

Marist College Institute for Public Opinion

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Does MA Spell Trouble for NY Dems?*** Complete Tables for Poll Appended ***

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This Marist Poll Reports:

In the wake of Republican U.S. Senator-elect Scott Brown's win in Massachusetts, a notable proportion -- 45% -- of registered Democratic voters in New York State say they are worried that a Republican will defeat the state's Democratic senators running for office in November. This includes 11% of Democrats who report they are very worried about this scenario. A majority, however, are not concerned including 29%who say they are not very worried, and 26% who are not worried at all.

"The Massachusetts race caught the eye of many New York Democrats," says Dr. Lee M. Miringoff, Director of The Marist Institute for Public Opinion. "Many are worried but not panicking."

But, how strong is party loyalty? Looking at the *overall* statewide electorate, a slim majority of registered voters -- 51% -- don't think it makes any difference whether a Democrat or Republican is elected to represent New York in the U.S. Senate. 29% report it's more important to have a Democrat in Washington while 20% think a Republican is the best fit.

55% of Democrats believe a member of their own party would get the job done in D.C., and 51% of Republicans say a GOPer would do the trick. However, notable proportions in both parties report it doesn't matter from which party a senator from New York should come. 40% of Democrats and 44% of Republicans believe this to be true. Not surprisingly, 73% of non-enrolled voters do not think partisanship matters in choosing the senators from New York.

"All things being equal, the edge in New York is still with the Democrats when it comes to picking a U.S. senator," says Miringoff, "although many voters are up for grabs."

Gillibrand Leads Among Democrats, But One-Quarter Undecided

Is Senator Kirsten Gillibrand likely to be the Democrats' choice to face the Republican challenger in November? When the sitting senator is matched up against former Tennessee Congressman Harold Ford Jr. and labor activist Jonathan Tasini in a hypothetical contest for the Democratic nomination, 44% of Democrats say they support Gillibrand, 27% report they are behind Ford, and 4% state they are backing Tasini. However, a significant 25% of Democratic voters are unsure. This is relatively unchanged from a similar Marist Poll

conducted two weeks ago when Gillibrand received the support of 43% of Democrats and Ford garnered 24%.

Looking at region, Gillibrand receives majority support in New York's suburbs and upstate. However, she does not fare as well in New York City from where more than half of the Democratic vote will come in the primary. Here, Gillibrand receives 37% of the vote, Ford garners 31%, and Tasini nets 3%. 28% of New York City Democrats are unsure. Moving to the city's suburbs, 52% back Gillibrand, 18% are behind Ford, and 8% support Tasini. Here, too, there is a substantial proportion of undecided Democrats -- 23%. Upstate, Gillibrand receives 52%, Ford gets 23%, and Tasini wins over 3%. 22% are undecided.

Favorability of Gillibrand, Ford Drop... More In Doubt

Although Harold Ford has not formally announced his candidacy for U.S. Senate, the jabs between Ford and Gillibrand are well underway. This has created greater uncertainty about both Kirsten Gillibrand and Harold Ford among Democrats statewide.

"Both Gillibrand and Ford lack strong political identities in New York. The fisticuffs between them are forcing each to depend on political goodwill they don't have," states Dr. Lee M. Miringoff, Director of The Marist Institute for Public Opinion. "The number of Democrats who don't have an opinion of each has soared over the past two weeks."

When it comes to voters' impression of Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, nearly one-half of Democratic voters -- 48% -- have either never heard of or are unsure how to rate her. 37% have a favorable view of the senator while 15% have an unfavorable view of her.

Gillibrand's rating has changed dramatically since Marist last asked voters about her standing in its January 15th survey. At that time, 32% were unsure how to rate her, 48% had a positive impression of her, and 20% had an unfavorable view of her.

Like Gillibrand, Ford's favorability has declined. Currently, 67% of Democratic voters have either never heard of or are unsure how to rate him. 20% think well of Ford while 13% have an unfavorable view of him. In Marist's mid-January survey, 52% had either never heard of or were unsure how to rate Ford, 34% viewed him positively, and 14% had an unfavorable impression of him.

