



# SIENA RESEARCH INSTITUTE

SIENA COLLEGE, LOUDONVILLE, NY

[www.siena.edu/sri](http://www.siena.edu/sri)

For Immediate Release:

Saturday, October 30, 2010

Contact:

Steven Greenberg at 518-469-9858

PDF version; crosstabs by district:

[www.Siena.edu/SRI](http://www.Siena.edu/SRI)

## Siena College State Senate Polls:

### **Zeldin Builds Large 16-Point Lead over Foley in 3<sup>rd</sup> SD Ball Opens 5-Point Lead on Kaplowitz in Open 40<sup>th</sup> SD Ritchie Has Slim 4-Point Edge over Aubertine in 48<sup>th</sup> SD Kennedy Now Takes 6-Point Lead over Quinn in 58<sup>th</sup> SD**

Loudonville, NY. Four of the most hotly contested and closely watched State Senate races shows one very tight race featuring a Democratic incumbent (SD 48), one race with a small lead for the Republican in an open seat currently held by a Republican (SD 40), one race (SD 58) with a small lead for a Democratic challenger in a seat currently held by the Democrats, and one race (SD 3) that has a Republican challenger far ahead of a Democratic incumbent, according to four new Siena (College) Research Institute State Senate polls of likely voters released today.

#### **3<sup>rd</sup> SD – Suffolk County – Brian Foley (D, incumbent) vs. Lee Zeldin (R)**

Zeldin has a commanding 53-37 percent lead over Foley. Five weeks ago the race was at 44-43 percent for Foley. Zeldin has the support of 78 percent of Republicans, up from 65 percent, and has a nearly two-to-one lead among independent voters 58-30 percent, up from 51-35 percent. Foley has the support of 69 percent of Democrats, down from 73 percent. Five weeks ago, Foley had the support of 26 percent of Republicans, which is now down to 17 percent and Zeldin's Democratic support grew to 21 percent from 14 percent.

In Brookhaven, Zeldin leads 53-38 percent (44-44 percent in previous Siena Poll), and in Islip he has a similar 53-37 percent lead, where previously Foley had a slim 44-41 percent lead. Zeldin leads by 22 points among men (up from nine) and nine points among women, among whom he previously trailed by 12 points. Voters 55 years old and older had previously supported Foley by a 50-37 percent margin and now support Zeldin by an even larger 55-36 percent margin.

When voters were asked whether they were inclined to re-elect Foley or they would prefer 'someone else,' someone else is the big winner 57-35 percent.

3 <sup>rd</sup> Senate District – Suffolk County								
Candidate	Senate Race		Favorable		Unfavorable		DK/NO	
	10/30	9/28	10/30	9/28	10/30	9/28	10/30	9/28
Lee Zeldin (R)	53%	43%	42%	26%	33%	17%	26%	57%
Brian Foley (D)*	37%	44%	38%	39%	53%	41%	9%	20%
DK/Not voting	10%	13%						
* Incumbent	Siena College State Senate Poll – October 30, 2010							

Zeldin is viewed favorably by 42 percent of voters and unfavorably by 33 percent, up from 26-17 percent favorability rating five weeks ago. Currently, 26 percent of voters don't have an opinion of Zeldin, less than half of the 57 percent who had no opinion in the previous poll. Foley is viewed favorably by 38 percent of voters (down one point) and unfavorably by 53 percent, up 12 points.

In the Governor's race, Andrew Cuomo leads Carl Paladino 57-33 percent. Previously Cuomo led Paladino 49-23 percent (with 20 percent supporting Lazio before he dropped out of the race). Cuomo leads among Democrats by 74 points and independents by 25 points. He trails Paladino among Republicans by a 55-33 percent margin. Cuomo also has the support of nearly one-third of voters supporting Zeldin.

"It seems that voters are prepared to change direction only two years after Foley won a huge upset victory. Voters would, by a strong margin, prefer 'someone else' to Foley. Zeldin is viewed far more favorably than Foley and voters have given him a very large lead heading into the closing days of the campaign. This district, nearly evenly divided between Democrats and Republicans, is overwhelmingly supportive of Cuomo, and it appears that there are a significant number of voters in this district – nearly one in five – who want to send Republican Zeldin to Albany to work with Democrat Cuomo," Greenberg said.

