



Marketing Resource Group, LLC

INTEGRITY . COLLABORATION . RESULTS .

MICHIGAN POLL®

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 22, 2020

CONTACT: Jenell Leonard

C: 765-210-7971

E: jleonard@mrgmi.com

Ballot Test: Biden increases lead on Trump, but late-deciding voters could again play a significant role

James on the heels of Peters in bid for U.S. Senate

LANSING, Mich. – In the race for the White House, former Vice President Joe Biden holds a five-point lead over President Trump, as a result of a recent statewide poll commissioned and conducted by Marketing Resource Group, LLC.

In the +4 Democrat survey of 600 likely voters, results show that if the election were held today 46 percent of voters would choose the former vice president to lead the country compared to the 41 percent who would support a second term for President Donald J. Trump. The former vice president increased his lead by two points compared to the MRG Michigan Poll® that was conducted in March, which showed Biden with 44 percent support compared to President Trump's 41 percent.

The former vice president's personal ratings have also improved since the primary season with 45 percent of voters sharing positive feelings and 42 percent negative. The spring poll showed 36 percent favorable responses and 41 percent negative. President Trump's personal ratings show 40 percent with positive feelings compared to 53 percent who share a negative feeling. The March poll resulted in 41 percent of voters rating positive feelings toward the president compared to 48 percent who shared a negative feeling.

“While the president's numbers have remained unchanged over the past six months, the former vice president has improved by bringing together Democrat voters for the general election,” said MRG's owner, Jenell Leonard. “Both candidates enjoy support from their party bases in the low 90s, and will now be looking to win the support of undecided and third-party voters.”

Michigan could still play an important role in deciding the presidential race

While Vice President Biden's lead has expanded from a then-hypothetical matchup in the spring, signs exist that the presidential race could still tighten before November. In the recent poll, 12 percent of respondents were either undecided or willing to vote for a third-party candidate, including 40 percent of independent voters. Those potential late-deciding voters could make up the current difference between the two candidates and potentially swing the 2020 presidential race.

*MRG Michigan Poll ®
Fall 2020*

“These are not Republicans and Democrats who simply have yet to come home,” said Leonard. “Our polling shows there is a significant number of undecided voters who can still be won. How candidates perform in their eyes managing the continued concerns surrounding COVID-19 and the nomination of a new Supreme Court Justice could go a long way toward their chances in November.”

President Trump has the strongest support in West Michigan, the Flint/Saginaw/Bay City area and Northern Michigan. Vice President Biden is doing well in Wayne and Oakland Counties, as well as Mid-Michigan. Macomb County and the counties surrounding the Detroit metro area (Lapeer, Monroe, Livingston and St. Clair) look primed to reprise their role as critical tipping points.

U.S. Senate Race

The margins have tightened in the race for U.S. Senate with freshman Senator Gary Peters holding on to a two-point lead over his Republican rival, John James. Forty-two percent of polled respondents conveyed support for the incumbent, compared to 40 percent conveying their support for James. The MRG Michigan Poll® conducted in March showed a seven-point spread in the U.S. Senate race with Gary Peters receiving 42 percent support compared to James’ 35 percent.

When asked to rate their feelings about the respective U.S. Senate candidates, 34 percent of voters shared positive feelings towards Senator Peters compared to the 26 percent negative. Republican candidate John James tallied 32 percent positive with 30 percent negative.

“Both candidates have been covering the airwaves over the past several months, but James’ messaging of Peters’ missed votes and skipping work seems to be resonating with voters,” said Leonard. “Peters is already underperforming the top of the ticket, and further slippage is not a good sign for an incumbent. The Michigan Senate race is clearly trending toward Republicans and should be considered one of the tightest races in the country. That means Michigan could play a significant role in deciding control of the U.S. Senate.”

Gary Peters’ strongest support comes from union households and those living in Wayne County, Oakland County and Mid-Michigan. John James’ strongest support comes from West Michigan, Northern Michigan and the Flint/Saginaw/Bay City region.