Gillibrand's Approval Rating Stagnates

One year after her appointment to the U.S. Senate, Gillibrand has failed to convince most voters statewide that she is getting the job done. 24% of New York's electorate thinks she is doing either an excellent or good job in office while 33% rate the job she is doing as fair, and 18% view her performance poorly. 25% are unsure how to rate her.

Gillibrand's job approval rating is identical to Marist's January 15th survey results.

Gillibrand Trails Pataki, Leads Blakeman

Former New York Governor George Pataki would be a formidable adversary against Kirsten Gillibrand if this year's general election for U.S. Senate in New York were held today. 49% of registered voters statewide say they would back the Republican Pataki in this hypothetical matchup while 43% would cast their ballot for Gillibrand. 8% are unsure.

This is a change from Marist's January survey when 45% said they would support Gillibrand, and 42% reported they would back the former governor. 13% were unsure.

While speculation exists about whether the former governor will throw his hat into the ring, Republican Bruce Blakeman has announced he will challenge Gillibrand in the fall. He currently faces an uphill battle against Senator Gillibrand. Blakeman trails with 30% to the senator's 52%.

Pataki Widens Lead Over Ford... Blakeman and Ford in Tight Race

What if Harold Ford receives the Democratic nomination instead of Kirsten Gillibrand? If the election were held today, Ford would lose to Pataki. 52% of registered voters say they would support Pataki while 35% would back Ford. 13% are unsure.

Pataki has widened his lead over Ford in this hypothetical pairing since just two weeks ago. When Marist last asked this question in mid-January, Pataki received 42% of the vote to Ford's 36%. 22% reported they were unsure.

Ford runs more competitively, however, against Republican Bruce Blakeman. When the two go head-to-head, Ford garners 39% to Blakeman's 35% with 26% saying they are undecided.

Nature of the Sample: 838 New York State Registered Voters

This survey of 838 New York State registered voters was conducted on January 25th through January 27th, 2010. Registered voters were interviewed by telephone in proportion to the voter registration in each county in New York and adjusted for turnout in statewide elections. Telephone numbers were selected based upon a list of telephone exchanges from throughout the state. The exchanges were selected to ensure that each region was represented in proportion to its population. In an effort to increase coverage, this land-line sample was supplemented by respondents reached through random dialing of cell phone numbers. The two samples were then combined. Results are statistically significant at ±3.5%. There are 360 Democrats. The results for this subset are statistically significant at ±5.5%. The error margin increases for cross-tabulations.

Marist Poll February 2010 NYS Tables

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Are you very worried, worried, not very worried, or not worried at all that, like in Massachusetts, New Yorks Democratic U.S. Senators running in November will lose to Republican candidates?

		Very worried	Worried	Not very worried	Not worried at all
		Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %
Democrats		11%	34%	29%	26%
Gillibrand I	Democrats	13%	34%	32%	20%
Ford Demo	crats	10%	31%	36%	23%
Undecided	Democrats	8%	37%	18%	36%
Political	Liberal	14%	41%	24%	20%
Ideology	Moderate	10%	34%	35%	21%
	Conservative	7%	21%	26%	47%
Region	New York City	10%	31%	28%	31%
	Suburbs	15%	47%	20%	17%
	Upstate	10%	31%	37%	21%
Income	Less than \$50,000	10%	34%	28%	27%
	\$50,000 or more	11%	35%	27%	27%
Race	White	10%	32%	35%	23%
	Non White	11%	38%	21%	30%
Age	Under 45	8%	43%	27%	22%
	45 or older	13%	29%	31%	27%
Gender	Men	8%	32%	28%	32%
	Women	13%	35%	30%	22%

