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Siena College 21st Congressional District Poll:

Owens & Doheny Locked in Near Dead Heat Race

Independents Shift: Big Owens Lead Evaporates; Doheny Favored by 2

Romney Leads Obama By 4 Points After Previously Trailing by 5 Points

Loudonville, NY. After having an early double digit lead seven weeks ago, Democratic Representative Bill Owens is now locked in a near dead heat with his Republican challenger Matt Doheny. Owens has the support of 44 percent of likely voters and Doheny has the support of 43 percent, according to a Siena College Research Institute poll of likely 21st C.D. voters released today.

Doheny now has a tiny two point lead among independent voters after having previously trailed Owens among independents by 30 points. Owens had led among voters in the portion of the district he currently represents by 24 points and that lead is now seven points. Among voters in the area new to the 21st C.D., Doheny had a small three-point lead and now leads there by 10 points. Mitt Romney now leads President Obama 49-45 percent, after having trailed by five points in the prior Siena College poll.

“Owens is no stranger to close races, having won two nail-biting elections with less than 50 percent of the vote. Well, here we go again,” said Siena College pollster Steven Greenberg.

“Doheny increased his support among Republicans in this district with a 15-point enrollment edge, although

Owens continues to have support from more than 20 percent of Republicans. Owens is still supported by more than three-quarters of Democrats. Independent voters, however, have shifted dramatically over the last seven weeks from being strongly for Owens to being nearly evenly divided, leaning toward Doheny,” Greenberg said.

If the election was today, who would you vote for?					
		Bill Owens	Matt Doheny	Donald Hassig	Don't Know/ Not Voting
21st CD	Nov. 1	44%	43%	4%	9%
	Sept. 10	49%	36%	6%	9%
<i>Democrats</i>	Nov. 1	77%	10%	5%	8%
	Sept. 10	76%	11%	7%	6%
<i>Republicans</i>	Nov. 1	22%	67%	2%	8%
	Sept. 10	26%	60%	3%	11%
<i>Independents</i>	Nov. 1	41%	43%	6%	9%
	Sept. 10	54%	24%	11%	10%
Fulton/Warren/ Washington/Saratoga	Nov. 1	36%	46%	5%	13%
	Sept. 10	37%	41%	9%	13%
Clinton/Essex/Franklin/ Hamilton/Herkimer	Nov. 1	53%	37%	3%	6%
	Sept. 10	54%	32%	5%	10%
Jefferson/Lewis/ St. Lawrence	Nov. 1	47%	44%	3%	7%
	Sept. 10	60%	32%	4%	4%
Siena College Poll – November 1, 2012					

“Owens continues to have a significant double digit lead in the northern/central portion of the district. Doheny has increased his lead in the area closest to the Capital District, most of which is new to the district, from four to 10 points. And the most dramatic movement came in the western part of the district, where Doheny had trailed Owens by 28 points and now is within three points. Owens leads among voters he currently represents by seven points, down from 24 points, and Doheny leads among voters in the new part of the district by 10 points, up from three points,” Greenberg said.

“Men give a small edge to Doheny, while women give Owens a small edge. Owens leads by 10 points among voters 55 and older, while Doheny leads among voters under 55 years of age by 11 points,” Greenberg said.

“The negative advertising has taken a toll on the view voters have of both candidates. Owens continues to have a better favorability rating than Doheny, although 38 percent of voters now view him unfavorably, up from 22 percent. Doheny’s favorable rating is up seven points and his unfavorable rating is up by 10 points. His favorability rating is now only positive by two points,” Greenberg said.

Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of ...?				
		Favorable	Unfavorable	Don't Know/ No Opinion
Bill Owens	Nov. 1	47%	38%	15%
	Sept. 10	51%	22%	26%
Matt Doheny	Nov. 1	43%	41%	16%
	Sept. 10	36%	31%	33%
Donald Hassig	Nov. 1	6%	19%	75%
	Sept. 10	6%	17%	77%
Andrew Cuomo	Nov. 1	69%	25%	6%
	Sept. 10	72%	23%	5%
Mitt Romney	Nov. 1	51%	46%	4%
	Sept. 10	44%	53%	4%
Barack Obama	Nov. 1	47%	51%	2%
	Sept. 10	50%	47%	3%
Siena College Poll – November 1, 2012				

Romney Turns Narrow Deficit into Narrow Lead

“Thanks to a large swing by independent voters – who had supported Obama by 19 points and now favor Romney by three – Romney has turned a previous five-point deficit into a 49-45 percent lead over Obama,” Greenberg said. “Obama’s favorability rating dropped a little, while Romney’s jumped from being negative by nine points to being positive by five points, largely because of the views of independent voters.”

“In the closing days of the campaign, both candidates will be fighting for every last vote. An equal and large number of supporters of both candidates say they are committed to their man and only one in twelve voters remains undecided,” Greenberg said. “Which candidate will do a better job of convincing last minute deciders? Which campaign will do a better job of getting their voters to the polls? Will momentum carry Doheny to victory? Will Owens be able to hang on? Will the presence of a third party candidate once again syphon enough votes to ensure that the winner does not have the support of a majority? The proverbial barn is on fire.”

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This Siena College 21st C.D. survey was conducted October 29-30, 2012 by telephone calls to 629 likely voters. A likely voter screen was applied to the sample of registered voters that had been statistically adjusted to reflect party registration, gender and age. It has a margin of error of ± 3.9 percentage points. The Siena College Research Institute, directed by Donald Levy, Ph.D., conducts political, economic, social and cultural research primarily in New York State. 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.