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## **NATIONAL: RYAN'S INITIAL IMPACT**

### ***Presidential horse race remains tight***

The *Monmouth University Poll* finds little movement in the presidential horse race since our last national poll two months ago. The selection of Paul Ryan as the presumptive GOP vice presidential nominee receives generally positive reviews but has made little initial impact on U.S. voter intentions.

In the presidential contest, registered voters give a slight edge to the incumbent, with 45% saying they intend to support Barack Obama in this year's election compared to 41% for Mitt Romney. That advantage narrows to 46% – 45% among American voters who are considered the most likely to vote at this time. In June, Obama's lead in the *Monmouth University Poll* was 46% to 42% among registered voters and 47% to 46% among likely voters. Independent voters are split – 40% for Romney to 37% for Obama. Obama claims 87% support among Democrats and Romney has 87% of the Republican vote.

Romney's pick for the GOP vice presidential nomination, Wisconsin Congressman Paul Ryan, receives more positive than negative reviews, especially when compared to the man he hopes to replace. Currently, 31% of American voters have a favorable view of Ryan and 27% have an unfavorable one, while 42% have no opinion. The negative numbers for incumbent Vice President Joe Biden are higher, earning a 30% favorable rating to a 35% unfavorable one, with 35% having no opinion.

Ryan's net +4 positive rating is also better than his running mate's net –3 negative; Mitt Romney currently holds a 35% favorable to 38% unfavorable rating. Barack Obama does slightly better than the rest of the field in favorable ratings (42%), but this is offset by a similar unfavorable number (40%).

"None of the candidates for the nation's two highest offices waltzes into this race with stellar ratings, but Paul Ryan is generally seen as a solid pick for vice president." said Patrick Murray, director of the New Jersey-based Monmouth University Polling Institute.

More than half (54%) of voters say that Romney made a good choice with Paul Ryan; only 28% call it a bad pick. Among Republicans, 83% say it is a good pick and just 7% describe it as bad. Independents also see Ryan as more of a good (55%) rather than bad (25%) choice. Three-in-ten (30%) Democrats say the choice is a good one while 49% say it is bad.

While Mitt Romney’s selection may get favorable reviews, it has changed few minds, at least initially. Just 8% of voters say that the GOP running mate has led them to change their vote intention. Of this group, 53% say they now support Romney to 34% who now support Obama. The remainder have moved to either a third party candidate (8%) or undecided (5%).

The *Monmouth University Poll* also found some potential shifts in the national turnout dynamic. Currently, 88% of self-identified Republican voters say they are certain to vote in November, up 4 points from June. Among Democrats, the current number of “certain” voters stands at a similar 86%, which marks a 7 point gain over the same period. On the other hand, independent voters’ turnout likelihood has decreased by 4 points to 70%.

The poll also asked voters to assess which candidate would better handle three sets of issues. On the economy and jobs, there is no decisive winner – 44% trust Obama more on this issue to 42% who prefer Romney. There is also no advantage on the federal budget and national debt – 43% choose Obama to 43% for Romney. When it comes to Social Security and Medicare, though, Obama has a slight edge – 46% trust the incumbent more on this issue to 39% who prefer the challenger.

“Jobs, health care, entitlements, and government spending will all be part of the debate this fall. Electoral victory will likely come down to which issue is ultimately more important in voters’ minds,” added Murray.

The latest *Monmouth University Poll* was conducted by telephone with 1,375 registered voters in the United States from August 15 to 19, 2012. This sample has a margin of error of  $\pm 2.7$  percent. The poll was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute in West Long Branch, New Jersey.

