

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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For more commentary from Professor Redlawsk see
<http://eagletonpoll.blogspot.com>

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ADLER HOLDS LEAD IN NEW JERSEY 3RD DISTRICT CONGRESSIONAL RACE

But Runyan Catches Adler among Voters Paying the most Attention

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J – In the already heated battle for Congress in New Jersey’s 3rd Congressional District, incumbent Democrat John Adler holds a narrow lead over Republican challenger Jon Runyan, among all registered voters according to a new Rutgers-Eagleton Poll. With third party candidate Peter DeStefano included, Adler leads 31 percent to 25 percent, while DeStefano polls at 4 percent, and 34 percent say “don’t know”. Another 6 percent say they will not vote in the Congressional race. Without DeStefano on the ballot, Adler leads Runyan 35 percent to 28 percent, with 23 percent don’t know and 13 percent not voting.

The telephone poll of 421 registered voters living in the 3rd Congressional District was conducted August 5-8, 2010 and has a margin of error of +/-4.8 percentage points.

While Adler leads among all registered voters, Runyan pulls ahead 36 to 35 percent among voters who are paying the most attention to the campaign.

Adler Support Higher among Self-Identified Likely Voters; Small lead with Independents

Among registered voters who say they are “very” or “somewhat” likely to vote in November, Adler’s lead grows to 10 points, 40 percent to 30 percent, with 22 percent don’t know and 8 percent saying they would not vote in this race. The 10 point lead holds when DeStefano is included in the list of candidates.

Among Republican voters, 60 percent say they will vote for Runyan, while 56 percent of Democrats will support Adler. At the same time 19 percent of Republicans and 29 percent of Democrats don’t know whom they support. Among independents, Adler has a small lead, 23 to 19 percent, but 45 percent say they don’t know whom they will support.

“It is hard in August to predict who will really vote in November,” said David Redlawsk, Director of the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll and Professor of Political Science. “Thus, while a simple likely voter screen suggests that Adler does better, more people say they will vote than actually turn out.”

Runyan Stronger among those Most Paying Attention

While likely voters give Adler a lead, his advantage disappears among the 54 percent of registered voters who report following the election “very” or “somewhat” closely, Runyan outpolls Adler from this group, 36 percent to 35 percent, while DeStefano receives 4 percent; 24 percent don’t know. About 1 percent say they will not vote in this race. However, Adler has a strong lead among those following the election “Not too closely” or not at all, 24 percent to 11 percent for Runyan, and 3 percent for DeStefano, The majority of these registered voters either answer “don’t know” (49 percent) or that they will not vote (13 percent).

“While likely voters put Adler up strongly, it’s more realistic to consider those who follow the election news,” Redlawsk said. “In a midterm election, these are the voters most likely to turn out. If that pattern holds, then the race is essentially a dead heat.”

Experience verses the Outsider

By a 22-percentage point margin, registered voters say they prefer an experienced candidate over a political outsider. Among those who favor experience, Adler is preferred to Runyan, 38 percent to 18 percent, with 4 percent choosing DeStefano. Among voters preferring an outsider, DeStefano polls 9 percent, while Runyan gets 36 percent and Adler 14 percent.

The DeStefano Effect

Respondents were given two ballot tests: the first with candidates Adler and Runyan (with “don’t know” and “will not vote” options), and a second test that included DeStefano. Among registered voters, Adler’s support was more adversely affected than Runyan’s by DeStefano, who picked up 6 percent of initial Adler voters, but only 2 percent of Runyan supporters. DeStefano also added 14 percent of those who initially said they would not vote. These effects are relatively small however, given the low level of support for DeStefano overall.

“Despite the debate over the DeStefano candidacy, our polling suggests that he is not currently much of a factor, and if anything, affects Adler slightly more,” said Redlawsk.

“Interestingly, when he is included on the ballot test, the number saying they will not vote plummets, and the ‘don’t knows’ grow. This suggests that at least some voters may be open to an alternative to the two major party candidates. Even so, it seems unlikely that DeStefano’s presence on the ballot would greatly affect the dynamics of the race.”

In the Adler internal campaign poll reported in the press, DeStefano was tagged as a “Tea Party” candidate. However, given the controversy and uncertainty over his connection to the Tea Party movement, the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll simply labeled him as an “independent candidate.”

“We chose not to label DeStefano as a Tea Party candidate, and this no doubt lowered his support in the poll, compared to the internal Adler campaign poll,” said Redlawsk. “However, given the level of debate over his status, even labeling him as Tea Party would most likely have had a limited effect, especially among those voters most paying attention.”

