratic challengers tested, Sestak has the best image among Democratic voters (Sestak: 44% favorable, 24% unfavorable; Pawlowski: 23% favorable, 18% unfavorable; Shapiro: 24% favorable, 18% unfavorable). Sestak's name identification varies across the state, reaching a high of 78% in the Philadelphia/Southeast region (41% favorable, 37% unfavorable) and a low of 44% in the Northern Tier (19% favorable, 25% unfavorable).

Senate 2016 General Election Match-ups

Republican Senator Pat Toomey holds commanding early leads over three potential Democratic challengers in the race for Senate. Toomey leads declared candidates Joe Sestak (53-32%) and Ed Pawlowski (55-30%) by 21% and 25%, respectively. Josh Shapiro trails Toomey by the largest margin (55-27%). Toomey consistently receives stronger support from his own party than the Democrats do from theirs and he also earns 20% or more of the Democratic vote in all three match-ups. Toomey leads Pawlowski and Shapiro by significant margins in their home regions (Scranton/LV: Toomey 57%, Pawlowski: 31%; Philadelphia/Southeast: Toomey 51%, Shapiro: 37%).

Toomey leads Joe Sestak in every region, and earns majorities of the vote in the Northern Tier (54-26%), Pittsburgh/Southwest (60-25%), Scranton/Lehigh Valley (53-27%) and South Central (55-27%) regions.

Sestak narrows Toomey's lead to 3% in the Philadelphia/Southeast region (47-44%). Toomey also leads Sestak among both women (46-37%) and men (61-27%).

Grading Governor Wolf

Governor Tom Wolf is viewed favorably by 49% of Pennsylvania voters (43% unfavorable). This represents a net 8% decline from his pre-election day standing in our [final gubernatorial poll in 2014](#). The Governor's image is a net positive among both women (52% favorable, 40% unfavorable) and men (48% favorable, 45% unfavorable).

Voters are split on what grade they would give Wolf after his first few months in office. Most voters give Wolf a grade in the B (22%) or C (20%) range. However, more voters would give Wolf an F (21%) than would give him an A (16%). Voters in Pittsburgh/Southwest were the most critical of Wolf (50% D/F) while voters in Philadelphia/Southeast gave him the highest marks (46% A/B).

Voter Opinion of Kathleen Kane

A majority of Pennsylvanians have an unfavorable opinion of Attorney General Kathleen Kane (31% favorable, 52% unfavorable). Kane is viewed unfavorably by both women (32% favorable, 48% unfavorable) and men (31% favorable, 55% unfavorable).

The allegations against Kathleen Kane have received extensive coverage in the news, so it is little surprise that 80% of voters have seen, read or heard something recently about the allegations against her. Of those who have heard something, 69% say the information they heard gave them a more unfavorable opinion of Kane.

A plurality (39%) of those surveyed say Kane should stay in office and the justice system should determine whether she is guilty or not, followed by 30% who say she should resign immediately and 25% who say she should resign if she is formally charged. Pluralities of both women (38%) and men (40%) say Kane should stay in office. Interestingly, younger voters are much more likely to say Kane should resign immediately (18-39: 41% resign immediately, 25% if formally charged, 31% stay in office; 40-54: 40%/20%/35%), while older voters say she should stay in office (55-65: 25%/27%/40%; 66+:21%/26%/45%).

Voters Say Taxes Going Up Under Wolf

When asked whether they think their taxes are more likely to go up or down as a result of Tom Wolf's proposed tax plan, an overwhelming 71% think their taxes are more likely to go up. Voters from all three parties agree that they are more likely to go up (Republicans: 87%, Democrats: 56%, Independents: 73%).

Property Taxes Voted the Worst

Property taxes have the most significant impact on personal finances, according to 50% of Pennsylvania voters (27% income tax, 14% sales tax). The property tax jumps to 67% among voters from Scranton/Lehigh Valley. Younger voters (18-39) are the only group where a plurality says income tax (41%) rather than the property tax (37%).

What's Impacting Taxes More?

Sixty-one percent of those surveyed think that "too many people not working and rely[ing] on government assistance" has a greater impact on taxes in general than "rich people not paying their fair share" (32%). Republicans overwhelmingly say the problem is that too many people are not working (85%) while a majority of Democrats say the rich are not paying their fair share (56%). Independents (67%) and Moderates (50%) tend to agree with Republicans on this issue.

Defining “Wealthy”

To place taxes on the ‘wealthy’ and the ‘middle class’ in perspective, we asked at what income level Pennsylvanians consider a family in Pennsylvania to be wealthy. A plurality of Pennsylvanians (29%) consider a household income of \$100,000-\$199,000 to be wealthy. The remaining voters are primarily split between \$200,000-\$299,000 (23%) and \$300,000 and above (21%). An additional 18% consider \$75,000-\$99,000 to be wealthy.

Confirmation of Marcus Brown

Thirty-nine percent of voters feel that the state Senate should not confirm Marcus Brown, compared to 20% who say he should be confirmed as state Police Commissioner. Still, a plurality of voters are not sure what the Senate should do (40%). Men are more likely to say he should not be confirmed (44%) while most women say they are ‘not sure’ (47%).

METHODOLOGY:

The sample size for the survey is 503 likely voters in Pennsylvania and the margin of error is +/-4.37%. Responses were gathered through land line interviews conducted using Interactive Voice Response (IVR). The survey was conducted May 6-7, 2015 by Harper Polling. The total percentages for responses may not equal 100% due to rounding.