

To: Interested Parties
From: John Hagner, Clarity Campaign Labs
Date: August 14, 2015
Subject: NJ-5 Voters Show Strong Support for Federal LGBT Non-Discrimination Protections

A new poll conducted by Clarity Campaign Labs on behalf of the Human Rights Campaign shows strong support for a new federal LGBT non-discrimination bill (The Equality Act) in the district of Congressman Scott Garrett, who recently made headlines for his anti-LGBT comments. The same survey shows Garrett starts in a relatively weak position for a 6-term incumbent heading into his re-election campaign, with poor approval ratings and Garrett drawing less than the crucial 50 percent support in a trial heat against Democrat Josh Gottheimer.

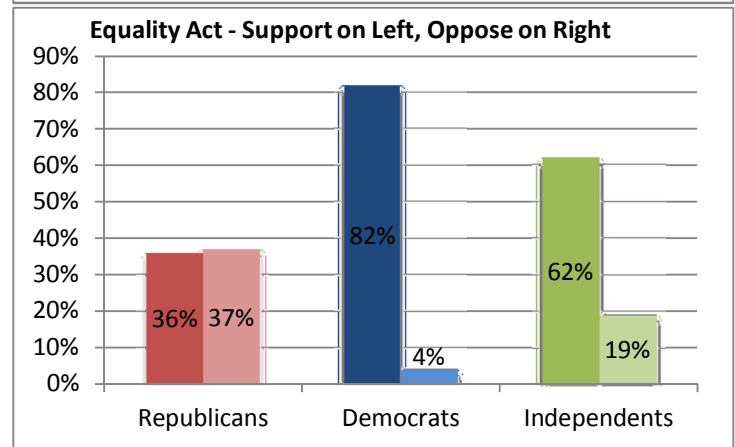
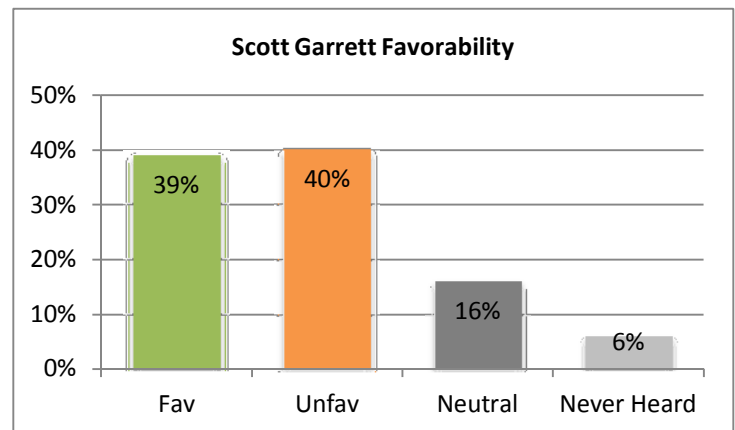
Support for the new Equality Act was widespread. Voters in NJ-5 support the Equality Act overall by a 33 point margin, with 55% saying Congress should pass it and 22% saying they should not. Democrats support it by wide margins – 82% to 4%, but equally important is the strong support from Independents: 62% to 19%. There is substantial Republican support for the bill, with 36% of Republicans saying Congress should pass the bill.

We described the law neutrally, reading voters this summary: “The Equality Act is a bill that would extend existing non-discrimination laws to protect gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender people in housing, services and public spaces, credit, and employment.” After hearing this summary, 55% of the voters in the district think that Congress should pass the Equality Act, while only 22% say that they should not.

Voters who are undecided on this new non-discrimination bill appear highly persuadable. 56 percent of those undecided on the Equality Act are either Democratic or Independent voters. Importantly, Congressman Garrett’s willingness to oppose the Equality Act could have significant

implications for his re-election. If he opposes the Equality Act, 18% of his current supporters say they would be less likely to vote for him next November. Among people who are undecided for Congress, 47% say they’d be more likely to oppose a candidate who opposes the Equality Act; only 12% of undecideds say they’d be more likely to support one.

We find that in the race for Congress in 2016, the incumbent Republican Scott Garrett starts out in the lead, but with less than fifty percent of the vote. 46% of voters are supporting Garrett, with 33% supporting Democratic candidate Josh Gottheimer.



One driver of the difference in the vote is the huge differential in name ID between the candidates. 79% of the district’s voters have an opinion on Scott Garrett, but the problem for Garrett is that they’re

evenly divided, with 39% having a favorable view and 40% an unfavorable. Only 13% of the district has an opinion on Gottheimer – 5% favorable and 8% unfavorable.

Support for the Equality Act also cuts across age and gender. Every age range tested is supportive; voters under 35 say Congress should pass it 67% to 17%, but voters over 80 also support it, 45% to 14%. Women support it 60% to 13%, and men 49% to 34%.

Methodology: A poll of registered voters in New Jersey's Fifth Congressional District. We surveyed 607 voters with an IVR survey and we matched the sample to the voter file and weighted it to reflect the electorate in this district. The margin of error is +/- 4.80% at a 95% confidence interval.