#### 40<sup>th</sup> SD – Dutchess/Putnam/Westchester Counties – Michael Kaplowitz (D) vs. Greg Ball (R)

Ball has a 49-44 percent lead over Kaplowitz in what continues to be a close race. While Kaplowitz has the support of 85 percent of Democrats (up from 80 percent), Ball has the support of 77 percent of Republicans (up from 68 percent) and has increased his lead among independent voters from 18 points to 29 points, in a district closely divided between Democrats and Republicans.

A gender gap seen in the last Siena Poll has largely disappeared as Ball leads among men by nine points (down from 12 points) and 47-45 percent among women (having previously trailed among women by 11 points). Ball has taken a narrow three-point lead in Westchester County, after trailing by eight points. Kaplowitz has cut his deficit in Dutchess and Putnam Counties from 15 points to 10 points.

40 <sup>th</sup> Senate District – Dutchess/Putnam/Westchester Counties								
Candidate	Senate Race		Favorable		Unfavorable		DK/NO	
	10/30	10/4	10/30	10/4	10/30	10/4	10/30	10/4
<b>Greg Ball (R)</b>	<b>49%</b>	45%	<b>49%</b>	39%	<b>41%</b>	39%	<b>10%</b>	22%
<b>Mike Kaplowitz (D)</b>	<b>44%</b>	44%	<b>36%</b>	34%	<b>40%</b>	23%	<b>23%</b>	43%
<b>DK/Not voting</b>	<b>7%</b>	12%						
<b>Siena College State Senate Poll – October 30, 2010</b>								

Ball is viewed favorably by 49 percent of voters and unfavorably by 41 percent (up from a 39-39 percent favorability rating). Kaplowitz has a negative 36-40 percent favorability rating, down significantly from his previous positive 34-23 percent favorability rating. Among independent voters, Ball has a 59-32 percent favorability rating, compared to Kaplowitz’s negative 24-55 percent rating.

Cuomo has opened a wide lead in this district in the Governor’s race, leading Paladino 53-34 percent, up from 49-44 percent in the previous Siena Poll. Cuomo leads among independents by nine points after previously trailing by eight points. Paladino previously led among Republicans by 66 points and now that lead has been cut in half to 33 points. Cuomo has double-digit leads in each region of the district.

“Given the partisan makeup of the district, it is not surprising that this race has stayed close between candidates that are elected officials but not an incumbent in this open Senate seat. Ball has gained a little momentum in the last few weeks, picking up some support from undecided independent and Republican voters. Ball has also seen his favorability rating improve, while Kaplowitz’s moved significantly in the wrong direction. It is interesting to note that while Ball has picked up four points and Kaplowitz’s level of support has remained flat, the Governor’s race has shown a major movement for Democrat Cuomo. This is a race where turnout will have a major impact – and the potential to swing this election either way,” Greenberg said.

**48<sup>th</sup> SD – Oswego/Jefferson/St. Lawrence – Darrel Aubertine (D, incumbent) vs. Patty Ritchie (R)**

Ritchie leads Aubertine by a narrow 47-43 percent margin, changing very little from her slim 48-45 percent lead in the September 28<sup>th</sup> Siena poll. Aubertine continues to win the support of more than three-quarters of Democrats. Ritchie has improved among Republicans, now getting 66 percent (up from 61 percent), and Aubertine has closed the gap with independent voters, now trailing by eight points (down from 28 points).

In the largest county in the district, Oswego, Ritchie’s lead is down to five points (from 12 points). She continues to lead by 19 points in St. Lawrence (the smallest county in the district). And Aubertine has seen his lead in Jefferson County fall from 19 points to six points. Ritchie continues to lead among men and Aubertine continues to have a slim lead among women. Slightly more of Aubertine’s voters (70 percent) than Ritchie’s voters (63 percent) say they are absolutely certain to support their candidate.

