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Democrats lead all Republicans in 2012 Wisconsin Senate race

Raleigh, N.C. – Herb Kohl won more than two-thirds of the vote in 2006 against a nominal opponent, but even against a big-name challenger in 2012, he is still in strong shape—that is, if he chooses to run for re-election in the first place. If he instead decides to retire at age 77 after four terms, recently defeated Russ Feingold would do just as well if he makes a bid for Wisconsin’s other Senate seat.

Congressman Paul Ryan, who will soon have a House committee chairmanship he may be reticent to lose, would give Kohl and Feingold their strongest challenges, losing to Kohl, 42-48, and to Feingold, 43-50. Former Governor Tommy Thompson, who declined to challenge Feingold in 2010, would lose to each Democrat by a 40-49 margin. And the most likely but least known of the candidates, state Attorney General J.B. Van Hollen, is down 41-52 to Feingold and 38-51 to Kohl.

Independents favor each of the Democrats by at least seven points in each of the matchups, and the Democrats hold more of their base in each contest except when Kohl is pitted against Ryan, in which case they each garner 84% of their respective parties.

This race is unusual in this climate in that none is disliked. Thompson’s 44-43 favorability rating is the worst, followed by Van Hollen’s 32-29, Ryan’s 38-30, and Kohl’s 50-35 job approval rating.

Feingold lost to Ron Johnson by almost five points, but in the entire registered electorate, the loser is better liked than the victor. Feingold has a 50-43 job approval rating, but Johnson’s favorability rating is only 42-39. That compares to Feingold’s 44-48 and Johnson’s 51-35 before the election. The independents who turned out to vote swung decisively to Johnson, but while 39% disapprove of each man now, 54% approve of Feingold’s job performance, while only 39% have a positive opinion of Johnson.

“Russ Feingold’s strong numbers when you get out of the 2010 electorate really show the extent to which last month was about Democrats not showing up,” said Dean Debnam, President of Public Policy Polling. “He would be a formidable alternative if Herb Kohl decides to make his current term his last one.”

PPP surveyed 702 Wisconsin voters from December 10th to 12th. The survey’s margin of error is +/-3.7%. Other factors, such as refusal to be interviewed and weighting, may introduce additional error that is more difficult to quantify.



Wisconsin Survey Results

Q1 Do you approve or disapprove of Senator Russ Feingold's job performance?

Approve 50%
Disapprove..... 43%
Not sure 6%

Q2 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Ron Johnson?

Favorable..... 42%
Unfavorable 39%
Not sure 18%

Q3 Do you approve or disapprove of Senator Herb Kohl's job performance?

Approve 50%
Disapprove..... 35%
Not sure 15%

Q4 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of JB Van Hollen?

Favorable..... 32%
Unfavorable 29%
Not sure 39%

Q5 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Paul Ryan?

Favorable..... 38%
Unfavorable 30%
Not sure 33%

Q6 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Tommy Thompson?

Favorable..... 44%
Unfavorable 43%
Not sure 13%

Q7 If the candidates for US Senate in 2012 were Democrat Herb Kohl and Republican JB Van Hollen, who would you vote for?

Herb Kohl..... 51%
JB Van Hollen 38%
Undecided..... 11%

Q8 If the candidates for US Senate in 2012 were Democrat Herb Kohl and Republican Paul Ryan, who would you vote for?

Herb Kohl..... 48%
Paul Ryan 42%
Undecided..... 11%

Q9 If the candidates for US Senate in 2012 were Democrat Herb Kohl and Republican Tommy Thompson, who would you vote for?

Herb Kohl..... 49%
Tommy Thompson 40%
Undecided..... 11%

Q10 If the candidates for US Senate in 2012 were Democrat Russ Feingold and Republican JB Van Hollen, who would you vote for?

Russ Feingold..... 52%
JB Van Hollen 41%
Undecided..... 7%

Q11 If the candidates for US Senate in 2012 were Democrat Russ Feingold and Republican Paul Ryan, who would you vote for?

Russ Feingold..... 50%
Paul Ryan 43%
Undecided..... 7%





Q12 If the candidates for US Senate in 2012 were Democrat Russ Feingold and Republican Tommy Thompson, who would you vote for?

<i>Russ Feingold</i>	49%
<i>Tommy Thompson</i>	40%
<i>Undecided</i>	11%

Q13 Would you describe yourself as a liberal, moderate, or conservative?

<i>Liberal</i>	19%
<i>Moderate</i>	41%
<i>Conservative</i>	40%

Q14 If you are a woman, press 1. If a man, press 2.

<i>Woman</i>	52%
<i>Man</i>	48%

Q15 If you are a Democrat, press 1. If a Republican, press 2. If you are an independent or identify with another party, press 3.

<i>Democrat</i>	35%
<i>Republican</i>	31%
<i>Independent/Other</i>	33%

Q16 If you are white, press 1. If African-American, press 2. If other, press 3.

