FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE **July 21, 2014**

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Montana Senate Race Tightens Considerably

Raleigh, N.C. – PPP's newest look at the Montana Senate race finds it has tightened considerably over the last eight months. John Walsh now trails Steve Daines only 46/39 in his quest to be elected for a full term. That represents a 10 point gain for Walsh since November when he trailed Daines by 17 points at 52/35.

Walsh and Daines have very similar approval numbers. Walsh is on slightly positive ground at a 38/37 approval, while Daines is on slightly negative ground at a 39/40 approval. Daines' approval numbers have dropped a net 9 points from last summer when we found him at a 41/33 spread. He went under water following the government shutdown and has not seen his numbers turn back around.

One place where Walsh has seen real improvement as he's become better known is in his crossover support from Republicans. Where he trailed 90/3 with them in November, that deficit is now just 79/12. Walsh has a slightly more unified party behind him, getting 81% of Democrats. Daines leads 41/32 with independents, but that has tightened from 48/35 last fall.

The generic Senate ballot in Montana actually gives Republicans only a 45/41 lead. Daines' lead is larger than that mostly based on his having slightly greater name recognition from having run statewide on his own account in 2012.

“Steve Daines is still the favorite in this race but it’s looking much more competitive now than it did last fall,” said Dean Debnam, President of Public Policy Polling. “It’s as close as the races in places like New Hampshire and Michigan that are getting far more attention as ones to watch this fall.”

PPP surveyed 574 Montana voters on July 17th and 18th. The margin of error for the survey is +/-4.1%. 80% of interviews for the poll were conducted over the phone with 20% interviewed over the internet to reach respondents who don’t have landline telephones.

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Montana Survey Results

Q1 Do you approve or disapprove of President Barack Obama's job performance?

Approve	37%
Disapprove	57%
Not sure	6%

Q2 The candidates for U.S. Senate are Democrat John Walsh and Republican Steve Daines. If the election was today, who would you vote for?

John Walsh	39%
Steve Daines	46%
Undecided	15%

Q3 Do you approve or disapprove of the job John Walsh is doing as U.S. Senator?

Approve	38%
Disapprove	37%
Not sure	26%

Q4 Do you approve or disapprove of the job Steve Daines is doing as U.S. Representative?

Approve	39%
Disapprove	40%
Not sure	21%

Q5 This fall, there will be an election for U.S. Senate. Would you say you are more likely to vote for the Democratic or Republican candidate?

Democrat	41%
Republican	45%
Not sure	14%

Q6 In the last presidential election, did you vote for Barack Obama or Mitt Romney?

Barack Obama	42%
Mitt Romney	47%
Someone else / Don't remember	11%

Q7 Would you describe yourself as very liberal, somewhat liberal, moderate, somewhat conservative, or very conservative?

Very liberal	9%
Somewhat liberal	19%
Moderate	32%
Somewhat conservative	26%
Very conservative	14%

Q8 If you are a woman, press 1. If a man, press 2.

Woman	53%
Man	47%

Q9 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	29%
Republican	35%
Independent / Other	36%

Q10 If you are white, press 1. If other, press 2.

White	87%
Other	13%

Q11 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	12%
30 to 45	24%
46 to 65	41%
Older than 65	23%

Q12 Mode

Phone	80%
Internet	20%

July 17-18, 2014
Survey of 574 Montana voters

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	Base	2012 Pres. Vote		
		Barack Obama	Mitt Romney	Someone else / Don't remember
Obama Approval				
Approve	**37%**	77%	7%	13%
Disapprove	**57%**	13%	91%	76%
Not sure	**6%**	10%	2%	11%

	Base	2012 Pres. Vote		
		Barack Obama	Mitt Romney	Someone else / Don't remember
Senate				
John Walsh	**39%**	76%	10%	22%
Steve Daines	**46%**	13%	79%	37%
Undecided	**15%**	12%	11%	41%

	Base	2012 Pres. Vote		
		Barack Obama	Mitt Romney	Someone else / Don't remember
Walsh Approval				
Approve	**38%**	72%	12%	14%
Disapprove	**37%**	13%	59%	32%
Not sure	**26%**	15%	29%	54%

	Base	2012 Pres. Vote		
		Barack Obama	Mitt Romney	Someone else / Don't remember
Daines Approval				
Approve	**39%**	15%	66%	17%
Disapprove	**40%**	72%	13%	30%
Not sure	**21%**	13%	21%	53%

	Base	2012 Pres. Vote		
		Barack Obama	Mitt Romney	Someone else / Don't remember
Generic Sen. Ballot				
Democrat	**41%**	83%	9%	19%
Republican	**45%**	6%	81%	39%
Not sure	**14%**	11%	10%	42%

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Obama Approval						
Approve	**37%**	81%	64%	42%	13%	6%
Disapprove	**57%**	11%	28%	49%	85%	87%
Not sure	**6%**	8%	7%	9%	2%	7%

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Senate						
John Walsh	**39%**	87%	60%	49%	14%	5%
Steve Daines	**46%**	10%	22%	32%	76%	80%
Undecided	**15%**	3%	18%	20%	10%	15%

