



Social Research Laboratory, PO Box 15301, Flagstaff, AZ 86011 (928) 523-1515

Tuesday, April 14, 2004

For More Information:
Fred Solop, Director
NAU Social Research Laboratory
(928) 607-0488

RENZI LEADS BABBITT IN ARIZONA 1st CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT RACE: BRINGING FEDERAL MONEY INTO THE DISTRICT HELPS RENZI; BABBITT DOESN'T BENEFIT FROM TIES TO FORMER GOVERNOR

Incumbent Rick Renzi has a double-digit lead over challenger Paul Babbitt in Arizona's First Congressional District race, according to results from a recent telephone survey. Renzi is better known in the district and is thought of more positively than Babbitt. Despite a mixed job performance rating, Renzi is viewed as better able to create new jobs in the district. Babbitt is thought of as better able to handle environmental issues. One-third of district voters say they are more likely to support Renzi knowing that he has brought more than \$130 million of new federal projects into the district. Twenty-eight percent say they are less likely to vote for Babbitt after learning that former Arizona Governor Bruce Babbitt is the brother of the candidate.

The Arizona First Congressional District (CD 1) Survey was conducted by the Social Research Laboratory with 611 likely voters living in the congressional district. Calling took place between April 7 and April 11, 2004. Results are accurate to within a +/- 4 percent margin of error, at a 95 percent confidence level. The Arizona First Congressional District race is widely considered to be one of the most competitive congressional races in the nation.

VOTERS ARE MORE FAMILIAR WITH RENZI THAN BABBITT

Likely voters in Arizona's CD 1 are more familiar with Rick Renzi than Paul Babbitt. Twice as many likely voters are able to name "Rick Renzi" as the Republican candidate for Congress than are able to name "Paul Babbitt" as the Democratic candidate (29% versus 15%, respectively).

Upon hearing the candidates' names, more voters say they are familiar with Rick Renzi than Paul Babbitt. Three-quarters (75%) of likely voters say they either know "a lot" or "some" about Renzi. Only 45 percent of likely voters know "a lot" or "some" about Babbitt. Overall, nearly half (47%) of likely voters have a positive opinion of Renzi and just over one-quarter of CD 1 likely voters (27%) hold a negative opinion of him. Babbitt's positive opinion ratings lag behind Renzi's. Thirty percent of likely voters in the district hold a positive opinion of Babbitt. Nearly one-quarter of likely voters (23%) hold a negative opinion of Babbitt. Just over one-quarter of likely voters (26%) are unable to rate Renzi and almost half of likely voters (48%) are unable to rate Babbitt.

When asked to evaluate Rick Renzi's performance representing the First District in Congress, 40 percent say he is doing an "excellent" or "good" job, and 42 percent say he is doing a "fair" or "poor" job. Eighteen percent say they don't know enough to evaluate his performance in Congress.

BABBITT STRONG ON ENVIRONMENT; RENZI STRONG ON JOB CREATION

First Congressional District voters were asked to identify which candidate would do a better job handling issues important to the district. Significant differences surfaced for two of four issues. Paul Babbitt is perceived to be better for protecting the environment. Forty-four percent of voters think Babbitt would do a better job handling this issue, while 32 percent think Renzi would do a better job handling this issue. Job creation is identified more often with Renzi than Babbitt. Thirty-seven percent of voters think Renzi would do a better job creating jobs, while 29 percent think Babbitt would do a better job with this issue.

When it comes to improving education and providing adequate health care, voters are divided in saying whether Renzi or Babbitt would do a better job. Thirty-seven percent of voters think Renzi would do a better job improving education and 34 percent think Babbitt would do a better job in this area. Thirty-three percent of voters think Renzi would do a better job providing adequate health care and 32 percent think Babbitt would do a better job in this area.

Fred Solop, director of Northern Arizona University's Social Research Laboratory commented on these results: "Congressman Renzi holds an advantage over challenger Paul Babbitt at this early point in the campaign. He is more well-known throughout the district and thought of

more positively than Babbitt. Paul Babbitt faces an uphill battle building name recognition and defining why voters should vote for him rather than Renzi.”

