

Andrews leads Lautenberg in South Jersey, poll finds

GALLOWAY TOWNSHIP -- Based on results of an April 22 to 24 survey of 1,005 likely Democratic voters in Congressional Districts 1 through 4, conducted by Zogby International on behalf of the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy at Richard Stockton College, southern New Jersey Congressman Rob Andrews outpolls Sen. Frank Lautenberg 37 percent to 28 percent, with a margin of error of 3.2 percent.

"This really comes as no surprise," said Sharon Schulman, director of the Hughes Center. "After all, Congressman Andrews is a South Jersey guy from Camden County."

However, many surprises did emerge in the survey released this week. When the congressional districts are looked at individually, Andrews is supported approximately 4 to 1 in his home district as well as the 4th Congressional District. The results of the 2nd and 3rd Congressional Districts still have Andrews slightly ahead, but within the margin of error of the poll.

When looked at by the larger counties, Lautenberg holds a substantial lead in Ocean County and a small lead in Burlington County. Andrews flips this around in his home counties of Camden and Gloucester.

Both candidates have positive job ratings. Half believe it is time for someone else to take over Lautenberg's Senate seat, but 37 percent believe he should be re-elected. Similarly, half said that if they knew he was going to be 85 when his new term started, it would make them less likely to vote for him. Yet 34 percent said it would make no difference.

Andrews and Lautenberg hold overwhelming support compared to the third Democratic candidate, Donald Cresitello.

When matched to the Republican candidates, Dick Zimmer, Joe Pennachio and Murray Sabrin, both Andrews and Lautenberg receive immense support from Democrats (more than 70 percent). This changes when the independent/unaffiliated people who identified themselves as

likely Democratic voters are polled and the percentages drop to 40 to 58, depending upon the combination.

Similar to other recent polls, southern New Jerseyans who are likely to vote for Democrats believe the top two issues fac-

ing the country today are jobs and the economy (60 percent) followed by the war in Iraq (50 percent). A strong third

are the 27 percent who rank healthcare very highly. And 83 percent believe the country is on the wrong track.

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