

Released:
Thursday, October 16, 2014

Contact:
PATRICK MURRAY
732-263-5858 (office)
732-979-6769 (cell)
pdmurray@monmouth.edu

NJ CD02: LOBIONDO ON COURSE FOR WIN

Well-liked incumbent garners crossover support

GOP incumbent Frank LoBiondo holds a substantial 21 point lead over Democrat Bill Hughes in the race for New Jersey's 2nd district House seat, according to the *Monmouth University Poll*. LoBiondo is widely liked by his constituents and holds the advantage on key issues in the race.

Among voters likely to cast their ballot in next month's congressional race, 56% say they will support Frank LoBiondo and 35% will vote for Bill Hughes, Jr. Another 2% say they will vote for a third party candidate and 7% are undecided. Republican LoBiondo won re-election two years ago by an 18 point margin even though Mitt Romney, the GOP presidential nominee at the top of the ticket, lost the district by 8 points.

LoBiondo has a significant lead among both men (64% to 30% for Hughes) and women (49% to 40%) as well as in both the coastal (54% to 36%) and inland counties (59% to 33%) of this southern shore district. Republicans support LoBiondo by a 91% to 5% margin while Democrats back Hughes by a smaller 76% to 16% margin. Independents support LoBiondo – 64% to just 25% for Hughes.

“LoBiondo has held his seat for two decades because of significant crossover appeal in a district that otherwise trends Democratic,” said Patrick Murray, director of the independent Monmouth University Polling Institute.

LoBiondo first ran for Congress in 1992 against then-Rep. Bill Hughes, Sr., father of the current Democratic nominee. LoBiondo lost that race by 14 points but went on to win the seat handily two years later when the incumbent decided to retire from Congress.

“There is speculation that LoBiondo's may retire in a few years. Perhaps the younger Hughes hopes that lightning will strike again and he will have a clear shot in 2016. Of course, back in 1994, LoBiondo first had to get past a primary race against a veteran lawmaker. That may also be on the cards for the Democrat next time around,” said Murray.

District voters who are familiar with the candidates tend to be more positive than negative, although few say they know enough about the challenger to form an opinion of him. Specifically, voter opinion of LoBiondo is 56% favorable and just 18% unfavorable with 27% registering no opinion. Voter opinion of Hughes is 28% favorable to 9% unfavorable with 62% having no opinion.

“To put it plainly, district voters, including many Democrats, simply like Frank LoBiondo,” said Murray.

The *Monmouth University Poll* found that LoBiondo has an advantage on the overall perception of who is in touch with the district. When asked which candidate understands the concerns of district residents, 37% say only LoBiondo does, 18% say only Hughes does, and 20% say both do. Another 17% of likely voters say that neither candidate understands the district.

LoBiondo is also the preferred candidate on a wide range of issues. These include:

- helping veterans and the military – 42% say LoBiondo will do a better job, 20% say Hughes will do a better job, and 19% say both will perform about equally;
- protecting coastal resources – 41% prefer LoBiondo, 22% prefer Hughes, and 18% say both will perform about equally;
- helping seniors – 39% prefer LoBiondo, 25% prefer Hughes, and 19% say both will perform about equally;
- improving jobs and the local economy – 38% prefer LoBiondo, 25% prefer Hughes, and 15% say both will perform about equally; and
- doing the right thing on healthcare – 35% prefer LoBiondo, 26% prefer Hughes, and 14% say both will perform about equally.

The *Monmouth University Poll* also found that 2nd district voters have a negative opinion of both Pres. Barack Obama and the U.S. House of Representatives. Obama receives an upside down 39% approve to 55% disapprove job rating while the House receives an even worse 17% approve to 70% disapprove rating for its performance. Voters in the 2nd district are divided on whether they would like to see the Republicans (36%) or the Democrats (30%) control Congress. Another 32% say party control would make no difference to them.

The *Monmouth University Poll* was conducted by telephone from October 12 to 14, 2014 with 438 New Jersey voters likely to vote in New Jersey’s 2nd Congressional District November general election. This sample has a margin of error of ± 4.7 percent. The poll was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute.

DATA TABLES

The questions referred to in this release are as follows:

(* Some columns may not add to 100% due to rounding.)

1. If the election for U.S. Congress in your district was today, would you vote for Frank LoBiondo, the Republican, Bill Hughes, the Democrat or some other candidate? [NAMES WERE ROTATED] [IF UNDECIDED: If you had to vote for one of the following at this moment, do you lean more toward Frank LoBiondo or more toward Bill Hughes?]

