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NATIONAL: BUSH, TRUMP GET BUMPS

But nearly 4-in-10 GOP voters say Trump is just seeking publicity

West Long Branch, NJ – The latest *Monmouth University Poll* of Republican voters nationwide found significant bumps, both in the vote choice question and candidate favorability, for Jeb Bush and Donald Trump since they threw their hats into the rings. Bobby Jindal has made no headway since he entered the race, and Chris Christie may actually be losing ground since his announcement. Despite Trump’s surge, the poll also found that many GOP voters are not taking his candidacy seriously.

When Republicans are asked who they would support for the GOP nomination for president, Jeb Bush nominally leads the pack with 15%, followed by Donald Trump at 13%, and Ted Cruz at 9%. The next group of candidates includes Scott Walker (7%) – who is formally announcing today – Mike Huckabee (7%), Marco Rubio (6%), Ben Carson (6%), and Rand Paul (6%). The rest of the field garners no more than 2% of the vote, including Rick Perry (2%), Chris Christie (2%), Bobby Jindal (2%), Rick Santorum (2%), Carly Fiorina (1%), and John Kasich (1%), Lindsey Graham and George Pataki earn less than a half a percentage point. Jim Gilmore, who expressed his intent to enter the race in early August and is included in the *Monmouth University Poll* for the first time, has no support. Another 18% of GOP voters say they still are unsure of who they will support for the party’s nomination.

Four candidates have entered the race since the last Monmouth poll was taken in June. Of these, Jeb Bush’s support increased 6 points from 9% and Donald Trump’s support increased 11 points from 2%. Bobby Jindal’s support remains unchanged from 1% and Chris Christie’s support has dropped two points from 4%. While Christie’s two-point drop may be statistically insignificant it could be meaningful if other polls also place him out of the top ten, and thus off the stage for the first debate next month. Among the rest of the field, Ted Cruz’s support has increased by 4 points from 5% in June while Ben Carson’s has dropped by 5 points from 11%. Support for the other candidates has changed by no more than three points since the last *Monmouth University Poll*.

“The biggest poll bump over the past few weeks has been for Donald Trump. But you’ve got to wonder if his support has already plateaued since many Republican voters don’t view him as a serious candidate,” said Patrick Murray, director of the Monmouth University Polling Institute in West Long Branch, NJ.

The poll asked GOP voters whether any of the Republican candidates in the presidential race are doing it more to get themselves publicity than to make a serious run for the office. While one third (32% said no and 1-in-5 (21%) were unsure, nearly 4-in-10 (39%) named Donald Trump as a candidate who is in it more for the publicity. Chris Christie is named by 9% and Jeb Bush and Mike Huckabee are each named by 5%. *[Note: poll respondents could name more than one person for this question.]*

For the most part, the poll did not find significant shifts in the Republican field’s favorability ratings. Exceptions to this include recent entrants, Bush, Trump, and Jindal, as well as Santorum. Chris Christie’s voter rating dropped by a small amount since he announced.

Jeb Bush now garners a solid 50% favorable to 30% unfavorable rating among his party’s electorate. This marks an improvement over his narrowly positive 40% to 35% rating in June. Bush also gets net positive ratings from very conservative Republicans (48% to 41%) and Tea Party supporters (45% to 40%). In prior polls, Bush held net negative ratings with these two important voting blocs.

Trump’s voter rating has gone from a decidedly negative 20% favorable and 55% unfavorable in June to just a narrowly negative 40% favorable and 41% unfavorable rating now. He has also made an incredible surge among the Tea Party supporters – flipping his decidedly net negative 20% to 55% rating with this group to a decidedly positive 56% favorable to 26% unfavorable rating now.

“It looks like Tea Party voters are really responding to Trump’s aggressive illegal immigrant message,” said Murray.

Bobby Jindal’s net rating has also improved, from 27% favorable and 16% unfavorable in June to 35% favorable and 15% unfavorable now. Still, half of GOP voters feel they don’t know enough about Jindal to give him an evaluation, which is unchanged from prior polls.

Rick Santorum is the only other candidate who enjoyed a significant improvement in his net rating since June, now standing at 40% favorable and 18% unfavorable compared to 33% favorable and 22% unfavorable last month.

