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Politics

N.J.'s hottest congressional race between Kennedy and Van Drew is a dead heat, poll says

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By [Jonathan D. Salant | NJ Advance Media for NJ.com](#)

The [sizzling congressional contest](#) between Rep. Jeff Van Drew and educator Amy Kennedy is a dead heat, according to a poll released Friday.

Kennedy, a member of the iconic Democratic family, led Van Drew, R-2nd Dist., in the [Stockton University Poll](#) among likely voters, 46% to 45%. That was well within the survey's margin of error of plus or minus 3.7 percentage points.

"The 2nd District is living up to its billing as a competitive swing district," said John Froomjian, executive director of the William J. Hughes Center for Public Policy at Stockton University.

"Turnout in the final days of mail voting and how the few undecided voters break will decide the race," Froomjian said. "Every vote counts, especially in this election."

The poll comes after Inside Elections, a Washington-based publication that tracks congressional races, said Kennedy [had a slight advantage](#). A [Monmouth University Poll](#) released at the beginning of the month put Kennedy ahead, 50% to 44% among likely voters if turnout was high, and 51% to 44% if turnout was lower.

Kennedy has been able to [match Van Drew in fundraising](#), bringing in \$3.8 million through Oct. 26 to the incumbent's \$3.9 million.

Van Drew, [who joined the Republican Party](#) after [voting against Trump's impeachment](#), is [closely linked to the president](#). While Trump trailed Joe Biden [by double digits in statewide polls](#), he was just 3 points behind, 48% to 45%, in the 2nd District, which supported him over Hillary Clinton in 2016.

By 55% to 40%, respondents said Van Drew's party switch affected their opinion of him. Of those who said it made a difference, 69% of those voters had a negative view of his decision while 28% viewed it positively.

A majority, 55% graded Trump's performance in office at fair or poor, while 44% rated his performance as excellent or good. He received lower marks for his handling of the [coronavirus](#), with

The poll of 676 likely voters was conducted Oct. 22-27.

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