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**Siena New York Albany Mayoral Democratic Primary Poll:**

## **Jennings Has 21 Point Lead over Ellis Heading Into Final Weekend of Mayoral Democratic Primary** **On Most Issues, Voters Think Jennings Will Do a Better Job** ***Property Taxes & Crime Lead List of Issues Voters Want Mayor to Address***

**Loudonville, NY.** As the Democratic mayoral primary in Albany enters the final weekend, incumbent Mayor Jerry Jennings leads Common Council Member Corey Ellis 54-33 percent, with 13 percent of voters still undecided, according to a new Siena (College) Research Institute poll of likely Albany Democratic primary voters. Primary voters also believe that Jennings would do a better job than Ellis on addressing most issues, including the three most important issues voters want the Mayor to work on: fighting crime, controlling property taxes and improving education. By a 52-38 percent margin, likely Democratic primary voters oppose building a new convention center in downtown Albany.

“While Jennings’ lead is certainly not insurmountable, Ellis clearly has his work cut out for him if he’s going to knock off the four-term incumbent Mayor, who is more well known and has a stronger favorability rating than does his challenger,” said Steven Greenberg, Siena New York pollster.

“Jennings is the overwhelming choice for Mayor among older, moderate, conservative, Catholic, and Jewish voters. Ellis’ support is strongest, but never reaches a majority, among the young, African-Americans and liberal voters,” Greenberg said.

<b>Do You Have a Favorable or Unfavorable Opinion of ...</b>			
<b>Person/Institution</b>	<b>Favorable</b>	<b>Unfavorable</b>	<b>DK/NO</b>
Jerry Jennings	67%	29%	4%
Corey Ellis	49%	25%	26%
Albany Common Council	60%	22%	19%
Albany Public Schools	58%	33%	9%
Albany Police Department	57%	34%	9%

“After 16 years as Mayor, Jennings is viewed favorably by two-thirds of primary voters, while Ellis has a two-to-one favorable rating but remains unknown to one-quarter of voters,” Greenberg said. “Both candidates are viewed favorably by liberal, conservative and moderate voters, as well as white and African American voters. Interestingly, both candidates are viewed more favorably by African American voters than white voters.”

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Voters give between a 57 percent and 60 percent favorability rating to three City institutions – the Common Council, Police Department and public schools – that have all been widely discussed during the campaign.

Voters gave Jennings a double digit lead as the best candidate to address six of eight issues (the lead was at least 19 points on five of the issues). Jennings only led Ellis by three points on ‘addressing neighborhood concerns’ and they received equal support on ‘reforming City government.’

“On virtually every issue – including crime, property taxes and education, the three most important issues for voters – Jennings is viewed as the stronger candidate,” Greenberg said. “That makes closing the electoral deficit even harder for Ellis since there is no issue where primary voters think he will be better than Jennings.”

Voters ranked crime (23 percent) and property taxes (21 percent) as the top issues they want the Mayor to address. Education and addressing neighborhood concerns were each viewed as the most important issue for 16 percent of voters, followed by economic development (13 percent) and reforming City government (seven percent).

<b>On Each Issue, Who Do You Think Would Do A Better Job?</b>			
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Jennings</b>	<b>Ellis</b>	<b>DK/NO</b>
Creating economic development in Albany	65%	24%	11%
Improving education	55%	32%	13%
Making schools safer for kids	54%	31%	15%
Fighting crime	53%	34%	13%
Controlling property taxes	52%	30%	18%
Addressing neighborhood concerns	47%	44%	9%
Addressing parking issues	46%	36%	18%
Reforming City government	44%	44%	12%

While opposition to a convention center runs better than two-to-one among Ellis voters, Jennings voters are virtually evenly divided on the subject. Younger voters are the only group that supports a convention center.

“No election is over until the voters go to the polls, and it will be interesting to see how high – or low – the turnout is on Tuesday, but the political landscape four days out seems to be tilting in favor of the Mayor,” Greenberg said. “Ellis needs to convince some current Jennings supporters to switch to his camp and he’ll have to motivate his supporters and have an incredibly strong get-out-the vote operation if he wants to make this race competitive.”

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**This SRI Albany Mayoral Democratic Primary survey was conducted September 8-9, 2009 by telephone calls to 848 likely primary voters. It has a margin of error of ± 3.3 percentage points. Data was statistically adjusted by age to ensure representativeness. Sampling was conducted via random digit dialing weighted to reflect known population patterns. 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](http://www.Siena.edu/SRI/SNY).**