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Siena College New York Primary Polls:

Lazio & Paladino: Too Close To Call

**Lazio Enjoys Big Downstate Lead; Paladino Way Ahead Upstate
Schneiderman, Rice Lead AG Pack; Coffey in 3rd; 29% Undecided**

Races for Both Republican Senate Nominations Remain Wide Open

Kirsten Gillibrand has Commanding 5-to-1 Lead Over Gail Goode

Loudonville, NY. Rick Lazio and Carl Paladino are locked in a virtual dead heat (Lazio leads 43-42 percent) for the Republican nomination for Governor, while Eric Schneiderman (25 percent) and Kathleen Rice (23 percent) lead the pack in a five-way race for the Democratic nomination for Attorney General, with 29 percent still undecided, according to two new Siena College polls of likely primary voters released today.

Kirsten Gillibrand has a commanding lead for the Democratic nomination to retain her United States Senate seat. Joe DioGuardi leads Bruce Blakeman and David Malpass for the Republican nomination to challenge her, although nearly half of likely Republican primary voters remain undecided. Nearly 60 percent of Republican primary voters remain undecided in the battle between Jay Townsend and Gary Berntsen for the Republican nomination to take on Senator Charles Schumer, while Townsend holds a small lead among decided voters.

“In the final days of the campaign, likely Republican primary voters are split between Lazio and Paladino. A heavier than normal Republican turnout upstate will likely hand the nomination to Paladino, who leads upstate 53-32 percent, while a heavier than normal downstate suburban turnout will likely make Lazio the Republican nominee, as he leads there 55-30 percent. Lazio also leads 53-33 percent in New York City, which traditionally produces a smaller vote than any region in a Republican primary,” said Siena College pollster Steven Greenberg.

“Some political insiders have speculated that the wildcard in this race may be the ‘Tea Party’ voters and whether or not they turn out in a big way. That may not necessarily be the case. Two-thirds of likely Republican primary voters have a favorable view of the Tea Party Movement, while only 17 percent have an unfavorable view.

Paladino leads among Tea Party supporters but only by five points, 47-42 percent. Lazio leads among those unfavorable or undecided about the Tea Party Movement,” Greenberg said. “Additionally, the race is dead even, 43 percent for each, among voters who identify themselves as conservatives.”

“Lazio and Paladino have virtually the same favorable ratings but Lazio has a higher unfavorable rating. While Lazio is viewed favorably by about two-thirds of Republican voters downstate, upstate his favorability rating is 44-34 percent. Paladino’s upstate favorability rating is 57-16 percent but less than half of downstate primary voters view him favorably,” Greenberg said.

Republican Favorable/Unfavorable Ratings			
	Favorable	Unfav.	DK/NO
Rick Lazio	55%	26%	19%
Carl Paladino	53%	15%	32%
Joe DioGuardi	25%	13%	63%
David Malpass	17%	8%	75%
Bruce Blakeman	14%	9%	77%
Jay Townsend	13%	9%	78%
Gary Berntsen	11%	9%	80%
Tea Party Movement	66%	17%	17%

“Lazio and Paladino voters have similar levels of commitment to their candidates, with 42 percent of Paladino’s voters saying there’s no chance they’ll change their minds and another 39 percent saying it’s unlikely they will change their mind. For Lazio the corresponding numbers are 39 percent and 43 percent,” Greenberg said.

“Lazio voters are more optimistic about their candidate’s chances. By a margin of 74-10 percent, Lazio voters think Lazio will win. A much smaller percentage of Paladino voters, 46-38 percent, think Paladino will win.”

In 5-Way AG Democratic Primary, Schneiderman & Rice Lead the Pack; Still Large Undecided

“Schneiderman enters the final primary campaign weekend with a two-to-one lead over Rice in New York City (38-19 percent), with the other three candidates all in single digits. Rice has a similar 35-18 percent lead over

Democratic Primaries	
Attorney General	
Eric Schneiderman	25%
Kathleen Rice	23%
Sean Coffey	13%
Richard Brodsky	7%
Eric Dinallo	4%
Don’t know/no opinion	29%
Junior Senator	
Kirsten Gillibrand	63%
Gail Goode	12%
Don’t know/no opinion	24%

Schneiderman in the downstate suburbs. Upstate, Sean Coffey has the support of 22 percent of voters and Rice is supported by 20 percent, with the other candidates in single digits and Schneiderman finishing last, behind Richard Brodsky and Eric Dinallo,” Greenberg said.

