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Berkley gaining on Heller, trails narrowly

Raleigh, N.C. – In PPP’s first look at the Nevada Senate race since Shelley Berkley and Dean Heller became official candidates for John Ensign’s seat, Berkley has more than halved the gap between her and her House colleague since January. She trails only 47-43 after lagging by a 51-38 margin in a PPP poll three months ago.

Heller is very popular with independents. 51% of them see him favorably, and only 21% unfavorably. But he has gotten a lot less popular with Democrats since January, going from an unusually close 22-31 favorable-unfavorable margin to only 16-48 now. That is still healthy crossover support, especially combined with unanimity among Republicans and such strong support from unaffiliated voters. But as Berkley has entered the scene, the trajectory is not in his favor to maintain that support.

In the previous poll, Heller took a full 20% of Berkley’s party’s vote, but now earns only 13%. Keeping him in the lead are independents, who support him by an almost identical 56-29 spread, and Republicans, who have lined up a little more steadily behind him, 86-8 versus 85-12. Because of a healthy number of Democrats crossing over to Heller and almost twice as many Democrats being undecided as Republicans, Berkley maintains only 76% of her party’s backing, an imbalance that gives Berkley room to grow as she becomes better known over the course of her candidacy.

Right now, voters are split pretty evenly on how they feel about Berkley personally, 34% with a favorable opinion, 31% unfavorable, and a 35% plurality not sure. Only 28% have no opinion of the former statewide officeholder Heller. Berkley has become only slightly less popular in the last three months; previously, she had a 34-29 grade.

“Shelley Berkley’s come out of the gate a lot stronger than Dean Heller since John Ensign officially announced he wasn’t going to run again,” said Dean Debnam, President of Public Policy Polling. “It should be a very competitive race.”

PPP surveyed 491 Nevada voters from April 21st to 24th. The margin of error for the survey is +/-4.4%. This poll was not paid for or authorized by any campaign or political organization. PPP surveys are conducted through automated telephone interviews. PPP is a Democratic polling company but polling expert Nate Silver of the *New York Times* found that its surveys in 2010 actually exhibited a slight bias toward Republican candidates.



Nevada Survey Results

- Q1** Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Shelley Berkley?
- Favorable*..... 34%
 - Unfavorable* 31%
 - Not sure* 35%
- Q2** Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Byron Georgiou?
- Favorable*..... 3%
 - Unfavorable* 17%
 - Not sure* 80%
- Q3** Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Dean Heller?
- Favorable*..... 43%
 - Unfavorable* 29%
 - Not sure* 28%
- Q4** If the candidates for US Senate next year were Democrat Shelley Berkley and Republican Dean Heller, who would you vote for?
- Shelley Berkley*..... 43%
 - Dean Heller*..... 47%
 - Undecided*..... 10%
- Q5** If the candidates for US Senate next year were Democrat Byron Georgiou and Republican Dean Heller, who would you vote for?
- Byron Georgiou*..... 28%
 - Dean Heller*..... 52%
 - Undecided*..... 20%
- Q6** John Ensign announced this week that he will be resigning effective next month. Would you like for Governor Sandoval to appoint his replacement, or would you rather that there was a special election to choose his replacement?
- Would like for Governor Sandoval to appoint Senator Ensign's replacement*..... 44%
 - Would rather that there was a special election to choose Senator Ensign's replacement*..... 53%
 - Not sure*..... 3%
- Q7** Who did you vote for President in 2008?
- John McCain*..... 44%
 - Barack Obama*..... 49%
 - Someone Else/Don't Remember*..... 7%
- Q8** Would you describe yourself as very liberal, somewhat liberal, moderate, somewhat conservative, or very conservative?
- Very liberal*..... 10%
 - Somewhat liberal* 19%
 - Moderate*..... 28%
 - Somewhat conservative*..... 25%
 - Very conservative* 18%
- Q9** If you are a woman, press 1. If a man, press 2.
- Woman* 53%
 - Man*..... 47%
- Q10** 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* 45%
 - Republican*..... 35%
 - Independent/Other*..... 20%





Q11 If you are Hispanic, press 1. If white, press 2.
If African-American, press 3. If other, press 4.

