



Baldwin Wallace University Community Research Institute Ohio Midterm Poll III – Highlights and Analysis

Tuesday, October 30

This is the third and final midterm election poll of likely voters in Ohio by the Baldwin Wallace University Community Research Institute. Information here and in the topline report is EMBARGOED for release until 6:00 a.m. EST, Tuesday, October 30. Overnight newspaper publishing is ok.

In the races for U.S. Senator and the governorship in Ohio, there has been little movement among undecided voters. In all three polls, Democratic incumbent Senator Brown had at least a 15-point lead over Republican Congressman Renacci. In the most recent poll, Brown leads Renacci, by about 20 points, with 17% of respondents indicating they are unsure how they will vote.

U.S. Senate race

Response choice	9/16/18 poll	10/8/18 poll	10/28/18 poll
Sherrod Brown (D)	49.2%	49.5%	51.2%
Jim Renacci (R)	31.8%	33%	31.7%
Unsure	19.1%	17.5%	17.1%

Unlike the race for U.S. Senate, the Ohio governor's race is tied. Both Democrat Richard Cordray and Republican Mike DeWine are polling at about 39%. Libertarian candidate Travis Irvine is polling at 4.1%, and Green Party candidate Constance Gadell-Newton is polling at 1.9%.

Analysis (Lauren Copeland): The outcome of the gubernatorial race will hinge on turnout and how late-deciders break. If history is any guide, Cordray might be able to ride Brown's coattails to the finish line.

Ohio Governor's race

Response choice	9/16/18 poll (only D & R candidates)	10/8/18 poll (only D & R candidates)	10/8/18 poll (w. L&G candidates)	10/28/18 poll (only D & R candidates)	10/28/18 poll (w. L&G candidates)
Richard Cordray (D)	37%	39.2%	37.1%	42.2%	38.8%
Mike DeWine (R)	41.8%	42.2%	39.7%	41.1%	39.4%
Travis Irvine (L)	X	X	4.3%	X	4.1%
Constance Gadell-Newton (G)	X	X	3.4%	X	1.9%
Unsure	21.3%	18.6%	15.4%	16.6%	15.8%

Note: 'X' indicates candidate was not included in the polling question.

Ohio Issue 1

Response	10/8/18 poll	10/28/18 poll
Support	47.9%	43%
Oppose	30.5%	39.8%
Unsure	21.7%	17.2%

Analysis (Tom Sutton): The campaign against Issue 1 appears to be closing the gap, with opposition increasing from 30.5% in the early October poll to 39.8% in the late October poll. However, 17% are still unsure – making the ballot measure a toss-up.

The BW-CRI has also been tracking party preference for generic U.S. House races. Respondents indicate a 3.6-point preference for Democratic candidates in the 10/28/18 poll, up slightly from the 2.3-point preference in the 10/8/18 poll. 15% of respondents remain undecided.

U.S. House seat party preference

Response choice	9/16/18 poll	10/8/18 poll	10/28/18 poll
Democrat	43.2%	42.5%	42.6%
Republican	40%	40.2%	39%
Third party	2.3%	3.9%	3.5%
Unsure	14.5%	13.4%	14.9%

President Trump's approval ratings held steady across the three polls. 43% approved and 52% disapproved in the 9/16/18 poll, and 44% approve and 50% disapprove in the 10/28/18 poll.

Trump approval ratings

Response choice	9/16/18 poll	10/8/18 poll	10/28/18 poll
Approve	42.9%	44.8%	44.2%
Disapprove	51.6%	49.8%	49.7%
Unsure	5.6%	5.3%	6.1%

Top issues for Ohioans: Healthcare and the Economy

Respondents were asked about a list of issues of importance in the Ohio Senate and gubernatorial races in each of the CRI polls. Healthcare was the most important issue in each poll, followed by the economy.

We also asked Ohioans about several provisions of the Affordable Care Act (i.e. Obamacare). Although Ohioans are evenly divided in terms of whether they have favorable or unfavorable attitudes about the healthcare legislation (44.2% favorable to 41.8% unfavorable), approximately 89% of Ohioans believe it is 'very' or 'somewhat' important to prohibit health insurance companies from charging sick people higher premiums, and about 92% believe it is 'very' or 'somewhat' important to prohibit health insurance companies from discriminating against people with pre-existing conditions.

Analysis (Lauren Copeland): The midterm elections have placed the debate over healthcare, and the Affordable Care Act in particular, in the spotlight. Democrats and Republicans alike are under increasing

pressure to protect federal healthcare provisions. Even Republicans in tight races are trying to soften their stances on healthcare.”

Down-ballot statewide races

The survey also asked Ohioans how they plan to vote in non-judicial down-ballot statewide races. The percentage of undecided voters for each race hovers around 20%.

The Secretary of State race shows a 6-point lead for Democrat Kathleen Clyde over Republican Frank LaRose, 39.8% to 33.7%, with Libertarian Dustin Hanna garnering 4.7%.

In the race for Ohio Auditor of State, Democrat Zach Space is polling ahead of Republican Keith Faber (40.2% to 32.0%, respectively). Libertarian candidate Robert C. Coogan is polling at 5%.

The race for Ohio Attorney General is a statistical tie (40.2% for Steve Dettelbach vs. 38.9% for Dave Yost), as is the race for Ohio Treasurer of State (38.8% for Rob Richardson vs. 36.0% for Robert Sprague).

The full topline is attached and will be published at <https://www.bw.edu/centers/community-research-institute/> at the embargo release.

CONTACTS

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Tom Sutton is a professor of political science and director of the Community Research Institute at Baldwin Wallace University in Ohio. Dr. Sutton is a battleground state veteran and widely-quoted political analyst, whose teaching and research has focused on national elections, the U.S. Supreme Court, and the presidency. He is an insightful media expert on U.S. politics and on the significance of Ohio in the national election.

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Lauren Copeland is a professor of political science and associate director of the Community Research Institute at Baldwin Wallace University in Ohio. Dr. Copeland teaches courses on American politics and research methods and is a frequent media contributor. A self-described “politics and data science nerd,” her research lies at the intersection of political communication, political behavior, and public opinion, and she studies the relationship between digital media use and political participation.

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