### DATA TABLES

*The questions referred to in this release are as follows:*

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

1. If the election for President were today, would you vote for Mitt Romney the Republican, or Barack Obama the Democrat, or some other candidate? [*IF UNDECIDED: At this moment, do you lean towards Mitt Romney or do you lean towards Barack Obama?*] [*NAMES WERE ROTATED*]

(with leaners)	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE		
			Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic
Romney	41%	45%	87%	40%	6%	44%	38%	36%	42%	44%	49%	7%	30%
Obama	45%	46%	7%	37%	87%	40%	50%	49%	44%	45%	39%	82%	61%
Other candidate	6%	4%	3%	11%	2%	7%	4%	11%	5%	3%	6%	2%	5%
(VOL) Undecided	8%	6%	3%	13%	5%	9%	7%	5%	10%	8%	7%	9%	5%

TREND: Reg. Voters	August 2012	June 2012
Romney	41%	42%
Obama	45%	46%
Other candidate	6%	5%
(VOL) Undecided	8%	7%
Unwtd N	1375	1395

TREND: <i>Likely Voters</i>	August 2012	June 2012
Romney	45%	46%
Obama	46%	47%
Other candidate	4%	3%
(VOL) Undecided	6%	4%
<i>Unwtd N</i>	1149	1152

[QUESTIONS 2 AND 3 WERE ROTATED]

2. Is your general opinion of Mitt Romney favorable or unfavorable, or do you have no opinion?

	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE		
			Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic
Favorable	<b>35%</b>	40%	74%	34%	7%	39%	32%	25%	37%	40%	41%	8%	26%
Unfavorable	<b>38%</b>	39%	8%	32%	69%	32%	43%	33%	39%	39%	36%	51%	33%
No opinion	<b>27%</b>	21%	18%	34%	23%	29%	25%	42%	25%	20%	23%	40%	41%

TREND: <i>Reg. Voters</i>	August 2012	June 2012
Favorable	35%	34%
Unfavorable	38%	34%
No opinion	27%	32%
<i>Unwtd N</i>	1375	1395

TREND: <i>Likely Voters</i>	August 2012	June 2012
Favorable	40%	38%
Unfavorable	39%	37%
No opinion	21%	25%
<i>Unwtd N</i>	1149	1152

3. Is your general opinion of Barack Obama favorable or unfavorable, or do you have no opinion?

	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE		
			Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic
Favorable	<b>42%</b>	45%	8%	33%	82%	38%	47%	42%	42%	43%	36%	76%	54%
Unfavorable	<b>40%</b>	43%	80%	42%	6%	44%	36%	32%	41%	44%	47%	9%	26%
No opinion	<b>18%</b>	12%	12%	25%	11%	18%	17%	27%	17%	13%	17%	15%	20%

TREND: <i>Reg. Voters</i>	August 2012	June 2012
Favorable	42%	43%
Unfavorable	40%	40%
No opinion	18%	17%
<i>Unwtd N</i>	1375	1395

TREND: <i>Likely Voters</i>	August 2012	June 2012
Favorable	45%	45%
Unfavorable	43%	43%
No opinion	12%	11%
<i>Unwtd N</i>	1149	1152

[QUESTIONS 4 AND 5 WERE ROTATED]

4. Is your general opinion of Paul Ryan favorable or unfavorable, or do you have no opinion?

	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE		
			Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic
Favorable	<b>31%</b>	35%	65%	28%	7%	35%	27%	20%	33%	36%	36%	6%	18%
Unfavorable	<b>27%</b>	30%	6%	23%	50%	25%	29%	19%	28%	31%	26%	40%	18%
No opinion	<b>42%</b>	34%	29%	49%	43%	40%	45%	61%	40%	34%	37%	54%	64%

5. Is your general opinion of Joe Biden favorable or unfavorable, or do you have no opinion?

	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE		
			Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic
Favorable	30%	32%	8%	22%	58%	27%	32%	19%	31%	35%	29%	48%	26%
Unfavorable	35%	39%	70%	35%	9%	39%	32%	27%	36%	41%	41%	10%	24%
No opinion	35%	28%	22%	43%	33%	34%	35%	54%	34%	24%	31%	42%	50%

[QUESTIONS 6 TO 8 WERE ROTATED]