<i>Hispanic</i>	16%
<i>White</i>	72%
<i>African-American</i>	8%
<i>Other</i>	4%

Q12 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.

<i>18 to 29</i>	6%
<i>30 to 45</i>	25%
<i>46 to 65</i>	48%
<i>Older than 65</i>	21%





Crosstabs

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone Else/Don't Remember
Berkley Favorability				
Favorable	34%	13%	54%	22%
Unfavorable	31%	53%	11%	34%
Not sure	35%	34%	35%	44%

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone Else/Don't Remember
Georgiou Favorability				
Favorable	3%	3%	2%	6%
Unfavorable	17%	16%	18%	14%
Not sure	80%	81%	79%	80%

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone Else/Don't Remember
Heller Favorability				
Favorable	43%	72%	18%	39%
Unfavorable	29%	8%	49%	17%
Not sure	28%	19%	33%	44%

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone Else/Don't Remember
Berkley/Heller				
Shelley Berkley	43%	9%	74%	31%
Dean Heller	47%	85%	15%	47%
Undecided	10%	7%	11%	21%





Crosstabs

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone Else/Don't Remember
Georgiou/Heller				
Byron Georgiou	28%	4%	52%	11%
Dean Heller	52%	85%	22%	48%
Undecided	20%	10%	26%	41%

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone Else/Don't Remember
Should Sandoval Appt. Ensign Replacement, or Have Special Election?				
Would like for Governor Sandoval to appoint Senator Ensign's replacement	44%	71%	23%	26%
Would rather that there was a special election to choose Senator Ensign's replacement	53%	26%	75%	65%
Not sure	3%	2%	1%	9%

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Berkley Favorability						
Favorable	34%	56%	51%	41%	18%	15%
Unfavorable	31%	12%	17%	22%	40%	57%
Not sure	35%	33%	31%	38%	42%	29%

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Georgiou Favorability						
Favorable	3%	6%	1%	1%	6%	2%
Unfavorable	17%	14%	27%	18%	11%	15%
Not sure	80%	80%	71%	81%	83%	84%





Crosstabs

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Heller Favorability						
Favorable	43%	12%	18%	32%	70%	68%
Unfavorable	29%	67%	47%	36%	7%	9%
Not sure	28%	21%	35%	32%	23%	23%

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Berkley/Heller						
Shelley Berkley	43%	77%	72%	53%	16%	14%
Dean Heller	47%	16%	14%	35%	75%	81%
Undecided	10%	6%	14%	12%	9%	5%

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Georgiou/Heller						
Byron Georgiou	28%	66%	51%	32%	6%	9%
Dean Heller	52%	22%	22%	41%	76%	82%
Undecided	20%	12%	28%	27%	18%	9%

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Should Sandoval Appt. Ensign Replacement, or Have Special Election?						
Would like for Governor Sandoval to appoint Senator Ensign's replacement	44%	25%	20%	32%	61%	73%
Would rather that there was a special election to choose Senator Ensign's replacement	53%	75%	80%	62%	36%	25%
Not sure	3%	-	-	6%	3%	2%





Crosstabs

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Berkley Favorability			
Favorable	34%	36%	31%
Unfavorable	31%	23%	40%
Not sure	35%	41%	29%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Georgiou Favorability			
Favorable	3%	3%	3%
Unfavorable	17%	16%	19%
Not sure	80%	81%	79%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Heller Favorability			
Favorable	43%	40%	47%
Unfavorable	29%	29%	29%
Not sure	28%	31%	24%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Berkley/Heller			
Shelley Berkley	43%	46%	39%
Dean Heller	47%	43%	52%
Undecided	10%	11%	9%





Crosstabs

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Georgiou/Heller			
Byron Georgiou	28%	31%	25%
Dean Heller	52%	47%	56%
Undecided	20%	22%	18%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Should Sandoval Appt. Ensign Replacement, or Have Special Election?			
Would like for Governor Sandoval to appoint Senator Ensign's replacement	44%	42%	47%
Would rather that there was a special election to choose Senator Ensign's replacement	53%	55%	51%
Not sure	3%	3%	2%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Berkley Favorability				
Favorable	34%	59%	9%	20%
Unfavorable	31%	9%	55%	37%
Not sure	35%	32%	36%	43%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Georgiou Favorability				
Favorable	3%	4%	3%	1%
Unfavorable	17%	21%	16%	9%
Not sure	80%	75%	81%	89%





