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Contact:

Dr. Don Levy, 518-944-0482, 518-783-2901 or dlevy@siena.edu

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YNN/Siena College Albany Mayoral Primary Poll:

Sheehan Has Large, Early 54 to 23% Lead over Ellis in Mayoral Democratic Primary

Democratic Voters Think Sheehan Better on All Issues, Especially Economic Development, Jobs, Taxes & Waste Management

Jennings Leaving Office with High Personal Marks from Voters Despite Low Grades to City on Infrastructure, Jobs, Schools and Gov't Responsiveness

Loudonville, NY. As the Democratic mayoral primary race in Albany enters its final six weeks, City Treasurer Kathy Sheehan leads Corey Ellis 54-23 percent among registered Democrats, with 23 percent of voters undecided, according to a new YNN/Siena (College) Research Institute poll of Albany voters. Democratic voters believe that Sheehan would do a better job than Ellis on addressing all key issues by margins of 26 to 35 points, including capitalizing on the Hudson River, keeping taxes under control, managing economic development, creating jobs, addressing the city's long-term waste management issues and improving public education.

Current Mayor Jerry Jennings is viewed favorably by 71 percent of city voters and two-thirds say that he has done either an excellent (20%) or good (46%) job as mayor. While a small majority, 51 percent, says that the city is on the right track compared to 37 percent that believe Albany is headed in the wrong direction, majorities say that many aspects of governmental service or life in Albany including the condition of local roads, how responsive local government is to the needs of citizens, the quality of our public schools and the ability to obtain suitable employment are no better than fair if not poor.

“While no lead in July is insurmountable in September, Corey Ellis, despite a strong showing against Jennings four years ago has a large hill to climb against a well-known, well liked Sheehan who voters believe is more likely to do a better job addressing many local issues,” according to Don Levy, SRI's Director.

“Sheehan is the overwhelming choice for Mayor among older, White, Catholic, and male voters. Ellis' support is strongest and reaches a majority among African-Americans and he has plurality support among younger and Protestant voters,” Levy said.

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Democratic voters give Sheehan a favorability rating of 63 percent against only 11 percent unfavorable. A majority of every group views Sheehan favorably except the young and African-Americans both of whom still show strong pluralities of 28 to 32 points of favorable views of Sheehan. Ellis is viewed favorably by more than a two-to-one ratio, 49 to 21 percent with two-thirds of African-Americans and a majority of women, voters under the age of 55 and Protestants having a favorable view of Ellis.

“On every issue that we asked about– including several economic development issues, crime, controlling city taxes, education and addressing the city’s issues with waste management, Sheehan is viewed as the stronger candidate,” Levy said. “Ellis is seen as competitive with Sheehan at this stage of the campaign only on addressing neighborhood concerns.”

Fifty-seven percent of all voters, including a majority of voters of every party and age group, are in favor of changing the Albany City Charter to put in place term limits for the Mayor’s office.

By a margin even greater than during the last Mayor’s election in 2009, 59 percent of all voters and 59 percent of Democrats oppose a proposal to build a new convention center in downtown Albany while 33 percent of all voters and 34 percent of Democrats support the proposal (in 2009 among Democrats, 52% opposed while 38% supported). Support is greatest and reaches a majority only among the City’s younger voters similar to four years ago.

“Right now, a majority of Albany’s Democrats, whether they see the city moving in the right direction or the on the wrong track, favor Kathy Sheehan over Corey Ellis. Still, while Sheehan’s early lead is impressive, hold the headlines. Ellis is well liked by voters and did succeed in closing strong against Jennings four years ago. Sheehan’s supporters in this poll are slightly more ardent than Ellis’ but at this early point we didn’t screen for likely voters. In every election but even more so in a primary in September, the candidate that succeeds in getting their faithful to turnout may very well be celebrating after the polls close.”

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On Each Issue, Who Do You Think Would Do A Better Job?			
Issue	Sheehan	Ellis	DK/NO
Keeping city taxes under control	50%	18%	31%
Managing economic development in Albany	50%	19%	30%
Capitalizing on the Hudson River waterfront as an asset	49%	14%	36%
Improving public education	47%	21%	32%
Creating jobs	46%	19%	35%
Addressing the city’s long-term waste management issues	43%	17%	38%
Addressing neighborhood concerns	40%	32%	26%
Fighting crime	39%	26%	33%

This YNN/Siena College Albany Mayoral Primary Poll was conducted July 22-24, 2013 by land and cell telephone calls to 948 registered voters of whom 670 were Democrats. It has an overall margin of error of ± 3.2 percentage points and ± 3.8 percentage points for Democrats only. Data was statistically adjusted by age, gender and racial status to ensure representativeness. Sampling was conducted using households known to include registered voters weighted to reflect established population patterns. For more information, please call Don Levy at 518-944-0482. Survey cross-tabulations and frequencies can be found at: www.Siena.edu/SRI/SNY.