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PDF version; crosstabs by district: www.Siena.edu/SRI/SNY

Siena College State Senate Polls:

15th SD, in Queens, Neck-and-Neck Race Between Democratic Senator Addabbo and Republican Ulrich; In 60th SD, Erie County, Republican Senator Grisanti Has 2-to-1 Lead Over Democrat Amodeo

Loudonville, NY. The Siena College Research Institute today released two new State Senate polls – one currently held by a Queens Democrat and one currently held by an Erie County Republican. In the 15th SD, Democratic Senator Joseph Addabbo, Jr. and Republican New York City Councilman Eric Ulrich are locked in a tight race. Addabbo has the support of 45 percent of likely voters, and Ulrich is supported by 43 percent. In the 60th SD, Republican Senator Mark Grisanti has the support of 47 percent of likely voters, compared to Democrat Michael Amodeo’s 23 percent, Conservative Party candidate Charles Swanick’s 17 percent, and six percent for Gregory Davis on the Working Families Party line.

“The seat in Queens – despite its overwhelming 33-point Democratic enrollment advantage – is viewed by Republicans as an opportunity to defeat a Democratic incumbent and increase their majority. There’s no question that the Democrats are going to have their hands full in trying to hold on to this seat. Addabbo and Ulrich are separated by just two points, with one in eight voters still undecided,” said Siena pollster Steven Greenberg. “In Erie County, Democrats are hoping to unseat a freshman Republican – one of four Republicans to vote for last year’s same sex marriage law. With a crowded field of candidates splitting the anti-Grisanti vote, the incumbent has a 24-point lead over his nearest competitor, Amodeo, the Democrat, who only leads the Conservative candidate by six points,” Greenberg said. Republicans now have a 33-29 Senate majority.

SD	Candidate	Senate Race	Favorability Rating			Presidential Horse Race		
			Fav	Unfav	DK/NO	Obama	Romney	DK/NO
15	Joseph Addabbo, Jr.(D)	45%	40%	33%	26%	48%	45%	7%
	Eric Ulrich (R)	43%	42%	17%	41%			
	Undecided / Not Voting	12%						
60	Mark Grisanti (R)	47%	59%	30%	10%	54%	40%	5%
	Michael Amodeo (D)	23%	25%	18%	57%			
	Charles Swanick (C)	17%	30%	39%	31%			
	Gregory Davis (WFP)	6%	6%	14%	80%			
	Undecided / Not Voting	7%						

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Key Issues for Voters

“Job creation is far and away the single most important issue voters want their senator working on in Albany in both the 15th and 60th SDs,” Greenberg said. “Education and health care are the second tier issues in Queens, and education and state taxes are the second tier issues for Erie County. Ethics reform is at or near the bottom of the list in both districts.”

What is the most important issue you want your State Senator to be working on in Albany?		
Issue	15 th SD	60 th SD
Property taxes	11%	8%
State budget	9%	10%
State taxes	6%	15%
Ethics reform	8%	6%
Health care	16%	8%
Education	17%	17%
Creating jobs	31%	32%
Something else	2%	2%
Don't know/no opinion	1%	1%

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Favorability Ratings				
	15 th SD		60 th SD	
	Fav	Unfav	Fav	Unfav
Dem. Senate Candidate	40%	33%	25%	18%
Rep. Senate Candidate	42%	17%	59%	30%
New York State Senate	39%	49%	26%	64%
Andrew Cuomo	73%	23%	65%	32%
Barack Obama	49%	48%	55%	43%
Mitt Romney	47%	48%	42%	54%

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“Voters are divided on both President Obama and Mitt Romney in the 15th SD, while 60th SD voters have a favorable view of Obama and an unfavorable view of Romney,” Greenberg said. “Cuomo is viewed strongly favorable in both.”