“Schneiderman has a 22-point lead among Jewish voters. There is, however, no demonstrable gender advantage for Rice, the only woman with four male opponents. While Schneiderman leads Rice among Democratic men, 26-20 percent, the two are tied with 24 percent for each among women,” Greenberg said.

“Even among likely Democratic primary voters – those that pay the most attention – Rice and Schneiderman remain unknown to roughly half the voters and the others even more,” Greenberg said. “By a margin of 24-19 percent, voters think Schneiderman will beat Rice in the primary, and by a 27-21 percent margin, voters think the Schneiderman would have a better chance than Rice of beating Republican Dan Donovan in November.”

Democratic Favorable/Unfavorable Ratings			
	Favorable	Unfav.	DK/NO
Kathleen Rice	41%	14%	45%
Eric Schneiderman	40%	10%	50%
Sean Coffey	31%	12%	57%
Richard Brodsky	24%	15%	61%
Eric Dinallo	15%	11%	74%
Kirsten Gillibrand	58%	18%	24%
Gail Goode	7%	9%	84%
Andrew Cuomo	82%	11%	6%

Republican Senate Primaries: Battles of the Unknown Candidates; Huge Numbers Still Undecided

“In the race for the Republican nomination for the Gillibrand Senate seat, DioGuardi has the support of 29 percent of likely voters, compared to 14 percent for Malpass and 11 percent for Blakeman,” Greenberg said.

“But less than a week before the primary, nearly half of Republicans who say they will vote on Tuesday – and more than half of those upstate – have not made up their mind on who they want to see be their party’s standard bearer.

“While he is more known than his opponents, nearly two-thirds of voters still don’t know enough about DioGuardi to have either a favorable or unfavorable view of him. Three-quarters of likely primary voters also say that they don’t know enough about Blakeman and Malpass to have a view,” Greenberg said.

Republican Primaries	
Governor	
Rick Lazio	43%
Carl Paladino	42%
Don't know/no opinion	15%
Junior Senator (Gillibrand)	
Joe DioGuardi	29%
David Malpass	14%
Bruce Blakeman	11%
Don't know/no opinion	46%
Senior Senator (Schumer)	
Jay Townsend	25%
Gary Berntsen	17%
Don't know/no opinion	59%

“The candidates vying to take on Schumer are even less known, with about four in five likely Republican primary voters saying they don’t know enough about either Townsend or Berntsen to have an opinion about them,” Greenberg said. “And while Townsend has a 25-17 percent lead over Berntsen, a staggering 59 percent of voters remain undecided less than a week before they cast their votes.”

Gillibrand Headed to Overwhelming Landslide Against Unknown Democratic Challenger

“Gillibrand, with a 58-18 percent favorability rating among likely primary voters, appears headed to a huge victory Tuesday against barely-known Gail Goode. Gillibrand leads Goode 63-12 percent,” Greenberg said.

Turnout, Turnout, Turnout. How Low Will it Be? Who Will it Be?

“With expectations of only about one out of every seven Democrats and maybe one out of every four or five Republicans voting on Tuesday, the key for all the campaigns, will be working to try and get their supporters to the polls,” Greenberg said. “On the Republican side, will more voters come from upstate or downstate? On the Democratic side will there be a heavier than expected turnout in the suburbs or will the number of Democratic primaries for legislative and congressional seats in New York City produce an even larger City turnout than expected? The percentage of eligible voters who show up to vote on Tuesday – and who they are and where they come from – will likely determine the outcome of all of these hotly contested primary elections.”

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These two SRI surveys were conducted September 7-9, 2010 by telephone calls to 615 likely Democratic primary voters and 610 likely Republican primary voters drawn from registered and active voter households. Both polls have a margin of error of +/- 4.0 percentage points. SRI is an independent, non-partisan research institute. SRI subscribes to the American Association of Public Opinion Research Code of Professional Ethics and Practices. For more information, call Steven Greenberg at 518-469-9858. Survey cross-tabulations and frequencies can be found at: www.siena.edu/sri/sny.