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NEW HAMPSHIRE: TRUMP'S LEAD GROWS

Cruz, Kasich, Rubio in second tier as Carson fades

West Long Branch, NJ – Donald Trump has increased his already sizable lead in the New Hampshire Republican primary while three candidates battle for second place according to the latest ***Monmouth University Poll***. Only 1-in-3 voters have completely locked in their vote choice, while 1-in-4 are still very much up for grabs. Another 4-in-10 voters have a strong candidate preference but are willing to keep their options open.

About 1-in-3 (32%) likely GOP primary voters in New Hampshire currently back Donald Trump for the presidential nomination, up from 26% in November. The next tier of candidates includes Ted Cruz (14%), John Kasich (14%), and Marco Rubio (12%), with Chris Christie (8%), Carly Fiorina (5%), Jeb Bush (4%), Rand Paul (4%), and Ben Carson (3%) trailing behind. While the order of placement has shifted, all of these candidates are within a few percentage points of their showing two months ago, with Cruz showing the biggest gain of the second tier – 5 points since November. The only candidate who experienced a substantial fall in fortunes is Carson – who has plummeted from 16%. None of the other three candidates included in the poll registers higher than 1%.

One month before New Hampshire heads to the polls, 1-in-3 (32%) likely Republican voters say they are completely decided on who they will support, which is up from 20% in November. Trump supporters (46%) are the most likely to say their candidate choice is completely locked in.

Another 42% of the electorate say they have a strong preference but are willing to consider other candidates. The remaining 1-in-4 say they either have only a slight preference (15%) or are really undecided (12%), which is down from 4-in-10 who were similarly uncommitted two months ago. Combining voters' first and second choices, Trump has the potential support of 40% of likely voters and Cruz may be able to get up to 35% support, compared to 23% for Rubio, 20% for Kasich, 20% for Christie, 13% for Bush, and 11% for Fiorina.

"As Granite State voters start to firm up their decision, it's looking more and more unlikely that Trump will be toppled from his perch. The real fight is for second place," said Patrick Murray, director of the independent Monmouth University Polling Institute in West Long Branch, NJ.

New Hampshire's first-in-the-nation primary is known as the ultimate arena for retail politics. Indeed, 4-in-10 (41%) likely Republican voters report having seen at least one of the presidential candidates in person. That's up from 15% in July. Fiorina (14%), Christie (14%), Trump (13%), Bush (11%), Kasich (11%), and Rubio (10%) have been the biggest draws. Less than 1-in-10 voters have attended a Cruz (7%), Paul (5%), or Carson (5%) event. Interestingly, a number of Republican primary voters also say they have seen Democrats Hillary Clinton (5%) and Bernie Sanders (3%) in the flesh.

Overall, New Hampshire voters hold a generally favorable opinion of the Republican field and the majority would be able to live with a variety of candidates becoming the GOP nominee. This includes Trump (26% would feel enthusiastic and 30% satisfied), Cruz (20% enthusiastic and 44% satisfied), Rubio (13% enthusiastic and 51% satisfied), or Christie (9% enthusiastic and 47% satisfied).

Most candidates have seen only minor shifts in fundamental voter opinion of them over the past two months. Ted Cruz's ratings have gone up to 57% favorable (from 46% in November) and 24% negative (from 32%). Views of Donald Trump (52% favorable to 40% unfavorable) have ticked up slightly, while views of Marco Rubio (56% favorable to 28% unfavorable) have dipped slightly.

Views of Chris Christie (50% favorable to 36% unfavorable) have gone down a bit but he still holds onto the net positive margin he achieved in November after turning around prior negative ratings. Voter opinion of John Kasich (43% favorable to 32% unfavorable) has remained stable over the past two months. Jeb Bush (39% favorable to 47% unfavorable) continues to hold the only net negative rating among the race's top contenders. The candidate who has suffered the most significant downturn in voter opinion, though, is Ben Carson (46% favorable to 34% unfavorable), whose favorable number has dropped by 27 percentage points since September.

The *Monmouth University Poll* also found that the top issue for Granite State Republicans in making their vote decision is national security and terrorism (35% first choice / 20% second choice), followed by the economy and jobs (20% first choice / 21% second choice). The next tier of issue concerns includes taxes and government spending (13% first choice / 14% second choice) and immigration (8% first choice / 10% second choice). Gun ownership (4% / 9%), health care (4% / 6%), social issues (3% / 6%), education (2% / 3%), and drug addiction (1% / 1%) rank much farther down the list.

