Released:
Tuesday, October 14, 2014

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

NJ CD03: MACARTHUR LEADS BELGARD BY 10

DCCC attacks not sticking to GOP nominee

Republican Tom MacArthur holds a 10 point lead in the race for the open House seat in New Jersey's 3rd district, according to the ***Monmouth University Poll***. Democrat Aimee Belgard has not gained traction with her challenge that the GOP nominee, who recently moved to the 3rd, is not in tune with the district.

Among voters likely to cast their ballot in next month's congressional race, 51% say they will support former Randolph Township Mayor Tom MacArthur and 41% will vote for Burlington County Freeholder Aimee Belgard. Another 2% say they will vote for the third party candidate and 6% are undecided. MacArthur leads in the Ocean County portion of the district with 58% to 33% for Belgard. Burlington County voters split their ballots 46% for local office holder Belgard and 46% for MacArthur. There is also a significant gender gap in voter preferences. MacArthur holds a significant 58% to 35% advantage over Belgard among men. Women voters split evenly at 45% for Belgard and 44% for MacArthur.

Belgard has tried to cast MacArthur as a political opportunist after he recently moved into the district and self-funded his campaign. This doesn't seem to have penetrated among most voters. When asked which candidate understands the concerns of district residents, 26% say only MacArthur does, 23% say only Belgard does, and 11% say both do. When asked which candidate is honest and trustworthy, 20% say only MacArthur is, 18% say only Belgard is, and 15% say both are. About 1-in-4 (27%) likely voters say that neither candidate understands the district and 1-in-3 (32%) say that neither is honest and trustworthy.

"This has arguably been the nastiest race in New Jersey this year. While both sides have taken shots at each other, national Democrats have weighed in with some controversial attacks against MacArthur. It doesn't look like they worked," said Patrick Murray, director of the independent

Monmouth University Polling Institute. "This is not turning out to be the horse race that Democrats had hoped."

On the issues, Belgard has attempted to dent MacArthur's record as an insurance company executive on equal pay and helping victims of disasters. On the issue of equal pay for women, 44% of district voters say that Belgard will do a better job compared to just 19% who say MacArthur will do a better job and 14% who say both candidates would perform about the same. Opinion is evenly divided, though, when it comes to helping victims of Superstorm Sandy in what was arguably the hardest hit congressional district in the country. Identical numbers of voters give the advantage to either MacArthur (25%) or Belgard (25%) and another 17% say both would perform about equally in helping Sandy victims.

MacArthur has an advantage on other issues which are important to the district. In the home of Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, 38% of voters say MacArthur will do a better job helping veterans and the military compared to 24% who say Belgard will do a better job and 14% who say both would perform about equally.   Voters also say that MacArthur (40%) will do a better job than Belgard (20%) on keeping taxes and spending under control, while 9% say both will perform about equally on this issue.

"The equal pay debate may be fueling the gender gap in this race, but it's not enough to overcome Belgard's deficit on other issues," said Murray.

District 3 voters who are familiar with the candidates tend to have a positive opinion of MacArthur – 37% favorable to 22% unfavorable, with 41% registering no opinion. The net positive gap is smaller for Belgard –29% favorable to 21% unfavorable, with 50% having no opinion.

The *Monmouth University Poll* also found that 3rd district voters have a negative opinion of both Pres. Barack Obama and the U.S. House of Representatives. Obama receives an upside down 38% approve to 58% disapprove job rating while the House receives an even worse 20% approve to 73% disapprove rating for its performance. Even with this low rating for the GOP-led House, more 3rd district voters would like to see the Republicans (43%) rather than the Democrats (35%) control Congress. Another 20% say party control would make no difference to them.

The *Monmouth University Poll* was conducted by telephone from October 9 to 13, 2014 with 423 New Jersey voters likely to vote in New Jersey's 3rd Congressional District November general election. This sample has a margin of error of $\pm$ 4.8 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 Tom MacArthur, the Republican, Aimee Belgard, 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 Tom MacArthur or more toward Aimee Belgard?]

