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Voters still heavily undecided in Democratic gubernatorial primary; Senatorial primary strongly favors Cardin

Baltimore— The Goucher Poll asked Maryland residents about their opinions toward the Democrats current running for Governor of Maryland and US Senate. Goucher Poll surveyed 409 Maryland Democratic primary voters from February 12-18 and has a margin of error of +/-4.8 percent.

When asked to describe their own political ideology, **44 percent** of Democratic likely voters say they are “progressive,” **43 percent** say they are “moderate,” and **10 percent** say they are “conservative.”

Democratic Gubernatorial Primary

Respondents were asked whether they had a favorable or unfavorable opinion of the candidates currently running in the Democratic gubernatorial primary. Majorities—in some cases large majorities—of Democratic likely voters indicated that they “don’t know” whether they viewed each candidate favorably or unfavorably.

Rushern Baker had the highest favorability rating at **30 percent**. Ben Jealous and Kevin Kamenetz register a **28 percent** and **22 percent** favorability rating, respectively.

If the primary election were held today, **19 percent** say they would vote for Rushern Baker, **12 percent** say for Kevin Kamenetz, and **10 percent** for Ben Jealous. **Forty-seven percent** say they “don’t know” what Democratic candidate they would support of the election were held today.

Education (**26 percent**), economy/jobs (**20 percent**), racial/social justice (**16 percent**), and healthcare (**14 percent**) were identified as the most important issues in determining a vote for governor among Democratic likely voters.

“Days out from the candidate filing deadline, our poll suggests that Democratic voters have yet to turn their full attention to the gubernatorial race,” said Mileah Kromer, director of the Sarah T. Hughes Field Politics Center. *“With so many undecided voters, there is ample time and room for the field to shift—even dramatically. Yet, at*

the same time, the lesser-known candidates need to increase their name recognition soon or this primary could become a 3-way race.”

Democratic Senatorial Primary

The entry of Chelsea Manning brought an uneventful U.S. Senate race briefly into the spotlight.

Democratic voters were asked whether they had a favorable or unfavorable opinion of incumbent Ben Cardin and Chelsea Manning. Senator Cardin registered strong favorability ratings among Democratic likely voters; **64 percent** hold a favorable opinion of Cardin and **15 percent** hold an unfavorable opinion. **Forty-four percent** of Democratic likely voters were unable to gauge how they viewed Manning; **19 percent** hold a favorable opinion of Manning and **37 percent** hold an unfavorable opinion.

If the primary election were held today, **61 percent** say they would vote for Ben Cardin and **17 percent** for Chelsea Manning. **Nineteen percent** say they “don’t know” what Democratic candidate they would support of the election were held today.

To view archived polls and sign up to receive future results, visit www.goucher.edu/poll.

About the Goucher Poll

The Goucher Poll is conducted under the auspices of the Sarah T. Hughes Field Politics Center at Goucher College. Directed by Dr. Mileah Kromer, the Goucher Poll conducts surveys on public policy, economic, and social issues in Maryland.

Goucher College supports the Goucher Poll as part of its mission to instill in its students a sense of community where discourse is valued and practiced. The Goucher Poll is fully funded by the Sarah T. Hughes Field Politics Center endowment and does not take additional funding from outside sources. The Goucher Poll seeks to improve public discourse in Maryland by providing neutral, nonbiased, and independent information on citizen perceptions and opinions. The data collected by the Goucher Poll are used to support faculty and student research.

The Sarah T. Hughes Field Politics Center is a member of the Association of Academic Survey Research Organizations and the American Association for Public Opinion Research Transparency Initiative.



Survey Methodology

To ensure all Maryland residents are represented, the Goucher Poll is conducted using random digit dialing (RDD) of a county-level stratified random sample using landline and cellular telephone numbers. The sample of telephone numbers for the survey is obtained from Survey Sampling International, LLC (<http://www.surveysampling.com/>).

The survey was conducted **Thursday, September 14 to Sunday, September 17, 2017**. During this time, interviews were conducted 5:00pm to 9:00pm on Thursday, Friday, and Monday and 12:00pm to 9:00pm on Saturday and Sunday. The Goucher Poll uses Voxco Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) software to administer its surveys. Interviews are conducted by a staff of professionally trained, paid, student interviewers.

Interviewers attempted to reach respondents with working phone numbers a maximum of five times. Only Maryland adults—residents aged 18 years or older—were eligible to participate. Interviews were not conducted with adults who were reached at business or work numbers. Seventy-six percent of the interviews were conducted on a cell phone, and 24 percent were conducted on a landline.