		Registered Voters			
		When thinking about this November's elections for U.S. Senator from New York which comes closest to your opinion:			
		It is more important to elect Democrats to represent New York State in Washington	It is more important to elect Republicans to represent New York State in Washington	It doesnt make any difference whether a Democrat or Republican is elected	
		Row %	Row %	Row %	
Registered V	oters	29%	20%	51%	
Party	Democrat	55%	6%	40%	
Registration	Republican	5%	51%	44%	
	Non-enrolled	12%	15%	73%	
Political	Liberal	56%	3%	41%	
Ideology	Moderate	27%	15%	58%	
	Conservative	10%	42%	48%	
Region	New York City	42%	13%	45%	
	Suburbs	34%	25%	41%	
	Upstate	20%	22%	59%	
Income	Less \$50,000	32%	16%	53%	
	\$50,000- \$99,999	30%	20%	51%	
	\$100,000 or more	29%	25%	46%	
Income	Less than \$50,000	32%	16%	53%	
	\$50,000 or more	30%	22%	48%	
Race	White	25%	23%	52%	
	Non White	44%	9%	47%	
Age	18 to 29	29%	10%	61%	
	30 to 44	26%	19%	55%	
	45 to 59	27%	19%	54%	
	60 or older	34%	25%	41%	
Age	Under 45	27%	16%	57%	
	45 or older	31%	22%	47%	
Gender	Men	26%	23%	51%	
	Women	33%	17%	50%	

		Democrats					
		If this year's Democratic primary for U.S. Senate in New York State were held today, whom would you support if the candidates are:					
		Kirsten Gillibrand	Harold Ford Jr.	Jonathan Tasini	Unsure		
		Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %		
Democrats		44%	27%	4%	25%		
Political	Liberal	53%	23%	3%	21%		
Ideology	Moderate	47%	25%	6%	23%		
	Conservative	20%	45%	3%	33%		
Region	New York City	37%	31%	3%	28%		
	Suburbs	52%	18%	8%	23%		
	Upstate	52%	23%	3%	22%		
Income	Less than \$50,000	46%	24%	4%	25%		
	\$50,000 or more	45%	28%	4%	23%		
Race	White	43%	27%	3%	27%		
	Non White	45%	28%	5%	21%		
Age	Under 45	46%	24%	4%	26%		
	45 or older	43%	30%	4%	24%		
Gender	Men	42%	32%	6%	20%		
	Women	45%	24%	2%	29%		

			Democrats	;	
		In general, do you have a favorable or an unfavorable impression of Kirsten Gillibrand			
		Favorable	Unfavorable	Unsure-Never Heard	
		Row %	Row %	Row %	
Democrats		37%	15%	48%	
Gillibrand De	emocrats	72%	4%	24%	
Ford Democ	rats	19%	29%	52%	
Undecided D	emocrats	3%	15%	83%	
Political	Liberal	43%	13%	43%	
Ideology	Moderate	41%	12%	47%	
	Conservative	20%	19%	61%	
Region	New York City	32%	15%	53%	
	Suburbs	36%	14%	50%	
	Upstate	48%	14%	38%	
Income	Less than \$50,000	38%	14%	48%	
	\$50,000 or more	40%	14%	46%	
Race	White	40%	21%	38%	
	Non White	32%	4%	63%	
Age	Under 45	37%	10%	53%	
	45 or older	38%	17%	45%	
Gender	Men	36%	18%	46%	
	Women	38%	12%	50%	

			Democrats	;	
		In general, do you have a favorable or an unfavorable impression of Harold Ford Jr.			
		Favorable	Unfavorable	Unsure-Never Heard	
		Row %	Row %	Row %	
Democrats		20%	13%	67%	
Gillibrand De	mocrats	13%	19%	68%	
Ford Democr	ats	50%	3%	48%	
Undecided D	emocrats	3%	8%	89%	
Political	Liberal	24%	15%	61%	
Ideology	Moderate	18%	15%	67%	
	Conservative	21%	5%	74%	
Region	New York City	22%	14%	64%	
	Suburbs	18%	17%	65%	
	Upstate	18%	9%	72%	
Income	Less than \$50,000	21%	9%	70%	
	\$50,000 or more	22%	14%	64%	
Race	White	21%	16%	63%	
	Non White	19%	7%	74%	
Age	Under 45	16%	8%	77%	
	45 or older	23%	16%	60%	
Gender	Men	27%	19%	54%	
	Women	16%	9%	76%	