(with leaners)	LIKELY VOTERS	PARTY ID			GENDER		COUNTY	
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	Burlington	Ocean
Tom MacArthur	**51%**	7%	54%	86%	58%	44%	46%	58%
Aimee Belgard	**41%**	88%	33%	8%	35%	45%	46%	33%
Other candidate	**2%**	0%	4%	2%	1%	3%	2%	2%
Undecided	**6%**	5%	10%	4%	5%	7%	6%	7%

[*QUESTIONS 2 AND 3 WERE ROTATED*]

2. Is your general opinion of Tom MacArthur 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	Burlington	Ocean	MacArthur	Belgard	
Favorable	**37%**	8%	37%	61%	44%	31%	35%	39%	70%	6%	18%
Unfavorable	**22%**	37%	24%	8%	20%	24%	21%	23%	4%	39%	23%
No opinion	**41%**	55%	39%	31%	36%	46%	44%	38%	27%	55%	59%

3. Is your general opinion of Aimee Belgard favorable or unfavorable, or do you have no opinion of her?

	LIKELY VOTERS	PARTY ID			GENDER		COUNTY		VOTE CHOICE		Undecided/ May change mind
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	Burlington	Ocean	MacArthur	Belgard	
Favorable	**29%**	63%	19%	10%	27%	31%	31%	25%	3%	68%	18%
Unfavorable	**21%**	5%	27%	30%	24%	19%	22%	21%	40%	0%	21%
No opinion	**50%**	32%	54%	61%	49%	50%	47%	54%	57%	32%	62%

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	Burlington	Ocean	MacArthur	Belgard	
Approve	**38%**	82%	33%	5%	34%	41%	43%	30%	7%	74%	35%
Disapprove	**58%**	11%	61%	95%	63%	53%	52%	67%	92%	17%	58%
(VOL) Don't know	**4%**	7%	5%	1%	3%	6%	5%	3%	1%	9%	8%

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	Burlington	Ocean	MacArthur	Belgard	
Approve	**20%**	16%	19%	22%	20%	20%	19%	21%	23%	18%	16%
Disapprove	**73%**	76%	76%	67%	76%	70%	74%	71%	69%	79%	74%
(VOL) Don't know	**7%**	8%	5%	10%	4%	10%	7%	9%	8%	3%	10%

[*QUESTIONS 6 AND 7 WERE ROTATED*]

6. Which candidate understands the concerns of people who live in your Congressional District – Tom MacArthur, Aimee Belgard, both of them, or neither of them?

	LIKELY VOTERS	PARTY ID			GENDER		COUNTY		VOTE CHOICE		Undecided/ May change mind
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	Burlington	Ocean	MacArthur	Belgard	
MacArthur	**26%**	2%	26%	47%	31%	22%	23%	31%	52%	2%	9%
Belgard	**23%**	54%	16%	5%	20%	26%	26%	19%	1%	60%	11%
Both	**11%**	12%	11%	10%	11%	11%	15%	6%	10%	11%	13%
Neither	**27%**	18%	34%	27%	24%	29%	23%	31%	27%	17%	41%
(VOL) Don't know	**13%**	14%	12%	11%	14%	12%	12%	13%	9%	9%	26%

7. Which candidate would you say is honest and trustworthy – Tom MacArthur, Aimee Belgard, both of them, or neither of them?

	LIKELY VOTERS	PARTY ID			GENDER		COUNTY		VOTE CHOICE		Undecided/ May change mind
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	Burlington	Ocean	MacArthur	Belgard	
MacArthur	**20%**	1%	17%	40%	20%	20%	17%	25%	43%	1%	6%
Belgard	**18%**	44%	12%	2%	15%	21%	20%	16%	1%	47%	7%
Both	**15%**	15%	11%	18%	17%	12%	16%	13%	15%	14%	13%
Neither	**32%**	20%	46%	30%	32%	32%	30%	35%	34%	20%	51%
(VOL) Don't know	**14%**	20%	14%	9%	15%	14%	17%	11%	7%	18%	23%

8. Who would do a better job on the following issues – Tom MacArthur or Aimee Belgard, or would they perform about equally? [*ITEMS WERE ROTATED*]

