



MIKE DOWNS CENTER FOR INDIANA POLITICS

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 29, 2010

Contact: Andrew Downs, Assistant Professor of Political Science, 260-481-6691
Michael Wolf, Associate Professor of Political Science, 260-481-6898

Coats Leads in Statewide Poll of Likely Republican Primary Voters Top Three Republican Candidates Lead Ellsworth in Hypothetical General Election

Republican Senate Primary Election

407 registered Hoosier voters likely to participate in the May 4 Republican primary prefer Dan Coats to the four other candidates. Coats received 36% of the support. John Hostettler received 24% and Marlin Stutzman received 18%. 13% of the respondents were undecided (margin of error +/- 5%).

	If the Republican Primary for US Senate were today, who would you vote for?
Don Bates	6%
Richard Behney	4%
Dan Coats	36%
John Hostettler	24%
Marlin Stutzman	18%
Undecided	13%

Coats enjoyed leads in almost all demographic categories. One category where he did not have a lead was among voters who voted for Barack Obama in 2008. In that category Coats was in a virtual tie with Hostettler (Hostettler 29%; Coats 27%).

The survey respondents were asked to identify themselves as independents, independents who lean Republican, Republican, or as strong Republicans. Coats had comfortable leads in two of the four categories. He had a 17-point lead among independents who lean Republican and a 20-point lead among strong Republicans. Coats and Hostettler were in a virtual tie among self-identified Republicans (Coats 33%; Hostettler 31%). Hostettler was leading among self-identified independents by 12 points.

If the Republican Primary for US Senate were today, who would you vote for?						
	Don Bates	Richard Behney	Dan Coats	John Hostettler	Marlin Stutzman	Undecided
Independents	6%	5%	23%	35%	18%	13%
Independents leaning Republican	2%	4%	38%	20%	21%	16%
Republicans	4%	2%	33%	31%	17%	13%
Strong Republicans	9%	4%	39%	19%	17%	11%
Obama voters in 2008	2%	6%	27%	29%	24%	12%

Tea Party Movement

Respondents were asked two questions about the Tea Party Movement. The first asked if their opinion of the Tea Party Movement was favorable, unfavorable, neutral, or if they had no opinion of the movement. The second asked if the respondent identified with the Tea Party Movement. Favorable views were held by 42% of the respondents while 23% had unfavorable views. One in five (20%) of the respondents had a neutral view and 15% had no opinion. Although 42% had a favorable view of the Tea Party Movement, only 27% identified with the movement. The percentage of Republican primary voters holding a favorable view of the Tea Party Movement jumped to 78%. The percentage of Republican primary voters identifying with the Tea Party Movement increased to 56%.

Despite the anti-Washington persona of much of the Tea Party Movement, its Indiana supporters are more supportive of the “establishment” candidate Dan Coats than other candidates, including Marlin Stutzman who has been endorsed by the Senate Conservatives Fund which is led by Senator Jim DeMint (R-S.C.). The Senate Conservatives Fund has endorsed and attempted to raise money for conservative candidates against more moderate establishment Republicans. Just over a third of those voters viewing the Tea Party Movement favorably (34%) were supporting Coats with 21% supporting Hostettler and 20% supporting Stutzman.

Among Republican primary voters identifying with The Tea Party Movement, Coats lost some of his support, but still has the plurality at 30% with 23% supporting Stutzman and 21% supporting Hostettler.

	Don Bates	Richard Behney	Dan Coats	John Hostettler	Marlin Stutzman	Undecided
Favorable View of Tea Party Movement	7%	4%	34%	21%	20%	14%
Neutral View of Tea Party Movement	7%	0%	47%	27%	8%	11%
Identify with Tea Party Movement	9%	5%	30%	21%	23%	11%
Do not identify with Tea Party Movement	3%	4%	36%	27%	18%	12%

Respondents who identify with the Tea Party Movement also viewed the direction of the country in a starkly different light than do those who do not identify with the movement. Ninety-six percent (96%) of Tea Party identifiers believed the country was headed in the wrong direction, while 47% of the respondents who do not identify with the movement thought the country was headed in the right direction. Tea Party identifiers were over three-times as likely as those who did not identify with the movement (26% to 8 %) to mention the federal deficit as the most important issue facing the country. The difference between those who identify with the Tea Party movement and those who do not also was manifested in their general election vote choice between the presumptive Democratic nominee Brad Ellsworth and the main Republican candidates. Ellsworth beat his Republican opponents head-to-head with those who do not identify with the movement, whereas 10% or less of those who identify with the movement said they would support Ellsworth over Coats, Hostettler, or Stutzman.

