



**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Interested Parties  
**FROM:** Jeffrey Pollock & Joe Hickerson  
**RE:** Illinois-14 Special Election Survey Results  
**DATE:** February 11, 2008

Our survey of likely special election voters in Illinois’ 14<sup>th</sup> Congressional District shows a dead even race to replace Dennis Hastert, with Bill Foster at 43% and Jim Oberweis at 45% – a statistical tie. Among the critical segment of voters who identify themselves as Independents, Foster leads 49% to 27%.

<b>Vote Support</b>			
	<b>CURRENT</b>	<b>POST PROFILES</b>	<b>CHANGE</b>
Bill Foster	43%	49%	+6
Jim Oberweis	45%	41%	-4
Undecided	12%	10%	-2

The current 50-50 nature of the race is underscored by the fact that 41% of voters would prefer a generic Democratic candidate, and 40% would prefer a generic Republican.

Another underlying dynamic is the effect the primaries have had on both candidates popularity. Because of the vitriolic Republican battle, 41% of voters have an unfavorable opinion of Oberweis, while 49% have a favorable opinion. For Foster, though, the primary has had a positive effect. In our first survey last April, just 6% of voters had a favorable opinion of Foster. Today, 40% have a favorable opinion – and just 14% have an unfavorable one.

Because Foster is less familiar to special election voters – and because those who do know him are less polarized than those who know Oberweis – Foster has more room to grow once paid communications begin in earnest. Indeed, following brief positive profiles of both candidates, Foster’s support jumps to a near majority (49%), while Oberweis’ support actually dips to 41%.

Voters in the district are also signaling an intense desire for change, as just 21% believe the country is headed in the right direction. This dissatisfaction with the direction of the country is fueled first and foremost by economic concerns, which are cited as the most important issue by 30% of voters. Additionally, 60% of voters have an unfavorable opinion of President Bush.

***METHODOLOGICAL NOTE:** This memorandum summarizes results from a telephone poll of 525 randomly selected likely voters in Illinois’ 14<sup>th</sup> Congressional District for the special election on March 8, 2008. Interviewing was conducted February 6-10, 2008. Special care was taken to ensure that the geographic and demographic divisions of the actual electorate are properly represented. The estimation error associated with a sample of 525 is 4.3 percent at the 95% confidence interval. This means that in 95 of 100 cases, the results of this poll are within 4.3 points, plus or minus, of the results that would have been obtained if all probable voters in the special election in Illinois’ 14<sup>th</sup> Congressional District had been interviewed.*

NEW YORK  
895 BROADWAY, 5<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR  
NEW YORK, NY 10003  
212.260.8813  
212.260.9058 FAX

WASHINGTON DC  
4445 WILLARD AVENUE, SUITE 1040  
CHEVY CHASE, MD 20815  
301.951.5200  
301.951.7040 FAX

CONNECTICUT  
36 TRUMBULL STREET, 3<sup>RD</sup> FLOOR  
HARTFORD, CT 06103  
860.547.1414  
860.548.0842 FAX

ARKANSAS  
THREE FINANCIAL CENTRE  
900 SOUTH SHACKLEFORD, SUITE 510  
LITTLE ROCK, AR 72211  
501.954.7878 FAX 501.954.9955