

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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INTERVIEWS: DEAN DEBNAM 888-621-6988 / 919-880-4888 (serious media inquiries only please, other questions can be directed to Tom Jensen)

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE POLL: TOM JENSEN 919-744-6312

Kirk Takes Lead Over Giannoulias for Obama's Senate Seat

Raleigh, N.C. – For the first time since March, Republican Mark Kirk has a small lead over Democrat Alexi Giannoulias to succeed Roland Burris, appointed by former Governor Rod Blagojevich to temporarily fill President Obama's vacated Senate seat. Kirk has 40% to Giannoulias' 36%, with Green Party candidate LeAlan Jones' share continuing to slowly decline, now at 8%, and Libertarian Mike Labno measured for the first time at 3%. In mid-August, Giannoulias led with 37% to Kirk's 35% and Jones' 9%.

The difference is, as many places, voter enthusiasm on the GOP side. Kirk pulls 79% of his own party, up from 74% last time, while Giannoulias earns only 68% of Democrats, down from 72%. That is because Kirk now gets 9% of Democrats to Giannoulias' 2% of Republicans, when in August, the Democrat got 6% crossover support to Kirk's 5%. With the entrance of Labno at 5% of unaffiliated and third-party voters, Kirk's lead among them, while still healthy at 41-27-13 over Giannoulias and Jones, is slightly down from 36-20-15 in the previous survey.

This party unity gap and resulting tight race with two third-party candidates splitting 11% of the vote reflect the tepid feelings voters have for their major-party choices in this election. Only 39% say they are excited about who they themselves are voting for in the Senate race, while 45% wish someone better were running. At 38-44, the plurality Democrats reflect the overall voter sentiment, but Republicans are flipped, at 45-39. Independents are by far the least satisfied with their options, at 32-54.

Kirk's improvement in the horse race has come despite voters slightly souring on him personally in the last month. He and Giannoulias are now equally disliked, with respective 33-47 and 33-48 favorability ratings. Voters have split slightly in favor of the Democrat, 7-6, since August, but against the Republican, 7-13.

“This election is in some ways a referendum on President Obama, and with some seats moving back toward the Democrats of late, and others suddenly moving toward the Republicans, this race could end up deciding control of the Senate,” said Dean Debnam, President of Public Policy Polling.

PPP surveyed 470 likely Illinois voters from September 23rd to 26th. The survey's margin of error is +/-4.5%. Other factors, such as refusal to be interviewed and weighting, may introduce additional error that is more difficult to quantify.



Illinois Survey Results

Q1 The candidates for Senate are Democrat Alexi Giannoulias, Republican Mark Kirk, Green Party candidate LeAlan Jones, and Libertarian Mike Labno. If the election was today, who would you vote for?

Alexi Giannoulias 36%
Mark Kirk..... 40%
LeAlan Jones 8%
Mike Labno 3%
Undecided..... 13%

Q2 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Alexi Giannoulias?

Favorable 33% *Not sure* 20%
Unfavorable..... 48%

Q3 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Mark Kirk?

Favorable..... 33% *Not sure* 20%
Unfavorable 47%

Q4 Are you excited about who you're casting your US Senate vote for or do you wish someone better was running?

Excited about who you're voting for 39% *Wish someone better was running* .. 45%
Not sure 16%

Q5 Do you approve or disapprove of Barack Obama's job performance?

Approve..... 44% *Not sure* 7%
Disapprove..... 49%

Q6 Do you approve or disapprove of Senator Roland Burris' job performance?

Approve 17%
Disapprove..... 68%
Not sure 15%

Q7 Do you approve or disapprove of Senator Dick Durbin's job performance?

Approve 46%
Disapprove..... 43%
Not sure 11%

Q8 Who did you vote for President in 2008?

John McCain..... 39%
Barack Obama..... 54%
Someone else/Don't remember 7%

Q9 Would you describe yourself as a liberal, moderate, or conservative?

Liberal..... 23%
Moderate..... 40%
Conservative..... 37%

Q10 If you are a woman, press 1. If a man, press 2.

Woman 55%
Man..... 45%

Q11 If you are a Democrat, press 1. If a Republican, press 2. If you are an independent or identify with another party, press 3.

Democrat 42%
Republican..... 32%
Independent/Other..... 26%

Q12 If you are Hispanic, press 1. If white, press 2. If African-American, press 3. If other, press 4.