<i>White</i>	90%
<i>African-American</i>	6%
<i>Other</i>	4%

Q17 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>	5%
<i>30 to 45</i>	33%
<i>46 to 65</i>	45%
<i>Older than 65</i>	18%





Crosstabs

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Feingold Approval				
Approve	50%	87%	70%	13%
Disapprove	43%	10%	22%	80%
Not sure	6%	3%	7%	7%

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Johnson Favorability				
Favorable	42%	9%	25%	75%
Unfavorable	39%	73%	53%	10%
Not sure	18%	18%	22%	15%

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Kohl Approval				
Approve	50%	78%	66%	22%
Disapprove	35%	10%	19%	62%
Not sure	15%	13%	15%	16%

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Van Hollen Favorability				
Favorable	32%	16%	27%	45%
Unfavorable	29%	50%	33%	14%
Not sure	39%	34%	39%	41%





Crosstabs

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Ryan Favorability				
Favorable	38%	13%	29%	58%
Unfavorable	30%	60%	36%	10%
Not sure	33%	27%	35%	32%

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Thompson Favorability				
Favorable	44%	16%	34%	66%
Unfavorable	43%	72%	54%	20%
Not sure	13%	12%	12%	14%

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Kohl/Van Hollen				
Herb Kohl	51%	85%	68%	19%
JB Van Hollen	38%	6%	21%	69%
Undecided	11%	9%	11%	12%

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Kohl/Ryan				
Herb Kohl	48%	84%	62%	16%
Paul Ryan	42%	6%	24%	76%
Undecided	11%	10%	13%	8%





Crosstabs

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Kohl/Thompson				
Herb Kohl	49%	87%	66%	15%
Tommy Thompson	40%	8%	22%	72%
Undecided	11%	5%	12%	13%

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Feingold/Van Hollen				
Russ Feingold	52%	93%	71%	14%
JB Van Hollen	41%	7%	22%	76%
Undecided	7%	1%	7%	10%

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Feingold/Ryan				
Russ Feingold	50%	94%	67%	13%
Paul Ryan	43%	5%	23%	80%
Undecided	7%	1%	10%	7%

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Feingold/Thompson				
Russ Feingold	49%	92%	67%	10%
Tommy Thompson	40%	7%	20%	76%
Undecided	11%	1%	13%	14%





Crosstabs

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Feingold Approval			
Approve	50%	52%	49%
Disapprove	43%	41%	46%
Not sure	6%	8%	5%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Johnson Favorability			
Favorable	42%	38%	47%
Unfavorable	39%	40%	38%
Not sure	18%	22%	15%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Kohl Approval			
Approve	50%	53%	47%
Disapprove	35%	31%	38%
Not sure	15%	16%	14%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Van Hollen Favorability			
Favorable	32%	26%	39%
Unfavorable	29%	27%	30%
Not sure	39%	46%	31%





Crosstabs

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Ryan Favorability			
Favorable	38%	33%	42%
Unfavorable	30%	27%	33%
Not sure	33%	40%	25%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Thompson Favorability			
Favorable	44%	41%	47%
Unfavorable	43%	42%	44%
Not sure	13%	17%	9%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Kohl/Van Hollen			
Herb Kohl	51%	53%	50%
JB Van Hollen	38%	35%	41%
Undecided	11%	12%	10%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Kohl/Ryan			
Herb Kohl	48%	49%	47%
Paul Ryan	42%	40%	44%
Undecided	11%	12%	9%





Crosstabs

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Koh/Thompson			
Herb Kohl	49%	51%	47%
Tommy Thompson	40%	37%	42%
Undecided	11%	12%	10%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Feingold/Van Hollen			
Russ Feingold	52%	55%	49%
JB Van Hollen	41%	37%	45%
Undecided	7%	8%	6%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Feingold/Ryan			
Russ Feingold	50%	53%	48%
Paul Ryan	43%	39%	46%
Undecided	7%	8%	6%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Feingold/Thompson			
Russ Feingold	49%	52%	46%
Tommy Thompson	40%	37%	43%
Undecided	11%	11%	11%





Crosstabs

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Feingold Approval				
Approve	50%	85%	7%	54%
Disapprove	43%	9%	87%	39%
Not sure	6%	6%	7%	7%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Johnson Favorability				
Favorable	42%	9%	84%	39%
Unfavorable	39%	71%	4%	39%
Not sure	18%	20%	12%	23%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Kohl Approval				
Approve	50%	80%	16%	51%
Disapprove	35%	9%	66%	32%
Not sure	15%	11%	17%	18%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Van Hollen Favorability				
Favorable	32%	16%	50%	33%
Unfavorable	29%	47%	10%	26%
Not sure	39%	36%	40%	41%





Crosstabs

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Ryan Favorability				
Favorable	38%	16%	61%	39%
Unfavorable	30%	51%	6%	29%
Not sure	33%	33%	33%	31%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Thompson Favorability				
Favorable	44%	18%	71%	46%
Unfavorable	43%	71%	16%	39%
Not sure	13%	11%	13%	15%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Kohl/Van Hollen				
Herb Kohl	51%	89%	9%	51%
JB Van Hollen	38%	4%	79%	35%
Undecided	11%	7%	12%	14%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Kohl/Ryan				
Herb Kohl	48%	84%	8%	46%
Paul Ryan	42%	6%	84%	39%
Undecided	11%	9%	8%	15%



