



Voters Show Strong Support for Capito and Tomblin in Primary Elections

MBE Voter Opinion Poll™ Suggests Capito leading among potential GOP candidates and Tomblin edging out Tennant in crowded Democrat field; Also opinions regarding Intermediate Court system constant

For Immediate Release -- November 16, 2010

For Interviews and Questions Contact: Mark Blankenship 304.545.2428, mark@markblankenship.com

(Charleston, W.Va.) – Congresswoman Shelley Moore Capito is leading prominent Republican candidates if the GOP primary for West Virginia governor were held today according to a new MBE Voter Opinion Poll released by Mark Blankenship Enterprises (MBE). The survey also finds that Acting Governor Earl Ray Tomblin slightly edges out Secretary of State Natalie Tennant in a crowded field of potential Democratic candidates. MBE recently conducted a telephone survey of 401 registered West Virginia voters. This is an independent survey and the results of the survey do not reflect the opinions of MBE and are meant only to provide insights into public opinion.

Sample Ballots - GOP

Half (50%) of Republican voters across West Virginia say they would vote for Congresswoman Shelley Moore Capito if the GOP primary election for West Virginia governor were held today. Newly elected 1st District Congressman David McKinnley is named by 12% while former secretary of state Betty Ireland receives 8%; State Senator Clark Barnes garners 6% and 25% say they are undecided. “As we have seen, Congresswoman Capito demonstrates political strength across West Virginia and that is especially true in her party” said Mark Blankenship, CEO of MBE. “Congressman-elect McKinnley is certainly someone to watch as well, while he garners 12% of the vote statewide but he receives nearly 40% of the GOP votes in the 1st District” he said. “Obviously the dynamics of such a race depending on Capito, if she runs she would have a commanding lead, but if she doesn’t the field could be wide open” Blankenship said.

If the Republican primary election for West Virginia governor were held today, which of the following candidates would you most likely vote for? (Read and Rotate)	GOP Voters
Shelley Moore Capito, U.S. Congresswoman	50%
David McKinnley, U.S. Congressman-elect	12%
Betty Ireland, former secretary of state	8%
Clark Barnes, state senator	6%
Don't Know	25%

Sample Ballots - Democratic

Acting Governor Earl Ray Tomblin edges out Secretary of State Natalie Tennant among West Virginia Democratic voters if the primary election for governor were held today. Tomblin receives 24% of Democratic votes compared to Tennant’s 19%. Speaker of the West Virginia House of Delegates Rick Thompson, State Treasurer John Perdue and State Senator Jeff Kessler each receives 7%, while State Senator Brooks McCabe receives 3% and 32% are undecided. Tomblin’s base of support is in West Virginia’s 3rd Congressional District which is also the area of the state where Tennant finds the least support. “A plurality of West Virginia Democrats are undecided when asked who the party’s next gubernatorial nominee should be which shows just how competitive this primary could be” said Blankenship. “Right now Acting Governor Tomblin and Secretary of State Tennant lead the field but the race is far from decided” he continued.

If the Democrat primary election for West Virginia governor were held today, which of the following candidates would you most likely vote for? (Read and Rotate)	Democratic Voters
Earl Ray Tomblin, Acting Governor	24%
Natalie Tennant, Secretary of State	19%
Rick Thompson, Speaker of the WV House of Delegates	7%
John Perdue, WV State Treasurer	7%
Jeff Kessler, WV State Senator	7%
Brooks McCabe, WV State Senator	3%
Don’t Know	32%

Gubernatorial Generic Ballot

Democrats are virtually tied with Republicans on the gubernatorial generic ballot with 37% of voters saying they would likely vote for the Democrat candidate, 34% saying the Republican and 29% answering “don’t know.” Sixty-seven percent (67%) of Republican voters say they would vote for the Republican candidate compared to 60% of Democrats who say they would vote for the Democrat candidate. A plurality of Independents (42%) say they don’t know which party’s candidate they are more likely to vote for.

Intermediate Court System

Voters were asked *“Most state court systems are made up of a trial court where cases are heard, an appellate court where decisions can be reviewed and appealed and the state supreme court, which has the final say on matters of state law. West Virginia only has a two level system, a trial court and a supreme court. Some say that West Virginia should add an appeals court, since most cases never have a chance for review and appeal. Others say that this is unnecessary and would cost too much money. Based on what you have heard would you support or oppose West Virginia creating an appellate court?”* A majority (55%) support the creation of such a court including 28% who say they “strongly support” the concept. Thirty-six percent (36%) oppose the creation of an intermediate court system. Interestingly, a statewide survey conducted by MBE in November of 2009 found overall support for the intermediate court system (results based on the exact same question used in the 2010 survey cited above) was 57% while 36% opposed. “Tracking this question during the last 12 months shows very little change as a majority of West Virginians still support the creation of an intermediate appellate court system in the state” said Mark Blankenship, CEO of MBE which commissioned the survey.

###

Methodology

- *401 interviews were conducted between November 10 and November 11, 2010, among registered West Virginia voters. The average interview length was 10 minutes. Some totals may not equal 100% as a result of rounding.*
- *A telephone list of West Virginia registered voters was used to generate the sample for this survey. Only voters who self-identified as likely voters in the next gubernatorial election completed the survey.*
- *Each interview was conducted by a live interviewer with the assistance of CATI software. 401 interviews yield a margin of error of +/- 4.9% at a 95% level of confidence. Landline and cell phone users were interviewed.*
- *The survey was conducted to better understand the attitudes and opinions of West Virginia voters on a host of important issues. The survey was conducted and sponsored by MBE and subsequently released to the public.*
- *The survey and all of its contents are the property of Mark Blankenship Enterprises, LLC and cannot be reproduced or published without attribution or the express consent of Mark Blankenship Enterprises, LLC.*
- *The exact language and order of questioning can be found in the accompanying questionnaire with results.*

About MBE

Mark Blankenship is president and chief executive officer of Mark Blankenship Enterprises, LLC (MBE). Located in Charleston, West Virginia, MBE is a national communications and opinion research firm. Blankenship's surveys, commentary and insights have appeared in a range of national and regional media including The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, The Drudge Report, Fox News, Roll Call, The Hill and others. MBE provides a range of actionable and reliable research methodologies to Fortune 500 companies, small businesses, prominent law firms, media organizations, associations and non-government organizations. If you seek further comment on these survey results, or any other issue, please do not hesitate to contact Mark Blankenship at 304.545.2428 or by email at mark@markblankenship.com