



Stockton poll shows Republicans leading in 9th District legislative races

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By DONNA WEAVER Staff Writer

The results of a Stockton Polling Institute survey show Republican candidates leading in all state-level races in the Republican-leaning 9th Legislative District, which includes much of Ocean County and portions of Atlantic and Burlington counties.

Poll results released Tuesday show strong support for Republican incumbents, with 61 percent saying they believe the state is headed in the right direction and 28 percent saying it is on the wrong track, while 12 percent are unsure.

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The poll shows Gov. Chris Christie leading his Democratic opponent, state Sen. Barbara Buono, by nearly 50 points — 70 to 21 — in the 9th District. Six percent remain undecided or refused to identify a choice.

Incumbent Republican state Sen. Chris Connors, Assemblyman Brian Rumpf and Assemblywoman DiAnne Gove are leading their Democratic challengers by comfortable margins, according to the poll. Connors has 57 percent of the vote in the race against Democrat Anthony Mazzella, who has 26 percent.

Connors has the highest name recognition of all legislative candidates in the district, with 45 percent of those polled saying their opinion of him is somewhat or very favorable. Seven percent had unfavorable views of Connors. Nearly 47 percent said they are unfamiliar

with him. However, 72 percent said they are not familiar with Mazzella.

Rumpf and Gove hold leads of about 10 percentage points over Democrats Peter Ferwerda and Christopher McManus. The Democratic Assembly candidates also are unfamiliar to more than 70 percent of those polled. Rumpf is unfamiliar to 54 percent and Gove is unfamiliar to 62 percent.

The 9th District Stockton poll results for the U.S. Senate race run contrary to statewide surveys, which have shown Democrat Cory Booker with a consistent but narrowing lead over Republican Steve Lonegan.

In the 9th District, including those who said they are leaning toward Booker or Lonegan, it is Lonegan who is leading with 54 percent compared with 37.5 percent for Booker, the Democratic Newark mayor.

The poll results show 23 percent of participants selected jobs as the most important issue facing the state, 20 percent pointed to property taxes and 14 percent cite taxes in general. Eleven percent of participants said the economy.



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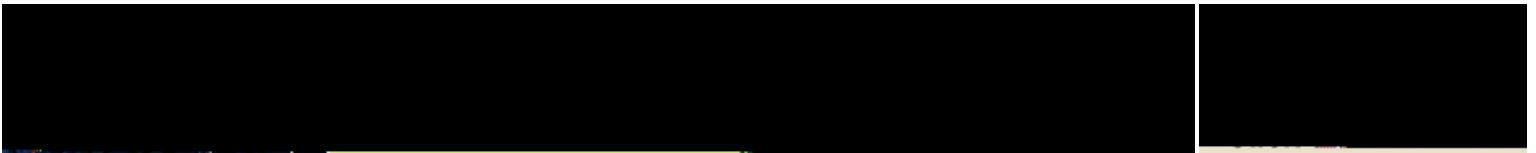


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