6. Who do you trust more to handle the economy and jobs – Mitt Romney or Barack Obama?

	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE		
			Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic
Romney	42%	45%	86%	44%	5%	46%	38%	37%	43%	44%	49%	8%	33%
Obama	44%	45%	8%	35%	85%	40%	48%	48%	42%	44%	37%	83%	59%
Not sure/Don't know	14%	10%	6%	21%	10%	14%	13%	15%	14%	13%	14%	8%	8%

7. Who do you trust more to handle Social Security and Medicare – Mitt Romney or Barack Obama?

	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE		
			Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic
Romney	39%	43%	83%	40%	5%	43%	36%	35%	40%	42%	46%	8%	28%
Obama	46%	46%	7%	39%	86%	40%	51%	48%	44%	46%	39%	80%	63%
Not sure/Don't know	15%	11%	10%	22%	10%	17%	13%	17%	17%	12%	15%	11%	9%

8. Who do you trust more to handle the federal budget and national debt – Mitt Romney or Barack Obama?

	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE		
			Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic
Romney	43%	46%	87%	45%	7%	48%	39%	38%	45%	45%	50%	10%	36%
Obama	43%	44%	7%	34%	83%	37%	48%	44%	41%	44%	37%	81%	56%
Not sure/Don't know	14%	10%	7%	21%	10%	15%	13%	19%	14%	11%	13%	9%	8%

9. Did Mitt Romney's choice of Wisconsin Congressman Paul Ryan as his running mate change your mind about who you will support for president or did it not affect who you will vote for?

	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE		
			Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic
Changed mind	8%	9%	8%	11%	6%	9%	8%	7%	7%	11%	9%	8%	5%
Did not affect vote	87%	88%	90%	81%	91%	86%	87%	89%	89%	82%	87%	86%	87%
Not sure/Don't know	5%	3%	2%	8%	3%	5%	5%	4%	4%	7%	4%	5%	8%

10. Overall, would you describe Mitt Romney's choice of Paul Ryan as a very good pick, somewhat good, somewhat bad, or very bad?

	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE		
			Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic
Very good	26%	30%	55%	22%	7%	29%	23%	13%	27%	33%	30%	10%	15%
Somewhat good	28%	26%	28%	33%	23%	28%	28%	37%	28%	23%	28%	22%	33%
Somewhat bad	13%	13%	5%	12%	20%	14%	13%	14%	13%	13%	11%	19%	17%
Very bad	15%	17%	2%	13%	29%	15%	16%	13%	15%	17%	15%	22%	12%
Not sure/Don't know	18%	15%	10%	20%	20%	15%	21%	24%	17%	15%	16%	29%	23%

The *Monmouth University Poll* was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute on August 15 to 19, 2012 with a national random sample of 1,375 registered voters, including 484 via live interview on a landline telephone, 578 via interactive voice response (IVR) on a landline telephone, and 313 via live interview on a cell phone. Interviewing services were provided by Braun Research, Inc. (live landline and cell) and Survey USA (IVR and live cell) and the telephone sample was obtained from Survey Sampling International. Monmouth is responsible for all aspects of the survey questionnaire design, data weighting and analysis. For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling has a maximum margin of plus or minus 2.7 percentage points. Sampling error increases as the sample size decreases, so statements based on various population subgroups, such as separate figures reported by gender or party identification, are subject to more error than are statements based on the total sample. 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.

<i>POLL DEMOGRAPHICS (weighted)</i>			
27% Rep	48% Male	23% 18-34	73% White
33% Dem	52% Female	39% 35-54	10% Black
40% Ind		38% 55+	11% Hispanic
			6% Asian/Other

	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE		
			Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic
<i>Unweighted N</i>	1375	1149	384	521	450	632	743	258	418	692	1099	122	78
<i>moe</i>	2.7%	2.9%	5.0%	4.3%	4.6%	3.9%	3.6%	6.1%	4.8%	3.7%	3.0%	8.9%	11.1%

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