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April 3, 2012

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Small lead for Heller in Nevada Senate race

Raleigh, N.C. – PPP's newest look at the Nevada Senate race finds the same thing most of its polling on the contest has found: a narrow advantage for Dean Heller. The incumbent leads with 46% to 43% for Shelley Berkley. Four PPP polls conducted since last April have found a 4 point Heller lead, a 3 point advantage, a tie, and now another 3 point advantage.

One thing worth noting since PPP's last poll of the race is that Berkley's favorability numbers have taken a bad turn. 33% of voters say they have a positive opinion of her to 40% with a negative one. The 3 previous polls had found her at 38/35, 33/33, and 34/31. Berkley's had some not so great press coverage and it does appear to be impacting her image.

Heller's approval numbers have pretty consistently stayed on narrowly positive ground in the low 40's or upper 30's since he was appointed to the Senate last spring. 43% of voters approve of him to 36% who disapprove. His higher than normal 23% approval rating with Democrats is the key to his success in a state that looks like it will probably go for Barack Obama again in 2012.

There are two key things driving Heller's ability to lead in the state even as PPP numbers that will be released tomorrow show Barack Obama at his greatest strength there since being elected. One is that Heller has the upper hand with independents, leading 52-39. The other is that he's peeling off a healthy percentage of the Democratic vote, getting 16% across party lines.

“The Nevada Senate race remains one of the closest in the country,” said Dean Debnam, President of Public Policy Polling. “This could come down to how strong Barack Obama’s coattails are. He’s doing a lot better than Berkley with Hispanic and black voters, but if they end up voting the entire Democratic ticket it could put her over the top.”

PPP surveyed 553 Nevada voters from March 29th to April 1st. The margin of error for the survey is +/-4.2%. 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 approve or disapprove of Senator Dean Heller's job performance?
- Approve*43% *Not sure*21%
- Disapprove*.....36%
- Q2** Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Shelley Berkley?
- Favorable*..... 33%
- Unfavorable* 40%
- Not sure* 26%
- Q3** If the candidates for US Senate this fall were Republican Dean Heller and Democrat Shelley Berkley, who would you vote for?
- Dean Heller*..... 46%
- Shelley Berkley* 43%
- Undecided*..... 12%
- Q4** Would you describe yourself as very liberal, somewhat liberal, moderate, somewhat conservative, or very conservative?
- Very liberal*..... 10%
- Somewhat liberal* 17%
- Moderate*..... 30%
- Somewhat conservative*..... 26%
- Very conservative* 16%
- Q5** If you are a woman, press 1. If a man, press 2.
- Woman* 53%
- Man*..... 47%
- Q6** 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* 43%
- Republican*..... 39%
- Independent/Other*..... 18%
- Q7** If you are Hispanic, press 1. If white, press 2. If African-American, press 3. If other, press 4.
- Hispanic*..... 15%
- White* 71%
- African-American* 8%
- Other*..... 6%
- Q8** 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*..... 32%
- 46 to 65*..... 36%
- Older than 65*..... 20%





Crosstabs

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Heller Approval						
Approve	43%	19%	21%	38%	57%	71%
Disapprove	36%	57%	57%	41%	25%	9%
Not sure	21%	23%	23%	22%	18%	20%

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Berkley Favorability						
Favorable	33%	52%	55%	46%	11%	9%
Unfavorable	40%	18%	19%	30%	54%	77%
Not sure	26%	31%	26%	24%	35%	14%

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Heller/Berkley						
Dean Heller	46%	19%	11%	33%	65%	94%
Shelley Berkley	43%	64%	81%	51%	21%	6%
Undecided	12%	17%	8%	15%	14%	1%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Heller Approval			
Approve	43%	47%	39%
Disapprove	36%	32%	41%
Not sure	21%	22%	20%





Crosstabs

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Berkley Favorability			
Favorable	33%	33%	33%
Unfavorable	40%	35%	47%
Not sure	26%	32%	20%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Heller/Berkley			
Dean Heller	46%	47%	45%
Shelley Berkley	43%	42%	43%
Undecided	12%	11%	12%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Heller Approval				
Approve	43%	23%	67%	40%
Disapprove	36%	49%	17%	45%
Not sure	21%	28%	15%	15%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Berkley Favorability				
Favorable	33%	58%	7%	32%
Unfavorable	40%	18%	64%	42%
Not sure	26%	24%	29%	26%





Crosstabs

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Heller/Berkley				
Dean Heller	46%	16%	76%	52%
Shelley Berkley	43%	70%	13%	39%
Undecided	12%	14%	10%	9%

	Base	Race			
		Hispanic	White	African-American	Other
Heller Approval					
Approve	43%	39%	47%	35%	19%
Disapprove	36%	38%	35%	29%	52%
Not sure	21%	22%	18%	36%	29%

	Base	Race			
		Hispanic	White	African-American	Other
Berkley Favorability					
Favorable	33%	38%	28%	68%	35%
Unfavorable	40%	34%	44%	19%	35%
Not sure	26%	27%	27%	13%	31%

	Base	Race			
		Hispanic	White	African-American	Other
Heller/Berkley					
Dean Heller	46%	28%	53%	19%	35%
Shelley Berkley	43%	49%	37%	66%	59%
Undecided	12%	23%	9%	15%	6%





Crosstabs

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Heller Approval					
Approve	43%	41%	37%	47%	47%
Disapprove	36%	35%	38%	36%	33%
Not sure	21%	24%	25%	17%	20%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Berkley Favorability					
Favorable	33%	29%	29%	36%	37%
Unfavorable	40%	32%	41%	40%	44%
Not sure	26%	38%	30%	24%	18%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Heller/Berkley					
Dean Heller	46%	32%	38%	51%	56%
Shelley Berkley	43%	62%	41%	40%	38%
Undecided	12%	6%	21%	8%	6%

