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QUINNIPIAC UNIVERSITY

POLL

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SCOTT, SINK IN DEAD HEAT IN FLORIDA GOV RACE, QUINNIPIAC UNIVERSITY POLL FINDS; DEMOCRAT WINS 'ETHICS' CONTEST

Closing the Florida governor's race to a dead heat, Chief Financial Officer Alex Sink, the Democrat, now has 44 percent of likely voters to Republican Rick Scott's 45 percent, compared to the Republican's 49 – 43 percent lead October 1, according to a Quinnipiac University poll released today.

Ms. Sink's surge could be tied to voter belief, 44 – 28 percent, that she was a more ethical businessperson than Scott when both were in the private sector, the independent Quinnipiac (KWIN-uh-pe-ack) University survey finds. A total of 89 percent of likely voters say a candidate's record in business is either somewhat or very important to their vote choice.

By a 42 – 37 percent margin, Florida voters have a favorable opinion of Sink, while Scott gets a negative 39 – 46 percent favorability rating. This compares to the October 1 survey showing her with a split 39 – 39 percent favorability, compared to Scott's split 41 – 40 percent.

“In the last two weeks, Chief Financial Officer Alex Sink has moved into a statistical tie with Rick Scott. Her image has improved while his has deteriorated. It would seem that the debate through television ads about their respective business careers may be the reason,” said Peter A. Brown, assistant director of the Quinnipiac University Polling Institute. “At this point she is winning that debate handily and it is having an impact on the race.

“How the voters feel about the economy is also directly tied to their vote: Among those who think the economy is improving, Ms. Sink leads 69 – 22 percent, while Scott leads 58 – 25 percent among voters who see the economy getting worse.”

Only 20 percent of Florida likely voters say the state economy is getting better, while 34 percent say it is getting worse and 43 percent say it is about the same.

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Florida independent likely voters say 50 – 24 percent that Sink, the former president of Bank of America’s Florida division, was more ethical in business than Scott, the former CEO of Columbia/HCA, the nation’s largest hospital chain.

In the horse race, Sink leads Scott 82 – 7 percent among Democrats while Scott leads 83 – 8 percent among Republicans. Independent voters, who backed Scott 46 – 40 percent October 1, now back Sink 51 – 34 percent.

He has a 48 – 42 percent lead among men, while she leads 47 – 41 percent among women.

Scott leads 65 – 20 percent among white evangelical Christians; 15 percent of that group are undecided or for another candidate, larger than among the overall electorate.

“How that group finally comes down could be a key to the election. White evangelical Christians are a Republican group, but the relatively larger number of undecided voters might indicate some may be holding back from Scott because of the charges about his business conduct,” said Brown. “Among many of those voters it may be a question of whether to vote for Scott or not vote in the governor’s race.

“The big reason for Sink’s move into parity with Scott has been the turnaround in independent voters, who are often the key to victory in close races,” said Brown. “Because they are not members of either party, independents are the most likely to be moved by questions about a candidate’s ethics.”

Most voters, 86 percent, say their minds are made up and they will not switch their allegiance, with 13 percent – equally split among Sink and Scott voters – saying they might change their minds.

From October 6 – 10, Quinnipiac University surveyed 1,055 Florida likely voters with a margin of error of +/- 3 percentage points.

The Quinnipiac University Poll, directed by Douglas Schwartz, Ph.D., conducts public opinion surveys in Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Florida, Ohio and the nation as a public service and for research.

For more data or RSS feed – <http://www.quinnipiac.edu/polling.xml>, or call (203) 582-5201.

1. If the election for governor were being held today, and the candidates were Alex Sink the Democrat and Rick Scott the Republican, for whom would you vote? (If undecided) If you had to choose today, would you vote for Sink or Scott? (This table includes Leaners)

	LIKELY VOTERS.....						
	Tot	Rep	Dem	Ind	Men	Wom	WtBrnAgn Evnglcl
Sink	44%	8%	82%	51%	42%	47%	20%
Scott	45	83	7	34	48	41	65
SMONE ELSE (VOL)	2	2	1	3	2	2	4
WLDN'T VOTE (VOL)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
DK/NA	9	6	10	12	8	10	11

	PrtOf	RATING ECONOMY Q16		
	TeaPt	Better	Worse	Same
Sink	7%	69%	25%	45%
Scott	84	22	58	46
SMONE ELSE (VOL)	3	-	4	1
WLDN'T VOTE (VOL)	-	-	-	-
DK/NA	5	9	12	7

TREND: If the election for Governor were being held today, and the candidates were Alex Sink the Democrat and Rick Scott the Republican, for whom would you vote? (If undecided) If you had to choose today, would you vote for Sink or Scott? (This table includes Leaners)

	LIKELY VOTERS..	
	Oct 12 2010	Oct 1 2010
Sink	44	43
Scott	45	49
SMONE ELSE (VOL)	2	1
WLDN'T VOTE (VOL)	-	-
DK/NA	9	7

1a. Is your mind made up, or do you think you might change your mind before the election?

