

SOONER SURVEY

A PUBLICATION OF COLE HARGRAVE SNODGRASS & ASSOCIATES

VOLUME 21 - NUMBER 4

September 2012

Bridenstine Poised to Capture CD-1

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Just 60 days after Jim Bridenstine defeated incumbent John Sullivan in the Republican primary, Republicans have united behind their nominee. When you couple Bridenstine's ability to bring the party together and a tide seeing Mitt Romney doubling the support of Barack Obama, it is easy to see that Jim Bridenstine will be the new congressman from this Tulsa area seat.

With a 23-point Republican advantage on the generic congressional ballot, this seat would be tough sledding for any Democrat. Oklahoma CD-1 encompasses all of Tulsa County and extends into four other counties. Just over a fifth of the district lies outside of Tulsa County. These more suburban and rural areas actually make the district more Republican. In fact, in the area outside of Tulsa County, the generic congressional ballot is 60% Republican vs. 21% Democrat, even more decisive than the already substantial advantage in Tulsa County (51% -32%).

The nature of this district is also evident when looking at the Presidential ballot. Mitt Romney currently doubles the support for Barrack Obama (60% Romney vs. 30% Obama) and

appears headed to an easy victory in this part of the Sooner State. There are, however, "real" Democrats in this seat. In other parts of Oklahoma, we often see close to half of the registered Democrats voting for Romney, here, that percentage is only 25. Statewide, registered Democrats not supporting Obama comprise approximately 25% of the voters – in

CD-1, it is only 10%.

However, this difference is more than compensated by the fact that more than half of the likely voters here are already registered Republicans.

Despite a bruising primary, including negative ads against him, Bridenstine has emerged in very good shape. Bridenstine is still unknown to 32% of voters, but has a favorable to unfavorable ratio of almost 4-to-1 (34% favorable vs. 9%

unfavorable). More important, however, is that among registered Republicans, any potential hangover from the primary has virtually disappeared as he sports a strongly 43% favorable with only a 6% unfavorable. Bridenstine also has strength among disaffected Democrats (43% favorable vs. 3% unfavorable among Democrats not voting for Obama). Bridenstine also has good numbers among senior citizens (31% favorable vs. 9%



Key Facts

- **Bridenstine starts the traditional campaign season with a 29-point advantage and support of 50% of the voters.**
- **Republicans have united behind Jim Bridenstine after the primary battle. Fully 75% of Republicans are committed to voting for Bridenstine in November. Only 5% of Republicans opt for the Democrat.**
- **Less than half (46%) of the registered Democrats will commit to their nominee while 18% opt for Bridenstine.**
- **The underlying environment supports Bridenstine. Romney has a two-to-one lead over Obama and the Republican has a 23-point advantage on the generic congressional ballot.**

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unfavorable) – especially those over the age of 75 (34% favorable vs. 6% unfavorable) creating a backfire against any possible “Mediscare” campaign by Democrat opponents.

Also helping Bridenstine is that his opponent is unknown. Only 8% of voters know enough about John Olson to rate him – and fully 75% say they have never heard the name. What little base he has is partisan – and that is not enough in this district.

In a ballot test including independent Craig Allen, Bridenstine starts with a 29-point advantage (50% Bridenstine vs. 21% Olson vs. 6% Allen). Only 19% of voters know both major party candidates — and among this group, Bridenstine’s lead is even greater (56% Bridenstine vs. 18% Olson). Even after the primary, only 5% of Republicans say they will vote for Olson, while 75% are united behind Bridenstine. In contrast, fewer than half of registered Democrats (46%) say they will support Olson and 18% are committed to Bridenstine. Bridenstine dominates among men (57% Bridenstine; 17% Olson) and has an 18-point lead among women (44% Bridenstine; 26% Olson). Bridenstine even leads in the more Democratic areas of the district and among all age groups.

While the margin may narrow, it is very clear that Bridenstine can expect his support to climb well beyond 50% as undecided voters (23% of the electorate) make-up their minds. Those currently undecided on the ballot test lean toward Mitt Romney (43%) over Barack Obama (37%) and lean toward the Republican on the generic ballot test. While it is tempting to look at Bridenstine as an incumbent in this race, that is simply not the case. He still has substantial room to grow and is a clear favorite to keep this seat in Republican hands. ♦

The Oklahoma CD-1 Questions

1. If the election for U.S. Congress were held today, would you be voting for: (Rotate)

The Republican candidate 53%
The Democrat candidate 30%
Undecided (vol.) 17%

Now, I’d like to read you a list of names. For each one, I want you to tell me first if you have heard of the person; then, if so, please tell me whether you have a favorable or an unfavorable impression of that person. (Rotate names)

2. Jim Bridenstine

Strongly Favorable 18%
Somewhat Favorable 16%
Somewhat Unfavorable 5%
Strongly Unfavorable 4%
Heard of / No opinion 25%
Never Heard of 32%

3. John Olson

Strongly Favorable 2%
Somewhat Favorable 5%
Somewhat Unfavorable 1%
Strongly Unfavorable 0%
Heard of / No opinion 16%
Never Heard of 75%

4. If the election for President were held today, would you be voting for: (Rotate)

Mitt Romney, the Republican 60%
Barack Obama, the Democrat 30%
Undecided (vol.) 10%

5. If the election for U.S. Congress in your area were held today, would you be voting for: (Rotate)

Jim Bridenstine, the Republican 50%
John Olson, the Democrat 21%
Craig Allen, an Independent 6%
Undecided (vol.) 23%

This edition of the Sooner Survey was conducted between August 28 - 30, 2012. It was a telephone survey of 300 Likely voters in Oklahoma Congressional District 1. The sample accurately reflects the electorate of the district. The confidence interval associated with samples of this type is such that 95% of the time, the results are within +/- 5.6% of the “true values,” where “true values” refer to the results obtained if it were possible to interview every voter in the state. The Bridenstine for Congress campaign commissioned the original poll from which this edition of the Sooner Survey was written.