



CLARUS POLL: D.C. Mayor's Race 2010

Less than a year before the 2010 city elections, a new poll finds that Washington, D.C. Mayor Adrian Fenty could face a tough fight winning a second term.

- The poll, conducted by the nonpartisan Clarus Research Group, finds that a little more than one-third of the city's voters want Fenty re-elected.
- Mayor Fenty runs slightly behind Council Chairman Vincent Gray in a head to head match-up, but leads a four-way trial heat against three possible opponents –including Gray and District Council members Kwame Brown and Michael Brown.

"Mayor Fenty's re-election base is dangerously weak for an incumbent going into an election year," said Ron Faucheux, president of Clarus, a nonpartisan polling firm based in Washington, D.C. "While the mayor still has the time and resources to shore up his re-election prospects before the September primary, he clearly has plenty of work to do to win back voters he's lost since the last election."

Key findings from the Clarus Poll:

FENTY JOB APPROVAL

- **Mayor Fenty has a job approval rating of 43 percent and a disapproval rating of 49 percent.** Fenty scores highest among whites (60 percent), voters under 50 years old (51 percent approval), and those who live in Wards 2 and 3 (60 percent). Fenty's job approval is lowest among voters over 50 (35 percent) and African Americans (29 percent). His support is weakest in the area comprising Wards 6, 7 and 8 where his job approval is 33 percent. Fenty is much stronger among white women (64 percent) than African American women (28 percent).
- **Issue approval:** Keeping the city clean and safe are Fenty's strongest issues, according to the poll. "Solid majorities approve of Fenty's handling of two key issues in the District – protecting the city from crime and keeping streets and public places clean and in good repair," said Faucheux.

Issues on which Fenty wins less than majority – but 40 percent or better – approval: Holding down city taxes, improving public education, keeping in touch with average citizens, working to bring new jobs to the city, and providing strong leadership. "Even though they are under 50%, it should be noted that Fenty's approval ratings are higher than his disapproval ratings on two of the hottest issues, education and jobs," said Faucheux.

Fenty's weakest points are bringing people together to solve problems, handling city finances, putting the city's interest above politics, living up to high ethical standards, and managing city government – he rates below 40 percent on these five issues (and in two cases under 30 percent).

2010 RACE FOR MAYOR

- **Thirty-four percent of all voters said they would like to see Fenty re-elected while 53 percent said they would like**

to see somebody new get elected. On this question, 31 percent of Democrats, 44 percent of Republicans, and 38 percent of independents said they would like to see Fenty re-elected.

Fifty-one percent of all white voters polled said they would like to see Fenty re-elected but only 22 percent of all African American voters polled would – a 29 – point difference.

• **Fenty runs first in the four-way Democratic primary trial heat for mayor:** Fenty 34 percent, Gray 24 percent, Kwame Brown 13 percent, Michael Brown 6 percent, 23 percent undecided. (It should be noted that most of the poll’s interviews were completed before news stories were run about issues related to Gray’s fundraising and home repairs.)

• **Gray leads Fenty in the two-way Democratic primary trial heat:** Gray 41 percent, Fenty 37 percent, 22 percent undecided.

In this match-up, Fenty tops Gray among men, whites, voters under 50 years old, and those in the area comprising Wards 2 and 3. Fenty loses women, voters 50 and older, African Americans and the other two areas of the city. In the two-way race, Gray picks up most of the support received by Kwame Brown and Michael Brown in the four-way trial heat.

“The fact that Vincent Gray beats the incumbent in a head-to-head race even though 38 percent of voters citywide don’t know enough about him to rate his job performance is an indication that a good bit of Gray’s support is primarily an anti-Fenty vote,” said Faucheux.

OTHER JOB RATINGS:

