

June 26, 2012

## Bachmann Vulnerable to Defeat in 2012 Status of the Contest for U.S. Congress

**To:** Interested Parties

**From:** Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research

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Congresswoman Michele Bachmann's unsuccessful bid for president had a clear and negative impact on her standing among voters in the new Minnesota 6<sup>th</sup> CD. She receives low marks on both her job performance and personal favorability. While she is well-defined and almost universally known, her support is below 50 percent in a two-way contest for U.S. Congress. Her weaker standing leaves her vulnerable to defeat in this November's election against businessman Jim Graves.

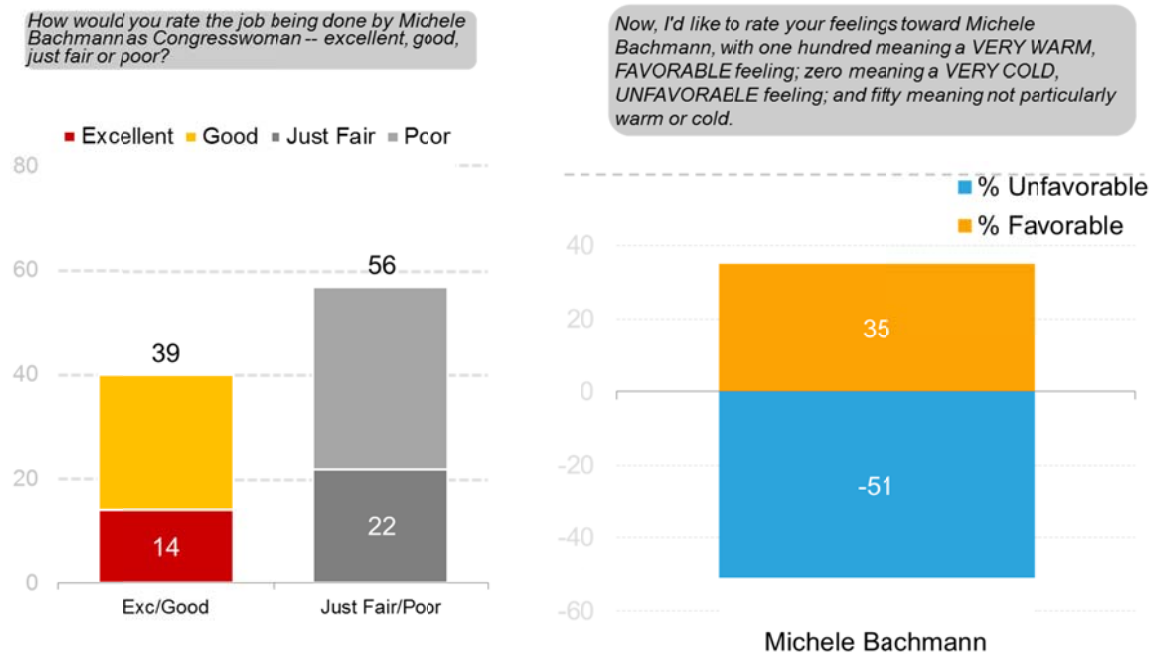
A poll of 505 likely voters in Minnesota's 6<sup>th</sup> Congressional District<sup>1</sup> shows that the district's voters are not as conservative as conventional wisdom suggests. While there is a Republican advantage in partisanship, voters split on feelings toward groups like Planned Parenthood (40 – 34 percent warm/cool ratings) and pro-life, anti-abortion groups (41 – 38 percent warm/cool ratings). The Tea Party receives net negative ratings among the district's voters, with 30 percent warm and 43 percent cool ratings.

Bachmann also comes to the 2012 elections with poor standing with voters in the district. Just 39 percent give her positive job performance ratings of either "excellent" (14 percent) or "good" (26 percent), while 22 percent rate her job as "just fair" and more than one-third (34 percent) rate her job performance as "poor". Bachmann is known by nearly every constituent (96 percent can identify and rate her), but reactions to her are strongly negative, with 51 percent of voters giving her a cool, negative rating and just 35 percent giving her a warm, positive rating.

