

INSIDE MICHIGAN POLITICS

Breaking: Southfield Mayor Brenda Lawrence Tops MI-14 Poll to Replace U.S. Rep. Gary Peters

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Southfield Mayor **Brenda Lawrence** leads the race to replace U.S. Rep. **Gary Peters** (D-Bloomfield Twp.) in Michigan's 14th congressional district, according to a Lake Research Partners poll obtained by ***Inside Michigan Politics***.

Lawrence took 37% of the vote in a seven-way matchup polled by Lake Research, a Washington, D.C. firm headed by prominent Democratic strategist **Celinda Lake**.

Rep. **Rudy Hobbs** (D-Southfield), who has been considered the early favorite in the race, placed second in the poll with 6%. Hobbs, who stepped down from his post as state House Minority Floor Leader to run, has racked up big endorsements from both Sen. **Carl Levin** (D-Detroit) and U.S. Rep. **Sandy Levin** (D-Southfield).

There were 46% who were undecided in the poll for MI-14, which covers eastern Detroit, as well as Oakland County cities including Pontiac, Southfield and Farmington Hills.

Lawrence was boosted by winning the majority of voters in the city of Southfield and women under 60.

Elected in 2001, Lawrence also was the Democrats' 2010 lieutenant governor nominee on the ticket with Lansing Mayor **Virg Bernero**. In 2008, she unsuccessfully challenged Oakland County Executive **L. Brooks Patterson**.

In 2012, Lawrence ran for the MI-14, along with former U.S. Rep. **Hansen**

Clarke, who was elected in 2010 in the MI-13, but opted to run in 2012 in the MI-14 after redistricting. Both Lawrence and Clarke were defeated in the Democratic primary by Peters.

Peters, who is in his third term, is vacating the MI-14 seat to run for the U.S. Senate seat left open by Carl Levin, who's retiring. Former Secretary of State **Terri Lynn Land** is the likely GOP nominee.

"With 9 months until the primary election, Mayor Brenda Lawrence starts in a dominant position," Lake, **David Merman** and **David Klinger** write in a memo. "Among voters who know her, she has a strong base and broad support. And for voters who don't know her, she has a positive record of achievement and strong biography that resonates with voters."

Sen. **Bert Johnson** (D-Highland Park), who unsuccessfully ran in 2012 in the MI-14, had 5% in the survey. Former Rep. **LaMar Lemmons** (D-Detroit) earned 3%. Sen. **Vince Gregroy** (D-Southfield) had 1%.

Attorney **Godfrey Dillard**, who ran last year in the MI-13, and former Gov. **Jennifer Granholm** administration official **Jessica McCall**, both registered 0%.

The live-operator telephone survey was conducted between November 14 and 18, 2013. The survey was of 406 likely Democratic primary voters in the MI-14, and had a 4.9% margin of error.

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