Hypothetical General Election

1,250 registered Hoosier voters likely to vote in the November general election were asked for their favorite candidate in three hypothetical match ups. In all of the cases, the Republican candidate came out ahead of the likely Democratic nominee Brad Ellsworth. Dan Coats had the largest lead at 47% to 31%. John Hostettler had the second largest lead at 45% to 32%. Marlin Stutzman had the smallest lead at 41% to 35%. In all three cases more than 20% of the respondents were undecided. Among the ever important independent voters, over 40% were undecided in all three hypothetical match ups (Coats 47%; Hostettler 41%; Stutzman 42%). The margin of error for all three hypothetical match ups is 2.8%.

Among likely general election voters		Among independent likely general election voters	
Dan Coats	47%	Dan Coats	30%
Brad Ellsworth	31%	Brad Ellsworth	23%
Undecided	22%	Undecided	47%
John Hostettler	45%	John Hostettler	36%
Brad Ellsworth	32%	Brad Ellsworth	23%
Undecided	23%	Undecided	41%
Marlin Stutzman	41%	Marlin Stutzman	33%
Brad Ellsworth	35%	Brad Ellsworth	25%
Undecided	25%	Undecided	42%

Issue Evaluations

Not surprisingly, the economy was the most important issue (53%). In almost every demographic category, a majority of respondents cited that as the most important issue. Only two other issues had more than 10% of the respondents citing them as the most important. Thirteen percent (13%) cited the federal deficit as the most important issue and 11% cited health care as the most important issue. The margin of error is 2.8%.

Direction of the Country and Evaluation of President Obama

The Indiana electorate had views similar to the rest of the country when it came to the direction of the country. When asked if things in the United States were headed in the right direction, two-thirds (66%) of Hoosiers said the country was on the wrong track. Not surprisingly, the respondent's identification as an Obama voter in 2008 strongly influenced their perception of whether the country was headed in the right or wrong direction. A large majority of Obama voters (62%) viewed the direction of the country as being on the right track, whereas nine-out-of-ten McCain voters (92%) viewed the country as on the wrong track. Seven of ten self-identified independents (69%) thought the country was headed in the wrong direction.

Respondents were asked if they approve or disapprove of the job President Barack Obama was doing as president. A majority (57%) disapproved while a third (34%) approved. Nine percent (9%) were unsure. Just over three quarters (77%) of the respondents who claimed to have voted for Obama in 2008 approved of his performance. Sixteen percent (16%) of those voters disapproved of his performance. Ninety percent (90%) of the McCain voters disapproved of his performance.

Mike Downs Center for Indiana Politics

The Mike Downs Center for Indiana Politics is a non-partisan organization that helps the people of Indiana understand the role of politics and government in their daily lives. By doing this, The Mike Downs Center hopes to encourage participation in political and public processes the same way its namesake Dr. Michael C. Downs did for more than 34 years. The Mike Downs Center is located on the campus of Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne (IPFW).

Statement of Methodology: This SurveyUSA poll was conducted by telephone in the voice of a professional announcer. Respondent households were selected at random, using a registration based sample (RBS) provided by Aristotle, of Washington DC. All respondents heard the questions asked identically. The calls were conducted from April 22 through 26. The number of respondents who answered each question and the margin of sampling error for each question are provided. Where necessary, responses were weighted according to the voter registration database. In theory, with the stated sample size, one can say with 95% certainty that the results would not vary by more than the stated margin of sampling error, in one direction or the other, had the entire universe of respondents been interviewed with complete accuracy. There are other possible sources of error in all surveys that may be more serious than theoretical calculations of sampling error. These include refusals to be interviewed, question wording and question order, weighting by demographic control data and the manner in which respondents are filtered (such as, determining who is a likely voter). It is difficult to quantify the errors that may result from these factors. Fieldwork for this survey was done by SurveyUSA of Clifton, NJ

#####