

## UMass Lowell-Boston Herald poll / Mass. Senate race / Sept. 13-17, 2012

**N=524 MA registered voters including 497 likely voters, reached by landline and cell phone; sampling error +/- 5.3 percentage points for all RVs, 5.5 points for LVs**

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

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Republican Sen. Scott Brown has a slight lead over Democratic challenger Elizabeth Warren, 50%-44%, among registered voters asked for whom they'd vote if the Senate election were today. Among likely voters, Brown's edge is 4 points, 49%-45%, which is within the sampling error margin for this poll.
  - The last time the UML-Herald poll looked at this race, in December, Warren had a 7-point advantage among registered voters, 49%-42%. In the intervening months and as the campaign has unfolded, other organizations' polls have painted a mixed picture of the contest but, all in all, have found it to be close.
  - Timing is one of many factors that may affect poll results. This survey started a week after the end of the Democratic National Convention, at which Warren gave a speech in prime time. All but the last night of the survey was conducted before video emerged of controversial remarks Republican presidential challenger Mitt Romney made at a private fund-raiser. Both Brown and Warren were advertising and campaigning aggressively throughout the poll field period.
- Brown is backed by one in five Democrats and Democratic-leaning independents (20% among likely voters) and a similar share (22 percent) of the 60% of likely voters who say they'd support Barack Obama for president.
  - Brown wins 58% of all independents, including partisan "leaners" - a numerical though not statistically significant increase from 53% in December. Over the same period, Warren has done no better than hold about steady among independents, at 35% now compared to 37%.
    - Among "unleaned" partisans – those who initially identify with a party, before those who say they're independent are asked which way they lean – 9% of Democratic likely voters and 11% of Democratic registered voters prefer Brown.
  - Looking at the ideological middle, Brown has a huge lead – 24 points, 59%-35% - among voters who say they're moderate on social issues such as gay marriage and abortion. The Republican even wins 37% of social liberals. But Warren and

Brown fairly evenly split those who say they're moderate on fiscal issues such as taxes and spending - 49% for Warren, 45% for Brown.

- Brown has opened up a large lead among men – 20 points among registered voters (56%-36%), 18 points among likely voters (55%-37%). He and Warren ran almost exactly even among men in December. And Brown has eroded Warren's advantage among women, which among registered voters was 18 points in December and just 7 points now – Warren got 51% of women in both polls but Brown improved from 35% to 44%. (Warren leads among women likely voters by 9 points.)
- There's still plenty of opportunity for the Senate race to shift, though, judging from measures of commitment and strength of support. Brown's backers are more apt to say there's a chance they could change their mind - 29%, compared to 19% of Warren supporters. Meanwhile, roughly similar shares of both Brown and Warren backers say they don't support their candidate strongly but only moderately (37% of Brown voters, 41% of those who'd vote for Warren today).
- Brown has pulled about even with Warren in an area that has been a hallmark of her campaign – being seen as a champion of the middle class. Asked which candidate would do better looking out for middle class families' economic interests, 46% of registered voters said Warren and 44% Brown. Warren had had a 10-point advantage on this measure in December, 43%-33%.
- Brown also is seeing improved job approval (58%, up sharply from 45% in the last UML-Herald poll in December) and favorability ratings (57%, up from 48%).
  - Warren has an even bigger increase in favorability since December, 14 points, but unlike Brown, her unfavorable score also edged up as more voters got to know her (48%/34% favorable/unfavorable now, 34%/27% in December, 30%/18% a year ago).
- Slightly more registered voters say Warren is too liberal (30%) than believe Brown is too conservative (24%). Now, 56% see Brown's ideology as "about right," up 11 points since December. As more voters have gotten to know Warren, 49 percent now see her as "about right" ideologically, up 9 points, but her "too liberal" score is 5 points higher too.
- Brown has burnished his image as a Republican who works well with Democrats - 55 percent (including a quarter of would-be Warren voters) say he compromises with Democrats about the right amount, vs. 27 percent who say he doesn't do so enough. When the UML-Herald poll asked this question in September 2011, 50% of registered voters said he compromises with Democrats about the right amount and 32% not enough.

- Warren does best among the youngest and oldest voters. She leads 54%-40% among likely voters under 35, and (51%-43%) among likely voters age 65 and up. Brown makes up for it among voters 35-64.
- Warren, a Harvard Law professor, also is strong among post-graduates, while Brown leads among voters with some college or undergraduate degrees. The candidates evenly split voters who have no more than a high school diploma.
- Brown leads by nearly 2-to-1, 60%-34%, among voters with family income last year of more than \$100,000. He also leads, though more narrowly, among voters with income of \$50,000 to \$100,000, by 56% to 42%. Warren has the advantage among voters with less than \$50,000 income, 58% to 37%.
- Despite numerous changes measured in this survey, Massachusetts registered voters' views on the role of government are holding steady. Just about half, 49%, say the government should do more to solve problems; 41% say it's doing too many things better left to businesses and individuals. That's about the same as a UML-Herald poll found a year ago.
- In all, 38% of this poll's registered voters were interviewed by cell phone. Brown led 52%-42% among registered voters interviewed by landline; he and Warren were tied at 46% among registered voters reached by cell. Among the subset of likely voters, Brown led 53-42% in the landline sample, while Warren had 48% and Brown 44% in the cell sample.

In other findings:

- In the race for the White House, Barack Obama and Joe Biden, the Democrats, retain a large lead over Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan, the Republicans – 60%-35% among registered voters, 59%-36% among likely voters. That's almost identical to Obama's victory margin over John McCain in 2008.
- Obama's favorable rating holds essentially steady at 60% to 34% unfavorable; Romney's is practically a mirror image, 32%/60%, a sharp deterioration from 40%/48% in December and 45%/43% favorable/unfavorable a year ago. (Brown doesn't seem to be connected to Romney in many voters' minds, though.)
- Though he won plaudits for his fiery speech at the Democratic convention, Gov. Deval Patrick's favorable rating is numerically but not quite statistically higher, 57% favorable/33% unfavorable compared to 52%/31% a year ago.

- Analysis by Mike Mokrzycki