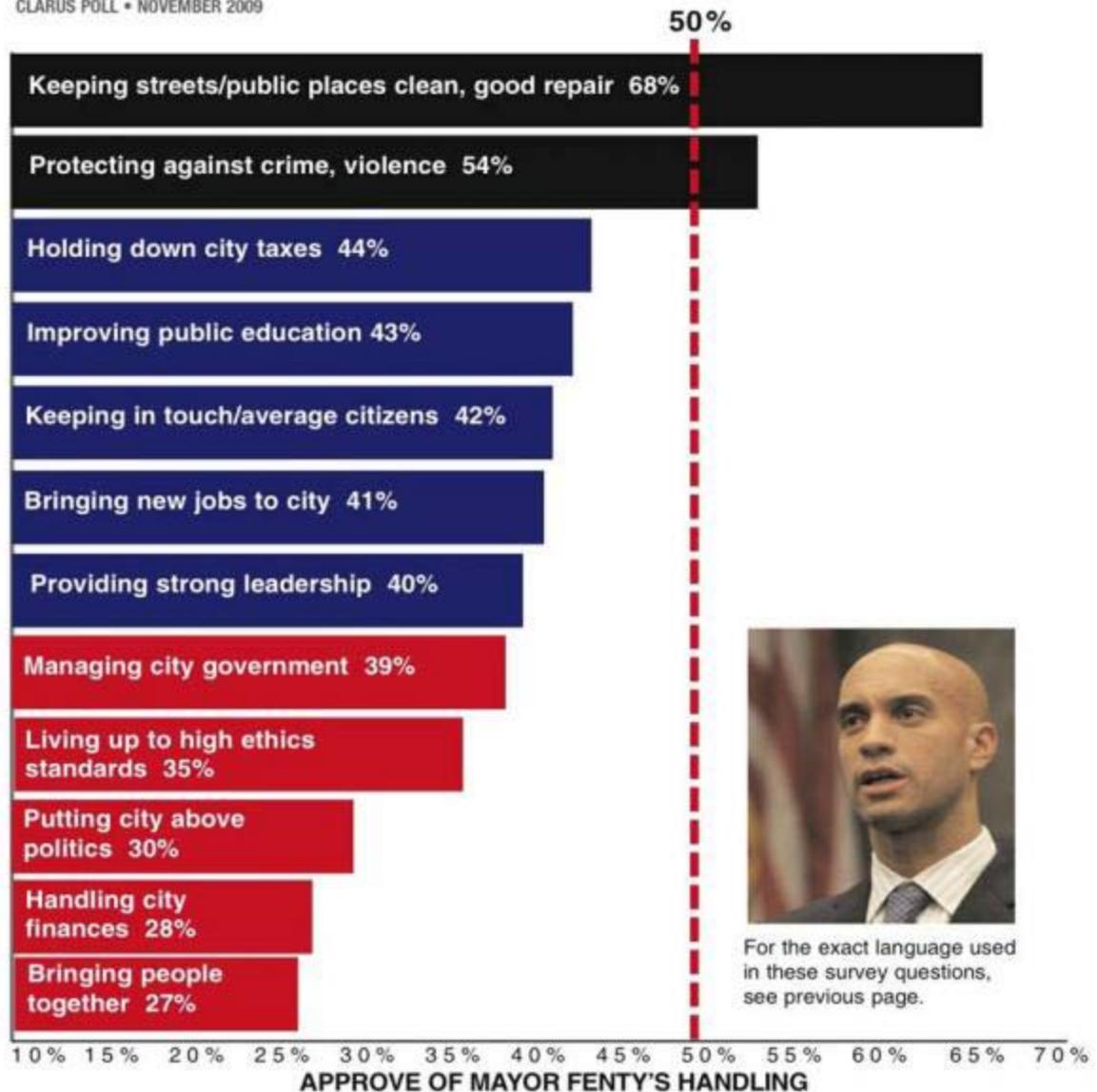
• **Police chief Cathy Lanier has a job approval rating of 71 percent and a disapproval rating of 12 percent.** “Chief Lanier’s popularity is very strong citywide and cuts across all lines,” said Faucheux. “Her ratings are the best of anyone tested in this poll.”

• **School Chancellor Michelle Rhee has a job approval rating of 47 percent and a disapproval rating of 39 percent.** “Rhee has maintained a net positive job rating despite heavy attacks from her critics,” pointed out Faucheux.

• **Council Chairman Gray has a job approval rating of 46 percent and a disapproval rating of 16 percent.** “Although his approval rating is below 50 percent, Gray has a solid, nearly three-to-one, positive-to-negative approval ratio,” said Faucheux.

Approval Ratings: Mayor Adrian Fenty's handling of issues

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The poll, conducted by live telephone interviewers Nov. 15-18, 2009, was based on a scientifically-selected sample of 501 self-identified Washington, D.C. registered voters. The margin of error is +/- 4.4 percent.

The poll was conducted by Clarus as a public service and was not sponsored or paid for by any client, political candidate, or party committee. Clarus also conducted public polls in the recent Virginia gubernatorial election, as well as for the upcoming 2010 Maryland gubernatorial race. More information on Clarus is available at ClarusRG.com.