48 <sup>th</sup> Senate District – Oswego/Jefferson/St. Lawrence								
Candidate	Senate Race		Favorable		Unfavorable		DK/NO	
	10/30	9/28	10/30	9/28	10/30	9/28	10/30	9/28
<b>Patty Ritchie (R)</b>	<b>47%</b>	48%	<b>53%</b>	39%	<b>30%</b>	18%	<b>17%</b>	43%
<b>Darrel Aubertine (D)*</b>	<b>43%</b>	45%	<b>52%</b>	54%	<b>39%</b>	33%	<b>9%</b>	13%
<b>DK/Not voting</b>	<b>11%</b>	7%						
<b>* Incumbent</b>								
<b>Siena College State Senate Poll – October 30, 2010</b>								

Aubertine is viewed favorably by 52 percent of voters and unfavorably by 39 percent (down from September’s 54-33 percent favorability rating). His favorability rating with Republicans fell dramatically to 38-53 percent. Ritchie has a 53-30 percent favorability rating, up from 39-18 percent in September, when 43 percent of voters didn’t know enough about her to have an opinion. She is viewed most favorably in St. Lawrence County and he is viewed most favorably in Jefferson County.

When asked whether they want to re-elect Aubertine or would prefer ‘someone else,’ half prefer someone else (up from 44 percent) and 42 percent are prepared to re-elect him (down from 45 percent).

In the Governor’s race, Cuomo has a 24-point lead over Paladino, 54-30 percent, up from a 16-point lead in September. In this district where Republicans significantly outnumber Democrats, Cuomo leads Paladino by 83 points with Democrats and 10 points with independents. And he only trails Paladino 42-39 percent with Republicans. He even has the support of three in ten Ritchie voters.

“This race has remained extraordinarily tight over the course of a fiercely contested campaign. Aubertine has been successful in this district with a significant Republican enrollment edge twice, however, he now appears to be in the battle of his political life. Ritchie has become better known over the course of the campaign and now has a stronger favorability rating than Aubertine. With just days until voters go to the polls, both campaigns need to focus their energy on turning out their supporters. The North Country may be in for a late night of counting on Tuesday before a winner can be declared,” Greenberg said.

**58<sup>th</sup> SD – Erie County –**

**Tim Kennedy (D/C) vs. Jack Quinn (R) vs. William Stachowski (WFP/I, incumbent)**

Kennedy has opened a six-point lead (45-39 percent) over Quinn, who had a narrow three-point lead in the October 4<sup>th</sup> Siena Poll. Stachowski, running on two minor party lines, has the support of nine percent of voters (down from 12 percent). Quinn has the support of 69 percent of Republicans (down from 76 percent) and the 17-point lead he previously had with independents is now down to two points. Kennedy has the support of 60 percent of Democrats, and in this district where Democrats have a better than two-to-one enrollment edge, that’s enough to give Kennedy the lead.

Kennedy has extended his lead in Buffalo/Lackawanna to 25 points, up from 15 points. Cheektowaga (where Kennedy previously had a 14-point lead) and the southern suburbs (where Quinn previously led by 26 points) are now both virtually dead even.

Quinn previously had a small lead with men, who are now nearly evenly divided. Women had been evenly divided between Kennedy and Quinn, and they now give Kennedy a 16-point lead. Kennedy’s previous seven-point lead among voters 55 years old and older has been cut nearly in half, however he has turned a 12-point deficit into a 10-point lead with voters under 55 years of age. Sixty-one percent of Quinn voters and 58 percent of Kennedy voters say they will not change their minds.

<b>58<sup>th</sup> Senate District – Erie County</b>								
<b>Candidate</b>	<b>Senate Race</b>		<b>Favorable</b>		<b>Unfavorable</b>		<b>DK/NO</b>	
	<b>10/30</b>	<b>10/4</b>	<b>10/30</b>	<b>10/4</b>	<b>10/30</b>	<b>10/4</b>	<b>10/30</b>	<b>10/4</b>
<b>Tim Kennedy (D/C)</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>19%</b>
<b>Jack Quinn (R)</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>13%</b>
<b>William Stachowski (W/I)*</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>70%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>8%</b>
<b>DK/Not voting</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>7%</b>						
<b>* Incumbent</b>								

**Siena College State Senate Poll – October 30, 2010**

Both Quinn and Kennedy currently have identical 49-40 percent favorability ratings. Kennedy’s is down from 51-30 percent, while Quinn’s has fallen further, from 62-25 percent. Kennedy is viewed most favorably in Buffalo/Lackawana and Quinn is viewed most favorably in the southern suburbs. Stachowski continues to have more than three times as many voters viewing him unfavorably as those who view him favorably.

