

The Merrill Poll

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March 17, 2016

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Presidential and Senate races are tight in Arizona

Arizona governor has positive approval rating

PHOENIX, Ariz. – Arizona voters are evenly divided on who they would vote for in this fall’s presidential and Senate races, according to a new Merrill Poll. The poll found that Donald Trump and Hilary Clinton are in a dead heat with 38 percent of the vote each, while 9 percent said they would vote for neither candidate and 15 percent were undecided. A head-to-head matchup between Clinton and Ted Cruz also resulted in a statistical dead heat, with 41 percent for Cruz and 35 percent for Clinton. In that matchup, 10 percent said neither and 14 percent were undecided.

Arizona voters also are split on their choice if the election were to be between Trump and Bernie Sanders. Trump received 36 percent and Sanders 39 percent of the vote, which is another statistical dead heat. Seven percent said they would choose neither candidate and 18 percent are undecided.

In a matchup between Sen. John McCain and Rep. Ann Kirkpatrick, Arizona voters also are split. McCain draws 41 percent while Kirkpatrick draws 40 percent, with 3 percent saying neither and 16 percent undecided.

Clinton’s draws support from Hispanics overall and also had a slightly higher percentage of Republicans who “crossed over” to support her versus Trump. She also tends to draw more support from social moderates while Sanders’ support tends to come from social liberals.

Trump tends to draw more support from voters who are somewhat conservative to moderate, while Cruz’s supporters tend to be very conservative.

The race between McCain and Kirkpatrick is competitive across all demographic groups, with the exception of social conservatism/liberalism. The more conservative voters are, the more likely they are to support McCain.

Dr. Tara Blanc, co-director of the Merrill Poll, said that Clinton’s support among Hispanic voters and the cross-over advantage she received from Republicans against Trump largely explain why she is competitive in Arizona. “One thing to note, however, is that contrary to what we found in the primary election, the percentage of voters who are undecided is relatively low across these matchups, so there’s less room for change.”

The poll also asked voters whether they approve of the job that Doug Ducey is doing as governor of Arizona. Overall, 52 percent (5 percent strongly approve and 47 percent approve) give the governor a positive rating while 34 percent (22 percent disapprove and 12 percent strongly disapprove) are dissatisfied and 14 percent have no opinion. Among those with an opinion, the governor receives 60 percent approval.

“For being just halfway through his first term as governor, that’s a solid rating,” says poll director Dr. Bruce Merrill.

The Merrill Poll was conducted March 7-11, 2016. The statewide sample of 701 Arizona voters who are most likely to vote was weighted based on party registration to reflect the population and included 45 percent Republicans, 33 percent Democrats and 22 percent Independents. Fifty-nine percent of the interviews were conducted in Maricopa County, 16 percent in Pima county, and 25 percent in Arizona’s other counties. Forty-eight percent were women and 52 percent were men. The sampling error was plus or minus 3.7 percent.

The Merrill Poll is an independent public opinion poll conducted by Dr. Bruce Merrill, a professor emeritus at Arizona State University who is nationally recognized for his work in survey research.

The data were collected via telephone phone interviews by Westgroup Research of Phoenix.

Question wording:

Please tell me how you would vote in the election for president in November based on who the candidates might be. If you are undecided just tell me and I’ll go on to the next race.

If the election is between Hillary Clinton and Donald Trump, who would you probably vote for?

1. Clinton or 2. Trump? 3. neither 4. undecided

Clinton	38%
Trump	38%
Neither	9%
Undecided	15%

If the election is between Hillary Clinton and Ted Cruz, who would you probably vote for? 1.

Clinton or 2. Cruz? 3. neither 4. undecided

Clinton	35%
Cruz	41%
Neither	10%
Undecided	14%

And if the election is between Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders, would you probably vote for

1. Trump or 2. Sanders? 3. neither 4. undecided

Trump	36%
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Sanders	39%
Neither	7%
Undecided	18%

There also will be a Senate race in Arizona this year. If the election for the Senate in Arizona is between Senator John McCain and Congresswoman Ann Kirkpatrick, would you probably vote for 1. McCain or 2. Kirkpatrick? 3. neither 4. undecided

McCain	41%
Kirkpatrick	40%
Neither	3%
Undecided	16%

Arizona Governor Doug Ducey is halfway through his first term. We would like to know what you think about the job that Governor Ducey is doing. Do you 1. strongly approve, 2. approve, 3. disapprove or 4. strongly disapprove of the job he is doing as governor? 5. don't know/no opinion

Strongly approve	5%
Approve	47%
Disapprove	22%
Strongly disapprove	12%
Don't know/no opinion	14%