	LIKELY VOTERS.....		
	Tot	CAND CHOICE Q1	
		AS	RS
Made up	86%	86%	86%
Might change	13	13	13
DK/NA	1	1	1

2. Is your opinion of - Alex Sink favorable, unfavorable or haven't you heard enough about her?

	LIKELY VOTERS.....						
	Tot	Rep	Dem	Ind	Men	Wom	WtBrnAgn Evnglcl
Favorable	42%	18%	72%	43%	42%	42%	29%
Unfavorable	37	62	8	34	38	35	56
Hvn't hrd enough	18	18	18	19	18	19	13
REFUSED	3	3	3	3	2	5	2

TREND: Is your opinion of - Alex Sink favorable, unfavorable or haven't you heard enough about her?

	LIKELY VOTERS..	
	Oct 12	Oct 01
	2010	2010
Favorable	42	39
Unfavorable	37	39
Hvn't hrd enough	18	19
REFUSED	3	3

3. Is your opinion of - Rick Scott favorable, unfavorable or haven't you heard enough about him?

	LIKELY VOTERS.....						
	Tot	Rep	Dem	Ind	Men	Wom	WtBrnAgn Evnglcl
Favorable	39%	68%	10%	34%	42%	35%	57%
Unfavorable	46	21	71	51	45	47	31
Hvn't hrd enough	12	8	15	12	10	14	9
REFUSED	3	3	4	3	3	4	3

TREND: Is your opinion of - Rick Scott favorable, unfavorable or haven't you heard enough about him?

	LIKELY VOTERS..	
	Oct 12	Oct 01
	2010	2010
Favorable	39	41
Unfavorable	46	40
Hvn't hrd enough	12	17
REFUSED	3	2

11. Turning back to the race for Governor, regardless of how you intend to vote, whose record as a businessperson do you think was more ethical Alex Sink's or Rick Scott's?

	LIKELY VOTERS.....						
	Tot	Rep	Dem	Ind	Men	Wom	WtBrnAgn Evnglcl
Sink	44%	18%	74%	50%	46%	43%	25%
Scott	28	51	6	24	28	29	45
NO DIFFERENCE (VOL)	11	15	4	12	12	9	15
DK/NA	16	17	16	14	14	18	15

12. When deciding how to vote for Governor, how important is the candidate's record as a businessperson, very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not important at all?

	LIKELY VOTERS.....						WtBrnAgn
	Tot	Rep	Dem	Ind	Men	Wom	Evnglcl
Very important	56%	62%	51%	50%	53%	59%	59%
Smwht important	33	35	29	37	35	31	37
Not too important	6	1	10	9	7	4	3
Not important at all	4	2	9	2	4	5	2
DK/NA	1	-	1	2	1	1	-

	RATING ECONOMY 16		
	Better	Worse	Same
Very important	49%	64%	52%
Smwht important	34	29	38
Not too important	7	2	6
Not impnt at all	9	4	3
DK/NA	2	-	1

15. Would you describe the state of Florida's economy these days as excellent, good, not so good, or poor?

	LIKELY VOTERS.....						WtBrnAgn
	Tot	Rep	Dem	Ind	Men	Wom	Evnglcl
Excellent	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Good	12	12	11	15	13	12	13
Not so good	44	34	59	38	43	44	40
Poor	44	54	28	46	44	44	47
DK/NA	1	-	1	-	-	1	-

16. Do you think Florida's economy is getting better, getting worse, or staying about the same?

	LIKELY VOTERS.....						WtBrnAgn
	Tot	Rep	Dem	Ind	Men	Wom	Evnglcl
Better	20%	13%	31%	16%	22%	17%	15%
Worse	34	43	26	31	29	40	39
The same	43	44	38	48	46	40	45
DK/NA	3	1	5	4	2	4	1

17. Do you consider yourself part of the Tea party movement or not?

	LIKELY VOTERS.....						WtBrnAgn
	Tot	Rep	Dem	Ind	Men	Wom	Evnglcl
Yes	21%	38%	4%	20%	22%	21%	35%
No	74	59	90	77	75	73	63
DK/NA	4	4	6	2	3	6	2