The *Monmouth University Poll* was conducted by telephone from January 7 to 10, 2016 with 414 New Hampshire voters likely to vote in the Republican presidential primary. This sample has a margin of

error of ±4.8 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. Who would you support if the presidential primary was being held today and the candidates
    for the Republican nomination were – [*NAMES WERE ROTATED*]

	January 2016	November 2015	September 2015	July 2015
Donald Trump	**32%**	26%	28%	24%
Ted Cruz	**14%**	9%	8%	3%
John Kasich	**14%**	11%	11%	7%
Marco Rubio	**12%**	13%	4%	6%
Chris Christie	**8%**	5%	2%	4%
Carly Fiorina	**5%**	5%	7%	3%
Jeb Bush	**4%**	7%	7%	12%
Rand Paul	**4%**	3%	4%	5%
Ben Carson	**3%**	16%	17%	5%
Mike Huckabee	**1%**	1%	1%	2%
Jim Gilmore	**0%**	<1%	0%	<1%
Rick Santorum	**0%**	<1%	1%	1%
(VOL) Other	**0%**	0%	3%	8%
Lindsey Graham	***n/a***	*<1%*	*1%*	*<1%*
Bobby Jindal	***n/a***	*0%*	*<1%*	*2%*
George Pataki	***n/a***	*<1%*	*1%*	*2%*
(VOL) Undecided	**3%**	4%	7%	14%
(n)	***(414)***	*(410)*	*(415)*	*(467)*

2. And who would be your second choice?

	January 2016	November 2015	September 2015	July 2015
Donald Trump	**8%**	9%	9%	8%
Ted Cruz	**21%**	9%	8%	5%
John Kasich	**6%**	7%	7%	5%
Marco Rubio	**11%**	14%	6%	8%
Chris Christie	**12%**	8%	5%	8%
Carly Fiorina	**6%**	9%	10%	4%
Jeb Bush	**9%**	10%	7%	10%
Rand Paul	**3%**	2%	2%	4%
Ben Carson	**5%**	15%	16%	2%
Mike Huckabee	**1%**	2%	2%	3%
Jim Gilmore	**<1%**	0%	<1%	0%
Rick Santorum	**1%**	0%	1%	2%
(VOL) Other	**0%**	0%	6%	12%
Lindsey Graham	***n/a***	*2%*	*1%*	*1%*
Bobby Jindal	***n/a***	*0%*	*1%*	*1%*
George Pataki	***n/a***	*<1%*	*0%*	*2%*
(VOL) No one	**10%**	7%	9%	8%
(VOL) Undecided	**7%**	7%	11%	18%

3. Which of the following best describes where your decision stands at this moment: I am completely decided on which candidate I will support, I have a strong preference right now but I am willing to consider other candidates, I have a slight preference among a group of candidates I like, or I am really undecided among a number of candidates?

	January 2016	November 2015
Completely decided	**32%**	20%
Strong preference	**42%**	39%
Slight preference	**15%**	22%
Undecided	**12%**	19%

4. I'm going to read you a few names of candidates for president. 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
Jeb Bush	**39%**	**47%**	**14%**
--November 2015	*44*	*42*	*14*
--September 2015	*39*	*45*	*16*
--July 2015	*47*	*37*	*16*
Ben Carson	**46%**	**34%**	**20%**
--November 2015	*64*	*19*	*16*
--September 2015	*73*	*10*	*16*
--July 2015	*45*	*15*	*40*
Chris Christie	**50%**	**36%**	**14%**
--November 2015	*54*	*32*	*14*
--September 2015	*38*	*46*	*16*
--July 2015	*42*	*40*	*19*
Ted Cruz	**57%**	**24%**	**18%**
--November 2015	*46*	*32*	*21*
--September 2015	*50*	*28*	*22*
--July 2015	*44*	*32*	*24*
John Kasich	**43%**	**32%**	**25%**
--November 2015	*45*	*31*	*23*
--September 2015	*54*	*19*	*27*
--July 2015	*45*	*15*	*40*
Marco Rubio	**56%**	**28%**	**16%**
--November 2015	*62*	*19*	*18*
--September 2015	*50*	*26*	*25*
--July 2015	*53*	*22*	*25*
Donald Trump	**52%**	**40%**	**8%**
--November 2015	*49*	*43*	*8*
--September 2015	*54*	*36*	*9*
--July 2015	*47*	*44*	*9*

[*QUESTIONS 5 THROUGH 8 WERE ROTATED*]