15th SD – Queens – Joseph Addabbo, Jr. (D) vs. Eric Ulrich (R)

Addabbo has the support of 45 percent of likely voters, compared to 43 percent support for Ulrich. Ulrich has the support of 76 percent of Republicans, while Addabbo has support from 63 percent of Democrats. Ulrich has a commanding 57-27 percent lead among independents. Addabbo leads by five points in the portion of the district he currently represents, while Ulrich leads by five points in the areas new to this district, and has an eight-point lead in his current council district.

Ulrich is viewed favorably by 42 percent of voters and unfavorably by 17 percent, with 41 percent having no opinion. Addabbo’s favorability rating is 40-33 percent. Voters view the State Senate unfavorably by a 49-39 percent margin. Likely voters are evenly divided on which party should control the Senate, and on the generic re-elect question, with 40 percent wanting Addabbo re-elected and 41 percent preferring ‘someone else.’

The race for President within this Senate district is as also tight, with Obama leading Romney 48-45 percent. By a two-to-one margin, independents side with Romney.

Voters give small advantages to Addabbo on job creation (five points), education (eight points) and health care (six points). They rate Addabbo and Ulrich virtually evenly on taxes, state budget, ethics, and representing their community in Albany.

“In this district where Democrats have a better than two-to-one enrollment edge – including a sizeable number of conservative Democrats – and independents look a lot more like Republicans than Democrats, we have Addabbo, the incumbent, running virtually even with Ulrich, who now represents about one-third of these voters in the City Council,” Greenberg said. “While Addabbo is more known than Ulrich to voters, Ulrich has the better favorability rating. The presidential race looks very similar to the senate race. In other words, this figures to be a barn burner straight through to Election Day.”

60th SD – Erie County – Mark Grisanti (R)/Michael Amodeo (D)/Charles Swanick (C)/Gregory Davis (WFP)

Grisanti has the support of 47 percent of likely voters, including 61 percent of Republicans, 59 percent of independents and 34 percent of Democrats. Democrat Amodeo, with 23 percent support overall, only leads Grisanti among Democrats by four points. Swanick, on the Conservative line, is supported by 17 percent of voters, including double digits from every party. Grisanti leads big with women, bigger with men and by nearly identical large margins among voters he currently represents and voters new to the redrawn district.

Grisanti has a 59-30 percent favorability rating, and is viewed favorably by a majority of voters in all parties. Amodeo, unknown to more than half of voters, has a favorability rating of 25-18 percent, while Swanick is viewed unfavorably by more voters than view him favorably. By a 64-26 percent margin voters view the State Senate unfavorably, and are closely divided on control of the Senate, siding with Democrats 48-44 percent.

Obama leads Romney by 14-points, 54-40 percent, in this district with a 19-point Democratic enrollment edge. Independents are closely divided, favoring Obama 47-43 percent.

By large margins, voters say Grisanti will do a better job on all issues. Nearly half of voters say Grisanti’s vote on same sex marriage has no effect on their support, while slightly more than one-quarter say it makes them more likely to vote for him, and one-quarter say it makes them less likely to vote for Grisanti.

“If Grisanti was opposed by a single candidate, this race might be more interesting since his support falls below 50 percent. However, with Amodeo splitting the votes of those opposed to Grisanti, the incumbent appears to be in a commanding position. He is well known and widely liked, and he’s seen as much better on all the issues. It’s going to take an awful lot to change the dynamic of this race in four weeks,” Greenberg said.

“In four State Senate races Siena has polled, advantage Republicans. Two Democratic seats are too close to call, while one Republican seat appears safe and another has an eight-point Republican lead,” Greenberg said.

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These SRI State Senate surveys were conducted from October 1-4, 2012 by telephone calls to likely voters in each State Senate district. For the 15th SD, 428 voters were included in the sample, with a margin of error of ± 4.7 percentage points. For the 60th SD, 439 voters were included in the sample, margin of error ± 4.7 . In each district a likely voter screen was applied to a weighted representative sample of registered voters. 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. Cross-tabulations and frequencies for these six polls can be found at: www.Siena.edu/SRI/SNY.