(with leaners)	LIKELY VOTERS	PARTY ID			GENDER		COUNTY	
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	Coast	Inland
Frank LoBiondo	56%	16%	64%	91%	64%	49%	54%	59%
Bill Hughes	35%	76%	25%	5%	30%	40%	36%	33%
Other candidate	2%	4%	3%	0%	3%	1%	3%	1%
Undecided	7%	4%	8%	4%	3%	10%	6%	7%

[QUESTIONS 2 AND 3 WERE ROTATED]

2. Is your general opinion of Frank LoBiondo favorable or unfavorable, or do you have no opinion of him?

	LIKELY VOTERS	PARTY ID			GENDER		COUNTY		VOTE CHOICE		Undecided/ May change mind
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	Coast	Inland	LoBiondo	Hughes	
Favorable	56%	26%	62%	82%	60%	52%	55%	57%	89%	16%	41%
Unfavorable	18%	33%	16%	4%	17%	18%	17%	18%	1%	42%	13%
No opinion	27%	41%	22%	15%	23%	30%	27%	25%	10%	42%	45%

3. Is your general opinion of Bill Hughes favorable or unfavorable, or do you have no opinion of him?

	LIKELY VOTERS	PARTY ID			GENDER		COUNTY		VOTE CHOICE		Undecided/ May change mind
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	Coast	Inland	LoBiondo	Hughes	
Favorable	28%	48%	25%	11%	28%	29%	32%	23%	8%	66%	16%
Unfavorable	9%	2%	12%	14%	13%	6%	11%	7%	14%	1%	8%
No opinion	62%	50%	63%	74%	59%	65%	58%	70%	77%	33%	76%

4. Do you approve or disapprove of the job Barack Obama is doing as president?

	LIKELY VOTERS	PARTY ID			GENDER		COUNTY		VOTE CHOICE		Undecided/ May change mind
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	Coast	Inland	LoBiondo	Hughes	
Approve	39%	78%	29%	11%	29%	48%	40%	38%	18%	71%	40%
Disapprove	55%	15%	67%	83%	66%	45%	56%	53%	76%	23%	50%
(VOL) Don't know	6%	8%	4%	6%	5%	7%	4%	9%	6%	6%	10%

5. Do you approve or disapprove of the job the U.S. House of Representatives is doing?

	LIKELY VOTERS	PARTY ID			GENDER		COUNTY		VOTE CHOICE		Undecided/ May change mind
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	Coast	Inland	LoBiondo	Hughes	
Approve	17%	17%	12%	25%	16%	18%	16%	19%	21%	18%	11%
Disapprove	70%	69%	78%	63%	73%	68%	70%	71%	66%	74%	70%
(VOL) Don't know	13%	14%	10%	12%	11%	14%	14%	10%	13%	8%	18%

6. Which candidate understands the concerns of people who live in your Congressional District – Frank LoBiondo, Bill Hughes, both of them, or neither of them?

	LIKELY VOTERS	PARTY ID			GENDER		COUNTY		VOTE CHOICE		Undecided/ May change mind
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	Coast	Inland	LoBiondo	Hughes	
LoBiondo	37%	19%	39%	55%	42%	32%	32%	44%	64%	6%	21%
Hughes	18%	41%	13%	2%	17%	19%	20%	16%	0%	51%	7%
Both	20%	17%	19%	25%	18%	22%	23%	16%	20%	21%	23%
Neither	17%	15%	24%	13%	19%	16%	18%	16%	11%	15%	34%
(VOL) Don't know	7%	9%	6%	5%	4%	11%	7%	8%	5%	7%	15%

7. Who would do a better job on the following issues – Frank LoBiondo or Bill Hughes, or would they perform about equally? [ITEMS WERE ROTATED]

Improving jobs and the local economy

	LIKELY VOTERS	PARTY ID			GENDER		COUNTY		VOTE CHOICE		Undecided/ May change mind
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	Coast	Inland	LoBiondo	Hughes	
LoBiondo better	38%	10%	42%	64%	46%	30%	38%	38%	64%	6%	19%
Hughes better	25%	56%	16%	5%	22%	28%	26%	25%	1%	68%	16%
Both equally	15%	15%	17%	13%	11%	19%	14%	17%	11%	16%	23%
(VOL) Neither	13%	11%	15%	12%	14%	11%	13%	12%	14%	6%	24%
(VOL) Don't know	9%	7%	10%	7%	7%	11%	10%	9%	9%	4%	18%

Protecting coastal resources

	LIKELY VOTERS	PARTY ID			GENDER		COUNTY		VOTE CHOICE		Undecided/ May change mind
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	Coast	Inland	LoBiondo	Hughes	
LoBiondo better	41%	15%	38%	74%	49%	35%	42%	40%	68%	6%	30%
Hughes better	22%	46%	16%	5%	23%	21%	24%	19%	3%	54%	16%
Both equally	18%	21%	22%	12%	15%	21%	18%	19%	13%	27%	22%
(VOL) Neither	6%	5%	9%	2%	6%	6%	6%	6%	5%	4%	10%
(VOL) Don't know	13%	13%	15%	7%	8%	17%	11%	16%	11%	9%	22%

