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## Republicans With Substantial Leads in Local Congressional Races

Oct 25, 2012

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Polls conducted by the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey show that the incumbent Republicans in the two Congressional districts involving Southern Ocean County have substantial leads over their Democrat opponents.

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> District, which will include all of the area except Barnegat and half of Stafford Township come 2013, Frank LoBiondo is crushing Democrat Cassandra Shober, 55 to 35 percent, according to the poll released on Sept. 27. The college conducted the telephone poll with 624 likely voters. It has a margin of error of 4 percent.

LoBiondo had a very favorable or somewhat favorable rating with 63 percent of those polled. Another 19 percent had a somewhat or very unfavorable opinion of the veteran congressman. The remaining 18 percent of those polled were unsure about him or were unfamiliar with him.

Shober's biggest problem is name recognition. Some 56 percent of those polled were not sure what they thought of her or were unfamiliar with her.

"Congressman LoBiondo's lead is expected, given his 18 years in Congress," said Daniel J. Douglas, director of the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy at Stockton College.

Meanwhile, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> District, which currently represents all of the communities in Southern Ocean County but which, after the new year, will only represent Barnegat and part of Stafford, Jon Runyan was holding a 49 to 39 percent lead over his opponent, Shelley Adler, as of Oct. 4, when the poll was released.

Some 614 likely voters were contacted in this poll, which also has a margin of error of plus or minus 4 percent. This race has attracted some national attention – it is, for example, on the watch lists of both the Republican and Democratic parties – because Runyan is only a one-term incumbent and because Adler, as the widow of the man Runyan defeated to win his seat in Congress, has more name recognition than many first-time candidates.

"With 12 percent of voters undecided," said Douglas, "candidate Adler still has an opportunity to close the lead on Runyan, though Runyan is clearly in a better position."

The poll was released before Adler picked up the endorsement of the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and before the candidates met for their first debate.

Fifty-one percent of those polled had a very or somewhat favorable opinion of Runyan, a former Philadelphia Eagles star. Twenty-six percent had a somewhat or very unfavorable opinion of him; 21 percent were unsure or unfamiliar with him.

Thirty-nine percent of those surveyed had a very or somewhat favorable opinion of Adler, while 26 percent had a somewhat or very unfavorable opinion of her, and 33 percent were unsure about her or unfamiliar with the candidate.

Polls can change, sometimes rapidly. When likely voters were asked about Runyan and Adler, they were also asked about President Barack Obama and Republican challenger Mitt Romney. Obama, surprisingly, had a 49 to 41 percent lead in a district considered to be Republican. That poll, though, was taken before the first presidential debate, an affair widely considered to have been a victory for the former Massachusetts governor.

— Rick Mellerup

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| 1:00 PM - 2:30 PM  | Brain Games at LBI Library                               |
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