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Walsh Approval						
Approve	**38%**	88%	59%	45%	13%	6%
Disapprove	**37%**	8%	27%	23%	54%	68%
Not sure	**26%**	3%	15%	33%	33%	25%

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	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Daines Approval						
Approve	**39%**	19%	16%	25%	64%	68%
Disapprove	**40%**	77%	67%	46%	14%	12%
Not sure	**21%**	3%	17%	28%	22%	20%

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Generic Sen. Ballot						
Democrat	**41%**	92%	69%	52%	11%	6%
Republican	**45%**	7%	18%	27%	79%	81%
Not sure	**14%**	1%	12%	21%	10%	13%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Obama Approval			
Approve	**37%**	39%	35%
Disapprove	**57%**	55%	58%
Not sure	**6%**	6%	7%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Senate			
John Walsh	**39%**	40%	38%
Steve Daines	**46%**	46%	47%
Undecided	**15%**	14%	15%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Walsh Approval			
Approve	**38%**	38%	38%
Disapprove	**37%**	35%	39%
Not sure	**26%**	28%	23%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Daines Approval			
Approve	**39%**	39%	40%
Disapprove	**40%**	41%	38%
Not sure	**21%**	20%	23%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Generic Sen. Ballot			
Democrat	**41%**	43%	39%
Republican	**45%**	45%	45%
Not sure	**14%**	12%	15%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent / Other
Obama Approval				
Approve	**37%**	79%	10%	29%
Disapprove	**57%**	17%	87%	60%
Not sure	**6%**	4%	3%	12%

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	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent / Other
Senate				
John Walsh	**39%**	81%	12%	32%
Steve Daines	**46%**	15%	79%	41%
Undecided	**15%**	5%	9%	28%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent / Other
Walsh Approval				
Approve	**38%**	77%	13%	29%
Disapprove	**37%**	13%	59%	34%
Not sure	**26%**	10%	28%	37%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent / Other
Daines Approval				
Approve	**39%**	19%	69%	27%
Disapprove	**40%**	69%	13%	41%
Not sure	**21%**	11%	18%	32%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent / Other
Generic Sen. Ballot				
Democrat	**41%**	88%	9%	35%
Republican	**45%**	6%	87%	36%
Not sure	**14%**	6%	4%	29%

	Base	Race	
		White	Other
Obama Approval			
Approve	**37%**	36%	44%
Disapprove	**57%**	57%	52%
Not sure	**6%**	7%	3%

	Base	Race	
		White	Other
Senate			
John Walsh	**39%**	39%	39%
Steve Daines	**46%**	46%	45%
Undecided	**15%**	14%	16%

	Base	Race	
		White	Other
Walsh Approval			
Approve	**38%**	38%	34%
Disapprove	**37%**	35%	45%
Not sure	**26%**	26%	21%

	Base	Race	
		White	Other
Daines Approval			
Approve	**39%**	39%	42%
Disapprove	**40%**	40%	39%
Not sure	**21%**	21%	19%

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	Base	Race	
		White	Other
Generic Sen. Ballot			
Democrat	**41%**	42%	40%
Republican	**45%**	45%	43%
Not sure	**14%**	13%	17%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Obama Approval					
Approve	**37%**	34%	35%	38%	38%
Disapprove	**57%**	52%	56%	58%	57%
Not sure	**6%**	14%	9%	3%	5%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Senate					
John Walsh	**39%**	41%	31%	43%	39%
Steve Daines	**46%**	38%	49%	46%	49%
Undecided	**15%**	20%	20%	12%	12%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Walsh Approval					
Approve	**38%**	39%	35%	37%	41%
Disapprove	**37%**	36%	33%	38%	40%
Not sure	**26%**	26%	32%	26%	19%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Daines Approval					
Approve	**39%**	28%	38%	39%	48%
Disapprove	**40%**	37%	40%	40%	40%
Not sure	**21%**	34%	22%	22%	12%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Generic Sen. Ballot					
Democrat	**41%**	48%	49%	38%	37%
Republican	**45%**	43%	40%	45%	51%
Not sure	**14%**	9%	11%	17%	13%

	Base	Mode	
		Phone	Internet
Obama Approval			
Approve	**37%**	38%	32%
Disapprove	**57%**	56%	58%
Not sure	**6%**	5%	11%

	Base	Mode	
		Phone	Internet
Senate			
John Walsh	**39%**	42%	27%
Steve Daines	**46%**	48%	41%
Undecided	**15%**	10%	32%

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	Base	Mode	
		Phone	Internet
Walsh Approval			
Approve	**38%**	39%	31%
Disapprove	**37%**	39%	28%
Not sure	**26%**	22%	41%

	Base	Mode	
		Phone	Internet
Daines Approval			
Approve	**39%**	42%	27%
Disapprove	**40%**	42%	30%
Not sure	**21%**	16%	43%

	Base	Mode	
		Phone	Internet
Generic Sen. Ballot			
Democrat	**41%**	41%	41%
Republican	**45%**	46%	41%
Not sure	**14%**	13%	18%

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