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To: Friends of Democracy Corps, Greenberg Quinlan Rosner, and Women's Voices Women Vote Action Fund

From: Stan Greenberg, James Carville, and Erica Seifert

Republican Incumbents Out of Touch and Increasingly Vulnerable **Report on third Republican battleground poll in 60 districts**

The latest Democracy Corps survey of the Republican House battleground shows the incumbents out of touch with their districts, a climate less favorable to Republicans, weakening support and vulnerability to attack. With numbers virtually identical to those of Democratic incumbents leading into the 2010 disaster, the House is surely in play in 2012.¹ The president is now dead even in these districts, while the image of everything Republican has fallen, above all, 'the Republican Congress.' These 'no-tax' Republicans are out of touch with their districts, polling below 50 percent, and losing ground, particularly with independents where Democrats trail by only 6 points.

This is a unique survey conducted in the battleground of the most competitive House seats for 2012: 48 of the 60 were carried by Obama in 2008. These are swing districts and are where control of Congress will likely be decided in 2012.

Key Findings:

- **These Republicans are weakening.** They have lost half of their vote margin since September, falling to 47 percent, well below their vote in 2010 election. Just 37 percent believe they deserve re-election and their approval hovers around 40 percent. Their lead evaporates after hearing balanced attacks, falling to 44 percent.
- **These incumbents are crashing with independents.** Since September, incumbents have lost 13 points from their margin here, and Democrats trail among independents by only 6 points.
- **These incumbents are weakened by a Republican Party and Republican Congress that are intensely unpopular.** Only 31 percent now give the Republican Party a warm

¹ This memo is based on a unique survey of 1000 likely 2012 voters in 60 Republican battleground districts conducted by Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research for Democracy Corps and Women's Voices Women Vote Action Fund December 4-7, 2011. Unless otherwise noted, margin of error=+/- 3.1% at 95% confidence.



rating; more than half (52 percent) give the Republican Congress a cool rating – leading the brand crash for the party. And very important, President Obama is now running even with both potential challengers – a marked improvement since September. As he improves, the Democratic challengers in these districts have an opportunity to gain among the new progressive base that elected Obama in 2008.

- **These incumbents are profoundly out of touch with voters in these districts, particularly on taxes.** In these districts, 58 percent say they want to vote for a representative who will ask the wealthiest to pay a greater share in taxes and cut special interest spending to address the deficit.
- **These incumbents are profoundly out of touch on Medicare, Social Security and entitlements.** By a 20-point margin (54-34) voters say they agree with the Democrats' position on raising taxes for the wealthiest and opposing cuts to Social Security and Medicare.
- **Voters and independents here hold the Republicans accountable for the gridlock on the big issues and battle with the president.** By a two-to-one margin, they want the named incumbent to work with President Obama to get things done, versus stopping him from advancing his agenda. And by a 12-point margin (39 to 27 percent), voters say they blame Republicans for the failure of the supercommittee.
- **Voters think these incumbents have been corrupted by politics and money.** Two-thirds say they are concerned that these Republicans promised to change Washington but instead are part of the problem—lobbyists, Wall Street bonuses, and subsidies for big oil.
- **With the House Republicans choosing to fight fewer public battles, a larger number of respondents are giving 'don't know' responses about the incumbents.** With few of their positive attributes rising or even reaching 40 percent, they remain vulnerable to political currents this year.
- **The incumbents are vulnerable to attack, with opportunities to move independents and consolidate the Rising American Electorate.** The strongest attacks center on Medicare and Social Security: 70 percent serious doubts, including 40 percent very serious. After attacks on both sides, the race for Congress is even, with Democrats at 45 percent with the biggest shifts coming among independents, unmarried women, and moderates.

On Monday, December 12, Democracy Corps founder and Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Chairman and CEO, Stan Greenberg, and Page Gardner, Founder and President of the Voter Participation Center and Women's Voices Women Vote Action Fund, will hold a briefing to discuss the results of the latest battleground survey.