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Hayworth Ahead in CD6 Race: Owens Image Still Undefined

J.D. Hayworth has a stunning lead, in what many assumed to be the most closely contested congressional race in Arizona. Hayworth, the Republican incumbent is benefiting from Democratic defections as well as support from independent voters, according to a recent survey of likely voters living in Congressional District 6. Just two weeks from Election Day, one-in-three likely voters say they have yet to form an impression of Steve Owens, the Democratic challenger.

This survey of 403 likely voters in Congressional District 6 was conducted by the Social Research Laboratory at Northern Arizona University. The survey was conducted from October 8 to October 15. Results are accurate within a 5% margin of error. This is the first survey of likely voters in Congressional District 6 to be released to the public during the current election season.

Incumbent Advantage

J.D. Hayworth has a commanding lead in the Congressional District 6 race. When asked whom they would vote for if the election was held today, fifty-four percent of likely voters say they support Hayworth. One-third of likely voters, 36 percent say they would vote for Owens. Robert Anderson, the Libertarian candidate, has 3 percent

support. Only 6 percent of likely voters are undecided. Support for Owens and Hayworth is rather firm as two-thirds of Owens supporters (66%) and three quarters of Hayworth supporters (77%) say they will not change their minds before election day.

Hayworth's lead is quite notable because Hayworth won the District 6 seat two years ago beating Steve Owens by only 2,500 votes. This year, Hayworth and Owens are battling for the same seat once again and many political analysts thought the race would be quite close once again.

As expected, each candidate draws significant support from members of their own party. Eighty-six percent of Republicans say they will vote for Hayworth, the Republican candidate, and 71 percent of Democrats say they will vote for Owens. However, there are a significant number of Democratic defections as 21 percent of Democrats say they support Hayworth. The critical difference between supporters of each candidate comes in the area of family income. People from lesser income households tend to support Owens rather than Hayworth (48% versus 43% support). As family income increases, support shifts to Hayworth. Fifty-seven percent of likely voters from middle-income families support Hayworth, as do 69% of voters from upper income households.

Owens With Image Problems

J.D. Hayworth is well known to Congressional District 6 voters. He has a record of 2 years service to the district and has drawn much attention since his arrival in Congress. As a result, a majority of likely voters (58%) hold a positive image of Hayworth. In fact, one-quarter of voters (28%) say they hold a very positive impression of Hayworth. Steve Owens, on the other hand, remains relatively unknown to the voters. One-third of likely voters (33%) have a positive impression of Owens and one-third (31%) hold a negative impression of Owens. Still, only two weeks before Election Day, one-third of likely voters (35%) say they have neither a positive nor a negative impression of Owens. They just do not know who he is. Seventy-nine percent of likely voters hold no impression of Robert Anderson, the Libertarian candidate for Congress.

“The bad news for Owens is that this late in the election season, people have yet to form an impression of who he is and what he stands for,” said Solop. “The good news

for Owens is that people don't necessarily feel negatively toward him. He still has a little time to define an image for the voters."

Almost half of all likely voters in the district (45%) believe J.D. Hayworth cares more about people like them. Only 23% of voters thought Owens cared more. Similarly, half of likely voters (50%) believe Hayworth has a better understanding of issues facing the congressional district. This stands in contrast to the 21 percent that believe Owens has a better understanding of the issues.

(30)



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STATEWIDE TELEPHONE POLL

**Social Research Laboratory
Northern Arizona University**

BACKGROUND MEMO

The telephone survey was conducted between October 8 and October 15, 1998. A random sample of 402 likely voters of Congressional District 6 was interviewed by telephone. Figures of this sampling size are subject to a sampling error of about +/- 5 percent at a 95 percent confidence interval. Sampling error is the probable difference in results between interviewing everyone in the population versus a scientific sample taken from the population. Sampling error does not take into account additional sources of error inherent in any study of public opinion. The data referred to in this release are presented below.

When voters go to the polls in November, they will be electing a representative to Congress. The Republican candidate for Representative is J.D. Hayworth, the Democratic candidate is Steve Owens, and the Libertarian candidate is Robert Anderson.

Do you have a very positive, somewhat positive, somewhat negative impression or very negative impression of J.D. Hayworth?

	%
Very positive	28
Somewhat positive	30
Somewhat negative	14
Very negative	13
Don't know/No answer	14
Total	99%

(N= 403)

How about Steve Owens? Do you have a very positive, somewhat positive, somewhat negative or very negative impression of Steve Owens?

	%	
Very positive	9	(N= 403)
Somewhat positive	24	
Somewhat negative	18	
Very negative	13	
Don't know/No answer	35	
Total	99%	

What about Robert Anderson? Do you have a very positive, somewhat positive, somewhat negative or very negative impression of Robert Anderson?

	%	
Very positive	2	(N= 403)
Somewhat positive	8	
Somewhat negative	5	
Very negative	5	
Don't know/No answer	79	
Refused	1	
Total	100%	

Regardless of who you may support, which congressional candidate do you think cares more about people like you?

	%	
Owens	23	(N= 403)
Hayworth	45	
Anderson	3	
Neither	8	
All three	4	
Don't know/Not sure	17	
Refused	1	
Total	99%	

Which candidate has a better understanding of the issues facing your congressional district?

	%
Owens	21
Hayworth	50
Anderson	1
Neither	4
All three	3
Don't know/Not sure	21
Refused	1
Total	101%

(N= 403)

Suppose the election for Representative was held today and you had to choose right now- would you vote for Steve Owens, the Democratic candidate, J.D. Hayworth, the Republican candidate, or Robert Anderson, the Libertarian candidate? (Names are rotated.)

	%
Owens	36
Firm	(66%)
Weak	(30%)
Hayworth	54
Firm	(77%)
Weak	(22%)
Anderson	3
Firm	(45%)
Weak	(47%)
Won't vote	1
Undecided/Don't know	6
Total	100%

(N= 403)

	Owens	Hayworth	Anderson	Don't know	
Party					
Democrat	71	21	1	7	(N=139)
Republican	8	86	2	4	(N=168)
Independent	37	48	11	2	(N=62)
Ideology					
Liberal	79	12	2	7	(N=48)
Conservative	14	77	5	4	(N=162)
In between	44	46	2	7	(N=183)
Sex					
Female	39	53	1	5	(N=192)
Male	31	58	5	6	(N=193)
Income					
< \$30K	48	43	1	6	(N=99)
\$30K - \$60K	33	57	5	5	(N=127)
>\$60K	26	69	4	1	(N=99)
Total					