The Questions and Results

The results and the wording of the questions asked by MRG follow.

Ballot Test:

Q. As you know, Michigan will have a general election on November 3rd. If the election for President were held today, and Donald Trump was the Republican candidate and Joe Biden was the Democrat candidate, would you vote for [ROTATE] (Donald Trump the Republican), (Joe Biden the Democrat), or for someone else? [IF DON'T KNOW, ASK:] Well, if you had to decide, are you leaning toward [ROTATE] Donald Trump, Joe Biden or someone else?

Vote Donald Trump	39%
Lean Donald Trump	2%
Vote Joe Biden	45%
Lean Joe Biden	2%
Vote Someone else	7%
Won't Vote (VOL)	0.2%
Undecided / Don't Know	5%
Refused	1%

TOTALS

Vote Trump.....	41%
Vote Biden	46%

Q. If the election for U.S. Senate were held today, would you vote for [ROTATE] (John James the Republican), (Gary Peters the Democrat), or for someone else? [IF DON'T KNOW, ASK:] Well, if you had to decide, are you leaning toward [ROTATE] John James, Gary Peters or someone else?

Vote John James	37%
Lean John James	3%
Vote Gary Peters	39%
Lean Gary Peters	3%
Vote someone else	8%
Won't Vote (VOL)	1%
Undecided / Don't Know	10%
Refused	1%

TOTALS

Vote James	40%
Vote Peters	42%

Personal Approval Ratings

Q. Now, I'm going to read you the names of some people in the news, and I'd like you to rate your feelings toward each one as very positive, somewhat positive, neutral, somewhat negative, or very negative. If you don't know the name, please just say so.

President:

	Very Pos	Somewhat Pos	Neutral	Somewhat Neg	Very Neg	Never Heard Of	Don't Know	Ref
Donald Trump	31.2	8.5	7	3.8	48.7	0	.2	.7
Joe Biden	27.3	17.8	10.8	8.6	33.8	0	1	.7

	Total Positive	Total Negative
Donald Trump	40%	53%
Joe Biden	45%	42%

U.S. Senate:

	Very Pos	Somewhat Pos	Neutral	Somewhat Neg	Very Neg	Never Heard Of	Don't Know	Ref
Gary Peters	12.5	21.5	24.2	11.3	14.8	8.7	6.8	0.2
John James	16.0	16.0	18.3	13.8	16.5	11.5	7.7	.2

	Total Positive	Total Negative
Gary Peters	34%	26%
John James	32%	30%

If anyone in the media would like additional numbers or cross tabs, please do not hesitate to contact us.

MRG Michigan Poll® Fall 2020

The survey of 600 likely Michigan voters was conducted by live interview September 14-19, 2020 with a +4 Dem sample. The survey sample was randomly drawn from a listed sample of all registered voters with a history of voting and stratified by city and township to reflect voter turnout. In addition, quotas for gender and cell phone interviews were met within each geographic area, and extra efforts were made to reach African Americans. Forty percent of the interviews were conducted with cell phone only or cell phone dominant households. Some columns may not add up to 100% because of rounding.

A sample of 600 likely voters in Michigan yields a sampling margin of error of ±4 percent with a 95 percent confidence interval. The sampling margin of error for subgroups may be higher depending on the size of the subgroup.

*MRG Michigan Poll ®
Fall 2020*

About Marketing Resource Group

Lansing, Michigan-based Marketing Resource Group, LLC (www.mrgmi.com) is an award-winning PR firm representing corporate, association, nonprofit, and private clients with interests in Michigan. MRG offers expertise in public affairs, communications, political campaign management, and public opinion survey research. For more than 30 years, MRG has conducted its bi-annual omnibus Michigan Poll®, tracking the pulse of Michigan voters on key statewide public policy and political issues. MRG is the only Michigan public opinion survey research firm that maintains nearly 35 years of trend analyses of voter attitudes related to state and national leaders, political parties, and the political and economic climate in Michigan.

Follow MRG on Twitter @mrgmichigan and on Facebook.

###