Interviews for this survey were completed with 952 Maryland residents from which **409** were identified as likely Democratic voters. For a sample size of 409, there is a 95 percent probability the survey results have a plus or minus 4.8 percentage point sampling error from the actual population distribution for any given survey question. Margins of error are higher for subsamples.

In addition to sampling error, all surveys are subject to sources of non-sampling error including question wording effects, question order effects, and non-response bias. Margin of error is not adjusted for design effects. Data is weighted by gender, age, race, and region of the state to represent adult population targets established by the American Community Survey (ACS).

Survey Question Design

The Goucher Poll provides the questions as worded and the order in which they are administered to respondents.

BRACKETED ITEMS []: Items and statements in brackets are rotated to ensure respondents do not receive a set order of response options presented to them, which maintains question construction integrity by avoiding respondent agreement based on question composition.

Example: [agree or disagree] or [disagree or agree]

PROBE (p): Some questions contain a “probe” maneuver to determine a respondent’s intensity of opinion/perspective. Probe techniques used in this questionnaire mainly consist of asking a respondent if his or her response is more intense than initially provided.

Example: Do you have a [favorable or unfavorable] opinion of President Obama?

PROBE: Would you say very favorable/unfavorable?

OPEN-ENDED: No response options are provided for an open-ended question, i.e., it is entirely up to the respondent to provide the response information. Any response options provided to the interviewer are not read to respondent; they are only used to help reduce interviewer error and time in coding the response.

VOLUNTEER (v): Volunteer responses means the interviewer did not offer that response option in the question as read to the interviewer. Interviewers are instructed not to offer “don’t know” or “refused” or “some other opinion” to the respondent, but the respondent is free to volunteer that information for the interviewer to record.

Goucher Poll Sample Demographics (in percent)

	Maryland Adult Population Parameter (ACS estimates)	Weighted Sample Estimate Maryland Registered Voters (Total=778)	Weighted Sample Estimate Democratic Likely Voters (Total=409)
Gender			
Male	48	48	38
Female	52	52	62
Age			
18 to 24	12	9	7
25 to 34	18	15	15
35 to 44	17	15	16
45 to 54	19	21	23
55 to 64	17	18	19
65+	18	20	20
Race			
White	63	62	51
Black	29	30	42
Other	8	8	7
Region			
Capitol	36	36	44
Central	46	47	46
Eastern	8	7	3
Southern	6	7	5
Western	4	3	3

Distribution of Regions

Capitol—Frederick, Montgomery, Prince George’s

Central—Anne Arundel, Baltimore City, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, Howard

Eastern—Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne’s, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, Worcester

Southern—Calvert, Charles, St. Mary’s

Western—Allegany, Garrett, Washington

Registered Voters

Registered voter screen question:

Q: REGVOTE

Are you registered to vote at your current address?

If “Yes” follow up: Are you registered as a Republican, Democrat, Independent, unaffiliated or something else?

Of the **952** Maryland residents surveyed, **778** indicated they were registered voters with the Democratic, Republican, or other party or registered unaffiliated (i.e. independent).

Maryland Voter Registration (in percent)

	Maryland Board of Elections Registration (December 2017)	Weighted Sample Estimate Registered Voters (n=778)
Democratic Party	55	58
Republican Party	26	25
Unaffiliated (Independent)	18	15
Other Party (Green/Libertarian/Other)	1	2
Total=	100	100

Information on voter registration in Maryland from the Board of Elections can be found at <http://www.elections.state.md.us>.

The following questions were asked to the **454** Maryland adults who identified themselves as a **registered Democrat**. Results are in percent and may not add up exactly to 100 due to weighting and rounding.

Q: INTEREST

Maryland will hold statewide primary and general elections in 2018.

How interested would you say you are in these elections: **extremely interested, very interested, somewhat interested, or not interested?**

	SEPT 17	FEB 18
Not very interested	1	0
Somewhat interested	25	21
Very interested	36	34
Extremely interested	38	45
Total=	354 (+/-5.2)	454 (+/-4.6)

Respondents who indicated they were “**not very interested**” were NOT asked the following questions:

Q: PRIM16

Thinking back to the last statewide primary election in April 2016, did you vote in the 2016 Maryland Democratic primary elections?

	SEPT 17	FEB 18
Yes	82	78
No	15	20
Don't know / Can't remember if I voted (v)	3	2
Total=	350 (+/-5.0)	454 (+/-4.6)

Q: PRIM14

Now, thinking back to the primary elections for Maryland governor in June 2014, did you vote in the 2014 Democratic primary elections?