Keeping taxes and spending under control

	LIKELY VOTERS	PARTY ID			GENDER		COUNTY		VOTE CHOICE		Undecided/ May change mind
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	Burlington	Ocean	MacArthur	Belgard	
MacArthur better	**40%**	14%	41%	62%	45%	36%	38%	43%	70%	13%	22%
Belgard better	**20%**	45%	11%	8%	16%	24%	22%	18%	3%	47%	17%
Both equally	**9%**	12%	8%	7%	9%	8%	9%	8%	3%	13%	10%
(VOL) Neither	**17%**	11%	25%	15%	17%	17%	18%	15%	17%	10%	26%
(VOL) Don't know	**14%**	18%	15%	9%	13%	15%	13%	16%	8%	17%	25%

Helping victims of Superstorm Sandy

	LIKELY VOTERS	PARTY ID			GENDER		COUNTY		VOTE CHOICE		Undecided/ May change mind
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	Burlington	Ocean	MacArthur	Belgard	
MacArthur better	**25%**	9%	22%	43%	28%	23%	23%	28%	46%	7%	10%
Belgard better	**25%**	52%	18%	9%	22%	27%	25%	25%	3%	58%	18%
Both equally	**17%**	12%	20%	19%	23%	13%	20%	15%	19%	13%	20%
(VOL) Neither	**13%**	11%	21%	7%	10%	16%	12%	15%	13%	7%	22%
(VOL) Don't know	**20%**	16%	19%	23%	18%	21%	21%	18%	19%	15%	30%

Making sure women get equal pay for equal work

	LIKELY VOTERS	PARTY ID			GENDER		COUNTY		VOTE CHOICE		Undecided/ May change mind
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	Burlington	Ocean	MacArthur	Belgard	
MacArthur better	**19%**	6%	16%	34%	21%	17%	15%	24%	37%	3%	6%
Belgard better	**44%**	72%	39%	24%	42%	46%	49%	38%	19%	79%	45%
Both equally	**14%**	6%	16%	18%	15%	13%	13%	15%	19%	5%	17%
(VOL) Neither	**9%**	5%	14%	10%	8%	11%	10%	9%	11%	2%	12%
(VOL) Don't know	**14%**	12%	15%	14%	14%	13%	13%	15%	14%	10%	20%

Helping veterans and the military

	LIKELY VOTERS	PARTY ID			GENDER		COUNTY		VOTE CHOICE		Undecided/ May change mind
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Male	Female	Burlington	Ocean	MacArthur	Belgard	
MacArthur better	**38%**	8%	37%	67%	42%	35%	35%	43%	75%	6%	23%
Belgard better	**24%**	54%	16%	7%	20%	27%	29%	17%	1%	60%	15%
Both equally	**14%**	17%	14%	8%	16%	12%	14%	13%	10%	16%	16%
(VOL) Neither	**7%**	4%	13%	5%	7%	8%	7%	8%	5%	3%	15%
(VOL) Don't know	**17%**	17%	20%	13%	16%	18%	16%	18%	10%	16%	31%

9. 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	Burlington	Ocean	MacArthur	Belgard	
Republicans	**43%**	1%	37%	86%	49%	38%	40%	47%	81%	5%	28%
Democrats	**35%**	90%	24%	2%	32%	38%	40%	30%	4%	79%	31%
No difference	**20%**	8%	36%	12%	18%	21%	19%	21%	14%	15%	36%
(VOL) Don't know	**2%**	1%	4%	0%	1%	3%	2%	2%	1%	0%	5%

POLL DEMOGRAPHICS
Likely Voter Sample (weighted)

Self-Reported Party ID	*Party of Registration*	*Gender*	*Age*	*County*
30% Democrat	*36% Democrat*	*47% Male*	*7 % 18-34*	*58% Burlington*
35% Republican	*38% Republican*	*53% Female*	*19% 35-49*	*42% Ocean*
35% Independent	*26% Unaffiliated*		*34% 50-64*	
			40% 65+	

MARGIN OF ERROR

	LIKELY VOTERS	*PARTY ID*			*GENDER*		*COUNTY*		*VOTE CHOICE*		*Undecided/ May change mind*
		Dem	*Ind*	*Rep*	*Male*	*Female*	*Burlington*	*Ocean*	*MacArthur*	*Belgard*	
Unweighted N	*423*	*118*	*164*	*136*	*189*	*234*	*241*	*182*	*176*	*143*	*129*
moe	*4.8%*	*9.0%*	*7.7%*	*8.4%*	*7.1%*	*6.4%*	*6.3%*	*7.3%*	*7.4%*	*8.2%*	*8.6%*

###