

INSIDE MICHIGAN POLITICS

Exclusive: Internal Poll Shows David Trott Defeating U.S. Rep. Kerry Bentivolio in MI-11 GOP Primary

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An internal poll shows attorney **David Trott** with a double-digit lead over U.S. Rep. **Kerry Bentivolio** (R-Milford) in the GOP primary for the 11th Congressional District seat.

The live-operator survey taken last week by North Carolina-based National Research Inc., was obtained by **Inside Michigan Politics**. IMP made the call to run the poll because of the lack of public polling in the race and the pollster's record. Former *New York Times* analyst **Nate Silver** ranked National Research near the top his list of accurate polling firms in the 2012 cycle.

Trott had 33% to Bentivolio's 19%, giving him a 14-point lead for the Aug. 5 primary.

This GOP primary is one of the most watched in the country. Bentivolio was elected with Tea Party support in 2012 as the only Republican on the ballot after then U.S. Rep. **Thad McCotter** (R-Livonia) resigned amidst a petition-gathering scandal. He's been vastly outraised by Trott, an attorney and longtime GOP fundraiser, who also has earned many high-profile endorsements.

The MI-11 covering Wayne and Oakland counties has a 55% GOP base, so the party is favored to keep the seat -- but it's not guaranteed. There's also a tough Democratic primary mainly between former congressional candidate **Nancy Skinner**, former State Department official **Bobby McKenzie** and Dr. **Anil Kumar**.

There are still a large number of undecided voters in the poll -- 47%. But Bentivolio will "have a very difficult time" winning their votes, according to a memo written by **Adam Geller** of National Research and **Stu Sandler** of Decider Strategies, a consultant for Trott.

When the pollster included voters leaning to one candidate or the other, Trott's lead grew to 39% to 21% for Bentivolio.

Trott polled behind Bentivolio in each of the three previous head-to-head matchups, but "steadily improved," the memo said.

On June 6, 2013, Trott had 8% and Bentivolio had 29%. On May 1, 2014, Trott earned 21% and Bentivolio 30%. On May 22, 2014, the candidates were statistically tied, with Trott at 22% and Bentivolio at 23%.

Trott's favorables in the most recent poll were 30% favorable to 16% unfavorable. Bentivolio's were nearly evenly split, 28% favorable to 25% unfavorable.

An automated poll last month from Target Insyght/Michigan Information & Research Service had almost the opposite result in the horserace question. Bentivolio was at 33% and Trott was at 21%.

The internal Trott survey of 400 likely Republican primary voters in the MI-11 was conducted between June 23 and 24, 2014. The margin of error was 4.9%.

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