Chris Christie’s rating has declined slightly to 25% favorable and 45% unfavorable. This is not statistically significant when compared to his June 26% to 43% rating, but his standing among Republican voters has dropped in every poll since December 2014, when it stood at a nominally positive 36% favorable and 34% unfavorable.

Candidates who have maintained their net positive ratings since June are Marco Rubio at 53% favorable to 19% unfavorable, Mike Huckabee at 53% to 23%, Ted Cruz at 48% to 16%, Ben Carson at

48% to 11%, Rick Perry at 45% to 21%, Rand Paul at 44% to 26%, Scott Walker at 42% to 11%, Carly Fiorina at 30% to 18%, and John Kasich at 19% to 16%. Candidates whose net negative ratings haven't budged are Lindsey Graham at 17% to 33% and George Pataki at 13% to 31%. Jim Gilmore enters the race with the lowest name recognition of the field and a negative 6% favorable to 14% unfavorable rating.

The poll also found that Republican voters are divided on how the large field of 2016 contenders might impact their party. One third (34%) say the number of candidates in the race is good for the party and a similar 39% say it is bad for the party, while 22% say it has no impact. Ideological moderates are more likely to say the impact will be bad (40%) rather than good (24%) for the party when compared to conservatives (36% good and 39% bad).

“Moderates may make up a small proportion of the GOP primary electorate, but their opinions could provide a window on how independents may view the Republican brand in November 2016 based on this field,” said Murray.

The *Monmouth University Poll* was conducted by telephone from July 9 to 12, 2015 with 1,001 adults in the United States. This release is based on a sample of 336 registered voters who identify themselves as Republicans or lean toward the Republican Party. This voter sample has a margin of error of ± 5.4 percent. The poll was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute in West Long Branch, NJ.

DATA TABLES

The questions referred to in this release are as follows:

(* Some columns may not add to 100% due to rounding.)

1. I know the 2016 election is far away, but who would you support for the Republican nomination for president if the candidates were – [NAMES WERE ROTATED]

	July 2015	June 2015	April 2015
Jeb Bush	15%	9%	13%
Ben Carson	6%	11%	7%
Chris Christie	2%	4%	5%
Ted Cruz	9%	5%	11%
Carly Fiorina	1%	2%	1%
Jim Gilmore	0%	n/a	n/a
Lindsey Graham	<1%	2%	1%
Mike Huckabee	7%	8%	9%
Bobby Jindal	2%	1%	1%
John Kasich	1%	1%	1%
George Pataki	<1%	<1%	<1%
Rand Paul	6%	6%	6%
Rick Perry	2%	4%	5%
Marco Rubio	6%	9%	5%
Rick Santorum	2%	3%	1%
Donald Trump	13%	2%	7%
Scott Walker	7%	10%	11%
(VOL) Other	0%	0%	1%
(VOL) No one	1%	2%	2%
(VOL) Undecided	18%	20%	14%

2. I'm going to read you a few names of people who are running for president in 2016. Please tell me if your general impression of each is favorable or unfavorable, or if you don't really have an opinion. [NAMES WERE ROTATED]

	Favorable	Unfavorable	No opinion
Former Florida Governor Jeb Bush	50%	30%	20%
--June 2015	40	35	25
--April 2015	49	31	21
--December 2014	39	30	31
Commentator and Doctor Ben Carson	48%	11%	41%
--June 2015	45	12	43
--April 2015	39	16	45
--December 2014	32	12	57
New Jersey Governor Chris Christie	25%	45%	30%
--June 2015	26	43	31
--April 2015	33	42	25
--December 2014	36	34	31
Texas Senator Ted Cruz	48%	16%	35%
--June 2015	49	17	35
--April 2015	49	19	32
--December 2014	39	15	46
Businesswoman Carly Fiorina	30%	18%	51%
--June 2015	29	18	54
--April 2015	18	20	62
--December 2014	n/a	n/a	n/a
Former Virginia Governor Jim Gilmore	6%	14%	80%
--June 2015	n/a	n/a	n/a
--April 2015	n/a	n/a	n/a
--December 2014	n/a	n/a	n/a
South Carolina Senator Lindsey Graham	17%	33%	50%
--June 2015	17	34	48
--April 2015	18	32	50
--December 2014	n/a	n/a	n/a
Former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee	53%	23%	24%
--June 2015	50	20	30
--April 2015	53	21	26
--December 2014	45	22	33
Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal	35%	15%	51%
--June 2015	27	16	57
--April 2015	30	21	48
--December 2014	28	14	58
Ohio Governor John Kasich	19%	16%	65%
--June 2015	20	18	62
--April 2015	24	14	61
--December 2014	21	11	69
Former New York Governor George Pataki	13%	31%	57%
--June 2015	14	29	58
--April 2015	15	33	52
--December 2014	n/a	n/a	n/a
Kentucky Senator Rand Paul	44%	26%	30%
--June 2015	39	24	37
--April 2015	47	22	31
--December 2014	42	18	39
Former Texas Governor Rick Perry	45%	21%	34%
--June 2015	45	20	35
--April 2015	42	20	39
--December 2014	43	20	37

