

To: Interested Parties

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■ Polling Shows Councilwoman Yuki Lei Sugimura Strongly Positioned to Defeat Mayor Richard Bissen in 2026

A recent Tulchin Research survey of Maui County voters shows that Councilwoman Yuki Lei Sugimura is well-positioned for a potential 2026 mayoral run against incumbent Mayor Richard Bissen. This is due in part to Sugimura's significantly higher net favorability ratings relative to Bissen. Detailed findings are outlined below.

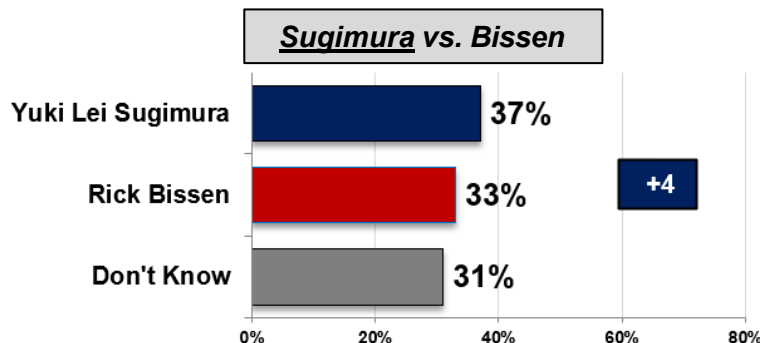
Sugimura Is One of the Most Well-Regarded Officials in Maui

In the poll, Councilwoman Sugimura holds a net favorability rating of +13 (42 percent favorable and 29 percent unfavorable), placing her among the strongest figures tested and second only to Governor Josh Green. In contrast, Mayor Richard Bissen holds a negative rating of -13 (38 percent favorable and 51 percent unfavorable), creating a 26-point gap between the two.

Favorability Ratings of Notable Public Figures in Maui County			
<i>Now, here is a list of public figures and organizations. Please indicate if you have a very favorable, somewhat favorable, somewhat unfavorable, or very unfavorable opinion of each. If you've never heard of them, please indicate so.</i>			
	Total Favorable	Total Unfavorable	Net
Yuki Lei Sugimura	42%	29%	+13
Richard Bissen	38%	51%	-13

Sugimura Leading Bissen in General Election Head-to-Head Matchup

Sugimura's positive favorability ratings translate into a 4 percent lead in a general election ballot test against the incumbent, another indication of the depth of her standing with voters. When likely general election voters were asked their preference for Mayor, Sugimura leads Bissen 37 percent to 33 percent, positioning her as the presumptive front-runner and best-situated candidate to win the 2026 Maui mayoral race.



Conclusion

Overall, the poll shows that Councilwoman Yuki Lei Sugimura would enter a potential 2026 mayoral race from a position of real strength. She leads incumbent Richard Bissen in a hypothetical head-to-head matchup and posts the highest favorability rating. Taken together, these results suggest she is well positioned to become Maui's next mayor if she chooses to run.

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***Survey Methodology:** From December 2-7, 2025, Tulchin Research conducted a survey of 400 likely 2026 voters in Maui County. The survey was administered using a combination of live professional interviewers calling landlines and cell phones as well as online data collection through texts and e-mails. The margin of error for the full sample is ± 4.9 percentage points.*