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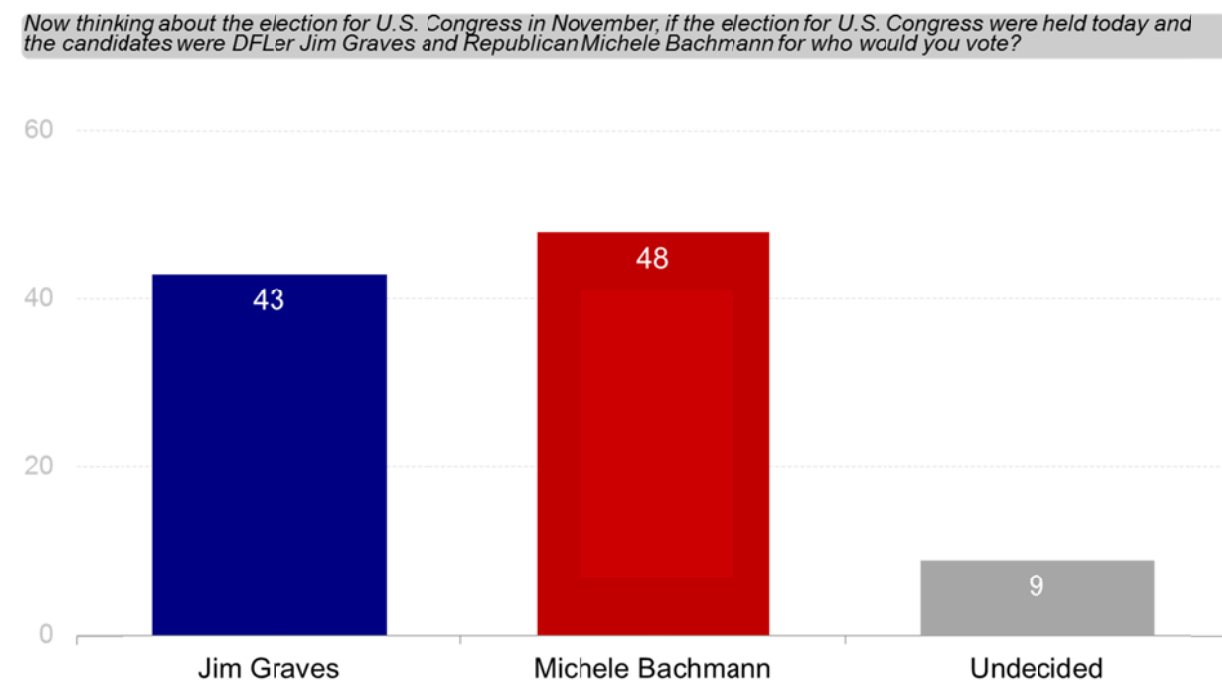
<sup>1</sup> This survey was prepared and supervised by Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research, Inc. Calling took place June 12-14, 2012. These findings, based on a sample size of 505 registered and likely November 2012 voters, are subject to a sampling error of  $\pm 4.4$  percentage points at a 95 percent confidence interval.

**Figure 1: Bachmann Job Performance and Personal Standing**



The race for U.S. Congress reflects her weakness with Bachmann under 50 percent and leading by only 5 points (48 – 43 percent, with 9 percent undecided).

