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PRESS RELEASE

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ABBOTT STARTS WITH SEVEN POINT LEAD OVER DAVIS IN TEXAS GOV. RACE

BOSTON (3/14/2014)- According to a new survey conducted by the Emerson College Polling Society, Texas Attorney General Gregory Abbott (R) has a seven point lead over his democratic opponent Wendy Davis (49% to 42%) in the upcoming gubernatorial election. The Polling Society is the first organization to look at the race since the March 6th primary. The survey was conducted from March 7th to March 12th, with a sample of 492 likely voters.

Abbott has a slight lead among independents and women, the two groups Democrats typically rely on in order to compete in the Lone Star State. Forty-two percent of independents currently support Abbott while 40 percent support Davis and 17 percent are undecided. Women voters are also more likely to vote for Abbott than Davis (46% to 42%).

Both candidates have wide support among their bases. Eighty-five percent of Republican say they will vote for Abbott while 8 percent prefer Davis. Similarly, Democrat voters support Davis overwhelmingly (84% to 9% for Abbott).

In terms of favorability, 41 percent of Texas voters view Davis favorably while 45 percent view her unfavorably. Slightly more women view Davis favorable than unfavorable (44% to 43%). A near majority of Texans have favorable view on Abbott (48% to 32%).

The survey also shows that 52 percent of all registered voters expect Abbott to defeat Davis despite easy victories in their respective primaries. A majority of both male and female voters believe Abbott will win the election indicating that neither gender is terribly optimistic about Davis's campaign.

Regional breakdowns reveal Davis has strong support in urban and metropolitan areas. She is leading by ten points in San Antonio (51% to 41%), six in Dallas (46% to 40%) and four in Houston (47% to 43%). However, she is losing the rest of Texas by a 2 to 1 margin (31% to 64%).

Other Findings

- United States Senator and Tea Party favorite Ted Cruz is viewed unfavorably in his home state-- 43 percent view him favorably while 48 percent view him unfavorably. Cruz is particularly unpopular among women (39% favorable compared to 50% unfavorable).
- Slightly more people view current governor Rick Perry favorably than unfavorably (48% to 46%).

- When asked about the use of fracking, 67 percent of Texans approve the method while 21 percent disapprove. The attitude toward fracking is split along party lines as 88 percent of Republicans support it whereas 56 percent of Democrats do not. Nearly 7 in 10 independents approve of the practice (67%).
- In a state that has the highest rate of uninsured people of all 50 states, 26 percent of survey respondents said they or someone they knew had signed up for the Affordable Care Act. Among African Americans, that figure was 42 percent. 56 percent of participants say they know someone who has no health insurance coverage.
- When asked what should be the top priority for immigration reform, 33 percent of those surveyed said securing US borders should come first while 16 percent felt the priority should be creating a path to citizenship. The most popular response (35%) was to do both equally. Among Hispanics, who would most likely be affected by immigration reform, only 12 percent prioritize a path to citizenship, 32 percent support securing the borders, and 50 percent are in favor of doing both equally.
- 55 percent of Texans are in favor of increasing the national minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$10.10 an hour, while 44 percent are against it. However, 68 percent of women are in favor of the increase, while men are evenly split on the issue 50-50 percent. An overwhelming majority of African-Americans were in support of this increase (88% in support, and 12% against).
- 44 percent of respondents described themselves as pro-life, while 37 percent said they were pro-life. 47 percent thought abortion should be allowed either up to 20 weeks, or up to the 3rd trimester. 39 percent would only allow it in the case of rape, incest or to protect the mother, while 14 percent said it should never be allowed.

Data was collected on March 7th to 12th using an automated data collection system. The Texas sample consisted of 494 registered likely voters with a margin of error of +/- 4.4 percent at a 95 percent confidence level. The full survey and results can be found at ECPS's website: www.theecps.com

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