State of the Race in the 3rd District

“As a well-funded incumbent, John Adler could be expected to start off with an advantage in the election,” said Redlawsk. “Even so, given the general sense of frustration voters are expressing, Adler’s very close win two years ago, and the competitive nature of the 3rd District, he has a fight on his hands.”

QUESTIONS AND TABLE FOLLOW ON THE NEXT PAGE

**Rutgers-Eagleton Poll August 6 – August 8, 2010
Questions and Tables**

The questions covered in the release of August 10, 2010 are list below. Column percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding. All percentages are of Registered Voters in New Jersey’s 3rd Congressional District.

Q. There will be an election for US Congress in November. Although it is some time away, how likely is it that you will vote this fall? Very likely, somewhat likely, not very likely, or are you certain you will not vote?

Very likely	69%
Somewhat likely	16%
Not very likely	8%
Not vote	5%
DK	1%
N=	421

NOTE: Respondents answering “Very Likely” or “Somewhat Likely” are included in the likely voter column below.

Q. If the election for Congress was today, would you vote for the Democrat John Adler, or the Republican Jon Runyan [ROTATE THESE TWO], or would you not vote?

	Without likely voter screen	With likely voter screen
Adler	35%	40%
Runyan	28%	30%
Not Vote	13%	8%
DK	23%	22%
N=	413	351

Q. Now, if the election was between Democrat John Adler, Republican Jon Runyan [ROTATE THESE TWO] and independent Peter DeStefano, who would you vote for, or would you not vote?

	Without likely voter screen	With likely voter screen
Adler	31%	36%
Runyan	25%	26%
DeStefano	4%	4%
Not Vote	6%	5%
DK	34%	30%
N=	416	354

*New Jersey 3rd CD – August 2010
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll*

Vote Choice	Dem	Ind	Rep	Liberal	Middle	Conserv
Adler	62%	27%	12%	50%	35%	19%
Runyan	9%	25%	62%	22%	19%	61%
Not Vote	10%	17%	9%	11%	16%	5%
DK	18%	31%	16%	17%	30%	15%
N=406	127	183	96	94	225	87

Including
DeStefano

Adler	56%	23%	13%	39%	34%	15%
Runyan	8%	19%	59%	16%	16%	59%
DeStefano	2%	5%	3%	5%	4%	1%
Not Vote	4%	8%	6%	6%	7%	4%
DK	30%	45%	19%	34%	39%	21%
N=411	130	185	95	94	227	87

Education

Employment

Vote Choice	HS or Less	Some Coll	Coll Grad	Grad Work	Full Time	Part Time	Retired	Not Empl
Adler	21%	36%	38%	58%	36%	36%	33%	40%
Runyan	38%	26%	22%	25%	28%	27%	30%	31%
Not Vote	17%	14%	13%	2%	12%	21%	5%	12%
DK	23%	24%	27%	15%	24%	16%	31%	18%
N=	121	137	98	55	170	71	103	61

Including
DeStefano

Adler	21%	33%	33%	49%	30%	33%	31%	37%
Runyan	30%	22%	20%	27%	26%	22%	23%	29%
DeStefano	2%	7%	1%	4%	4%	10%	1%	1%
Not Vote	9%	4%	8%	1%	6%	7%	3%	11%
DK	38%	34%	37%	18%	34%	29%	42%	22%
N=	125	136	99	54	174	72	103	62

Race

Vote Choice	White	Black	Asian	Latino	Other
Adler	34%	61%	10%	47%	40%
Runyan	34%	5%	0%	16%	15%
Not Vote	11%	7%	50%	0%	33%
DK	22%	27%	40%	37%	12%
N=	330	31	20	17	15

Including
DeStefano

Adler	30%	61%	0%	35%	22%
Runyan	29%	5%	0%	16%	15%
DeStefano	4%	0%	0%	12%	0%
Not Vote	7%	0%	10%	0%	0%
DK	30%	34%	90%	37%	62%
N=	333	31	19	17	14

New Jersey 3rd CD – August 2010
Rutgers-Eagleton Poll

Vote Choice	Age				Gender	
	18-29	30-49	50-64	65+	Male	Female
Adler	33%	36%	34%	35%	31%	39%
Runyan	24%	28%	31%	30%	37%	21%
Not Vote	26%	15%	6%	10%	11%	15%
DK	17%	21%	28%	25%	21%	25%
N=	61	140	113	94	195	218

