

**UMass Lowell/7News
Poll of New Hampshire Voters**

October 15-21, 2014

**N=900 New Hampshire Registered Voters with a subsample of a 643 Likely Voters.
The RV sample has an adjusted margin of error of +/-3.8%; the LV sample has an adjusted margin of error of +/-4.5%**

See <http://uml.edu/polls> for full questionnaire/topline results and detailed methodology disclosure.

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HIGHLIGHTS

New Hampshire Senate race is close

New Hampshire is home to one of the most-watched Senate contests in the nation, where incumbent Senator Jeanne Shaheen faces off against former Massachusetts Senator Scott Brown. With less than two weeks to go in the race, the race is close, with Jeanne Shaheen polling at 49% compared to Scott Brown's 46% among likely voters; the margin widens slightly to 48% to 41% among registered voters. The gap between the candidates among Granite State likely voters is within the margin of error and further adds to the national storyline that this race is tightening in the home stretch.

Shaheen is bolstered by the fact that she is experiencing greater loyalty from Democratic partisans than her opponent; 93% of Democrats support Shaheen compared to 84% of Republicans who support Brown. Shaheen is also winning Independents (50% of independents when leaners are classified as partisans and 52% when leaners are left in).

Those with a college education or post-graduate degree prefer Shaheen to Brown by margins of 15 percent and 25 percent, respectively. The net gender gap is 29 points, with Shaheen leading 56-39 percent among women, while Brown leads 53-41 percent among men.

Likely voters give Shaheen a net favorability rating of +12 percent (54% favorable to 42% unfavorable) compared to Scott Brown's net favorability rating of -5 percent (44% favorable to 49% unfavorable).

New Hampshire Voters Skeptical of Scott Brown

In addition to his negative net favorability rating, Scott Brown appears to be having a difficult time shaking the “carpetbagger” moniker given his previous service in the US Senate representing neighboring Massachusetts. When asked if Scott Brown knows enough about local New Hampshire issues to represent the state in the U.S. Senate, a slim majority of likely voters, 51% ,reported that he does not know enough about local New Hampshire issues, while 43% said that he does.

One of Brown’s talking points in both the 2014 campaign, as well as his 2012 campaign against Elizabeth Warren is that he was rated the most bi-partisan Senator during his time in the Senate. When asked, 42% of New Hampshire likely voters viewed Brown as “Independent-minded” while 50% viewed him as more of a “typical Republican.” While this is less than a majority, Brown’s independent credentials are stronger than those of Senator Jeanne Shaheen, who only 24% of LVs viewed as “independent minded,” compared to 72% who viewed her as more of a “typical Democrat.”

Running Against Obama

Most of the metrics we have discussed seem to favor the reelection of the incumbent Senator, which begs the question: why is this race polling so close? The likely answer is that Brown’s campaign has enjoyed some success in tying Senator Shaheen directly to the policies of President Barack Obama, stating repeatedly that Shaheen has voted with the President “99% of the time.” While the President won the majority of votes in New Hampshire in 2008 and 2012, his approval rating has fallen in New Hampshire. Just 37% of likely voters approve of the way he is handling his job as President compared to 60% who disapprove. Furthermore, Obama gets poor marks on his handling of international affairs (36% approve), the situation involving the Islamic State (ISIS/ISIL) in Iraq and Syria (36%), healthcare (35%), the economy (38%) and containment of the Ebola Virus (38%).

Among those likely voters who approve of the job Barack Obama is doing as President, 94% indicate that they intend to vote for Senator Shaheen. On the other hand, 73% of those who disapprove of the job Barack Obama is doing as President state they will vote for Brown. Shaheen is still winning 20% of Obama disapprovers and she will need to keep these voters in order to go on to win this race.

In addition, 41% of likely voters would say that Scott Brown has run a better campaign, while 37% say Shaheen has run a better campaign. Interestingly, New Hampshire likely voters have

apparently viewed Shaheen's campaign as more negative (43%) compared to 36% who say Brown has run a more negative campaign.

Voter turnout

Nationally, midterm turnout is typically only about 60-70% of Presidential year turnout. In the last couple of cycles in New Hampshire, this difference has been especially pronounced. Midterm turnout in the Granite State has ranged between 43-46% of eligible voters, while Presidential turnout has been over 70% of the eligible electorate.¹ Among registered voters surveyed, Shaheen enjoys an apparent lead more than double the size of that among likely voters. Our likely voter model, which includes questions on interest in the election, past voting behavior and vote intention suggests that 70% of Republicans will turn out to vote compared to 64% of Democrats and 54% of Independents (using leaned party ID). National shifts in enthusiasm about this election have the potential to help Brown close the gap in the final week of the campaign.

However, Brown must combat the perception that Shaheen is going to win; 59% think that Jeanne Shaheen will win the election, compared to 30% who think Scott Brown will win.

Governor's Race has Tightened

Our survey also indicates that the race for Governor of New Hampshire may be tightening, in large part due to the partisan and nationalized nature of the US Senate campaign. Governor Maggie Hassan is polling only slightly ahead of challenger Walt Havenstein 49% to 45% among likely voters; the lead is within the margin of error. The reported straight-ticket voting rates between the Senate and Governor's race are above 80% (85% of Shaheen voters intend to vote for Hassan, compared to 81% of Brown voters who intend to vote for Havenstein), which might mean that the costly Senate campaign is having spillover effects on the Governor's race.

Hassan's apparent lead is bolstered by support from Democrats (91%) and Independents, who support Hassan 48 percent to Havenstein's 29 percent. There is also a net 31 point gender gap in this race; the Incumbent Governor leads by 18 points among women, 56%-38%, while the Challenger leads by 13 points among men (53%-40%). Hassan also benefits from a 55% favorability rating, and the fact that 3 in 10 likely voters either have never heard of (10%) or have no opinion of (21%) her opponent. Much like the Senate race, those numbers are telling. Without the nationalization of this election, we would expect those fundamental numbers to have Hassan far ahead of Havenstein.

¹ <http://www.electproject.org/home/voter-turnout/voter-turnout-data>