

FRANKLIN & MARSHALL

**September 2010**

**Franklin & Marshall  
College Poll**

**SURVEY OF PA 8<sup>th</sup> Congressional District  
PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS**

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## Methodology

The survey findings presented in this release are based on the results of interviews conducted September 14-19, 2010. The interviews were conducted at the Center for Opinion Research at Franklin & Marshall College under the direction of the poll’s Director Dr. G. Terry Madonna, Head Methodologist Berwood Yost, and Senior Project Manager Angela Knittle. The data included in this release represent the responses of 464 registered adult residents of the 8<sup>th</sup> Congressional District in Pennsylvania, including 201 Democrats, 210 Republicans, 46 registered as Independent/Other, and 7 who refused to identify party. Telephone numbers for the survey were randomly generated using state voter registration lists. Voter Contact Services generated the sample using a registration-based sampling (RBS) scheme to identify survey respondents. A detailed description of the RBS scheme can be found on their website (<http://www.vcsnet.com/rbshelp.html>).

The sample error for registered adults is +/- 4.5 percentage points and is slightly higher for registered Democrats (+/- 6.9 percentage points) and registered Republicans (+/- 6.8 percentage points). The subsample of likely voters (n=379) has a sample error of +/- 5.0 percentage points.

In addition to sampling error, this poll is also subject to other sources of non-sampling error. Generally speaking, two sources of error concern researchers most. Non-response bias is created when selected participants either choose not to participate in the survey or are unavailable for interviewing. Response errors are the product of the question and answer process. Surveys that rely on self-reported behaviors and attitudes are susceptible to biases related to the way respondents process and respond to survey questions.

The Franklin & Marshall College Poll is produced in conjunction with the Philadelphia Daily News, WGAL-TV (South Central PA), Pittsburgh Tribune Review, WTAE-TV (Pittsburgh), WPVI-TV6/ABC (Philadelphia), Times-Shamrock Newspapers, Harrisburg Patriot-News, and Lancaster Newspapers. It may be used in whole or in part, provided any use is attributed to Franklin & Marshall College.

## Key Findings

- In the 8<sup>th</sup> congressional district, Mike Fitzpatrick has an advantage over incumbent Patrick Murphy among all registered adults, 46% to 36%, with about one in five (17%) adults still undecided. Fitzpatrick's advantage is larger among those more likely to vote, 49% to 35%, with 15% undecided. The survey finds that Fitzpatrick's advantage increases as the likely voter screen becomes more restrictive.
- Two in five (41%) registered adults in the district rate Representative Murphy's job performance as "excellent" or "good." About the same proportion (40%) believe he deserves re-election while almost half (47%) believes it is time for a change.
- In the PA senate race, Pat Toomey leads Joe Sestak in the district among all registered adults, 39% to 30%, and among likely voters, 42% to 32%. In the gubernatorial race, Tom Corbett leads Dan Onorato among registered adults, 37% to 29%, and among likely voters, 40% to 30%. Many registered adults in the 8<sup>th</sup> CD are still undecided about their choices for US senate (30%) and governor (34%).
- Unemployment and the economy (57%) are the primary issues facing respondents and their families in the district.
- The positive job performance rating for President Obama (37%) is low in the district, but is similar to his overall state-wide ratings. Governor Rendell's positive job performance rating (46%) is higher than the President's in the district and is also higher than his overall state-wide rating.

## Table A-1 – Congressional District Choice Demographics

If the November general election for the US House of Representatives were being held today and the candidates were (rotate) Mike Fitzpatrick, the Republican, and, Patrick Murphy, the Democrat, would you vote for Mike Fitzpatrick, Patrick Murphy, or aren't you sure how you would vote? (379 likely voters)

	Fitzpatrick	Murphy	Other	Don't know
<b>Party*</b>				
Republican	77%	8%	1%	15%
Democrat	18%	69%	1%	11%
Independent	38%	31%	0%	31%
Other	0%	33%	0%	67%
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	50%	33%	1%	17%
Female	48%	38%	1%	13%
<b>Age</b>				
18-34	60%	33%	0%	7%
35-54	56%	30%	1%	13%
55 and over	44%	40%	1%	15%
<b>Education</b>				
High school or less	43%	36%	2%	19%
Some college	51%	34%	1%	14%
College degree	50%	36%	0%	14%
<b>Household Income</b>				
Less than \$35,000	46%	37%	2%	15%
\$35-75,000	44%	39%	0%	17%
Over \$75,000	54%	37%	0%	10%
<b>Race*</b>				
Non-white	9%	73%	0%	18%
White	50%	35%	1%	15%
<b>Marital Status</b>				
Not currently married	41%	38%	2%	20%
Single, never married	57%	29%	0%	14%
Married	49%	36%	1%	14%
<b>Religious Affiliation*</b>				
Other/unaffiliated	28%	53%	2%	17%
Protestant	55%	30%	1%	15%
Catholic	57%	30%	0%	13%
<b>Born Again Christian or Fundamentalist</b>				
Yes	57%	25%	0%	18%
No	47%	38%	1%	14%
<b>Household Union Member</b>				
Yes	43%	47%	2%	8%
No	50%	34%	1%	16%
<b>Military Veteran</b>				
Yes	47%	31%	2%	20%
No	49%	36%	1%	14%
<b>Employment*</b>				
Fulltime	54%	30%	1%	15%
Other	53%	36%	0%	11%
Retired	35%	43%	2%	20%

\* Significant differences ( $p < .05$ )

# Marginal Frequency Report

Responses may not total 100% due to rounding.

