

TULCHIN RESEARCH

To: Interested Parties

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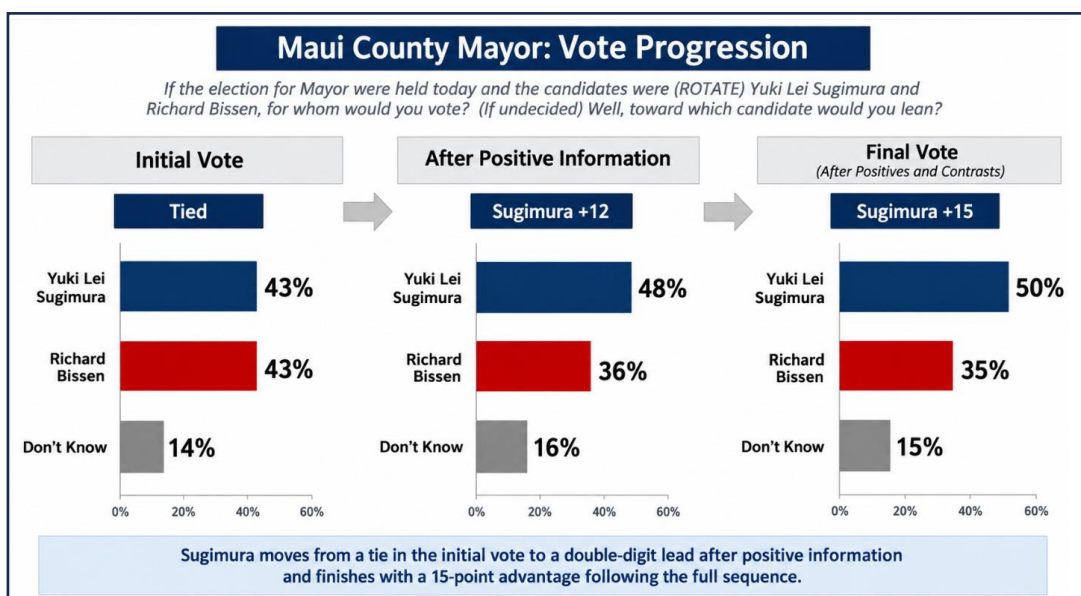
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New Poll Shows Maui Mayor's Race Deadlocked at Outset, with Significant Movement During Simulated Campaign

A recent Tulchin Research survey of likely November 2026 general election voters in Maui County finds an initially deadlocked and wide-open race for Mayor between Yuki Lei Sugimura and incumbent Mayor Richard Bissen. The two candidates begin tied at 43%, with neither holding an advantage and 14% of voters undecided. The survey's simulated campaign exercises, however, produce substantial movement in Sugimura's direction. After voters receive positive information about the candidates, Sugimura moves into a double-digit lead and finishes the full simulation with majority support (50%) to Bissen's 35%. The research also identifies several distinct positive themes surrounding Sugimura's record and agenda, as well as contrasts involving Bissen's management of county government, Maui's recovery, and his political record.

The Race Begins Deadlocked but Moves Substantially During the Simulated Campaign

At the outset, the race for Maui County Mayor is evenly divided. Sugimura and Bissen each receive 43% of the vote, while 14% of voters remain undecided. The result represents a competitive starting point compared to May survey research, when Sugimura held a 47% to 33% advantage over Bissen. The simulated campaign produces significant movement. After voters receive positive information about the candidates, Sugimura's support increases to 48% while Bissen falls to 36%, giving Sugimura a 12-point advantage. Following the complete positive and contrast sequence, Sugimura reaches 50% while Bissen receives 35%, resulting in a 15-point margin. These results demonstrate that while the race begins highly competitive, voters remain responsive to additional information about both candidates and their records.



Conclusion

In conclusion, the survey finds a Maui mayoral race that begins completely even but moves considerably over the course of the simulated campaign. Sugimura and Bissen start tied at 43%, before Sugimura moves to a 48% to 36% advantage following positive information and finishes the full simulation ahead 50% to 35%.

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Survey Methodology: *The findings in this memo are based on a survey of 400 likely November 2026 general election voters in Maui County, conducted August 19–24, 2026. The margin of error for the full sample is ± 4.39 percentage points. The survey was administered using a multi-modal approach, including landline and cellphone interviews as well as online data collection via email and text-to-web.*