

Healey Starts With 18-Point Lead Over Diehl

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State House News Service

A new 7News/Emerson College poll has Maura Healey leading Republican Geoff Diehl in the race for governor 52 percent to 34 percent, with 12 percent undecided. Fifty-five percent of voters view Healey favorably, compared to 34 percent who say the same about Diehl. Diehl, however, actually leads Healey among unenrolled voters 45-38, according to the poll.

The Republican hopeful seized on that distinction, expressing hope Friday that he might be able to make inroads with that group of voters, who represent the largest share in Massachusetts.

"We still have a lot of work to do, but coming off our convincing primary win this week I believe this poll shows the strength our campaign has and our ability to appeal to a wide range of voters on a number of issues," Diehl said in a statement Friday. "We are winning this race where it really counts, and I believe that as we bring our message of freedom, fiscal responsibility, and empowering parents to more and more voters statewide we will continue to surge in the polls."

Diehl's campaign said the 34 percent support he earned in the new Emerson poll matches the 34 percent support Gov. Charlie Baker received in a September 2014 WBUR/MassINC poll, though in that poll, Baker trailed Democrat Martha Coakley – whom he ultimately defeated – by only 7 percentage points.