RegPARTY. Are you currently registered as a Republican, a Democrat, an Independent, or as something else?

- 46% Republican
- 44% Democrat
- 9% Independent
- 1% Something else

IntFav. Please let me know your opinion of some people involved in politics today. Is your opinion of [FILL name] favorable, unfavorable, undecided, or haven't you heard enough about [FILL name] to have an opinion? (*rotated*)

	Strongly favorable	Somewhat favorable	Somewhat unfavorable	Strongly unfavorable	Undecided	Don't know
JOE SESTAK	10%	17%	12%	15%	23%	23%
PAT TOOMEY	13%	14%	9%	13%	24%	26%
TOM CORBETT	10%	15%	5%	4%	23%	43%
DAN ONORATO	6%	15%	5%	4%	22%	48%

*Strongly and somewhat favorable and strongly and somewhat unfavorable combined:*

	Favorable	Unfavorable	Undecided	Don't know
JOE SESTAK	27%	27%	23%	23%
PAT TOOMEY	27%	22%	24%	26%
TOM CORBETT	25%	9%	23%	43%
DAN ONORATO	21%	9%	22%	48%

Vote\_Nov. Many people will vote in the election for governor and congress in November, however, many other people will not. What would you say are the chances you will vote in the November election? Are you certain to vote, will you probably vote, are the chances fifty-fifty you will vote, OR don't you think that you will vote in the November election?

- 80% Certain to vote
- 12% Will probably vote
- 5% Chances 50-50 will vote
- 4% Don't think will vote

Pol\_Int. Some people don't pay much attention to political campaigns. How about you? Would you say that you are...very much interested, somewhat interested or not very interested in the 2010 elections?

- 48% Very much interested
- 41% Somewhat interested, or
- 11% Not very interested in the 2010 elections?

Vot06. Did you vote in the last election for governor in Pennsylvania in 2006, or not?

90%	Yes
8%	No
2%	Do not know

Vot08. Did you vote in the last presidential election in 2008, or not?

100%	Yes
0%	No

Vot08pref. Did you vote for Barack Obama, John McCain, or some other candidate in 2008?  
(464 registered respondents who voted in 2008 presidential election)

48%	Obama
49%	McCain
2%	Other

Vote\_Sen If the 2010 election for U.S. SENATOR were being held today and the candidates included (*rotated*) Joe Sestak, the Democrat, and Pat Toomey, the Republican, would you vote for Joe Sestak, Pat Toomey, or aren't you sure how you would vote?

30%	Joe Sestak
39%	Pat Toomey
1%	Some other candidate
30%	Do not know

Cert\_Sen. Are you absolutely CERTAIN you will vote FOR [fill] in the election, or are you still making up your mind? (325 registered respondents with vote choice)

75%	Certain to vote
25%	Still making up mind

Vote\_Gov. If the 2010 election for GOVERNOR were being held today and the candidates included (*rotated*) Tom Corbett, the Republican, and Dan Onorato, the Democrat, would you vote for Tom Corbett, Dan Onorato, or aren't you sure how you would vote?

37%	Tom Corbett
29%	Dan Onorato
1%	Some other candidate
34%	Do not know

Cert\_Gov. Are you absolutely CERTAIN you will vote FOR [fill Gov] in the election, or are you still making up your mind? (306 registered respondents with vote choice)

73%	Certain to vote
27%	Still making up mind

CD10. If the November general election for the US House of Representatives were being held today and the candidates were (rotate) Mike Fitzpatrick, the Republican, and Patrick Murphy, the Democrat, would you vote for Mike Fitzpatrick, Patrick Murphy, or aren't you sure how you would vote?

46%	Mike Fitzpatrick
36%	Patrick Murphy
1%	Some other candidate
17%	Do not know

CertCD. Are you absolutely certain you will vote for [fill CD10] in the election or are you still making up your mind? (384 registered respondents)

87%	Certain to vote
12%	Still making up mind
1%	Do not know

LeanCD. As of today, do you lean more to (rotate) Mike Fitzpatrick, the Republican, or Patrick Murphy, the Democrat? (78 registered respondents)

30%	Mike Fitzpatrick
24%	Patrick Murphy
46%	Do not know

RateCD. How would you rate the way that Patrick Murphy is handling her job as a member of Congress? Would you say that she is doing an excellent job, a good job, only a fair job, or a poor job as a member of Congress?