Including
DeStefano

Adler	29%	30%	32%	33%	27%	35%
Runyan	21%	26%	24%	27%	32%	19%
DeStefano	9%	3%	2%	4%	4%	3%
Not Vote	9%	9%	4%	3%	5%	7%
DK	32%	33%	38%	34%	33%	36%
N=	61	143	113	95	195	219

Vote Choice	Income			
	under 50K	50K-<100K	100K-<150K	150K+
Adler	25%	33%	44%	58%
Runyan	29%	37%	32%	22%
Not Vote	14%	14%	10%	0%
DK	33%	15%	14%	19%
N=	107	112	65	43

Including
DeStefano

Adler	19%	28%	42%	52%
Runyan	25%	31%	28%	23%
DeStefano	6%	4%	3%	0%
Not Vote	8%	6%	4%	1%
DK	42%	31%	22%	24%
N=	109	112	66	43

Q. Given a choice, would you vote for someone who has years of experience in elected office or for an outsider with little prior experience in government?

Experience	48%
Outsider	26%
DK	26%
N=	411

Vote Choice	Experience	Outsider	DK
Adler	44%	19%	35%
Runyan	20%	44%	28%
Not Vote	15%	14%	8%
DK	20%	23%	28%
N=402	191	105	106

Including DeStefano	Experience	Outsider	DK
Adler	38%	14%	34%
Runyan	18%	36%	26%
DeStefano	4%	9%	0%
Not Vote	7%	5%	6%
DK	33%	36%	35%
N=405	194	104	107

Q. How closely have you followed news about the election this fall?

Very closely	18%
Somewhat closely	36%
Not too closely	28%
Not at all closely	17%
N=	421

Vote Choice	Very closely	Somewhat closely	Not too closely	Not at all closely
Adler	39%	37%	40%	20%
Runyan	40%	40%	18%	8%
Not Vote	1%	7%	14%	36%
DK	20%	16%	28%	36%
N=411	77	150	111	73

Including DeStefano	Very closely	Somewhat closely	Not too closely	Not at all closely
Adler	33%	37%	33%	15%
Runyan	38%	34%	15%	7%
DeStefano	4%	5%	4%	1%
Not Vote	1%	1%	4%	22%
DK	23%	24%	43%	55%
N=415	78	152	112	73

Q. I'd like to ask about some people and organizations. Please tell me if your general impression of each one is favorable or unfavorable, or if you do not have an opinion. First, [next]: [ROTATE ORDER]

	Obama	Christie	Democrats in Congress	Republicans in Congress	State Legislature	Tea Party Movement
Favorable	46%	46%	26%	24%	13%	26%
Unfavorable	42%	41%	44%	46%	43%	38%
No Opinion	12%	13%	29%	30%	44%	36%
N=	420	420	421	420	420	420

Rutgers-Eagleton Poll August 5-8, 2010
New Jersey 3rd Congressional District Poll

The Rutgers-Eagleton Poll was conducted from August 5-8, 2010 with a scientifically selected random sample of 421 registered voters from the 3rd Congressional District of New Jersey. Data are weighted to represent known parameters in the population, including gender, age, race, education, and Hispanic ethnicity. All results are reported with these weighted data. This telephone poll included 414 landline respondents acquired through random digit dialing, and 7 interviews of randomly selected cell phone only households.

All surveys are subject to sampling error, which is the expected probable difference between interviewing everyone in a population versus a scientific sampling drawn from that population. The sampling error for a sample of 421 registered voters is +/-4.8 points, at a 95 percent confidence interval. Thus if 50 percent of New Jersey 3rd District registered voters favored a particular position, one would be 95 percent confident that the true figure would be between 45.2 and 54.8 percent (50 +/- 4.8) had all 3rd District registered voters been interviewed, rather than just a sample. Sampling error increases as the sample size decreases, so statements based on various population subgroups are subject to more error than are statements based on the total sample. Sampling error does not take into account other sources of variation inherent in public opinion studies, such as non-response, question wording or context effects.

Data were collected by Braun Research, Incorporated, of Princeton, NJ and were analyzed by staff of the Rutgers-Eagleton Poll. The AAPOR response rate 3 was 17.9%, the refusal rate 2 was 24.1% and the cooperation rate 3 was 42.6% for this poll.

Weighted Sample Characteristics (N=421 Registered Voters)			
31% Dem	48% Male	15% 18-29	82% White
46% Independent	52% Female	34% 30-49	9% Black
23% Republican		26% 50-64	4% Hispanic
		25% 65+	5% Asian