		Registered Voters				
		Would you rate	e the job Ser		Gillibrand i ir, or poor?	s doing in office as excellent,
		Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unsure-Never Heard
		Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %	Row %
Registered Vote	ers	2%	22%	33%	18%	25%
Party	Democrat	3%	30%	31%	9%	28%
Registration	Republican	1%	15%	28%	32%	24%
	Non-enrolled	3%	19%	39%	19%	20%
Political	Liberal	3%	31%	33%	8%	25%
Ideology	Moderate	1%	22%	36%	15%	27%
	Conservative	1%	16%	29%	33%	20%
Region	New York City	2%	22%	33%	18%	26%
	Suburbs	1%	15%	35%	19%	30%
	Upstate	3%	27%	32%	18%	21%
Income	Less \$50,000	3%	23%	38%	14%	22%
	\$50,000-\$99,999	3%	28%	30%	18%	22%
	\$100,000 or more	1%	16%	33%	24%	27%
Income	Less than \$50,000	3%	23%	38%	14%	22%
	\$50,000 or more	2%	23%	31%	20%	24%
Race	White	2%	23%	32%	19%	23%
	Non White	2%	20%	34%	14%	29%
Age	18 to 29	3%	30%	23%	8%	35%
	30 to 44	2%	19%	37%	18%	24%
	45 to 59	1%	24%	32%	20%	23%
	60 or older	4%	21%	34%	19%	23%
Age	Under 45	2%	23%	32%	15%	28%
	45 or older	2%	22%	33%	20%	23%
Gender	Men	3%	19%	33%	24%	21%
	Women	2%	26%	32%	13%	28%

If the 2010 election for U.S. Senate in New York State were held today, whom would you support if the candidates are:

		Guil	diddioo di o.	
		Kirsten Gillibrand, the Democratic candidate	George Pataki, the Republican candidate	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %
Registered Vo	oters	43%	49%	8%
Party Registration	Democrat	64%	28%	8%
	Republican	18%	76%	6%
	Non-enrolled	32%	59%	9%
Political	Liberal	67%	24%	8%
Ideology	Moderate	47%	45%	9%
	Conservative	18%	75%	7%
Region	New York City	47%	47%	6%
	Suburbs	39%	53%	8%
	Upstate	43%	48%	10%
Income	Less \$50,000	50%	43%	7%
	\$50,000- \$99,999	46%	45%	9%
	\$100,000 or more	37%	57%	6%
Income	Less than \$50,000	50%	43%	7%
	\$50,000 or more	42%	50%	8%
Race	White	41%	51%	8%
	Non White	51%	42%	7%
Age	18 to 29	40%	53%	7%
	30 to 44	44%	47%	9%
	45 to 59	39%	53%	8%
	60 or older	48%	44%	8%
Age	Under 45	43%	49%	8%
	45 or older	43%	48%	8%
Gender	Men	41%	54%	5%
	Women	45%	43%	12%

If the 2010 election for U.S. Senate in New York State were held today, whom would you support if the candidates are:

