

Stockton poll shows Whelan with lead over Balles in 2nd District Senate race

By JOEL LANDAU, Staff Writer | Posted: Tuesday, October 22, 2013 5:30 pm

State Sen. Jim Whelan, D-Atlantic, has a large lead over his opponent, Republican Frank Balles, in the race for state Senate.

The race for the two assembly seats is closer, and the election is now two weeks away.

Whelan leads Balles, who is Atlantic County sheriff, 55 percent to 34 percent with 11 percent undecided or declined to answer, according to a poll the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey released Tuesday. Whelan has increased his lead, which was 51 percent to 39 percent, since the last poll released Sept. 11.

For the district's two assembly seats, Republican incumbents John Amodeo, 23 percent, and Chris Brown, 21 percent, hold slight leads over Democratic challengers Vince Mazzeo, 21, and Nick Russo, 19 percent. But 15

- Seventy-six percent of voters support a ballot question to increase the state's minimum wage from \$7.25 an hour to \$8.25 an hour as well as provide annual cost-of-living increases. 16 percent oppose the proposal.

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