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De Blasio Holds Commanding Lead Over Lhota

**Seen Better on Issues; Strongest on Education, Housing, Income Gap
*Strong Support for Kelly & Inspector General; Divided on Stop & Frisk***

Loudonville, NY. With less than five weeks until Election Day, the Democratic candidate for mayor, Public Advocate Bill de Blasio, holds a commanding 68-19 percent lead over Republican Joe Lhota, according to The New York Times/Siena College Poll of likely voters released today. De Blasio is viewed favorably by 58 percent of likely voters and unfavorably by 19 percent, with 20 percent having not heard enough about him to have an opinion. Lhota has a negative 22-36 percent favorability rating, with 40 percent not having an opinion.

Voters see de Blasio as better than Lhota on every issue, and strongly favor the Democrat on dealing with the gap between rich and poor New Yorkers, addressing housing needs and improving education. By better than three-to-one margins, voters also see de Blasio as better able to bring about needed change, foster compromise between different groups and understand the needs and problems of people, as well as having a clearer vision for the City.

By better than two-to-one, voters would like to see Ray Kelly kept on as police commissioner. At the same time, by nearly three-to-one, they would like to see an inspector general to monitor the police, and they are virtually evenly divided on the existing stop and frisk policy.

“It may be too soon to say the words ‘Mayor de Blasio,’ but it doesn’t appear likely that New Yorkers are going to spend the next four years talking about decisions made by the ‘Lhota Administration.’ To paraphrase an old cliché, five weeks is a lifetime in politics,” said Siena College pollster Steven Greenberg. “However, it appears that Joe Lhota will likely need all of that time and a dramatic shift in the campaign if he hopes to close the gap, make this race competitive and have any chance of beating Bill de Blasio to become New York’s next mayor.

“De Blasio has large to commanding leads among every demographic group except Republicans, although he does run neck-and-neck with Lhota among self-identified conservatives. De Blasio leads by more than 60 points in the Bronx, more than 50 points in Manhattan and by more than 40 points in Queens and Brooklyn,” Greenberg said. “He has a 59-point lead with women and a 35-point lead with men. He has the support of nearly 90 percent of black voters, nearly 80 percent of Latinos, and leads among white voters 55-33 percent.”

“While one in five voters doesn’t know enough about de Blasio to have an opinion about him, he has a strong three-to-one positive favorability rating,” Greenberg said.

“Lhota is unknown to twice as many voters and is viewed unfavorably by more than view him favorably. In fact, he is not even viewed nearly as favorably by Republicans as de Blasio is by Democrats.”

Favorable / Unfavorable Ratings			
Person	Favorable	Unfavorable	Haven't Heard Enough
Bill de Blasio	58%	19%	20%
Joe Lhota	22%	36%	40%
Adolfo Carrion	7%	14%	76%
Rudy Giuliani	48%	45%	5%
Mike Bloomberg	46%	47%	3%
David Dinkins	40%	37%	19%

The New York Times/Siena College New York City Poll – Oct. 4, 2013

Voters Say de Blasio Would Do Better Job than Lhota on All Issues

“More than two-thirds of voters say de Blasio would be better than Lhota on dealing with the gap between rich and poor New Yorkers, addressing the City’s housing needs and improving public education. By a wide margin,

Which Candidate Would Do the Best Job on the Following Issues?		
Issue	De Blasio	Lhota
Dealing with the gap between the rich and poor in NYC	69%	15%
Addressing the housing needs of New Yorkers	69%	17%
Improving public education	66%	17%
Addressing City taxes	58%	25%
Promoting economic development in New York City	56%	29%
Keeping the City safe from crime	52%	29%
Keeping the City safe during a natural disaster	50%	28%
Keeping the City safe from a terrorist attack	49%	26%
Which Candidate Do You Think....		
Understands the needs & problems of people like yourself	67%	20%
Will bring about needed change	65%	20%
Can foster compromise between different groups	63%	19%
Has a clear vision for New York City	61%	19%
Has the ability to manage NYC’s complex government	57%	28%
Is tough enough to make hard decisions	52%	31%

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voters even say de Blasio will do a better job than Lhota on issues more traditionally seen as Republican strengths, such as taxes, crime, economic development, and keeping the City safe from terrorism,”

Greenberg said.

“Additionally, voters give de Blasio the overwhelming edge on understanding their needs, having a

vision for the City and the ability to bring about needed change and foster compromise,” Greenberg said. “They also think he’s tough enough to make the hard decision and manage a very complex City government.”

Voters Say de Blasio Better on Crime, but on Police Issues, They Are with Lhota as Much as with de Blasio

“By a 70-25 percent margin, voters favor an independent police department inspector general, although Lhota supporters are opposed. Keeping Ray Kelly as commissioner is supported 62-30 percent, including by a majority of de Blasio supporters. And stop and frisk divides voters down the middle, with de Blasio supporters strongly opposed, and Lhota supporters even more strongly in favor,” Greenberg said. “If crime was the most important issue for voters, this race might potentially be closer. But it’s not. Voters say jobs and education are the most important issues for them. And that might be why de Blasio has a huge – if not insurmountable – lead.”

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This New York Times/Siena College Poll was conducted September 28-October 2, 2013 by telephone calls in both English and Spanish to 1,168 New York City residents and interviews with 700 likely registered voters. It has a margin of error of ±3.7 percentage points for likely voters. Data was statistically adjusted to correct for unequal probability of selection by household size and the overlap of land and cell phones and by age, education, borough, race/ethnicity and gender to ensure representativeness. Sampling was conducted via random digit dialing to landline and cell phones weighted to reflect known population patterns. 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, call Steve Greenberg at (518) 469-9858. For survey cross-tabs and frequencies: www.Siena.edu/SRI/SNY.