9%	Excellent job
32%	A good job
29%	Only a fair job
19%	A poor job
11%	Do not know

DesRECD. Do you believe that Patrick Murphy has done a good enough job in the United States CONGRESS to DESERVE RE-ELECTION, or do you believe it is TIME FOR A CHANGE?

40%	Deserve re-election
47%	Time for a change
14%	Do not know

EconPM Do you think that policy makers in Washington should be most concerned with stimulating the economy and creating jobs, even if it means increasing the deficit, or do you think they should be most concerned with reducing the deficit?

48%	Stimulating the economy and creating jobs
42%	Reducing the deficit
10%	Do not know



RatePres. How would you rate the way that Barack Obama is handling his job as president?

8%	Excellent job
29%	A good job
26%	Only a fair job
35%	A poor job
2%	Do not know

RateGov. How would you rate the way that Ed Rendell is handling his job as Governor?

12%	Excellent job
34%	A good job
37%	Only a fair job
14%	A poor job
3%	Do not know

MIP\_YF. What do you think is the MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEM facing YOU and YOUR FAMILY TODAY?

42%	Economy (in general)
15%	Personal finances, unemployment
13%	Health care, insurance
6%	Taxes
4%	Education, schools
3%	Government, politicians
3%	Senior issues, social security
1%	Civil liberties
1%	Housing, real estate
1%	Personal illness, health problems
1%	Terrorism, war, foreign policy
2%	Nothing
5%	Do not know

Gov. Do you think that the problems facing you and your family can be solved with the help of the government, or are these problems beyond what you think the government can do?

55%	With the help of the government
34%	Beyond what you think the government can do
11%	Do not know

FinToday. We are interested in how people are getting along financially these days. Would you say that YOU and YOUR FAMILY are better off, worse off, or about the same financially as you were a year ago?

8%	Better off
36%	Worse off
55%	About the same

FinFut. Now looking AHEAD, do you think that A YEAR FROM NOW, YOU and YOUR FAMILY will be better off financially than you are now, worse off, or about the same as you are now?

20%	Better off
19%	Worse off
53%	About the same
8%	Do not know

RespEcon. Who do you feel is most responsible for the country's current economic situation: former President Bush, President Obama, are both equally to blame or is no one really to blame?

36%	Former President Bush
15%	President Obama
21%	Both are equally to blame
10%	No one is really to blame
14%	The Congress
5%	Do not know

DEMO I now have a final few questions for statistical purposes only.

CNTY. Region of state (What is the name of the county you live in?)

95%	Bucks
3%	Montgomery
3%	Philadelphia

RESID. How many years have you lived at your current residence?

23.1	Mean years
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AGE. What was your age on your last birthday?

2%	18-24
6%	25-34
9%	35-44
26%	45-54
22%	55-64
35%	65 and older

EDUC. What was the highest grade level of schooling you have completed?

3%	Non high school graduate
21%	High school graduate or GED
14%	Some college
11%	Two-year or tech degree
28%	Four year college degree
23%	Post graduate degree

MAR. What is your CURRENT marital status, are you single, married, separated, divorced, or a widower?

10%	Single, Never Married
75%	Married
1%	Separated
6%	Divorced
8%	Widow or widower

IDEO. Politically speaking, do you consider yourself to be a liberal, a moderate, or a conservative?

21%	Liberal
39%	Moderate
37%	Conservative
3%	Do not know

PRTY1. Regardless of how you are registered, in politics, as of today, do you think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, or an Independent?

19%	Strong Republican
12%	Republican
18%	Lean Republican
8%	Pure Independent
14%	Lean Democrat
7%	Democrat
20%	Strong Democrat
1%	Don't know

LABR. Are you or is any member of your household a member of a LABOR UNION?

16%	Yes
83%	No
1%	Do not know

VET. Are you a military veteran?

14%	Yes
86%	No

Hisp. Are you Hispanic or Latino, or not?

1%	Yes
99%	No

RACE. Which of the following categories best describes your racial background?

97%	White
3%	Non-white

REL. Do you consider yourself to be Protestant, Catholic, some other religion, or not affiliated with any religion?

36%	Protestant
36%	Catholic
12%	Some other religion
16%	Not affiliated with any religion

BAC. Do you consider yourself to be a born-again Christian or fundamentalist, or not?

16%	Yes
82%	No
1%	Do not know

WORK. Are you currently working FULL-time, PART-time, going to school, keeping house or something else?

43%	Full-time
17%	Part-time
2%	Going to school
7%	Keeping house
4%	Unemployed
1%	Disabled
25%	Retired
1%	Do not know

INC1. And, just for statistical purposes, we need to know if your total family income is above or below \$50,000 per year?

6%	Under \$25,000
7%	\$25-\$35,000
10%	\$35-50,000
20%	\$50-75,000
19%	\$75-100,000
30%	Over \$100,000
7%	Don't know

DONE. Sex of respondent:

49%	Male
51%	Female