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TO: David Gill for Congress, IL-13
FROM: Donna Victoria, Victoria Research & Consulting
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This memorandum reports on the findings of a poll taken in 13th Congressional District of Illinois April 11-13, 2012. Four hundred registered, likely voters for November 2012 were interviewed. The poll was designed to assess the strengths and weaknesses of David Gill as the Democratic nominee, at a time when the Republican nominee was yet to be decided following Tim Johnson's announcement of his retirement. All questions about this memo should be referred to Donna Victoria (donnaV@victoriaresearch.com or 301-565-9500.)

What is evident from our new results is that this race is wide open, with **Democratic nominee Dr. David Gill already holding a significant lead over two prominent Republican candidates.** Key results are as follows:

- The most important finding is that David Gill has a significant base of support no matter which candidate the Republicans eventually put forth. In a head-to-head trial heat, Gill beats Jerry Clarke handily, 40% to 33%. When paired against Rodney Davis, Gill has a double-digit lead: 41% to 31%. **In both matchups, Gill outperforms the generic trial heat, which is +3 in favor of a Democrat (38% to 35% for a Republican).**
- **The 13th District is an entirely new district in Central Illinois; "incumbent" Tim Johnson (R), who recently announced he would not run for this seat after all, currently represents fewer than a third of the voters in the new 13th.** It stands to reason that this creates an entirely new playing field for this open seat race, with two key points in Gill's favor: his previous campaigns give him a solid base in the old 15th C.D. portion, where he receives over 50% of the vote, and the Republicans are engaged in a divisive insider spat in which party chairmen will name a candidate, since Johnson waited until after the primary to announce his intentions, thus depriving Republican Primary voters of any say in their nominee.
- President Obama won this part of Illinois handily, by 11 percentage points, in 2008. At present, the race is much closer for 2012, with the President leading Mitt Romney by 4 percentage points in the new 13th. The President will win in Illinois and can win in the 13th district, but at present David Gill is not benefitting from any overly rosy coattails scenario involving the presidential race - **Gill has earned his lead on his own terms.**
- **David Gill has a compelling personal story and the poll findings show he has an ability to make gains in this race by relating his own life experience to his issue positions and his commitment to representing the people of the 13th District.** He is an emergency room doctor who is well prepared to talk about health care solutions no matter what the Supreme Court decision brings. He has experienced the real struggles that ordinary Illinoisans face, and he shares their frustrations with the gridlock and special interest politics in Washington. When this message is communicated in the survey, Gill readily attracts undecided voters, and he can withstand harsh criticism and attacks. **Contrary to the Republican narrative that he is "too liberal" or a "flawed" candidate, Gill is well-positioned to be very competitive in this district if he has the resources to communicate his message.**

Given the current political environment of “anything goes” attacks and unbridled campaign spending, voters are increasingly skeptical about the information they receive, and this race likely will be between two candidates who don’t have voting records or district-wide recognition. The winner is likely to be a person who can win on character – someone who has the integrity to be honest on tough issues, so that voters can trust him to make other tough decisions in Washington. David Gill fits this profile.