In the Governor’s race, Paladino continues to have a huge lead over Cuomo, 58-30 percent, down slightly from 65-30 percent. Paladino has the support of 86 percent of Republicans and 63 percent of independents and only trails Cuomo 48-43 percent with Democrats and 48-44 percent with Kennedy voters.

“Over the last four weeks, Kennedy has turned a small deficit into a small lead over Quinn in this heavily Democratic-dominated district that is located squarely in the middle of ‘Carl Country.’ In a district where nearly as many Democrats support Paladino as support Cuomo, Kennedy is getting the support of six out of ten Democrats, while Stachowski still has the support of 11 percent of Democrats. To hold on, Kennedy must ensure that Paladino Democrats come back to ‘Row A.’ And Quinn, who is within striking distance, must try and rebuild his margins with Republicans and independents,” Greenberg said.

\* \* \* \* \*

– more –

Gubernatorial Horse Race in State Senate District								
Candidate	3 <sup>rd</sup> SD		40 <sup>th</sup> SD		48 <sup>th</sup> SD		58 <sup>th</sup> SD	
	10/30	9/28	10/30	10/4	10/30	9/28	10/30	10/4
<b>Andrew Cuomo</b>	<b>57%</b>	49%	<b>53%</b>	49%	<b>54%</b>	48%	<b>30%</b>	30%
<b>Carl Paladino</b>	<b>33%</b>	23%	<b>34%</b>	44%	<b>30%</b>	32%	<b>58%</b>	65%
<b>DK/Not voting/Other</b>	<b>10%</b>	28%	<b>14%</b>	7%	<b>16%</b>	21%	<b>12%</b>	5%
<b>Siena College State Senate Polls – October 30, 2010</b>								

“Among these four Senate districts, one (SD 48) has a heavy Republican enrollment edge and Cuomo has a 24-point lead in the gubernatorial race there. In two districts (SDs 3 and 40) where enrollment is virtually even between Democrats and Republicans, Cuomo leads by 24 and 19 points. In the only district with an overwhelming Democratic enrollment edge (SD 58), in the middle of ‘Paladino Country’ in Erie County, Paladino leads Cuomo by 28 points,” Greenberg said. “Throughout the course of this campaign, Siena has included a gubernatorial match-up question in a number of hotly contested Senate and Congressional district polls and with the exception of the 58<sup>th</sup> SD, Cuomo has led in every district, tracking very closely to what Siena sees in statewide gubernatorial polls.

“As the campaign season winds down and voters prepare to go to the polls on Tuesday, no voter will have the opportunity to vote on which party should have a majority and control the State Senate in 2011. Rather, voters will have the opportunity to vote for their individual Senator. Collectively, however, the voters in about a dozen key districts will ultimately decide whether to keep the Democrats in the majority or to replace them after two years and put the Republicans back in the majority. If the four races Siena has looked at are any indication, it appears that the Republicans may have a small edge. But one thing for sure is that it’s going to be a long night on Tuesday watching district by district returns,” Greenberg said.

# # #

These SRI surveys were conducted from October 26-29, 2010 by telephone calls to likely voters in each State Senate district. For the 3<sup>rd</sup> SD, 412 voters were included in the sample, with a margin of error of  $\pm 4.8$  percentage points. For the 40<sup>th</sup> SD, 428 voters were included in the sample, margin of error  $\pm 4.7$ . For the 48<sup>th</sup> SD, 426 voters were included in the sample, margin of error  $\pm 4.7$ . For the 58<sup>th</sup> SD, 420 voters were included in the sample, margin of error  $\pm 4.8$ . In each district a stringent multi-question likely voter screen was applied to a weighted representative sample of registered voters. For more information, please call Steven Greenberg at 518-469-9858. Cross-tabulations and frequencies for these six polls can be found at: [www.Siena.edu/SRI/SNY](http://www.Siena.edu/SRI/SNY).