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Hughes Center Poll: 2nd District: Still Too Close to Call Whelan with Small Lead

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Galloway, NJ— Incumbent Democratic Senator James Whelan has a small, but statistically insignificant, lead over his Republican challenger, Assemblyman Vince Polistina.

The William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy today released the Stockton College/Zogby poll that indicates Whelan with a lead of 41.1 percent to Polistina's 38.3 percent. The 2.8 percentage point lead is within the margin of error (+/- 4.1 percent), meaning the race remains essentially tied, as it was in the Stockton College/Zogby poll conducted in late September.

"With months of commercials and over \$3 million spent, neither campaign has managed to make the case for its candidate," said Daniel J. Douglas, director of the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy. The 2nd Legislative District candidates have raised \$3.7 million and spent \$3.2 million, according to New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission reports required to be filed 11 days before the election. Total spending is likely to increase by Election Day.

"In the next few days, the campaigns will be carefully trying to identify leaners that they convince to go out and vote for their candidate," said Douglas.

Compared with the late September poll, Whelan's favorability rating increased slightly from 58.5 percent to 60 percent and his unfavorability ratings went from 26.9 to 32.3 percent. Polistina's favorability went from 55.2 percent to 46.3 percent. His unfavorability ratings went from 11.3 percent to 29.2 percent.

Despite the disparity in favorability ratings, a Polistina remains essentially tied with Whelan and has the opportunity to convince the 15.5 percent who report they are "not sure" of their choice.

Polistina may also benefit from the strength of his Assembly running mates. Incumbent Republican Assemblyman John Amodeo again leads all Assembly candidates with 46.3 percent of the vote with his running mate Chris Brown at 44.6 percent. The Democratic challengers still lag with Freeholder Alisa Cooper at 28.5 percent and running mate Damon Tyner at 30.8 percent. Although the "not sure" voters are high at 19.2 percent, Cooper and Tyner would have to convert nearly all of these voters to make this a close race.

Second District voters are optimistic with 63.0 percent reporting that they think New Jersey is going in the right direction. They also have favorable views of both President Barack Obama

and New Jersey Governor Chris Christie. Obama is viewed favorably by 51.6 percent of the voters and Christie is viewed favorably by 69.1 percent.

2nd LD Senate Race				2nd LD Assembly Race			
Candidate	May	Sept	Nov	Candidate	May	Sept	Nov
	%	%	%		%	%	%
Jim Whelan	46.8	40.0	41.1	John Amodeo	46.4	48.1	46.3
Vince Polistina	37.3	40.6	38.3	Chris Brown	40.4	46.7	44.6
Someone else	1.3	1.7	5.0	Alisa Cooper	26.3	29.1	28.5
Not sure	14.6	17.8	15.5	Damon Tyner	12.8	25.6	30.8
				Someone else	2.0	1.7	2.4
				Not sure	23.2	19.4	19.2

About the Hughes Center

The William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy at The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey serves as a catalyst for research, analysis and innovative policy solutions on the political, economic, social and cultural issues facing New Jersey.

** IBOPE Zogby International is a non-partisan, premier global public opinion polling and market research firm that offers timely, accurate results and in-depth analysis and insights. IBOPE Zogby International was formed in January 2010 following the acquisition of Zogby International by IBOPE Inteligencia of Brazil, a subsidiary of IBOPE Group. Please visit www.ibopezogby.com for more information on IBOPE Zogby International.*