Hispanic..... 6%
White 78%
African-American 12%
Other..... 4%





Q13 If you are 18 to 29 years old, press 1. If 30 to 45, press 2. If 46 to 65, press 3. If you are older than 65, press 4.

18 to 29.....	8%
30 to 45.....	27%
46 to 65.....	43%
Older than 65.....	22%





Crosstabs

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone else/Don't remember
Giannoulias/Kirk/Jones/Labno				
Alexi Giannoulias	36%	3%	63%	14%
Mark Kirk	40%	76%	13%	39%
LeAlan Jones	8%	6%	10%	8%
Mike Labno	3%	3%	2%	6%
Undecided	13%	12%	12%	34%

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone else/Don't remember
Giannoulias Favorability				
Favorable	33%	4%	55%	16%
Unfavorable	48%	80%	24%	47%
Not sure	20%	15%	20%	37%

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone else/Don't remember
Kirk Favorability				
Favorable	33%	59%	14%	29%
Unfavorable	47%	23%	68%	26%
Not sure	20%	19%	18%	45%

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone else/Don't remember
Excited or Wish Someone Better Running				
Excited about who you're voting for	39%	42%	39%	21%
Wish someone better was running	45%	45%	45%	49%
Not sure	16%	13%	16%	30%





Crosstabs

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone else/Don't remember
Obama Approval				
Approve	44%	2%	78%	13%
Disapprove	49%	93%	15%	71%
Not sure	7%	5%	6%	16%

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone else/Don't remember
Burr Approval				
Approve	17%	2%	30%	5%
Disapprove	68%	89%	51%	79%
Not sure	15%	9%	19%	16%

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone else/Don't remember
Durbin Approval				
Approve	46%	12%	74%	21%
Disapprove	43%	78%	16%	61%
Not sure	11%	11%	10%	18%

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Giannoulis/Kirk/Jones/Labno				
Alexi Giannoulis	36%	74%	43%	6%
Mark Kirk	40%	2%	33%	70%
LeAlan Jones	8%	13%	9%	4%
Mike Labno	3%	2%	2%	4%
Undecided	13%	9%	13%	16%





Crosstabs

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Giannoulas Favorability				
Favorable	33%	62%	38%	8%
Unfavorable	48%	11%	45%	73%
Not sure	20%	26%	17%	19%

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Kirk Favorability				
Favorable	33%	9%	27%	53%
Unfavorable	47%	69%	56%	25%
Not sure	20%	21%	17%	23%

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Excited or Wish Someone Better Running				
Excited about who you're voting for	39%	40%	34%	43%
Wish someone better was running	45%	43%	51%	41%
Not sure	16%	17%	15%	17%

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Obama Approval				
Approve	44%	84%	50%	12%
Disapprove	49%	11%	40%	83%
Not sure	7%	5%	10%	4%





Crosstabs

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Burris Approval				
Approve	17%	31%	22%	4%
Disapprove	68%	43%	68%	83%
Not sure	15%	25%	10%	13%

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Durbin Approval				
Approve	46%	80%	56%	14%
Disapprove	43%	10%	38%	69%
Not sure	11%	10%	6%	17%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Giannoulas/Kirk/Jones/Labno			
Alexi Giannoulas	36%	41%	31%
Mark Kirk	40%	36%	44%
LeAlan Jones	8%	6%	11%
Mike Labno	3%	3%	3%
Undecided	13%	15%	12%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Giannoulas Favorability			
Favorable	33%	34%	30%
Unfavorable	48%	41%	57%
Not sure	20%	25%	13%





Crosstabs

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Kirk Favorability			
Favorable	33%	30%	36%
Unfavorable	47%	47%	48%
Not sure	20%	23%	16%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Excited or Wish Someone Better Running			
Excited about who you're voting for	39%	37%	40%
Wish someone better was running	45%	42%	49%
Not sure	16%	21%	11%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Obama Approval			
Approve	44%	49%	38%
Disapprove	49%	43%	57%
Not sure	7%	8%	5%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Burr Approval			
Approve	17%	21%	13%
Disapprove	68%	63%	75%
Not sure	15%	17%	12%





