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Quinn Leads Pack Among Dems; Weiner in 2nd Place

Majority of Voters – Including a Strong Majority of Democrats – Say Weiner & Spitzer Deserve Another Chance at Elected Office

Majority ‘Satisfied’ with Mayoral Candidates; Split on Whether Any Can Be ‘Larger than Life’ Personalities Like Many Past Mayors

Loudonville, NY. City Council Speaker Christine Quinn leads a crowded pack of Democratic mayoral candidates, attracting the support of 27 percent of Democrats, leading former Congressman Anthony Weiner (18 percent), former City Comptroller Bill Thompson (11 percent), Public Advocate Bill de Blasio (11 percent), and City Comptroller John Liu (seven percent), according to The New York Times/Siena College Poll of registered New York City voters released today.

A clear majority of voters, including a strong majority of Democrats, say both Weiner and former Governor Eliot Spitzer deserve another chance at elected office despite their past behavior. A majority of voters say they are at least somewhat satisfied with the candidates running for mayor. However, only 43 percent say that any of the current candidates could become a mayor with a larger than life personality, while 43 percent say that none of the candidates could become that kind of mayor.

“With the support of more than one-quarter of Democrats, Quinn has a significant nine-point lead over Weiner, her closest competitor. Thompson and de Blasio, barely in double digits, and Liu behind them have substantial ground to make up over the next eight weeks if they want to make it into what appears to be a near-certain runoff after the September primary,” said Siena College pollster Steven Greenberg. “With a commanding Manhattan lead and two- to five-point leads in the outer boroughs, Quinn is in a strong position to make the runoff.

“Quinn leads with men and women, whites, blacks and Latinos, Jews, Catholics, and Protestants. The race is very close among older voters with Quinn, Weiner and Thompson separated by only four points. In union households – and organized labor support is dispersed among the candidates – Quinn, Weiner, Thompson, and de Blasio are all separated by seven points,” Greenberg said. “A lot can happen in this race as candidates become more known to voters, as voters begin to focus and as it becomes clearer which Democrats will cast their vote on primary day.”

“Although the five leading Democratic candidates include three current City officials, one former City official and one former Congressman, not one of those candidates is viewed favorably by more than 26 percent of voters or by 30 percent of Democrats,” Greenberg said. “Quinn and Liu are viewed favorably and unfavorably by nearly equal numbers of voters, while de Blasio and Thompson have better than two-to-one favorability ratings, and Weiner is viewed far more unfavorably than favorably.”

Favorable / Unfavorable Ratings				
Person	Favorable	Unfavorable	Undecided	Haven't Heard Enough
Christine Quinn	26%	26%	22%	25%
Bill de Blasio	23%	10%	22%	45%
Bill Thompson	23%	10%	21%	45%
Anthony Weiner	22%	37%	25%	15%
John Liu	20%	18%	19%	43%
Sal Albanese	6%	8%	12%	73%
Erick Salgado	3%	5%	11%	81%
John Catsimatidis	8%	12%	12%	68%
Joseph Lhota	8%	13%	16%	63%
George McDonald	5%	6%	12%	77%
Adolfo Carrion	6%	8%	11%	75%
Eliot Spitzer	28%	35%	24%	12%
Scott Stringer	14%	7%	18%	61%
Barack Obama	69%	18%	11%	1%
Andrew Cuomo	56%	14%	19%	11%
Michael Bloomberg	44%	39%	15%	2%

The New York Times/Siena College New York City Poll – July 18, 2013

Weiner & Spitzer Deserve Another Chance at Elected Office Despite Their Past Behavior

Fifty-nine percent of voters say Weiner deserves another chance, while 38 percent say he does not deserve another chance (62-36 percent among Democrats). Spitzer deserves another chance according to 54 percent of voters, and 42 percent say he doesn't (58-39 percent among Democrats).

“While more voters and Democrats view Weiner unfavorably than view him favorably, a strong majority of Democrats and independents and a plurality of Republicans are prepared to give him a second chance at elected office,” Greenberg said. “Voters say Spitzer deserves another chance too, although Republicans strongly disagree. Younger voters are very forgiving of Weiner but a majority of them don't want to give Spitzer another chance.”

Only 43 Percent of Voters Think There Is a “Larger than Life” Mayor Among Current Candidates

Fifty-three percent of voters say they are at least somewhat satisfied with the current mayoral candidates, however, only 10 percent are very satisfied. And only 43 percent of voters think that one of the current candidates could become a mayor with a ‘larger than life’ personality that embodies the essence of the City.

“Most voters are ‘somewhat satisfied’ with the current crop of candidates,” Greenberg said. “But somewhat satisfied doesn't seem to inspire voters to see any of the current candidates as a future LaGuardia, Lindsey, Koch, or Giuliani – mayors of both parties, often controversial, not universally loved, but certainly with larger than life personalities. Weiner and Quinn are each seen by about 11 percent of voters as having that potential. No other candidate is seen as conceivably ‘larger than life’ by more than three percent of the city's voters.”

Voters Want A New Direction After 12 Years of Bloomberg, Who is Viewed More Positive than Negative
Mayor Michael Bloomberg has a 48-42 percent job approval rating and is viewed favorably by 44 percent of voters, unfavorably by 39 percent, with 15 percent undecided.

“After almost 12 years in office, Bloomberg is viewed more positively than negatively but just barely. A majority of voters say his endorsement of a candidate won’t affect their vote but more voters say his endorsement of a candidate would make them less likely to support that candidate rather than support him or her,” Greenberg said.

“Perhaps most telling about how voters feel about the Bloomberg years is that 65 percent say they want the next mayor to move the City in a new direction, while 30 percent want to keep moving in the same direction,” Greenberg said. “That despite the fact that a majority think the City is headed in the right direction.”

Most Not Satisfied with Quality of Public Schools; Willing to Pay Higher Taxes to Improve Schools
By a 58-28 percent margin, voters say they are not satisfied with the quality of New York City public schools. A majority, 55 percent, say they would be at least somewhat willing to pay higher taxes to improve public education, compared to 42 percent who would not be willing.

“Regardless of gender, age, race, income, party, or borough, a majority of City residents are not satisfied with the quality of public schools. It’s not surprising that we hear the candidates speaking a lot about how they would address education if elected,” Greenberg said. “Democrats, and to a lesser degree independents, would be willing to pay higher taxes to improve the schools, however, Republicans are strongly opposed to that idea.”

Half of City Voters Want Kelly Kept On & Half Think ‘Stop and Frisk’ is Excessive
Fifty percent of voters want the next mayor to keep Ray Kelly as police commissioner while 38 percent want a new police commissioner. Similarly, half believe ‘stop and frisk’ is excessive, compared to 45 percent who say it is an acceptable way to make New York City safer.

“A plurality of Democrats and independents say the next mayor should keep Commissioner Kelly, as do more than two-thirds of Republicans. Older voters and whites are strongly supportive of keeping Kelly, while a plurality of younger and Latino voters and a majority of black voters would prefer a new commissioner,” Greenberg said. “Support and opposition to stop and frisk breaks down similarly with Democrats, younger and black voters thinking it is excessive, and Republicans, older and white voters thinking it is acceptable.”

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This New York Times/Siena College Poll was conducted July 9-15, 2013 by telephone calls in both English and Spanish to 1371 New York City residents and interviews with 1010 registered voters. It has a margin of error of ± 3.1 percentage points for registered voters, ± 4.0 percentage points for Democrats and ± 8.8 percentage points for Republicans. Data was statistically adjusted 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.