



Watson Coleman on CD3 race: Belgard's message 'resonating' with voters

By Chase Brush | September 18th, 2014 - 10:01am

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TRENTON - Reacting to recent polling numbers that show Democratic hopeful Aimee Belgard neck-and-neck with her Republican opponent in CD3, fellow Democrat and congressional candidate Assemblywoman Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-15) said she's not surprised that the Burlington County freeholder is holding her own in a race that many assume is the Republican's to lose.

During a press conference yesterday where she accepted an endorsement from the Sierra Club of her own campaign against Somerset County doctor Alieta Eck in CD12, Watson Coleman said Belgard's message is "resonating" with voters in CD3.

"She's right on the issues, she's standing up for people in her district, and I think that message is resonating," Watson Coleman said of Belgard, the Democratic contender in a historically red-leaning CD3. "I also think that people are very weary in the state of New Jersey about who they're sending back to Congress. They want things to get done. They want to walk away from this sort of no-ism that is taking over the Congress and they want people who are willing to work with one another so that they can come to solutions on some of these problems."

Belgard is squaring off against Republican businessman

announced his retirement earlier this year. MacArthur is thought to have the edge over Belgard at least in funding, having already poured \$3 million of his own cash into his campaign. That makes it an uphill battle for Belgard, who, despite having support from national organizations like the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, still faces the challenge of defeating a conservative in a heavily red-leaning district.

But a poll by the Stockton Polling Institute this week showed Belgard and MacArthur [tied among the 606 likely voters surveyed in the district](#), indicating that the race may be closer than many initially expected. The numbers seem to have kicked the MacArthur campaign into [panic mode](#), releasing two negative Philadelphia TV network ads this week attacking Belgard for her work as a freeholder.

Watson Coleman said Belgard could help alleviate some of the partisan gridlock plaguing Washington, but also noted that some of Belgard's success in the race could be credited to her running on a ticket topped by U.S. Senator Cory Booker, who she called an "idealist."

Other polling this week shows Booker holding a [nine point lead](#) over his Republican opponent, Jeff Bell, in CD3.

"For example, we ought not to be fighting about our transportation infrastructure, whether it needs to be funded or whether it can help grow our economy," she said. "But we've got people down in Washington who just want to say no to everything. So Aimee in her district represents that opportunity to be more collaborative and to work for the issues that are important."