Crosstabs

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Durbin Approval			
Approve	46%	51%	39%
Disapprove	43%	36%	52%
Not sure	11%	13%	9%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Giannoulias/Kirk/Jones/Labno				
Alexi Giannoulias	36%	68%	2%	27%
Mark Kirk	40%	9%	79%	41%
LeAlan Jones	8%	7%	6%	13%
Mike Labno	3%	2%	2%	5%
Undecided	13%	15%	11%	14%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Giannoulias Favorability				
Favorable	33%	56%	5%	28%
Unfavorable	48%	21%	78%	54%
Not sure	20%	23%	17%	18%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Kirk Favorability				
Favorable	33%	11%	62%	32%
Unfavorable	47%	68%	21%	47%
Not sure	20%	21%	17%	21%





Crosstabs

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Excited or Wish Someone Better Running				
Excited about who you're voting for	39%	38%	45%	32%
Wish someone better was running	45%	44%	39%	54%
Not sure	16%	18%	16%	14%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Obama Approval				
Approve	44%	80%	3%	35%
Disapprove	49%	12%	92%	57%
Not sure	7%	7%	5%	8%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Burris Approval				
Approve	17%	31%	1%	16%
Disapprove	68%	51%	90%	69%
Not sure	15%	19%	9%	15%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Durbin Approval				
Approve	46%	73%	15%	41%
Disapprove	43%	16%	72%	52%
Not sure	11%	11%	13%	8%





Crosstabs

	Base	Race			
		Hispanic	White	African-American	Other
Giannoulis/Kirk/Jones/Labno					
Alexi Giannoulis	36%	47%	31%	68%	31%
Mark Kirk	40%	40%	43%	14%	38%
LeAlan Jones	8%	-	10%	5%	-
Mike Labno	3%	-	3%	-	-
Undecided	13%	13%	12%	14%	31%

	Base	Race			
		Hispanic	White	African-American	Other
Giannoulis Favorability					
Favorable	33%	47%	29%	48%	38%
Unfavorable	48%	47%	54%	17%	23%
Not sure	20%	7%	17%	35%	38%

	Base	Race			
		Hispanic	White	African-American	Other
Kirk Favorability					
Favorable	33%	40%	35%	17%	23%
Unfavorable	47%	40%	46%	61%	38%
Not sure	20%	20%	19%	22%	38%

	Base	Race			
		Hispanic	White	African-American	Other
Excited or Wish Someone Better Running					
Excited about who you're voting for	39%	40%	39%	39%	31%
Wish someone better was running	45%	40%	47%	39%	38%
Not sure	16%	20%	14%	22%	31%





Crosstabs

	Base	Race			
		Hispanic	White	African-American	Other
Obama Approval					
Approve	44%	47%	38%	78%	46%
Disapprove	49%	47%	56%	9%	54%
Not sure	7%	7%	6%	13%	-

	Base	Race			
		Hispanic	White	African-American	Other
Burris Approval					
Approve	17%	20%	13%	43%	23%
Disapprove	68%	73%	74%	35%	46%
Not sure	15%	7%	13%	22%	31%

	Base	Race			
		Hispanic	White	African-American	Other
Durbin Approval					
Approve	46%	53%	43%	61%	46%
Disapprove	43%	40%	48%	13%	46%
Not sure	11%	7%	9%	26%	8%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Giannoulas/Kirk/Jones/Labno					
Alexi Giannoulas	36%	31%	39%	37%	33%
Mark Kirk	40%	31%	39%	40%	42%
LeAlan Jones	8%	12%	10%	8%	4%
Mike Labno	3%	2%	4%	0%	5%
Undecided	13%	23%	8%	14%	15%





Crosstabs

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Giannoulas Favorability					
Favorable	33%	34%	31%	32%	35%
Unfavorable	48%	53%	48%	49%	43%
Not sure	20%	14%	21%	19%	22%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Kirk Favorability					
Favorable	33%	26%	30%	35%	34%
Unfavorable	47%	53%	47%	46%	48%
Not sure	20%	21%	23%	19%	18%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Excited or Wish Someone Better Running					
Excited about who you're voting for	39%	41%	31%	39%	47%
Wish someone better was running	45%	41%	50%	46%	38%
Not sure	16%	19%	19%	14%	15%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Obama Approval					
Approve	44%	36%	44%	45%	44%
Disapprove	49%	49%	48%	49%	51%
Not sure	7%	14%	8%	5%	5%





Crosstabs

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Burris Approval					
Approve	17%	15%	13%	20%	19%
Disapprove	68%	73%	73%	63%	70%
Not sure	15%	12%	14%	17%	11%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Durbin Approval					
Approve	46%	48%	42%	47%	48%
Disapprove	43%	28%	44%	46%	41%
Not sure	11%	24%	13%	7%	11%

