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Lisa Madigan Leads Early Democratic Primary Field; Republican Contest Unsettled

A new poll by the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute at Southern Illinois University shows most Illinois Republicans are undecided about which candidate to support as the 2014 race for governor opens.

Illinois Democrats give a plurality of their support to Attorney General Lisa Madigan, in a hypothetical primary match up with Gov. Pat Quinn and former U.S. Commerce Secretary and White House Chief of Staff Bill Daley, according to the Simon Poll.

“As the curtain goes up on these contests, the nominations in both parties are up for grabs,” said David Yepsen, director of the Institute. “It seems early to be talking about primary elections so soon after the November presidential election, but the Illinois primary is just over a year away – March 2014 - and campaigns are already at work. This poll gives us a good snapshot of the contests as they begin.”

The poll of 600 registered voters in Illinois was taken Jan 27 to Feb 8. The statewide sample has a margin of error of plus or minus 4 percentage points. The smaller subsamples of Republicans and Democrats have larger margins of error.

In the race for governor, the survey found:

*On the Republican side, 53.2 percent of likely GOP primary voters said they are undecided about a candidate. State Treasurer Dan Rutherford captured 10.2 percent of the vote; state Senator Bill Brady won 9.7 percent; Congressman Aaron Schock won 9.1 percent; former Congressman Joe Walsh won 5.9 percent; and state Senator Kirk Dillard garnered 3.2 percent. Chicago businessman Bruce Rauner showed no support.

*Among Democrats, Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn faces serious competition from Madigan and Daley. The poll showed 31.9 percent for Madigan, 22.9 percent for Quinn, and Daley picked up 11.9 percent. A sizeable group – 28.4 percent – was undecided.

*Many Illinois voters are in a bad mood. There are 41.7 percent who feel the country is on the

right track and 48.5 percent who believe it is headed in the wrong direction. By comparison, 75 percent feel the state is headed in the wrong direction and only 15.8 percent see it on the right path. Quinn's job approval remains poor, with 32.8 percent approving of the job he's doing and 51.3 percent disapproving. In last summer's Simon Poll, Quinn's job approval rating was almost 10 percentage points higher: 42.2 percent positive and 49 percent negative.

*People feel a little better about their home towns and regions. There are 53.7 percent who see their region headed in the right direction and 34.8 percent who see it going in the wrong direction.

In addition to the campaign questions, the poll measured attitudes toward current public policy issues in the state and those results will be released in the coming days. Topics include gun control issues, pension reform, state budget questions, abortion, gay marriage, gambling and redistricting.

For this poll, the Institute surveyed 600 registered voters across the state, January 27 through February 8, resulting in a statistical margin for error of plus or minus 4 percentage points. The Democratic subsample of 310 respondents has a margin of error of plus or minus 5.5 percentage points, and the Republican subsample of 186 respondents has a margin of error of 7.2 percentage points.

The questionnaire was available in both English and Spanish, and a Spanish-speaking interviewer was made available. The sample also included two-thirds land-line phones and one-third cell phones. The Simon Institute developed the questionnaire, and live phone interviews were administered by Customer Research International of San Marcos, Texas, which reports no Illinois political clients. The Institute paid for the project out of non-state funds from its endowment.

The director of the poll is Dr. Charles Leonard, visiting professor at the Institute.

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**Appendix:
The Simon Poll Spring 2013
Response Frequencies**

1. First we would like to know what you think about the direction of the United States of America. Generally speaking, do you think things in our country are going in the right direction, or are they off track and heading in the wrong direction?

Right direction	41.7%
Wrong direction	48.5%
Other/Don't know	9.8%

2. And what about the direction of the State of Illinois? Generally speaking, are things in Illinois going in the right direction, or are they off track and heading in the wrong direction?

Right direction	15.8%
Wrong direction	75.0%
Other/Don't know	9.2%

3. And how are things going in your city or area of the state? In general, are things in your city or area going in the right direction, or are they off track and heading in the wrong direction?

Right direction	53.7%
Wrong direction	34.8%
Other/Don't know	11.5%

4. Next, I'd like for you to tell me how well Illinois Governor Pat Quinn is doing his job. Do you approve or disapprove of the job Governor Quinn is doing?

Strongly approve	7.3%
Approve	25.5%
Neither	7.7%
Disapprove	17.5%
Strongly disapprove	33.8%
Other/Don't know	8.2%

5. Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat or an Independent?

Strong Democrat	25.8%
Not-strong Democrat	13.0%
Independent Democrat	12.8%
Pure Independent	9.5%
Independent Republican	8.5%
Not-strong Republican	10.0%
Strong Republican	12.5%
Other/Don't know	7.8%

6. (Democrats only/ N=310). If the Democratic primary election for governor were held today, who would you vote for?

Madigan	31.9%
Quinn	22.9%
Daley	11.9%
Someone else	4.8%
Other/Don't know	28.4%

7. (Republicans only/ N=186) If the Republican primary election for governor were held today, who would you vote for?

Rutherford	10.2%
Brady	9.7%
Schock	9.1%
Walsh	5.9%
Dillard	3.2%
Andrjiewski	2.2%
Proft	1.6%
Rauner	0.0%
Someone else	4.8%
Other/Don't know	53.2%

