
MEMORANDUM

TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Hamilton Campaigns
DATE: October 13, 2008
RE: Polling in Florida's 25th Congressional District ¹

Democrat Joe Garcia has significantly narrowed the gap between Republican Mario Diaz-Balart since our last survey in July 2008. Garcia's early media efforts targeting persuadable voters have been extremely effective. This poll was conducted following two weeks of a Garcia district-wide cable television buy, a significant investment in direct mail and an active field program. Garcia is also riding the coattails of a surging Barack Obama who now leads John McCain in this district and is benefiting from the withering Republican registration advantage in the district. The overall result is that Garcia enters the final three weeks of the campaign, at the onset of airing their broadcast television advertising, with the race in a statistical tie.

Key Findings

- 1. Joe Garcia is statistically tied with Mario-Diaz Balart in the vote preference for U.S. Congress.** The trend line clearly shows that the momentum is in Garcia's favor. This can be directly attributed to an early communications plan that successfully increased Garcia's profile among several highly persuadable groups of voters.

Vote Preference for U.S. Congress		
	<u>October</u>	<u>July</u>
Joe Garcia	42%	33%
Mario Diaz-Balart	45%	55%
Undecided	13%	13%

¹ This memo is based on two surveys. One is of 500 registered voters who are likely to vote in the November 2008 general election in Florida's 25th Congressional District. Hamilton Campaigns conducted telephone interviewing October 8-9th, 2008. The margin of error for a sample of this size is ± 4.4 percentage points, at the 95% confidence level. The other survey referenced is of 700 registered voters who are likely to vote in the November 2008 general election in Florida's 25th Congressional District. Hamilton Campaigns conducted telephone interviewing July 7-13th, 2008. The margin of error for a sample of this size is ± 3.7 percentage points, at the 95% confidence level.

- 2. Our comparative advertising has been successful in significantly weakening Mario Diaz-Balart's image since July.** Incumbent Diaz-Balart's job rating and personal opinion rating are now at or under 50% despite being fairly solid in July.

Job Rating of Mario Diaz-Balart

	<u>October</u>	<u>July</u>
Positive	47%	60%
Negative	30%	27%

Personal Opinions of Mario Diaz-Balart

	<u>October</u>	<u>July</u>
Favorable	50%	64%
Unfavorable	26%	23%

- 3. The Obama Campaign is surging in the district.** In July, Barack Obama trailed John McCain in the Presidential vote preference. Since July, Obama has moved ahead of McCain.

Vote Preference for President

	<u>October</u>	<u>July</u>
Barack Obama	47%	40%
John McCain	43%	49%
Other	4%	n/a
Undecided	6%	10%

Bottomline

In this congressional race, the momentum is clearly with Democrat Joe Garcia. The Garcia Campaign made an early investment in communications, causing the race to narrow significantly. Heading into the final three weeks, the race is in a statistical dead heat and a large number of voters are still undecided. If Joe Garcia continues to have the resources to defend himself against attacks from Diaz-Balart (attacks that the media has even called "False") and can communicate the true contrast between the candidates, then it is likely that Mario Diaz-Balart will be forced to look for new employment during these difficult economic times that he and the Bush Administration helped to create.