		Can	uluales al e.	
		Kirsten Gillibrand, the Democratic candidate	Bruce Blakeman, the Republican candidate	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %
Registered Vo	oters	52%	30%	18%
Party	Democrat	74%	10%	16%
Registration	Republican	21%	63%	16%
	Non-enrolled	48%	30%	22%
Political	Liberal	76%	10%	15%
Ideology	Moderate	57%	25%	19%
	Conservative	27%	54%	19%
Region	New York City	57%	24%	19%
	Suburbs	49%	33%	18%
	Upstate	51%	32%	18%
Income	Less \$50,000	55%	26%	18%
	\$50,000- \$99,999	56%	28%	16%
	\$100,000 or more	47%	36%	17%
Income	Less than \$50,000	55%	26%	18%
	\$50,000 or more	52%	31%	17%
Race	White	49%	34%	17%
	Non White	65%	16%	19%
Age	18 to 29	50%	27%	22%
	30 to 44	57%	26%	18%
	45 to 59	50%	33%	17%
	60 or older	51%	31%	18%
Age	Under 45	54%	26%	19%
	45 or older	51%	32%	17%
Gender	Men	49%	33%	17%
	Women	55%	26%	19%

If the 2010 election for U.S. Senate in New York State were held today, whom would you support if the candidates are:

Harold Ford Jr., the Democratic candidate Row % Sow			- Jun	ididatoo di oi	
Registered Voters 35% 52% 13%					Unsure
Party Registration Republican			Row %	Row %	Row %
Registration Republican Non-enrolled 11% 79% 57% 10% 10% 57% 14% Political Ideology Liberal 56% 29% 15% 14% 56% 14% 56% 14% 14% 14% 14% 14% 14% 14% 14% 14% 14	Registered Vo	oters	35%	52%	13%
Non-enrolled 29% 57% 14% 1		Democrat	53%	34%	13%
Political Ideology		Republican	11%	79%	10%
Ideology		Non-enrolled	29%	57%	14%
Region New York City 41% 49% 9% 9% 14% 49% 9% 9% 14% 49% 9% 14% 49% 14% 49% 14% 49% 14% 49% 14% 49% 14% 49% 14% 49% 14% 45% 11% 450,000 43% 45% 11% 450,000 43% 45% 11% 450,000 43% 45% 11% 45% 11% 45% 11% 45% 11% 45% 45% 12% 45% 45% 40% 42% 45		Liberal	56%	29%	15%
Region New York City 41% 49% 9% Suburbs 25% 61% 14% Upstate 37% 49% 14% Income Less \$50,000 43% 45% 11% \$50,000-\$99,999 38% 52% 11% \$100,000 or more 31% 55% 13% Income Less than \$50,000 43% 45% 11% \$50,000 or more 35% 53% 12% Race White 33% 55% 12% Non White 48% 40% 12% Age 18 to 29 33% 51% 16% 30 to 44 36% 53% 12% 45 to 59 30% 59% 11% 60 or older 42% 45% 13% Age Under 45 35% 52% 13% Age Under 45 35% 52% 12% Age Under 45 36% 52% 12%	Ideology	Moderate	38%	48%	14%
Suburbs 25% 61% 14% Upstate 37% 49% 14% Income Less \$50,000 43% 45% 11% \$50,000-\$99,999 38% 52% 11% \$100,000 or more 31% 55% 13% Income Less than \$50,000 43% 45% 11% \$50,000 or more 35% 53% 12% Race White 33% 55% 12% Non White 48% 40% 12% Age 18 to 29 33% 51% 16% 30 to 44 36% 53% 12% 45 to 59 30% 59% 11% 60 or older 42% 45% 13% Age Under 45 35% 52% 13% Age Under 45 35% 52% 13% Age Under 45 36% 52% 12% Age Under 45 36% 52% 12% Age Under 45 36% 56% 13%		Conservative	15%	78%	8%
Upstate	Region	New York City	41%	49%	9%
Income		Suburbs	25%	61%	14%
\$50,000- \$99,999 \$100,000 or more \$100,000 or m		Upstate	37%	49%	14%
\$99,999 \$100,000 or more \$1100,000 or more Less than \$50,000 \$50,000 or more Race White Non White 48% Age 18 to 29 30 to 44 36% 30 to 44 45 to 59 60 or older Age Under 45 45 or older Men \$100,000 or 31% 43% 55% 11% 55% 11% 55% 12% 53% 51% 16% 51% 16% 53% 51% 16% 53% 11% 56% 13% 56% 13% 56% 13% 56% 13%	Income	Less \$50,000	43%	45%	11%
Income Less than \$50,000 \$50			38%	52%	11%
\$50,000 \$50,000 or more 35% 53% 12% Race White 33% 55% 12% Non White 48% 40% 12% Age 18 to 29 33% 51% 16% 30 to 44 36% 53% 12% 45 to 59 30% 59% 11% 60 or older 42% 45% 13% Age Under 45 35% 52% 13% Gender Men 31% 56% 13%			31%	55%	13%
Race White 33% 55% 12% Non White 48% 40% 12% Age 18 to 29 33% 51% 16% 30 to 44 36% 53% 12% 45 to 59 30% 59% 11% 60 or older 42% 45% 13% Age Under 45 35% 52% 13% 45 or older 36% 52% 12% Gender Men 31% 56% 13%	Income		43%	45%	11%
Non White 48% 40% 12% Age 18 to 29 33% 51% 16% 30 to 44 36% 53% 12% 45 to 59 30% 59% 11% 60 or older 42% 45% 13% Age Under 45 35% 52% 13% 45 or older 36% 52% 12% Gender Men 31% 56% 13%			35%	53%	12%
Age 18 to 29 33% 51% 16% 30 to 44 36% 53% 12% 45 to 59 30% 59% 11% 60 or older 42% 45% 13% Age Under 45 35% 52% 13% 45 or older 36% 52% 12% Gender Men 31% 56% 13%	Race	White	33%	55%	12%
30 to 44 36% 53% 12% 45 to 59 30% 59% 11% 60 or older 42% 45% 13% Age Under 45 35% 52% 13% 45 or older 36% 52% 12% Gender Men 31% 56% 13%		Non White	48%	40%	12%
45 to 59 30% 59% 11% 60 or older 42% 45% 13% Age Under 45 35% 52% 13% 45 or older 36% 52% 12% Gender Men 31% 56% 13%	Age	18 to 29	33%	51%	16%
60 or older 42% 45% 13% Age Under 45 35% 52% 13% 45 or older 36% 52% 12% Gender Men 31% 56% 13%		30 to 44	36%	53%	12%
Age Under 45 35% 52% 13% 45 or older 36% 52% 12% Gender Men 31% 56% 13%		45 to 59	30%	59%	11%
45 or older 36% 52% 12% Gender Men 31% 56% 13%		60 or older	42%	45%	13%
Gender Men 31% 56% 13%	Age	Under 45	35%	52%	13%
		45 or older	36%	52%	12%
Women 39% 48% 12%	Gender	Men	31%	56%	13%
		Women	39%	48%	12%