Crosstabs

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Kohl/Thompson				
Herb Kohl	49%	89%	8%	46%
Tommy Thompson	40%	6%	80%	38%
Undecided	11%	5%	12%	17%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Feingold/Van Hollen				
Russ Feingold	52%	93%	3%	55%
JB Van Hollen	41%	3%	87%	37%
Undecided	7%	4%	10%	8%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Feingold/Ryan				
Russ Feingold	50%	91%	4%	49%
Paul Ryan	43%	4%	88%	41%
Undecided	7%	4%	7%	10%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Feingold/Thompson				
Russ Feingold	49%	90%	3%	48%
Tommy Thompson	40%	6%	83%	37%
Undecided	11%	4%	15%	15%



Crosstabs

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
Feingold Approval				
Approve	50%	48%	81%	48%
Disapprove	43%	45%	14%	41%
Not sure	6%	6%	5%	11%

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
Johnson Favorability				
Favorable	42%	45%	5%	33%
Unfavorable	39%	37%	67%	41%
Not sure	18%	17%	29%	26%

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
Kohl Approval				
Approve	50%	49%	71%	50%
Disapprove	35%	36%	14%	31%
Not sure	15%	15%	14%	19%

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
Van Hollen Favorability				
Favorable	32%	34%	14%	26%
Unfavorable	29%	28%	48%	22%
Not sure	39%	39%	38%	52%





Crosstabs

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
Ryan Favorability				
Favorable	38%	39%	19%	33%
Unfavorable	30%	28%	52%	26%
Not sure	33%	32%	29%	41%

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
Thompson Favorability				
Favorable	44%	46%	10%	52%
Unfavorable	43%	42%	76%	30%
Not sure	13%	12%	14%	19%

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
Kohl/Van Hollen				
Herb Kohl	51%	49%	76%	59%
JB Van Hollen	38%	40%	10%	26%
Undecided	11%	10%	14%	15%

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
Kohl/Ryan				
Herb Kohl	48%	46%	71%	52%
Paul Ryan	42%	43%	19%	33%
Undecided	11%	11%	10%	15%





Crosstabs

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
Koh/Thompson				
Herb Kohl	49%	48%	76%	48%
Tommy Thompson	40%	42%	10%	33%
Undecided	11%	10%	14%	19%

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
Feingold/Van Hollen				
Russ Feingold	52%	49%	90%	59%
JB Van Hollen	41%	44%	5%	30%
Undecided	7%	7%	5%	11%

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
Feingold/Ryan				
Russ Feingold	50%	48%	86%	52%
Paul Ryan	43%	46%	10%	30%
Undecided	7%	7%	5%	19%

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
Feingold/Thompson				
Russ Feingold	49%	46%	90%	56%
Tommy Thompson	40%	43%	5%	26%
Undecided	11%	11%	5%	19%





Crosstabs

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Feingold Approval					
Approve	50%	49%	46%	55%	49%
Disapprove	43%	49%	49%	38%	45%
Not sure	6%	3%	6%	7%	5%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Johnson Favorability					
Favorable	42%	28%	51%	38%	42%
Unfavorable	39%	34%	34%	43%	41%
Not sure	18%	37%	15%	19%	17%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Kohl Approval					
Approve	50%	40%	42%	57%	52%
Disapprove	35%	34%	41%	30%	34%
Not sure	15%	26%	17%	13%	14%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Van Hollen Favorability					
Favorable	32%	29%	33%	32%	33%
Unfavorable	29%	23%	23%	33%	29%
Not sure	39%	48%	44%	35%	38%





Crosstabs

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Ryan Favorability					
Favorable	38%	17%	40%	37%	41%
Unfavorable	30%	26%	25%	34%	29%
Not sure	33%	57%	35%	29%	30%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Thompson Favorability					
Favorable	44%	25%	51%	42%	40%
Unfavorable	43%	43%	35%	48%	48%
Not sure	13%	31%	14%	10%	13%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Kohl/Van Hollen					
Herb Kohl	51%	40%	43%	58%	53%
JB Van Hollen	38%	40%	45%	33%	37%
Undecided	11%	20%	12%	10%	9%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Kohl/Ryan					
Herb Kohl	48%	40%	42%	53%	48%
Paul Ryan	42%	34%	48%	38%	40%
Undecided	11%	26%	10%	9%	13%





Crosstabs

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Kohl/Thompson					
Herb Kohl	49%	47%	41%	54%	52%
Tommy Thompson	40%	41%	46%	36%	35%
Undecided	11%	12%	12%	9%	13%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Feingold/Van Hollen					
Russ Feingold	52%	62%	45%	56%	52%
JB Van Hollen	41%	29%	48%	36%	42%
Undecided	7%	9%	7%	8%	6%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Feingold/Ryan					
Russ Feingold	50%	57%	45%	54%	48%
Paul Ryan	43%	34%	49%	38%	45%
Undecided	7%	9%	6%	8%	6%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Feingold/Thompson					
Russ Feingold	49%	52%	41%	53%	49%
Tommy Thompson	40%	31%	50%	35%	40%
Undecided	11%	17%	9%	12%	11%

