

Gregg Is Most Popular Politician in New Hampshire

For more information, contact Andrew Smith, UNH Survey Center, at 603-862-4367. Results also will be available at the center web site at <http://www.unh.edu/ipssr/survey-center/index.html>

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DURHAM, N.H. -- Senator Judd Gregg has the highest overall favorability rating among the major office holders in New Hampshire, according to the latest WMUR/CNN Poll, conducted by the University of New Hampshire Survey Center.

The poll is sponsored by WMUR-TV Channel 9, Manchester, and CNN. The poll was conducted Sept. 5-11, with a random sample of 702 likely New Hampshire primary voters interviewed by telephone. In 95 out of 100 cases, the statewide estimate will be accurate to plus or minus 3.7 percent.

High name recognition and a high favorability rating are key indicators of how well a politician is likely to fare at the ballot box, says UNH Survey Center director Andrew Smith. "Gov. Jeanne Shaheen, Senators Judd Gregg and Bob Smith, and Congressmen Charlie Bass and John Sununu are all well known to New Hampshire voters and an analysis of their favorability ratings may inform many political decisions these politicians make in the next several years," says Smith.

Shaheen, apparently not affected by the debate over education funding, remains popular among New Hampshire voters -- 63% of New Hampshire likely voters say they have a favorable opinion of her, 30% have an unfavorable opinion, 5% are neutral and 2% don't know enough about her to say.

Her net favorability rating (the percent favorable minus the percent unfavorable) is a +33 and it has remained stable since the May, 1999 WMUR / CNN Poll when it stood at +36. "Shaheen is often mentioned as a candidate for the US Senate in 2002 and being known by 98% of New Hampshire voters, and being viewed favorably by 63%, are strong advantages, particularly since incumbent Senator Bob Smith recently quit the Republican Party," Smith points out.

Republican Senator, and former Governor, Judd Gregg is also well known and well liked by New Hampshire voters. Sixty-three percent of New Hampshire voters have a favorable opinion of Gregg, 21% have an unfavorable opinion of him, 10% are neutral, and 6% say they don't know enough about him to say. Gregg's net favorability rating is a strong +42, essentially unchanged since May, 1999 when it stood at +41. Gregg's strong favorability rating makes him a favorite for re-election in 2004.

Republican Sen. Bob Smith, a candidate for President in 2000, recently quit the Republican Party. New Hampshire voters have not been pleased with his recent decisions. Only 36% of likely voters have a favorable opinion of Smith, 48% have an unfavorable opinion of him, 9% are neutral, and 7% don't know enough about him to say. Smith's net favorability rating of -12 is significantly lower than Shaheen, a potential challenger in 2002 and significantly lower than the +12 in the May, 1999 WMUR / CNN Poll.

First District Congressman John Sununu, son of former Governor John Sununu, is well known to New Hampshire voters -- 56% have a favorable opinion of Sununu, 29% have an unfavorable opinion, 10% are neutral, and 5% don't know enough about him to say. His net favorability score statewide is +27, a modest decline since the May, 1999 WMUR / CNN Poll when it stood at +35. Looking only at the First Congressional District, 59% of voters have a favorable opinion of him, 27% have an unfavorable opinion, 10% are neutral, and 4% don't know enough about him to say. Sununu's net favorability rating of +32 reflects a moderate decline since May when his favorability rating in the First District stood at +45.

Second District Congressman Charlie Bass is the least well known of New Hampshire's major office holders. Forty-seven percent of New Hampshire voters say they have a favorable opinion of Bass, 22% have an unfavorable opinion of him, 13% are neutral, and 18% don't know enough about him to say. Statewide, Bass's net favorability rating is +25, essentially unchanged since the May, 1999 WMUR / CNN Poll when it stood at +27. Looking only at the Second District, 56% of voters say they have a favorable opinion of him, 26% have an unfavorable opinion, 9% are neutral, and 9% don't know enough about him to say. His net favorability rating of +30 in the Second District is unchanged since May, 1999.

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