If the 2010 election for U.S. Senate in New York State were held today, whom would you support if the candidates are:

		- Gui	ididdioo dioi	
		Harold Ford Jr., the Democratic candidate	Bruce Blakeman, the Republican candidate	Unsure
		Row %	Row %	Row %
Registered Vo	oters	39%	35%	26%
Party Registration	Democrat	61%	13%	26%
	Republican	8%	69%	24%
	Non-enrolled	35%	37%	27%
Political	Liberal	63%	13%	24%
Ideology	Moderate	39%	33%	29%
	Conservative	21%	56%	22%
Region	New York City	49%	27%	23%
	Suburbs	32%	40%	27%
	Upstate	38%	36%	26%
Income	Less \$50,000	47%	32%	22%
	\$50,000- \$99,999	39%	33%	28%
	\$100,000 or more	37%	39%	25%
Income	Less than \$50,000	47%	32%	22%
	\$50,000 or more	38%	36%	26%
Race	White	36%	38%	26%
	Non White	53%	25%	23%
Age	18 to 29	40%	35%	26%
	30 to 44	40%	36%	24%
	45 to 59	36%	36%	28%
	60 or older	43%	32%	25%
Age	Under 45	40%	36%	24%
	45 or older	39%	34%	26%
Gender	Men	36%	38%	26%
	Women	43%	31%	25%