Helping seniors

	LIKELY VOTERS	PARTY ID			GENDER		COUNTY		VOTE CHOICE		Undecided/ May change mind
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	Coast	Inland	LoBiondo	Hughes	
LoBiondo better	39%	15%	38%	65%	47%	31%	39%	38%	66%	7%	23%
Hughes better	25%	49%	18%	8%	23%	27%	28%	21%	4%	59%	19%
Both equally	19%	19%	20%	16%	13%	23%	19%	18%	15%	23%	24%
(VOL) Neither	8%	9%	9%	4%	8%	7%	7%	9%	5%	7%	14%
(VOL) Don't know	11%	8%	14%	7%	9%	12%	8%	14%	10%	5%	22%

Doing the right thing on healthcare

	LIKELY VOTERS	PARTY ID			GENDER		COUNTY		VOTE CHOICE		Undecided/ May change mind
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	Coast	Inland	LoBiondo	Hughes	
LoBiondo better	35%	13%	34%	60%	41%	29%	36%	33%	59%	9%	15%
Hughes better	26%	56%	18%	4%	26%	26%	29%	21%	2%	67%	18%
Both equally	14%	10%	18%	14%	11%	17%	14%	14%	14%	11%	20%
(VOL) Neither	11%	10%	15%	6%	11%	11%	10%	12%	10%	7%	18%
(VOL) Don't know	15%	10%	15%	16%	12%	17%	11%	19%	15%	6%	29%

Helping veterans and the military

	LIKELY VOTERS	PARTY ID			GENDER		COUNTY		VOTE CHOICE		Undecided/ May change mind
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	Coast	Inland	LoBiondo	Hughes	
LoBiondo better	42%	19%	44%	68%	52%	34%	43%	42%	67%	13%	27%
Hughes better	20%	44%	13%	5%	19%	21%	22%	18%	1%	54%	14%
Both equally	19%	19%	20%	18%	16%	22%	18%	22%	15%	21%	27%
(VOL) Neither	6%	8%	8%	1%	6%	6%	6%	6%	4%	6%	9%
(VOL) Don't know	12%	10%	15%	8%	8%	16%	12%	13%	12%	7%	22%

8. Which party would you like to see control Congress – the Republicans or the Democrats, or would it make no difference?

	LIKELY VOTERS	PARTY ID			GENDER		COUNTY		VOTE CHOICE		Undecided/ May change mind
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	Coast	Inland	LoBiondo	Hughes	
Republicans	36%	3%	31%	78%	45%	29%	38%	34%	63%	4%	22%
Democrats	30%	77%	14%	2%	25%	35%	33%	27%	6%	73%	22%
No difference	32%	20%	53%	19%	29%	34%	28%	37%	31%	22%	53%
(VOL) Don't know	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%	3%

The *Monmouth University Poll* was sponsored and conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute from October 12 to 14, 2014 with a statewide random sample of 438 likely voters in New Jersey's 2nd Congressional District drawn from a list of registered voters who voted in at least two of the last four general elections and indicate they are likely to vote in the upcoming election. This includes 375 contacted by a live interviewer on a landline telephone and 63 contacted by a live interviewer on a cell phone. Monmouth is responsible for all aspects of the survey design, data weighting and analysis. Final sample is weighted for region, age, gender, and party registration based on state registration list information on the pool of voters who have participated in two of the last four elections. Data collection support provided by Braun Research (field) and L2 (voter list). For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling has a maximum margin of plus or minus 4.7 percentage points. Sampling error can be larger for sub-groups (see table below). In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

POLL DEMOGRAPHICS				
Likely Voter Sample (weighted)				
Self-Reported Party ID	Party of Registration	Gender	Age	County
33% Democrat	40% Democrat	47% Male	8% 18-34	36% Atlantic
31% Republican	40% Republican	53% Female	18% 35-49	31% Cape May/Cumberland
36% Independent	20% Unaffiliated		37% 50-64	22% Salem/Gloucester
			37% 65+	11% Other

	LIKELY VOTERS	PARTY ID			GENDER		COUNTY		VOTE CHOICE		Undecided/ May change mind
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	Coast	Inland	LoBiondo	Hughes	
Unweighted N	438	138	157	135	198	240	260	178	207	128	120
moe	4.7%	8.4%	7.8%	8.4%	7.0%	6.3%	6.1%	7.4%	6.8%	8.7%	9.0%

###