



SIENA RESEARCH INSTITUTE

SIENA COLLEGE, LOUDONVILLE, NY

www.siena.edu/sri

For Immediate Release:

Monday, September 28, 2015

Contact:

Steven Greenberg (518) 469-9858

PDF version; crosstabs; website:

www.Siena.edu/SRI/SNY

Time Warner Cable News / Siena College 52nd State Senate District Poll: **Akshar Has Early, Commanding 28-Point Lead Over Fiala** By Generally Wide Margins, Akshar Seen as Better on Issues *Fiala Has Negative Favorability Rating; Akshar Strongly Positive* **Strong Opposition to Minimum Wage & Common Core;** **Support for Fracking Ban; Small Plurality Wants SAFE Act Repealed**

Loudonville, NY. Republican candidate Fred Akshar has a commanding early lead over Democrat Barbara Fiala, 59-31 percent, in the race to fill the Senate seat left vacant by the conviction of former Senate Deputy Majority Leader Tom Libous, according to a new Time Warner Cable News/Siena College poll of likely 52nd S.D. voters released today. By margins ranging from seven to 49 points, voters see Akshar as better than Fiala on a series of six issues.

Akshar is viewed favorably by 53 percent of likely voters and unfavorably by 17 percent. He has a 65 percent favorable rating from Republicans and 56 percent from independents, and even has a 37-31 percent favorability rating among Democrats. Fiala has a negative 32-53 percent favorability rating. She is viewed favorably by 51 percent of Democrats and unfavorably by 68 percent of Republicans and 55 percent of independents.

“With five weeks until Election Day, Akshar currently has an imposing 28 point lead over Fiala. While Fiala has a two-to-one lead, 60-28 percent, among Democrats, Akshar has an 84-9 percent lead among Republicans and a 61-27 percent lead among independent voters,” said Siena College pollster Steven Greenberg.

If the election was today, who would you vote for?			
	Fred Akshar	Barbara Fiala	Don't Know/Other
52nd SD	59%	31%	9%
<i>Democrats</i>	28%	60%	12%
<i>Republicans</i>	84%	9%	6%
<i>Independents</i>	61%	27%	13%
Broome County	59%	32%	9%
Chenango/Delaware Counties	65%	27%	8%
Tioga County	55%	29%	15%
Time Warner Cable News/Siena College Poll – September 28, 2015			

“Akshar leads by at least 26 points in every part of the district. He has a 34-point lead with men and a 22-point lead with women. He leads with voters under 55 years of age by 42 points and among voters 55 and older by a narrower but still strong 18 points,” Greenberg said. “Other than Democrats, Fiala appears to have no base. Certainly not regionally, not by age and not even by gender.”

“Although known to the vast majority of voters, the former Broome County Executive is not particularly well liked, other than by Democrats, and only by a little more than half of them,” Greenberg said. “A first time candidate, Akshar has quickly become known to most voters and sports a three-to-one favorable rating, including being viewed favorably by a plurality of Democrats.

Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of ...?			
	Favorable	Unfav.	Don't Know/ No Opinion
Fred Akshar	53%	17%	30%
Barbara Fiala	32%	53%	16%
Andrew Cuomo	38%	59%	3%
Tom Libous	35%	56%	9%
NYS Senate	28%	63%	9%
John Flanagan	9%	9%	82%
Time Warner Cable News/Siena College Poll – September 28, 2015			

“On every issue, Akshar is seen as the candidate who – by a wide margin, except on health care where he leads by a small margin – will do a better job in the Senate. And by a two-to-one margin, voters say Akshar will do a better job than Fiala representing their community in Albany,” Greenberg said.

Which candidate would do a better job representing you in the State Senate on . . .		
Issue	Akshar	Fiala
Jobs (Most important: 32%)	52%	30%
Education (20%)	49%	35%
State taxes (13%)	54%	27%
Fighting corruption in state govt. (11%)	60%	23%
Health care (7%)	44%	37%
Combating heroin use in ST (NA)	67%	18%
Representing our community in Albany	57%	29%
Time Warner Cable News/Siena College Poll – September 28, 2015		

Strong Opposition to Minimum Wage Increase & Common Core; Support for Fracking Ban

By a 71-23 percent margin, voters would like to see Common Core education standards eliminated. They oppose the recent minimum wage increase for fast food workers 62-34 percent. They agree with the decision to not allow hydrofracking in the Southern Tier 54-40 percent. And a plurality of voters, 41 percent, would like to see the SAFE Act repealed, compared to 34 percent who support it.

“At least 62 percent of voters from every party, county and gender oppose Common Core standards, including 79 percent of Akshar supporters and 55 percent of those supporting Fiala. Opposition to the recent minimum wage increase also runs high in this district, except with Democrats and Fiala supporters,” Greenberg said.

“While a majority of Republicans and Akshar supporters want fracking authorized, Democrats, independents and voters from every county agree with the fracking ban. The SAFE Act more closely divides these voters, with 54 percent of Fiala voters supporting the law and 54 percent of Akshar supporters wanting it repealed.”

“Governor Andrew Cuomo, the State Senate and the direction the state is headed in are all viewed significantly under water by voters,” Greenberg said. “Given that and the Republicans’ modest enrollment advantage, as well as how voters feel about Akshar and Fiala, it is clear that the Democrats are going to need a dramatic change in the dynamic of the campaign if they want to make this race competitive in the final five weeks.”

###

This Time Warner Cable News/Siena College 52nd S.D. survey was conducted September 21-24, 2015 by telephone calls to 535 likely voters. The results have a margin of error of ± 4.5 percentage points including the design effects resulting from weighting. Sampling was conducted via a stratified dual frame sample of historically active registered voters reached via landline telephone numbers provided by Prime New York and cell phone telephone numbers provided by Survey Sampling International. A likely voter screen was applied to initial respondents from this dual frame sample that was statistically adjusted to reflect party registration, gender and age. The Siena College Research Institute, directed by Donald Levy, Ph.D., conducts political, economic, social and cultural research primarily in NYS. SRI, an independent, non-partisan research institute, subscribes to the American Association of Public Opinion Research Code of Professional Ethics and Practices. For more information, please call Steven Greenberg at 518-469-9858. Survey cross-tabulations and frequencies can be found at: www.Siena.edu/SRI/SNY.