Crosstabs

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Heller Favorability				
Favorable	43%	16%	74%	51%
Unfavorable	29%	48%	10%	21%
Not sure	28%	36%	17%	27%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Berkley/Heller				
Shelley Berkley	43%	76%	8%	29%
Dean Heller	47%	13%	86%	56%
Undecided	10%	11%	6%	15%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Georgiou/Heller				
Byron Georgiou	28%	54%	5%	13%
Dean Heller	52%	22%	87%	55%
Undecided	20%	24%	9%	32%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Should Sandoval Appt. Ensign Replacement, or Have Special Election?				
Would like for Governor Sandoval to appoint Senator Ensign's replacement	44%	20%	77%	47%
Would rather that there was a special election to choose Senator Ensign's replacement	53%	78%	20%	49%
Not sure	3%	2%	3%	4%





Crosstabs

	Base	Race			
		Hispanic	White	African-American	Other
Berkley Favorability					
Favorable	34%	36%	29%	72%	33%
Unfavorable	31%	34%	33%	9%	22%
Not sure	35%	30%	38%	19%	44%

	Base	Race			
		Hispanic	White	African-American	Other
Georgiou Favorability					
Favorable	3%	4%	2%	9%	-
Unfavorable	17%	25%	15%	19%	17%
Not sure	80%	71%	83%	72%	83%

	Base	Race			
		Hispanic	White	African-American	Other
Heller Favorability					
Favorable	43%	38%	47%	25%	33%
Unfavorable	29%	30%	29%	28%	28%
Not sure	28%	32%	24%	47%	39%

	Base	Race			
		Hispanic	White	African-American	Other
Berkley/Heller					
Shelley Berkley	43%	54%	37%	69%	50%
Dean Heller	47%	45%	52%	13%	39%
Undecided	10%	2%	11%	19%	11%





Crosstabs

	Base	Race			
		Hispanic	White	African-American	Other
Georgiou/Heller					
Byron Georgiou	28%	36%	22%	63%	39%
Dean Heller	52%	50%	57%	16%	39%
Undecided	20%	14%	21%	22%	22%

	Base	Race			
		Hispanic	White	African-American	Other
Should Sandoval Appt. Ensign Replacement, or Have Special Election?					
Would like for Governor Sandoval to appoint Senator Ensign's replacement	44%	39%	50%	17%	25%
Would rather that there was a special election to choose Senator Ensign's replacement	53%	55%	49%	78%	75%
Not sure	3%	5%	2%	4%	-

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Berkley Favorability					
Favorable	34%	30%	22%	38%	38%
Unfavorable	31%	25%	34%	28%	35%
Not sure	35%	45%	43%	34%	27%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Georgiou Favorability					
Favorable	3%	3%	2%	4%	3%
Unfavorable	17%	16%	17%	18%	16%
Not sure	80%	81%	82%	78%	81%





Crosstabs

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Heller Favorability					
Favorable	43%	32%	46%	42%	48%
Unfavorable	29%	25%	26%	32%	26%
Not sure	28%	44%	27%	26%	27%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Berkley/Heller					
Shelley Berkley	43%	42%	33%	47%	44%
Dean Heller	47%	33%	53%	46%	49%
Undecided	10%	25%	14%	7%	7%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Georgiou/Heller					
Byron Georgiou	28%	21%	23%	30%	33%
Dean Heller	52%	49%	53%	51%	54%
Undecided	20%	31%	24%	20%	14%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Should Sandoval Appt. Ensign Replacement, or Have Special Election?					
Would like for Governor Sandoval to appoint Senator Ensign's replacement	44%	38%	50%	42%	46%
Would rather that there was a special election to choose Senator Ensign's replacement	53%	55%	47%	55%	54%
Not sure	3%	7%	3%	3%	-

