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Siena College 9th State Senate District Special Election Poll:

McGrath Opens 8-Point Lead Over Kaminsky

Both Candidates Do Well with Their Own Party, While Independents Side with McGrath Almost Two-to-One; Pluralities View McGrath Favorably & Kaminsky Unfavorably

Loudonville, NY. Republican Chris McGrath has opened an eight-point lead, 51-43 percent over Democratic Assemblyman Todd Kaminsky in the special election to fill the Senate seat left vacant by the conviction of former Senate Majority Leader Dean Skelos, according to a new Siena College poll of likely 9th S.D. voters released today. Kaminsky had a slight 47-45 percent edge in the Siena College poll released March 15.

McGrath is viewed favorably by 48 percent of likely voters and unfavorably by 39 percent (from 43-23 percent in March), while Kaminsky has a 41-49 percent favorability rating (down from 44-20 percent in March).

Voters are evenly divided on which candidate is running the more negative campaign. A plurality of voters think McGrath will win and a small majority want to see Republicans retain control of the Senate.

McGrath has turned what was a neck-and-neck battle into a solid, single-digit lead heading into the final days of the campaign, said Siena College pollster Steven Greenberg. McGrath is doing better with Republicans than Kaminsky does with Democrats. That, coupled with a commanding 26-point lead among independent voters, is what provides McGrath with his lead.

If election was today, who would you vote for?				
	April 16		March 15	
	Todd Kaminsky	Chris McGrath	Todd Kaminsky	Chris McGrath
9th SD	43%	51%	47%	45%
<i>Democrats</i>	77%	19%	82%	10%
<i>Republicans</i>	14%	83%	16%	77%
<i>Independents</i>	33%	59%	34%	53%
AD 20	47%	48%	56%	38%
AD 21	38%	55%	37%	52%
Other ADs	47%	50%	47%	43%
Siena College Poll – April 16, 2016				

The change in the last month appears to have come largely from within Kaminsky's base. His previous 72-point lead among Democrats has fallen to 58 points and the 18-point lead he had in the 20th Assembly District, which he currently represents, disappeared with the candidates now virtually tied.

McGrath extended a narrow three-point lead with men into a 20-point bulge, as women remain largely unchanged, supporting Kaminsky by four points, down slightly from six points in March. Voters 55 and older, who had given Kaminsky the edge by seven points in March, are now virtually evenly divided, while voters under 55 support McGrath by 17 points, up from four points in March, Greenberg said.

The campaign has taken a toll on both candidates' favorability ratings but more so on Kaminsky, Greenberg said. Kaminsky's positive 44-20 percent favorability rating four weeks ago is now a negative 41-49 percent favorability rating.

Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of?				
	April 16		March 15	
	Favorable	Unfav.	Favorable	Unfav.
Todd Kaminsky	41%	49%	44%	20%
Chris McGrath	48%	39%	43%	23%
Andrew Cuomo	46%	51%	57%	40%
NYS Senate	34%	57%	34%	55%
Siena College Poll – April 16, 2016				

McGrath's unfavorable rating rose about half as much as Kaminsky's and his favorable rating edged up, bringing him to a 48-39 percent favorability rating, from 43-23 percent in March.

Andrew Cuomo also saw a significant drop in his favorability rating. His current negative 46-51 percent favorability rating is down from a positive 57-40 percent rating in March, Greenberg said. Interestingly, voters' view of the State Senate is essentially unchanged at 34-57 percent, from 34-55 percent four weeks ago.

Also little changed in the last four months are the presidential primaries. Democrats favor Hillary Clinton by 22 points, down from 26 points in March, while 56 percent of Republicans favor Donald Trump, up from 44 percent last month, although support for John Kasich and Ted Cruz is unchanged. The increase for Trump appears to be all of the former Marco Rubio voters shifting to New York's Trump, Greenberg said.

Voters are now a little more supportive of seeing the Republicans remain in control of the State Senate. In March, voters sided with the Republicans by a narrow three points, however, that's now up to nine points, with 16 percent of Democrats wanting the GOP in control, while only seven percent of Republicans want the Democrats controlling the Senate, Greenberg said. Voters are evenly divided, 37-37 percent, when it comes to which candidate and campaign is running the more negative campaign.

As both candidates gear up to get out the vote for Tuesday, McGrath has an eight-point edge among likely voters and, by a nine-point margin, those voters think McGrath is likely to beat Kaminsky. The unpredictability of turnout in a special election with concurrent presidential primaries means that GOTV efforts by both campaigns, being watched by political insiders statewide, is crucial in these final days, Greenberg said.

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This Siena College 9th S.D. survey was conducted April 12-14, 2016 by telephone calls to 796 likely voters. The results have a margin of error of ± 3.6 percentage points including the design effects resulting from weighting. Sampling was conducted via a sample of historically active registered voters with telephone numbers provided by Prime New York. A likely voter screen was applied to initial respondents from the sample that had been statistically adjusted to reflect historic party turnout 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.