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PRESS RELEASE

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MEDIA CONTACT: Grey VanDeMark

info@emersoncollegepollingsociety.com

www.emersoncollegepollingsociety.com

**EMERSON COLLEGE POLL: GOV. PATRICK FRONT RUNNER IN POTENTIAL U.S. SENATE RACE;
BROWN LEADS KENNEDY**

BOSTON – December 20, 2012. With the expectation that U.S. Senator John Kerry will be appointed Secretary of State, attention now focuses on who will be his successor. A new survey by the Emerson College Polling Society (ECPS) finds that Governor Deval Patrick ahead of U.S. Senator Scott Brown (48% to 43%) and former Governor William Weld (50% to 32%) in head-to-head matchups to succeed Kerry. Brown leads Vicki Kennedy, the widow of U.S. Senator Ted Kennedy, (46% to 40%) There was a 2.9 percent margin of error in the ECPS survey.

Felix Chen, chief analyst of the poll, pointed out that while Patrick may win the head-to-head contest, 38% of those surveyed believed Brown would be the next U.S. Senator, 14% named Patrick, followed by 10% selecting Attorney General Martha Coakley then Kennedy with 7%, and former Governor Weld with 3%.

In a hypothetical competitive primary between Patrick, Kennedy, Coakley and Congressman Mike Capuano, there was no clear front runner, according to the ECPS poll. Patrick received 20% of Democrat voters support while Kennedy was within the margin at 16%, Capuano at 13% and Coakley had 11%. Thirty-percent of Democrat primary voters were undecided.

Brown has overwhelming support among GOP voters to be their party nominee, ahead of Weld by the comfortable margin of 80% to 7% among those polled.

Other Points

+ According to Chen, Senator Kerry has a 63% favorable rating and the support of nearly 59% of those polled to be Secretary of State.

+ Under the law a special election to fill the seat must be held no sooner than 145 days and no later than 160 days on a Tuesday placing the potential election sometime in late May or early June.

+ A Brown/ Kennedy campaign would showcase a third female Democrat U.S. Senate candidate challenging Brown. Brown is vulnerable with women voters, holding only a 3 point favorable to unfavorable opinion (46% to 43%). Among men, Brown enjoys a 17% margin, (55% to 38%). Chen points out that 40% of the female voters would choose Brown over Patrick in a potential Senate election.

+ Chen concludes that the ECPS data reveal another challenge for Brown. The former Senator trails both Patrick (29% to 61%) and Kennedy (31% to 51%) in the head-to-head match-ups among those polled in the greater Boston metro area.

+ Other potential candidates whose names surfaced in the poll are U.S. Congressman Ed Markey, Actor Ben Affleck, and former Republican Gubernatorial nominee Charlie Baker.

+ Sixty-seven percent (67%) of respondents said that the recession was not over in Massachusetts and 13% thought it was.

Data was collected between December 16 and 18, 2012, using an automated data collection system. The Massachusetts sample consisted of 1,053 registered voters with a margin of error of +/- 2.9% at a 95% confidence level. The full survey and results are available at the groups' website. www.emersoncollegepollingsociety.com.

The next ECPS survey will focus on public attitudes on gun policies, in the wake of the Newtown tragedy. Publication Date: January 22, 2013

About Emerson College Polling Society

Emerson College Polling Society is a student organization at Emerson College dedicated to formulating, administering, and analyzing public opinion polls. The results and analysis of this release are the sole views of Emerson College Polling Society and do not reflect the views of Emerson College as a whole.

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