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## **Fallen Castle Beats Coons: But Coons Leading Triumphant O'Donnell**

Republican Senate candidate Christine O'Donnell is actually better known to Delaware's likely voters than Democrat Chris Coons: 93% say they have heard of Coons, while 97% say they have heard of O'Donnell. Nonetheless, according to the most recent poll by [Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind](#), Coons leads O'Donnell 53%-36% in the special election.

O'Donnell is in a statistical dead heat with Coons in Kent and Sussex counties, leading him 46% to 45%. But in the more populous New Castle County, Coons leads by a margin of 58% to 31%.

Democrats have largely united behind Coons: 85% say that they will vote for their party's nominee. However, only 68% of Republicans say that they will vote for O'Donnell. Independents lean to Coons by 46% to 37%.

"Typically, Republicans are more loyal to their party than Democrats," said Dan Cassino, professor of political science at Fairleigh Dickinson University and survey analyst for the university's PublicMind research group. "This hesitation by Republicans is hurting O'Donnell."

Two years ago, Christine O'Donnell also had the Republican nomination for U.S. Senate and challenged then-incumbent Sen. Joe Biden, who was also on the ballot as the Democratic candidate for vice president of the United States. After the September primary, Biden comfortably led O'Donnell by 69%-26% with more than nine of 10 Democrats breaking for Biden, while about three in five Republicans supported O'Donnell. "This poll shows that O'Donnell is 10 points ahead of the 26% she polled after the 2008 primary," said Cassino, "and has already matched the 35% she ultimately received in the 2008 race against Biden. But she needs to unite her own party."

One in three of the First State's likely voters (34%) say they have a favorable view of the Tea Party, while almost half (48%) say that they have an unfavorable view. O'Donnell gets the support of 77% of those who have a favorable view of the movement, which is credited with her win in the primary against Rep. Mike Castle, but 86% of those with an unfavorable view of the Tea Party support Coons.

"The Tea Party movement is still controversial," said Cassino. "Association with it certainly helps to mobilize some voters, but in Delaware, it also seems to be turning a lot of voters off."

The Democrat, Coons, is running far ahead of how he might have fared against congressman and former Gov. Mike Castle, whom O'Donnell beat for the nomination. In a hypothetical matchup between Coons and Castle, Castle coasts 50%-36% over Coons, leading in New Castle County by a 5-to-4 margin (51%-38%) as well as winning downstate (49%-33%).

"Incumbents have traditionally done better in Delaware than in many other states," said Cassino. "Castle is well known and liked enough across partisan groups that this would have been a very difficult race for Coons to win."

Coons is running about the same as the Democratic nominee for the House of Representatives, John Carney. As reported yesterday by FDU's PublicMind (Oct. 5, 2010) Carney is getting 51% of the vote against 36% for Republican Glen Urquhart, who upset the primary election with his win over Michelle Rollins.

"You have to wonder whether the real loser here is Beau Biden," said Cassino. "The Democratic nomination was his for the asking and it might have been him with a lead right now."

Delaware voters split on their view of the president's performance, with 47% approving and 45% disapproving. Behind the split, four of five Democrats approve of President Obama's performance, while four of five Republicans disapprove.

However, when it comes to the direction of the economy 53% say it's "on the wrong track" against 38% who say it's headed in the right direction. Those who say the economy is on the wrong track break for O'Donnell by a 2-to-1 margin (60%-28%).

"To the extent that voters are frustrated over the economy, they will tend to seek alternatives to whoever holds office," added Cassino.

The [Fairleigh Dickinson University](http://publicmind.fdu.edu) poll of 801 randomly selected likely voters statewide in Delaware was conducted by telephone from Sept. 27 through Oct. 3 and has a margin of error of +/- 3.5 percentage points.

