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Heller, Berkley in dead heat in Nevada

Raleigh, N.C. – Having recently been appointed to fill the rest of John Ensign’s unexpired Senate term, Dean Heller’s bid for his own six years could not be any closer. Likely Democratic nominee, Rep. Shelley Berkley, ties Heller at 45% in PPP’s latest poll of the race, the first since July, when Heller led, 46-43.

The entire movement in the horse race is with Democrats, who are starting to consolidate behind Berkley as they become more aware that she is their candidate. In July, only 75% of her party were behind her, with 11% for Heller. That is now 82-14, almost matching Heller’s 83% of the GOP, though Berkley pulls only 8% of Republicans, up just a tick from 6%. Heller maintains a two-point lead with independents, but they are less than a fifth of the electorate. Republicans are twice as numerous, and Democrats more than that.

Three months ago, voters were split evenly on Berkley personally. A third saw her favorably, another third unfavorably, and the rest were not sure. She has upped her name recognition and positive rating since then, now at a 38-35 spread, similar to Heller’s 39-35 approval margin, which is almost unchanged from 38-35. Strangely, Heller has improved with Democrats, 21% of whom now approve of his performance, but declined with his own party and with independents. Still, independents like Heller far more than Berkley. Unusually for politicians in this climate, both have more enthusiastic bases than antagonistic opposition.

“This seems like one of those races that will basically be tied for the whole next year,” said Dean Debnam, President of Public Policy Polling. “The candidates have pretty much identical approval/favorability numbers, and they both hold their bases while splitting independents almost right down the middle. It would be hard for this contest to be any more evenly matched at this point in time.”

PPP surveyed 500 Nevada voters from October 20th to 23rd. 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 approve or disapprove of Senator Dean Heller's job performance?
- Approve39% Not sure26%
- Disapprove.....35%
- Q2** Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Shelley Berkley?
- Favorable..... 38%
- Unfavorable 35%
- Not sure 28%
- Q3** If the candidates for US Senate next year were Democrat Shelley Berkley and Republican Dean Heller, who would you vote for?
- Shelley Berkley 45%
- Dean Heller..... 45%
- Undecided..... 10%
- Q4** Would you describe yourself as very liberal, somewhat liberal, moderate, somewhat conservative, or very conservative?
- Very liberal..... 12%
- Somewhat liberal 18%
- Moderate..... 29%
- Somewhat conservative..... 25%
- Very conservative 17%
- Q5** If you are a woman, press 1. If a man, press 2.
- Woman 52%
- Man..... 48%
- 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..... 38%
- Independent/Other..... 19%
- Q7** If you are Hispanic, press 1. If white, press 2. If African-American, press 3. If other, press 4.
- Hispanic..... 11%
- White 75%
- African-American 7%
- Other..... 8%
- 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..... 15%
- 30 to 45..... 23%
- 46 to 65..... 42%
- Older than 65..... 20%





Crosstabs

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Heller Approval						
Approve	39%	30%	13%	26%	61%	65%
Disapprove	35%	54%	59%	47%	12%	7%
Not sure	26%	16%	27%	27%	27%	28%

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Berkley Favorability						
Favorable	38%	78%	55%	48%	16%	6%
Unfavorable	35%	14%	17%	26%	47%	66%
Not sure	28%	8%	28%	27%	37%	28%

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Berkley/Heller						
Shelley Berkley	45%	83%	74%	62%	15%	5%
Dean Heller	45%	15%	16%	24%	75%	89%
Undecided	10%	2%	10%	15%	10%	6%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Heller Approval			
Approve	39%	36%	42%
Disapprove	35%	35%	35%
Not sure	26%	29%	23%





Crosstabs

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Berkley Favorability			
Favorable	38%	42%	33%
Unfavorable	35%	27%	42%
Not sure	28%	30%	24%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Berkley/Heller			
Shelley Berkley	45%	52%	38%
Dean Heller	45%	38%	52%
Undecided	10%	10%	9%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Heller Approval				
Approve	39%	21%	61%	36%
Disapprove	35%	52%	15%	36%
Not sure	26%	27%	24%	29%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Berkley Favorability				
Favorable	38%	66%	11%	26%
Unfavorable	35%	12%	55%	46%
Not sure	28%	22%	34%	28%





Crosstabs

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Berkley/Heller				
Shelley Berkley	45%	82%	8%	37%
Dean Heller	45%	14%	83%	39%
Undecided	10%	5%	9%	24%

	Base	Race			
		Hispanic	White	African-American	Other
Heller Approval					
Approve	39%	33%	42%	19%	34%
Disapprove	35%	39%	34%	48%	26%
Not sure	26%	28%	24%	33%	40%

	Base	Race			
		Hispanic	White	African-American	Other
Berkley Favorability					
Favorable	38%	58%	31%	79%	37%
Unfavorable	35%	24%	38%	16%	36%
Not sure	28%	18%	31%	6%	27%

	Base	Race			
		Hispanic	White	African-American	Other
Berkley/Heller					
Shelley Berkley	45%	74%	38%	76%	50%
Dean Heller	45%	16%	53%	21%	28%
Undecided	10%	10%	9%	3%	22%





Crosstabs

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Heller Approval					
Approve	39%	40%	37%	38%	43%
Disapprove	35%	33%	30%	39%	34%
Not sure	26%	27%	33%	23%	24%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Berkley Favorability					
Favorable	38%	40%	35%	38%	39%
Unfavorable	35%	37%	35%	32%	38%
Not sure	28%	23%	30%	30%	23%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Berkley/Heller					
Shelley Berkley	45%	60%	42%	44%	42%
Dean Heller	45%	30%	47%	45%	52%
Undecided	10%	10%	11%	11%	6%

