



**To: Interested Parties**  
**From: Whit Ayres, Jon McHenry and Dan Judy**  
**Date: August 12, 2010**  
**Re: The State of the PA 12 Race**

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Our polling, conducted for American Action Forum on July 28, 29, 31, and August 1, with 400 likely general election voters, shows a competitive contest in the district. Challenger Tim Burns's 84 percent name recognition is almost identical to Representative Mark Critz's 82 percent, and Burns leads on the ballot by a slim 44 to 40 percent margin.

Beyond the ballot test, the key results from the survey are:

**1. The economy is the most important issue, followed by government spending.** In response to an open-ended question, 42 percent of voters name the economy as the most important issue. When presented with seven options in a closed-ended question, 23 percent of voters say "*creating new jobs*" is most likely to affect their vote for Congress, 19 percent say "*controlling government spending*," and 18 percent say "*making Washington, DC more accountable*."

**2. Voters identify most of the positive characteristics tested with Burns.** Voters say "*will work to get government spending under control*" (34 to 18 percent), "*will fight to keep taxes low*" (33 to 19 percent), "*will do the right thing to fix the health care reform bill*" (31 to 21 percent), "*will promote policies that are good for the economy*" (31 to 22 percent), and "*has new ideas that will change our country for the better*" (28 to 18 percent), better describe Burns than Critz.

Critz has an 18 to 17 percent advantage on "*is honest and trustworthy*."

**3. Critz's prospective support for Nancy Pelosi as Speaker is his greatest tested weakness.** Forty-seven percent of voters are much less likely to support him because "*if elected to a full term in November, he will vote for Nancy Pelosi as Speaker of the House*" (11 percent are somewhat less likely to support him, and 36 percent say it has no real effect on their vote).

**4. Majorities of voters in this district view both Barack Obama and Nancy Pelosi unfavorably.** President Obama draws a 40 to 51 percent favorable to unfavorable rating, while Speaker Pelosi draws a 25 to 61 percent rating.

### ***Methodology***

All respondents were selected randomly from a list of registered voters in the district, and indicated they are likely to vote in the elections for Congress this fall, and interviews were conducted by live interviewers. Quotas were set by gender, age, and county consistent with past participation. The margin of error is  $\pm 4.90$  percent when respondents split evenly on a question.