

Polls Show AG Madigan with Commanding Primary Leads – If She Runs

Written by Rich Miller
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It's little surprise that a poll taken January 30 of 1,255 likely Illinois Democratic primary voters shows Attorney General Lisa Madigan leading Governor Pat Quinn by a very large margin.

Madigan also leads Quinn and former White House chief of staff Bill Daley in a three-way contest, according to the poll, but Quinn leads Daley in a one-on-one race. And a large plurality of Democrats disapprove of the governor's job performance. The We Ask America Poll has a margin of error of 3 percent. About 18 percent of the results came from non-land line users.

In the poll, Madigan leads Quinn 50.5 to 25.7. Among women, who almost always cast a majority of Democratic primary votes, Madigan's lead is 53-22, while she leads among men 46-30.

Madigan's lead over the governor in Chicago is 46-30, and it's 51-28 in suburban Cook. Madigan is ahead 53-23 in the suburban collar counties and by a massive 53-21 Downstate.

Madigan has not yet decided whether she is going to run for governor. People close to her are divided over what they think she'll do. She reportedly plans to take her time with her decision.

A Public Policy Polling (PPP) survey taken in November had Madigan leading Quinn 64-20. But that poll was of just 319 "usual" Democratic primary voters with a margin of error of 5.5 percent. Still, the survey company does excellent work, so if you average the two polls you get a 57-23 lead for Madigan. If Madigan's decision is heavily weighted toward whether she can win the primary, she'll run.

Quinn has a better shot against Daley – a white, Irish Democratic Chicago man who may not bring much more to the table than Dan Hynes did in the 2010 primary. According to the We Ask America poll, Quinn leads Daley by 5 points, 38-33. November's PPP survey had Daley leading Quinn 37-34, so average those two results and you get an essential tie – 36 for Quinn and 35 for Daley.

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According to last week's We Ask America poll, Quinn leads Daley in the city 45-30, but Daley leads in suburban Cook 40-36. Quinn has a narrow half-point lead in the collars and leads by less than two points Downstate. The Daley name ain't what it used to be.

Could Daley be a spoiler who helps Quinn in a three-way race? Not according to the We Ask America poll, in which Madigan leads with 37 percent to Quinn's 20 percent to Daley's 15. Public Policy Polling did not test a three-way race last November.

Madigan's lead among women in a three-way contest is pretty big. She gets 38 percent to Quinn's 17 percent and Daley's 13 percent. Among men, her lead is a bit smaller – 34 percent to Quinn's 24 percent to Daley's 18 percent.

Madigan leads Quinn and Daley in Chicago 35-22-17. Her lead in suburban Cook is 35-18-18. She leads 36-17-16 in the collars and is ahead 40-19-11 Downstate.

Public Policy Polling had Quinn's job-approval rating among Democrats at 40 percent, with a 43-percent disapproval. Last week's We Ask America poll had Quinn's approval among fellow party members at 37 percent, with a 42-percent disapproval. Despite the head-to-head matchups, women give him a slightly lower disapproval rating than men; 41 percent of women disapprove compared to 46 percent of men. But just 36 percent of Democratic women and 37 percent of Democratic men approve of the way Quinn is handling his job.

Quinn won the 2010 primary and general elections despite low approval ratings. So he's been here before. What he didn't have to do back then, however, was take on one of the most popular politicians in Illinois. PPP's November poll pegged Lisa Madigan's favorable rating at 68 percent among Democrats, while just 16 percent had an unfavorable view.

If Lisa Madigan runs, she likely wins the primary. Daley is another story. Like 2010, a Daley-Quinn race will be a hard-fought and bloody battle that could end up being pretty close. If Quinn has to get a single primary opponent, Daley would be the one he'd want.

Rich Miller also publishes Capitol Fax (a daily political newsletter) and CapitolFax.com.

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