RENZI RUNNING AHEAD OF BABBITT

If the congressional election was held today, 49 percent of likely voters say they would vote to reelect Rick Renzi to Congress and 38 percent say they would vote for Paul Babbitt. Twelve percent of voters are undecided about who they would vote for today.

There is a significant gender difference within the electorate. Men strongly support Rick Renzi. Fifty-six percent of men say they would vote for Renzi if the election was held today, compared with 35 percent who would vote for Babbitt. Women split their vote with 43 percent supporting Renzi and 42 percent supporting Babbitt,

Renzi is doing a better job than Babbitt holding on to political party support. Seventy-five percent of Republican voters say they will vote to reelect Renzi to office. Most Republican voters (58%) are very sure of their vote choice and will not change their mind before Election Day. In contrast, 60 percent of Democratic voters say they will vote for Paul Babbitt, with 41 percent of Democrats saying they are very sure about their choice. Sixteen percent of Democrats are undecided at this time.

Voters are also divided by ideology. Seventy-six percent of conservatives support Renzi and 78 percent of liberals support Babbitt. People who fall between liberal and conservative lean toward Babbitt with 45 percent saying they support him and 39 percent saying they support Renzi.

MESSAGE TESTING

The survey tested the impact of specific messages on voter preferences. When District One voters are informed that Congressman Renzi has brought more than \$130 million of new federal projects into the district since being elected, one-third (33%) say they are more likely to vote for Renzi. Thirty-one percent of undecided voters and 13 percent of Babbitt supporters say they are more likely to vote for Renzi because of this information.

Survey respondents were told that Bruce Babbitt, former Governor of Arizona and Secretary of the U.S. Department of Interior under President Bill Clinton, is Paul Babbitt’s brother. After hearing this, 28 percent of voters say they are less likely to support Babbitt. Twenty percent say they are more likely to support Babbitt after hearing this. Half of Renzi’s supporters and six percent of

Babbitt supporters are less likely to vote for Paul Babbitt knowing about this tie to Bruce Babbitt. Paul's relationship with Bruce Babbitt has a mixed impact on undecided voters. Eighteen percent of undecided voters say they are more likely to vote for Babbitt and 14 percent are less likely to vote for Babbitt after learning about this familial relationship.

Solop commented, "The eyes of the nation are on Arizona's First Congressional District waiting to see how this race plays out. National Democrats and Republicans have prioritized this race as one of the most important races in the country this year. Despite Renzi's lead at this time, the seat remains competitive and high-profile. The distance between now and the November election can be an eternity for a competitive election such as this. I expect vote preferences to shift around some as Babbitt becomes more well-known and the election draws more attention from national and local media."

- 30 -



Social Research Laboratory, Northern Arizona University

April 14, 2004

ARIZONA FIRST CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT SURVEY
BACKGROUND MEMO

Spring 2004

The *Arizona First Congressional District Survey* was conducted between April 7 and April 11, 2004. A random sample of 611 likely CD 1 voters was asked questions regarding elected officials. Survey question results are subject to a sampling error of +/- 4 percent at a 95 percent confidence level. 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.

FAMILIARITY

In addition to voting for president this year, voters will be also choosing people to go to Congress. Can you name the Republican candidate running for Congress in your district?

| | Correctly names Renzi | Unable to name Renzi |
|-------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Total | 29% | 71% |

How much do you know about Rick Renzi: a lot, some, or nothing at all?

| | A lot | Some | Nothing at all | Don't know |
|-------|--------------|-------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Total | 15% | 60% | 25% | 1% |

Can you name the Democratic candidate running for Congress in your district?

| | Correctly names Babbitt | Unable to name Babbitt |
|-------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Total | 15% | 85% |

How much do you know about Paul Babbitt: a lot, some, or nothing at all?

| | A lot | Some | Nothing at all | Don't know |
|-------|--------------|-------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| Total | 9% | 36% | 54% | 1% |

