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Poll: Diehl Leads Oregon Republican Governor's Primary at 66.4% Across Seven Independent Measures — As Knight's Million-Dollar Bet on Dudley Reshapes Money Race

New survey of Oregon voters finds a commanding frontrunner, a well-funded challenger, and a cautionary set of numbers for the rest of the field

SALEM, OR — Oregon's Republican primary for governor is drawing a clear frontrunner in the polls and a high-profile financial challenge in the same week. A new independent survey by Predict Oregon finds state Rep. Ed Diehl with a commanding 66.4 percent of the Republican primary vote — while Nike co-founder Phil Knight's one-million-dollar donation to former Trail Blazer Chris Dudley has instantly made the money race competitive.

The poll, conducted March 3–8 among 1,022 Oregon voters, produced results notable not only for their magnitude but for their consistency. Seven independent measures — ballot preference, favorability, four hypothetical match-up scenarios, second-choice vote flow, and general election competitiveness — all converged on the same conclusion.

BRIEF HIT: SEVEN MEASURES. ONE DIRECTION.

The convergence of seven completely independent questions — asked in separate sections, measuring different things — all point the same way. When unrelated questions reach consistent conclusions across 921 Republican respondents, that is a strong signal — far beyond what either critics or candidates might dismiss as noise.

Survey completion rate: 84.6% — roughly 3 times the typical 20-40% rate for self-selected online polls. Statewide race; 230 unique zip codes, spanning every major region of the state.

For additional details on methodology, scenario testing, and candidate-level analysis, see the attached full Predict Oregon survey report that previously provided to the campaigns.

ED DIEHL: THE FRONTRUNNER'S CASE

State Rep. Ed Diehl leads the nine-candidate Republican field at 66.4 percent — a dominant position that holds and strengthens under every scenario tested. His favorability among likely Republican primary voters stands at 87.4 percent favorable, with only 6.3 percent unfavorable. No other candidate in the field comes close on either measure.

In a direct head-to-head against former House Speaker Christine Drahan, Diehl wins 81.5 percent to 12.2. In a three-way race with Drahan and Dudley, he consolidates at 74.6 percent while the other two split the remainder nearly evenly.

Second-choice data reinforces the picture. Among supporters of every other candidate in the field, Diehl is the top fallback choice regardless of who exits: 59.3 percent of Bethell voters, 54.9 percent of Drahan voters, 52.9 percent of Dudley voters, and 43.8 percent of Medina voters name Diehl as their second choice.

CHRIS DUDLEY: BIG MONEY ENTERS THE RACE

The poll was conducted prior to Phil Knight's one-million-dollar donation to Dudley's campaign — by far the largest single contribution to any candidate in the 2026 governor's race, bringing Dudley's total fundraising to 1.7 million dollars since his January announcement.

In the poll, Dudley sits at 7.6 percent in the full field — statistically competitive with Drahan (7.7 percent), but well behind Diehl. On general election competitiveness against Governor Tina Kotek, 66.5 percent of respondents rated Dudley as competitive or better — compared to 88.1 percent for Diehl.

The Knight money does not change the poll numbers, but it changes the strategic landscape considerably. Whether financial firepower can close a gap of this size in the time remaining before the May primary is the central question for the Dudley campaign.

CHRISTINE DRAHAN: THE NUMBERS WORTH WATCHING

Former House Speaker Christine Drahan enters the final stretch of the primary with a name recognition advantage — and a set of numbers that deserve scrutiny. Her unfavorable rating among Republican primary voters stands at 38.6 percent, the highest in the field. In a hypothetical November matchup against Governor Kotek, Drahan produces a 5.8 percent “won't vote” rate among Republicans — also the highest in the field, and more than three times Diehl's 1.7 percent.

Drahan's favorability is 46.5 percent — higher than Dudley's 40.1 percent — but her unfavorable floor is a structural challenge in a primary electorate where Diehl's negatives barely register.

DAVID MEDINA AND DANIELLE BETHELL

David Medina sits at 8.7 percent in the full field — the second-highest total among all candidates — with 45.4 percent favorability. Medina's campaign has staked a claim as the credible conservative alternative, though the data shows his support does not consolidate in Diehl's absence. In a Diehl-free scenario, the field fragments four ways with no single candidate breaking above 26 percent.

Danielle Bethell, at 2.9 percent, is the candidate with the most room to grow — and the most ground to cover. Her 49.9 percent neutral/no opinion rating, the highest in the field, reflects a candidate still in the process of building statewide name recognition. Bethell supporters, notably, choose Diehl as their second choice at 59.3 percent — the highest crossover rate in the field.

THE GENERAL ELECTION PICTURE

While only Republican respondents received the Republican primary questions, the general

election questions were asked of all respondents — Republicans, Non-Affiliated Voters, and Democrats — providing a cross-partisan view of each candidate’s perceived competitiveness against Democratic incumbent Governor Tina Kotek.

RATED COMPETITIVE OR BETTER VS. KOTEK

Ed Diehl: 88.1% all respondents · 90.2% Republicans · 73.3% Non-Affiliated Voters

Christine Drazan: 66.9% all respondents · 68.0% Republicans · 65.0% Non-Affiliated Voters

Chris Dudley: 66.5% all respondents · 67.8% Republicans · 58.3% Non-Affiliated Voters

David Medina: 46.9% all respondents · 48.5% Republicans · 30.0% Non-Affiliated Voters

Danielle Bethell: 50.0% all respondents · 51.9% Republicans · 30.0% Non-Affiliated Voters

Non-Affiliated Voters decide Oregon general elections. The gap between Diehl and the rest of the field among NAV voters is the number campaigns should be watching.

ABOUT THE POLL

Predict Oregon conducted this survey March 3–8, 2026. Respondents self-selected via Oregon-focused political social media communities and organic spread through respondents’ emails and cross-posting. The poll received 1,208 responses and collected 1,022 completed responses — an 84.6% completion rate.

This is a non-probability sample. Traditional margin of error calculations do not apply and are not reported. Results are directional indicators. The sample composition: 90.4 percent Republican, 5.8 percent Non-Affiliated Voter, 1.8 percent Democrat. Primary vote likelihood mean: 9.86 out of 10, with 98.3 percent of Republican respondents scoring 8 or higher. Geographic coverage: 759 respondents provided zip codes spanning 230 unique Oregon zip codes across every major region of the state.

ABOUT PREDICT OREGON

Predict Oregon is directed by Mark Anderson, who holds an MBA and has analyzed Oregon politics since 2008. He has served in multiple capacities within Oregon Republican politics and its grassroots organizations, including chairing the Marion County marketing committee during Chris Dudley’s 2010 gubernatorial campaign. Predict Oregon conducted this poll independently and without compensation from any campaign or political organization.

For questions or additional information, Mark Anderson can be reached at results@predictoregon.com