**Figure 2: Congressional Head-to-Head**

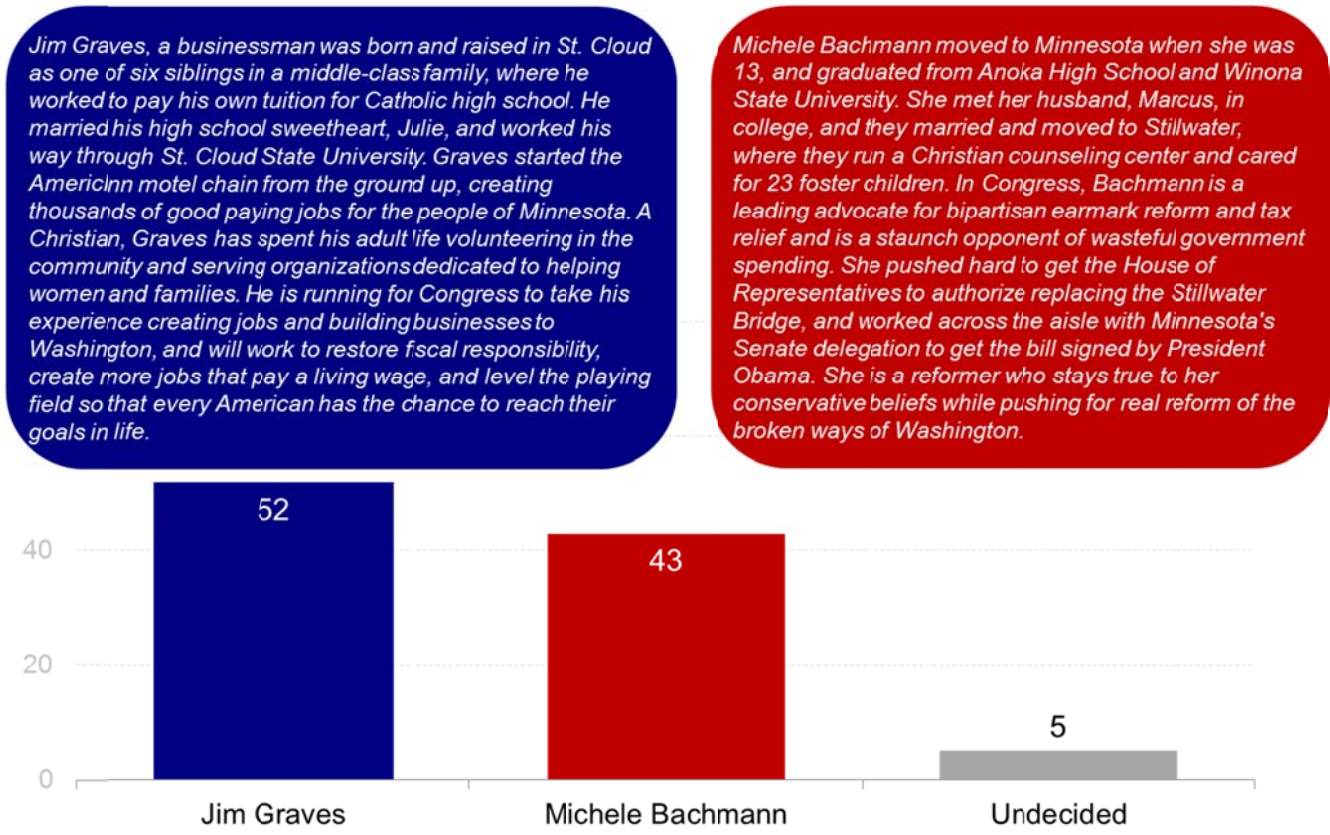


Notably, the gap in strength of support is also not as large as one would expect with an incumbent who is nearly universally known facing a relative newcomer. Just 31 percent of voters say they are certain to vote for Bachmann, compared to 26 percent who are certain Graves voters. This leaves a large persuadable bloc up for grabs in November.

Bachmann faces a big challenge this year. Jim Graves is a compelling candidate—a man who was born and raised in St. Cloud and is the product of a middle class family; a man who built a successful Minnesota business from the ground up. Once people learn more about him, he gains support quickly and moves into a 9-point lead (53 – 42 percent) in the Congressional contest.

**Figure 2: Congressional Head-to-Head After Positive Profiles**

*After hearing more information, thinking again about the election for U.S. Congress in November, if the election for U.S. Congress were held today and the candidates were DFLer Jim Graves and Republican Michele Bachmann for who would you vote?*



With the resources to communicate his story to voters and run a focused campaign, Graves can defeat Bachmann this November.