

## UMass Lowell-Boston Herald poll / Mass. Senate race / October 31-November 3, 2012

**N=956 MA registered voters including 800 likely voters, reached by landline and cell phone; sampling error +/- 3.7 percentage points for all RVs, 4.1 points for LVs**

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

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### HIGHLIGHTS

- Scott Brown, the Republican and Elizabeth Warren, the Democrat, are locked in an extremely tight race for the US Senate in Massachusetts, with the new UMass-Lowell/Boston Herald Poll giving Brown a 1 point numerical advantage among likely voters.
  - Brown now leads by 49-48 among MA likely voters. Warren leads among MA registered voters 49-47.
  - These numbers represent two interesting shifts in the race since our last poll:
    - Warren's 2 point lead among RVs represents an 8 point shift in the race since the last UML-Boston Herald poll in September, which showed Brown with a 50-44 lead among RVs and a 49-45 lead among LVs.
    - Our likely voter model, which is based on a 7-item turnout scale, shows that enthusiasm among Democrats may be relatively weak. While Warren has shored up support among Democrats leading into Tuesday's election, turnout is likely to be lower than in 2008, which was a banner year for turnout of the eligible electorate. While some of this may be related to top-of-ticket forces, the negative nature of the campaign may also be driving down turnout and ultimately helping Scott Brown.
- Democrats have a relatively large party registration and identification advantage in Massachusetts. In our survey, unleaned Democrats outnumber unleaned Republicans 29-11; leaned Democrats outnumber leaned Republicans 53-33. Much of Scott Brown's campaign has focused on wooing Independent voters and getting cross-over support from Democrats. Brown is winning all Independents 56-40 among RVs, down from 58-35 in the September poll. He has also lost ground among Democrats, taking 14% of

Democrats (including leaners); in September, he had the support of 21% of leaning Democrats. These underlying dynamics in party support largely account for the 8 point shift to Warren among RVs since September.

- Brown also now takes 16% of Obama voters, compared to 22% in September.
- Incumbent Scott Brown's approval rating has decreased slightly to 53% from 58% in September. Brown's favorability rating is at 54%, numerically down from 57% in September, while Warren's favorability is up 2 points from 48% in September to 50%. However, both have seen their unfavorable numbers go up. Brown is now rated as unfavorable by 4 in 10 voters (39%), up from 29% in September. Warren's unfavorable number is up to 42%, from 34% in September. Meanwhile, the number of people undecideds on this question has decreased for both candidates. These numbers suggest that the negative tone of the campaign has hurt both candidates, especially among Independent voters.
- With the campaigns focused heavily on appealing to women voters, MA RVs find that Elizabeth Warren will do a better job on issues especially important to women by a margin of 55-35.
  - However, the gender gap in this race has shrunk considerably since the September poll. Brown now leads by only 3 percentage points among men and Warren's advantage is only 7 percentage points among women. Therefore, it appears as if women's issues are not central to this campaign.
- The firmness of support for the candidates has also increased in the week before the election. Net persuadables (undecided voters, as well as those who say they could change their mind) are down to 16% of likely voters from 36% in September. While there is still room for the race to shift based on voter conversion, the closeness of the poll suggests that voter mobilization and turnout will determine the winner.
- As voters views' have crystallized about the candidates, we have also noted apparent increases in the number of registered voters calling Scott Brown too conservative (30%) and Elizabeth Warren too liberal (37%).
- While half of all registered voters still say that Brown has compromised with Democrats "about the right amount," the number of Independents who agree with this statement has decreased from 64% to 57% since September.
- On the question of which candidate would do a better job of looking out for middle class families, probably the most hotly debated point in this campaign, the candidates

standing on this issue remains virtually unchanged. Among RVs, 47% think Elizabeth Warren would do a better job, and 43% think Scott Brown would do a better job.

- Elizabeth Warren leads among young voters (18-34) 54-45%, while Brown leads among middle-age voters (35-64) 50-46% and older voters (65+) by 51-46%.

#### Other Highlights in the poll

- Barack Obama's lead remains strong as he is leading Mitt Romney 57-37 among likely voters and 59-35 among registered voters. Obama won 62% of the vote against John McCain in Massachusetts in 2008. Obama's margin from 2008 appears to be down slightly in Massachusetts, consistent with the closeness of the national race for President.