	SEPT 17	FEB 18
Yes	71	74
No	24	22
Don't know / Can't remember if I voted (v)	5	4
Total=	350 (+/-5.0)	454 (+/-4.6)

Q: LV

Which of the following statements best describes you. . .(response options read to respondent)

	SEPT 17	FEB 18
I will probably NOT vote in the 2018 Democratic primary elections.	2	2
I MAY vote in the 2018 Democratic primary election,	6	5
Unless some emergency comes up, I WILL vote in the 2018 Democratic primary election,	17	14
I will DEFINITELY vote in the 2018 Democratic primary election, or	69	71
I just don't know at this time	6	8
Total=	350 (+/-5.0)	454 (+/-4.6)

To receive **DEMGOVFAV**, **DEMGOV**, **DEMSENF**, and **DEMSEN** respondent must indicate the following:

- **Be somewhat, very, or extremely interested in the 2018 elections**
- **Currently a registered Democrat**
- **May, will, or will definitely vote in the 2018 primary election**

Q: DEMGOVFAV

Next, I'm going to read you a list of names of candidates running for the Democratic nomination for governor of Maryland in 2018. As I read each one, please tell me if you have a [favorable or unfavorable] opinion of them...(read list to respondent)

[Candidates Rotated]

	Unfavorable	Favorable	Don't know (v)	Refused (v)
Rushern Baker	10	30	59	1
Ben Jealous	12	28	59	1
Kevin Kamenetz	13	22	63	2
Richard Madaleno	10	12	77	2
Alec Ross	9	12	78	1
Jim Shea	10	11	78	1
Krish Vignarajah	8	9	82	1
Ralph Jaffe	10	9	80	1

Total=409, +/-4.8

Q: DEMGOV

Okay, if the Democratic primary for Maryland governor were held today, which of the following candidates would you support for the Democratic nomination? (read list to respondent)

[Candidates Rotated]

	SEPT 17	FEB 18
Rushern Baker	13	19
Doug Gansler	11	--
Kevin Kamenetz	8	12
Maya Rockey Moore Cummings	8	--
Ben Jealous	6	10
Rich Madaleno	2	2
Jim Shea	2	2
Alec Ross	1	3
Krish Vignarajah	1	2
Ralph Jaffe	--	1
Other candidate (v)	2	1
Undecided or no preference at all (v)	44	47
Will not vote (v)	1	--
Refused (v)	1	1
Total=	324 (+/-5.4)	409 (+/-4.8)

Q: DEMSENFAY

Okay. Next, I'm going to read you a list of names of candidates running for the Democratic nomination for US Senate in 2018. As I read each one, please tell me if you have a [favorable or unfavorable] opinion of them...(read list to respondent)

[Candidates Rotated]

	Unfavorable	Favorable	Don't know (v)	Refused (v)
Ben Cardin	15	64	20	>1
Chelsea Manning	37	19	44	>1

Total=409, +/-4.8

Q: DEMSEN

Okay, if the Democratic primary for US Senate were held today, which of the following candidates would you support for the Democratic nomination? (read list to respondent)

[Candidates Rotated]

	FEB 18
Ben Cardin	61
Chelsea Manning	17
Not sure/undecided (v)	19
Will not vote (v)	2
Refused (v)	1
Total=	409 (+/-4.8)

NOTE: **GOVISSUE** was administered to all registered voters on the full Goucher Poll sample (see results from the Tuesday, February 20). The results below are only for Democratic likely voters.

Q: GOVISSUE

Okay, next I'm going to read you a list of issues. Please tell me which of these is the single most important issue for you in determining your choice for governor? Is it. . .

[READ ITEMS 1-8]

[ITEMS 1-7 ROTATED]

	SEPT 17	FEB 18
Education	26	26
Economy and jobs	21	20
Racial and social justice issues	16	16
Health care	15	14
Environment	7	7
Taxes	6	3
Transportation and infrastructure	5	4
Other	3	7
Don't know/Refused (v)	1	3
Total=	324 (+/-5.4)	409 (+/-4.8)

NOTE: **IDEOLOGY** was asked among the demographic questions.

Q: IDEOLOGY

Do you consider yourself to be politically. . .

	SEPT 17	FEB 18
Conservative	12	10
Moderate	38	43
Liberal/Progressive	49	44
Don't Know (v)	1	3
Total=	324 (+/-5.4)	409 (+/-4.8)

Note: “Liberal” and “progressive” were used in the SEPT17 and FEB18 polls, respectively.