<i>Methodology, questions, and tables on the web at: <a href="http://publicmind.fdu.edu">http://publicmind.fdu.edu</a> Radio actualities at 201.692.2846</i>	<i>For more information, please call 973.443.8661</i>
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## Background Memo and Tables

The most recent survey by Fairleigh Dickinson University's PublicMind was conducted by telephone from September 27, 2010, through October 3, 2010, using a randomly selected sample of 801 likely voters statewide in Delaware. The sampling error for a population of 801 randomly selected respondents is +/- 3.5 percentage points at the 95 percent level of confidence. Sample error for subgroups varies with the size of the subgroup. Survey results are also subject to non-sampling error. This kind of error, which cannot be measured, arises from a number of factors including, but not limited to, non-response (eligible individuals refusing to be interviewed), question wording, the order in which questions are asked, and variations among interviewers. All PublicMind interviews are conducted by Opinion America, Inc. of Cedar Knolls, NJ. Professionally trained interviewers use a CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) system. Random selection of land-line households is achieved through computerized random-digit dialing. This technique gives every person with a land-line (including those with unlisted numbers) an equal chance of being selected. Landline households are supplemented with a separate, randomly selected sample of cell-phone-only-households, interviewed in the same time frame. The total sample is mathematically weighted to match known demographics of age and gender.

**Question:** In general, do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President?

	All	Men	Wom	Party			Race	
				Dem	Ind	Rep	white	AA
Approve	<b>47%</b>	44	51	80	34	12	40	93
Disapprove	<b>45%</b>	49	41	14	52	79	52	7
Mixed/unsure	<b>8%</b>	7	8	5	14	9	8	1

**Question:** In your opinion, do you believe that the economy is moving in the right direction or it off on the wrong track?

	All	Men	Women	Dem	Ind	Rep.
Right direction	<b>38%</b>	37	40	66	21	11
Wrong track	<b>53%</b>	55	52	26	70	81
Unsure	<b>9%</b>	8	8	7	9	8

**Question:** Now I'm going ask about some people. If you haven't heard of one of them, just say so. Have you heard of ... [ROTATE LIST]? Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of ... [MATCH ROTATION]? Would that be very or somewhat?

	Haven't heard of	Very favorable	Somewhat Favorable	Unsure/no opinion	Somewhat Unfavorable	Very unfavorable
Chris Coons	7%	24%	23%	19%	12%	15%
Christine O'Donnell	3	16	14	18	11	37

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**Question:** In November DELAWARE will vote for a US Senator. If the election were held today, would you vote for ... or ...?

[rotate names]		Party ID			Gender		Region		Economy		Tea Party	
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Men	Wom	New Castle	Kent & Sussex	Right track	Wrong track	+	-
<b>All</b>												
<b>Chris Coons,</b> the Democrat	52											
+ lean Coons	1											
<b>Total</b>	<b>53%</b>	85	46	16	50	56	58	45	87	28	13	86
<b>Christine O'Donnell,</b> the Republican	35											
+ lean O'Donnell	1											
<b>Total</b>	<b>36%</b>	10	37	68	41	32	31	46	7	60	77	6
Don't know (VOL)	<b>8%</b>	3	12	12	6	9	9	5	5	7	7	5
Glenn Miller/ind. (VOL)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
James Rash/Lib. (VOL)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Ref.	<b>3%</b>	1	4	3	2	4	2	3	1	4	2	3

**Question:** And going back to the election for US Senator. If the election for US Senate were between... and ..., who would you vote for? [PROMPT AS NEEDED: This is just hypothetical. IF "don't know" ASK: "which way do you lean?"]

[rotate name]		Party ID			Gender		Region	
		Dem	Ind	Rep	Men	Women	New Castle	Kent & Sussex
<b>All</b>								
<b>Chris Coons,</b> the Democrat	35							
+lean Coons	1							
<b>Total</b>	<b>36%</b>	57	37	12	38	34	38	33
<b>Mike Castle,</b> the Republican	49							
+lean Castle	1							
<b>Total</b>	<b>50%</b>	37	49	67	49	51	51	49
<b>Unsure</b>	9%	5	11	12	9	8	8	10
<b>Others</b>	1%	1	--	1	1	1	1	1
<b>Ref.</b>	4%	1	2	7	3	5	3	6

#### Delaware's Senate and House Races by Comparison

Republicans	Democrats	Race	Dem advantage
O'Donnell 36%	Coons 53%	2010 Senate	+17
Castle 50%	Coons 36%	2010 Senate (hypothetical)	(-14)
Urquhart 36%	Carney 51%	2010 House	+15
O'Donnell 26%	Biden 69%	2008 Senate (25 Sept.)	+43
35%	65%	2008 Senate (Final)	+30
Castle 62%	Hartley-Nagel 28%	2008 House (25 Sept.)	(-34)
61%	38%	2008 House (Final)	(-23)

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**Question:** When it comes to the recent movement called the Tea Party, do you have a favorable or unfavorable view of Tea Party voters and candidates?

