



The Perricone Group



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 24, 2009

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Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick Comes Up Short in New Poll; Conyers Slipping

Could Sins of Their Families Take Detroit's Congressional Dynasty Down?

LANSING, Mich. — Former Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick and former Detroit City Councilwoman Monica Conyers may not be the only elected officials in their families to leave office following their scandals, according to a new quarterly survey released today by the Rossman/Perricone/DennoNoor team.

Congresswoman Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick could hit the road at the end of this term if her numbers don't improve, according to DennoNoor pollster Dennis Denno.

“Voters in the 13th Congressional District seem so hungry for change that it appears almost anyone – especially a candidate from Detroit – could knock Kilpatrick off in a one-on-one match-up,” said Denno.

Only 27 percent of the voters in her district would vote to re-elect the seven-term congresswoman. Only 37 percent gave her high ratings – with her highest ratings coming from older African-American females living in Detroit.

“This survey shows Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick with strong splits in every demographic possible: race, gender, geography and age,” said The Rossman Group CEO Kelly Rossman-McKinney. “Her problems are especially serious among younger voters, white voters, male voters, and those voters living outside of Detroit. This doesn't bode well for her re-election.”

Despite the lack of support, only one-third of those polled said the problems of Kilpatrick's son, former Detroit Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick, affected how they would vote.

"Congresswoman Kilpatrick is between a rock and a hard place," said Former Michigan Speaker of the House and President of The Perricone Group Chuck Perricone. "As a mother she did the right thing and stood by her son. As an elected official there's no doubt she's paying a price."

Support for fellow Congressman John Conyers in the 14th District is much stronger, despite the problems of his wife, former Detroit City Councilwoman Monica Conyers, according to the poll. Conyers' voters are in a statistical dead-heat, with 40 percent support and 44 percent opposition. And more than three out of four voters said his wife's problems didn't affect their vote at all.

"Congressman Conyers is sitting much prettier than his counterpart," said Denno. "It appears that it will take a much greater effort to dethrone the iconic congressman."

Rossman-McKinney agreed. "It looks like John Conyers has managed to preserve his reputation – at least somewhat – by staying at arm's length from his wife and her problems," she said.

Conyers, who is in his 23rd Congressional term, still has work to do, according to Perricone. "He may look better than Carolyn at this point, but a 40/44 split isn't something he can take to the bank. It's clear that his wife's behavior has splashed up on him," said Perricone.

The Rossman/Perricone/DennoNoor poll also confirmed the top two candidates for Detroit city council continue to be Charles Pugh and incumbent Ken Cockrel Jr., followed by Gary Brown, incumbents Kwame Kenyatta and Brenda Jones, and Saunteel Jenkins. Rounding out the top nine candidates are incumbent Jo Ann Watson, followed by James Tate and Jai-Lee Dearing. The only other incumbent in the race – Alberta Tinsley-Talabi – came in 12th with 16 percent.

Last but not least, two-thirds of those surveyed don't know who they would support for governor if the Democratic primary were held today. Lt. Gov. John Cherry still has the strongest showing at 19 percent, but the two other announced candidates – State Rep. Alma Wheeler-Smith and former State Rep. John Freeman, are tied at just 3 percent. Although he has not yet put his hat in the ring, Speaker of the House Andy Dillon polls higher than Freeman and Wheeler-Smith combined, with 7 percent.

Methodology: This survey was part of the Rossman Group/Perricone Group/Denno Noor Polling Quarterly Survey of the Michigan electorate. 300 respondents from the 13th Congressional District and 300 from the 14th Congressional District were surveyed between August 13 and August 18, 2009, and the participation was stratified based on census data and past voter behavior. A screen was employed to include only those participants who said they would vote, either at the polls or by absentee ballot, in the August 2010 Primary Election. All numbers are rounded and may exceed 100%.

Attribution: For attribution purposes, please recognize all three organizations involved in the poll: The Rossman Group, Denno-Noor Research and The Perricone Group.

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