RATINGS

Overall, do you have a very positive, somewhat positive, somewhat negative, or very negative feeling about Rick Renzi?

| | Very positive | Somewhat positive | Somewhat negative | Very negative | Don't know |
|-------|--------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Total | 14% | 33% | 15% | 12% | 26% |

Overall, do you have a very positive, somewhat positive, somewhat negative, or very negative feeling about Paul Babbitt?

| | Very positive | Somewhat positive | Somewhat negative | Very negative | Don't know |
|-------|--------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| Total | 11% | 19% | 14% | 9% | 48% |

Rick Renzi has been your congressional representative for the last two years. Do you think Congressman Renzi has been doing an excellent, good, fair, or poor job representing your District?

| | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | Don't know |
|-------|------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| Total | 8% | 32% | 28% | 14% | 18% |

ISSUES

Now I am going to read a list of issues. Please tell me which candidate you think would do a better job handling each issue: Rick Renzi or Paul Babbitt? [rotate names]

| | Renzi | Babbitt | Don't know |
|-------------------------------|--------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Improving education | 37% | 34% | 29% |
| Protecting the environment | 32% | 44% | 25% |
| Providing adequate healthcare | 33% | 32% | 35% |
| Creating jobs | 37% | 29% | 34% |

VOTE CHOICE

If the Congressional election were held today, would you vote for Rick Renzi, the Republican candidate for Congress or Paul Babbitt, the Democratic candidate? [rotate candidates]

| | Renzi | Strong Renzi | Weak Renzi | Babbitt | Strong Babbitt | Weak Babbitt | Someone else | Undecided |
|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------|-------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| Total | 49% | (35%) | (14%) | 38% | (27%) | (11%) | 1% | 12% |
| Female | 43% | (30%) | (13%) | 42% | (28%) | (14%) | 1% | 16% |
| Male | 56% | (40%) | (16%) | 35% | (26%) | (9%) | 1% | 8% |
| Democrat | 24% | (16%) | (8%) | 60% | (41%) | (19%) | -- | 16% |
| Republican | 75% | (58%) | (17%) | 16% | (12%) | (4%) | 1% | 8% |
| Independent/ Other | 46% | (26%) | (20%) | 39% | (28%) | (11%) | 4% | 15% |
| Conservative | 76% | (59%) | (17%) | 15% | (10%) | (5%) | -- | 10% |
| In-between | 39% | (23%) | (16%) | 45% | (29%) | (16%) | 2% | 13% |
| Liberal | 12% | (8%) | (4%) | 78% | (65%) | (13%) | -- | 11% |
| 18 – 35 | 49% | (25%) | (24%) | 36% | (19%) | (17%) | -- | 16% |
| 36 – 55 | 48% | (33%) | (15%) | 40% | (30%) | (10%) | 1% | 12% |
| 56 + | 49% | (37%) | (12%) | 38% | (27%) | (11%) | 1% | 12% |

Congressman Renzi has brought more than \$130 million of new federal projects into the First Congressional District since being elected. Does knowing this make you more likely to vote for Rick Renzi, less likely to vote for him, or does this information not influence your vote at all?

| | More likely | Less likely | No influence | Don't know |
|----------------|------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Total | 33% | 3% | 59% | 5% |
| Renzi voters | 49% | 2% | 45% | 4% |
| Babbitt voters | 13% | 6% | 77% | 5% |
| Undecided | 31% | 1% | 53% | 15% |

Paul Babbitt's brother was Bruce Babbitt, former Governor of Arizona and Secretary of the U.S. Department of Interior under President Bill Clinton. Does knowing this make you more likely to vote for Paul Babbitt, less likely to vote for him, or does this information not influence your vote at all?

| | More likely | Less likely | No influence | Don't know |
|----------------|------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| Total | 20% | 28% | 50% | 2% |
| Renzi voters | 4% | 49% | 45% | 2% |
| Babbitt voters | 41% | 6% | 53% | -- |
| Undecided | 18% | 14% | 61% | 2% |