	<b>All</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Dem</b>	<b>Ind</b>	<b>Rep.</b>
Favorable	<b>34%</b>	40	29	13	34	61
Unfavorable	<b>48%</b>	45	51	73	36	20
Unsure/mixed	<b>18%</b>	15	19	13	29	18

**Question:** On the issue of abortion, would you describe yourself as...or ...?

<i>[rotate]</i>	<b>All</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Dem</b>	<b>Ind</b>	<b>Rep.</b>
Pro life	<b>36%</b>	36	36	23	28	54
Pro choice	<b>53%</b>	51	56	68	55	36
DK (VOL)	<b>8%</b>	10	6	6	15	7
Ref.	<b>3%</b>	3	3	2	2	3

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### Question Wording and Order

[ASK HERE 1/3 AT RANDOM US1 AND 1/3 AT RANDOM US2 AND 1/3 AT RANDOM NEITHER: WHEN NOT ASKED HERE, US1 And US2 are asked after last DE series. TRACK PLACEMENT.]

US1. In general, do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President?

Approve  
Disapprove  
DK/Unsure [DON'T READ]  
Ref. [DON'T READ]

US2. In your opinion, do you believe that the economy is moving in the right direction or it off on the wrong track?

Right direction  
Wrong track  
DK/Unsure [DON'T READ]  
Ref. [DON'T READ]

DE1. [Reported Oct. 5] Now, thinking about Delaware... In your opinion, do you think things in Delaware are moving in the right direction or have they gotten off on the wrong track?

Right direction  
Wrong track  
DK/Unsure [DON'T READ]

DE2. Now I'm going ask about some people. If you haven't heard of one of them, just say so. Have you heard of ... [ROTATE LIST]? Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of ... [MATCH ROTATION]? Would that be very or somewhat?

[ASK Coons AND O'Donnell AND ANY THREE; ROTATE NAMES]

Chris Coons  
Christine O'Donnell  
Beau Biden  
Doug Campbell  
Jack Markell  
Matt Denn  
Tom Carper  
John Carney  
Glen Urquhart

Haven't heard of ... [SKIP TO NEXT NAME]  
Very Favorable  
Somewhat favorable (and favorable DK)  
DK/Unsure [VOL]  
Somewhat unfavorable (and unfavorable DK)  
Very unfavorable

DE3. In November DELAWARE will vote for a US Senator. If the election were held today, would you vote for ... or ...?

[ROTATE NAMES]

Chris Coons, the Democrat  
Christine O'Donnell, the Republican  
Glenn Miller/independent. (VOL)  
James Rash/Libertarian (VOL)  
Don't know (VOL) [ASK: "which way do you lean?"]  
Ref.

DE4

-DE7 released Oct. 5, 2010.

DE8. And going back to the election for US Senator. If the election for US Senate were between... and ..., who would you vote for?

[ROTATE NAMES]

Chris Coons, the Democrat  
Mike Castle, the Republican  
Glenn Miller/independent. (VOL)  
James Rash/Libertarian (VOL)  
Don't know (VOL) [ASK: "which way do you lean?"]  
Ref.

DE9-DE10. [Released Oct. 5, 2010.]

[ASK HERE 1/3 AT RANDOM US1 AND 1/3 AT RANDOM US2 AND 1/3 AT RANDOM BOTH]

Finally, just some questions about yourself...

D1A. Regardless of who you might vote for, do you consider yourself a Democrat, a Republican, or an Independent?

Democrat  
Republican  
Independent [ASK: which way do you lean?"]  
Other [DON'T READ]  
Don't Know/Ref [DON'T READ]

D1B. When it comes to the recent movement called the Tea Party, do you have a favorable or unfavorable view of Tea Party voters and candidates?

Favorable  
Unfavorable

Don't know

D2. In thinking about government and politics, do you consider yourself to be liberal, moderate, or conservative?

Liberal  
Moderate  
Conservative  
DK/Ref [DON'T READ]

D3. On the issue of abortion, would you describe yourself as...or ...?

ROTATE

Pro life  
Pro choice  
DK (VOL)

...