

Most Utah voters think John Swallow broke the law

During the campaign season for the 2014 elections, a major topic of discussion was the scandal surrounding former Attorney General John Swallow. Students and professors involved in creating the KBYU Utah Colleges Exit Poll were interested to see if Utah voters were aware of the scandal and what the public's verdict was on the situation.

Strikingly, more than 90 percent of Utah voters said they were aware of the charges. More than 85 percent of those who knew about the case believed that Swallow was at least guilty of doing something unethical. Three-fourths of these voters also believed that he had done something illegal as well.

The survey also asked voters to rate their feelings towards Swallow on a one-to-five scale with one being the most negative response and 5 being the most positive. On average, people had extremely negative feelings regarding Swallow, the average response being a 1.5. Despite the fact that Utah is well known for being a very "Red State," Utah voters had more positive feelings for President Barack Obama, hardly a popular figure in Utah, rating the President as a 2.3 on the same 5 point scale used for Swallow. Voters were much more positive about others, giving Governor Gary Herbert a 3.5 and former GOP Presidential Candidate Mitt Romney a 3.6.

The displeasure with John Swallow has likely translated into less confidence in the Utah Attorney General's office overall. Using a four-point scale with 1 being the most negative response and 4 being the most positive, Utah voters average a 2.7 when rating their confidence in the Attorney General's office. In contrast, Utah voters are much more confident in the governor's office, averaging a 3.3. Attorney General Reyes acknowledged in his debate with challenger Charles Stormont that he had inherited an office held in low regard due to the actions of his predecessors. The KBYU Utah Colleges Exit Poll confirmed this view.