(Question 2 continued)

Florida Senator Marco Rubio	53%	19%	28%
--June 2015	54	13	34
--April 2015	41	18	40
--December 2014	38	16	46
Former Pennsylvania Senator Rick Santorum	40%	18%	43%
--June 2015	33	22	45
--April 2015	36	22	42
--December 2014	28	22	51
Businessman Donald Trump	40%	41%	19%
--June 2015	20	55	25
--April 2015	28	56	15%
--December 2014	n/a	n/a	n/a
Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker	42%	11%	46%
--June 2015	42	12	46
--April 2015	44	9	46
--December 2014	30	10	61

3. Do you think the number of candidates who are currently running for the Republican nomination is good for the party, is bad for the party, or does it have no impact?

	July 2015
Good for the party	34%
Bad for the party	39%
No impact	22%
(VOL) Don't know	5%

4. Are any of the Republican candidates in the presidential race right now doing it more to get themselves publicity than to make a serious run for the office? IF YES: Which candidates are running more to get publicity? [LIST WAS NOT READ] [Note: Results add to more than 100% because multiple responses were accepted]

	July 2015
Jeb Bush	5%
Ben Carson	3%
Chris Christie	9%
Ted Cruz	2%
Carly Fiorina	2%
Jim Gilmore	1%
Lindsey Graham	3%
Mike Huckabee	5%
Bobby Jindal	1%
John Kasich	<1%
George Pataki	3%
Rand Paul	2%
Rick Perry	3%
Marco Rubio	2%
Rick Santorum	%
Donald Trump	39%
Scott Walker	1%
None of them	32%
(VOL) Don't know	21%

The *Monmouth University Poll* was sponsored and conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute from July 9 to 12, 2015 with a national random sample of 1,001 adults age 18 and older. This includes 700 contacted by a live interviewer on a landline telephone and 301 contacted by a live interviewer on a cell phone, in English. Monmouth is responsible for all aspects of the survey design, data weighting and analysis. Final sample is weighted for region, age, education, gender and race based on US Census information. Data collection support provided by Braun Research (field) and SSI (RDD sample). The results in this poll release are based on a subsample of 336 registered voters who identify themselves as Republicans or lean toward the Republican Party. For results based on this sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling has a maximum margin of plus or minus 5.4 percentage points (unadjusted for sample design). Sampling error can be larger for sub-groups (see table below). In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

POLL DEMOGRAPHICS (weighted) FULL SAMPLE - ALL ADULTS		
49% Male	31% 18-34	66% White
51% Female	37% 35-54	12% Black
	32% 55+	15% Hispanic
		7% Asian/Other

POLL DEMOGRAPHICS (weighted) REPUBLICAN VOTERS ONLY		
47% Male	18% 18-34	87% White
53% Female	44% 35-54	4% Black
	38% 55+	4% Hispanic
		5% Asian/Other

	MARGIN OF ERROR									
	REPUBLICAN VOTER	PARTY ID		GENDER		TEA PARTY SUPPORTER		POLITICAL IDEOLOGY		
		Rep	Lean Rep	Male	Female	Yes	No	Very cons.	Somewhat cons.	Mod/ liberal
Unweighted N	336	238	98	163	173	138	182	138	111	80
moe	5.4%	6.4%	9.9%	7.7%	7.5%	8.4%	7.3%	8.4%	9.3%	11.0%

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