5. How would you feel if Donald Trump became the Republican nominee – enthusiastic, satisfied, dissatisfied, or upset?

	January 2016
Enthusiastic	**26%**
Satisfied	**30%**
Dissatisfied	**17%**
Upset	**25%**
(VOL) Don't know	**2%**

6. How would you feel if Ted Cruz became the Republican nominee – enthusiastic, satisfied, dissatisfied, or upset?

	January 2016
Enthusiastic	**20%**
Satisfied	**44%**
Dissatisfied	**19%**
Upset	**12%**
(VOL) Don't know	**5%**

7. How would you feel if Marco Rubio became the Republican nominee – enthusiastic, satisfied, dissatisfied, or upset?

	January 2016
Enthusiastic	**13%**
Satisfied	**51%**
Dissatisfied	**24%**
Upset	**9%**
(VOL) Don't know	**3%**

8. How would you feel if Chris Christie became the Republican nominee – enthusiastic, satisfied, dissatisfied, or upset?

	January 2016
Enthusiastic	**9%**
Satisfied	**47%**
Dissatisfied	**27%**
Upset	**15%**
(VOL) Don't know	**2%**

9. Which of the following issues is the most important to you in deciding who to support for president? [*ITEMS WERE ROTATED*]
10. And which is the second most important?

	FIRST CHOICE	**SECOND CHOICE**	*Combined 1 & 2*
Immigration	**8%**	**10%**	*18%*
The economy and jobs	**20%**	**21%**	*41%*
National security and terrorism	**35%**	**20%**	*55%*
Social issues like abortion and same-sex marriage	**3%**	**6%**	*9%*
Taxes and government spending	**13%**	**14%**	*27%*
Education	**2%**	**3%**	*5%*
Gun ownership	**4%**	**9%**	*13%*
Health care	**4%**	**6%**	*10%*
Drug addiction	**1%**	**1%**	*2%*
(VOL) All equally important	**8%**	**1%**	*9%*
(VOL) Other	**2%**	**0%**	*2%*
(VOL) Don't know	**0%**	**10%**	*10%*

11. Have you had the opportunity to meet or see any of the Republican or Democratic candidates for president in person this year, or not?

	January 2016	July 2015
Yes	**41%**	15%
No	**59%**	85%

.12. *If YES:* Which ones? *[MULTIPLE RESPONSES ACCEPTED.]*

	January 2016	July 2015
Jeb Bush	**11%**	3%
Ben Carson	**5%**	3%
Chris Christie	**14%**	7%
Ted Cruz	**7%**	1%
Carly Fiorina	**14%**	3%
Jim Gilmore	**0%**	1%
Lindsey Graham	**1%**	2%
Mike Huckabee	**0%**	1%
John Kasich	**11%**	3%
Rand Paul	**5%**	3%
Marco Rubio	**10%**	3%
Rick Santorum	**0%**	1%
Donald Trump	**13%**	3%
Hillary Clinton (D)	**5%**	*n/a*
Bernie Sanders (D)	**3%**	*n/a*
Other	**1%**	3%

The *Monmouth University Poll* was sponsored and conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute from January 7 to 10, 2016 with a statewide random sample of 414 New Hampshire voters drawn from a list of registered Republican and independent voters who participated in a primary election in the past two election cycles or voted in both the 2012 and 2014 general elections, and indicate they will vote in the Republican presidential primary in February 2016. This was supplemented by a sample of new voters who say they are likely to register and vote in the Republican primary. This includes 287 contacted by a live interviewer on a landline telephone and 127 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 age and gender based on state registration list information on the pool of voters who participate in primary elections. Data collection support provided by Braun Research (field) and Aristotle (voter list and non-voter sample). 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 4.8 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)		
60% Reg Rep	*55% Male*	*10% 18-34*
31% Reg Indep	*45% Female*	*25% 35-49*
9% New voter		*36% 50-64*
		29% 65+

		MARGIN OF ERROR								
		GENDER		*SELF-ID PARTY*		*POLITICAL IDEOLOGY*			*TEA PARTY SUPPORTER*	
	LIKELY VOTERS	*Male*	*Female*	*Rep*	*Ind*	*Very cons.*	*Somewhat cons.*	*Mod/ Lib*	*Yes*	*No*
Unweighted N	*414*	*247*	*167*	*226*	*187*	*118*	*126*	*165*	*117*	*280*
moe	*4.8*	*6.2*	*7.6*	*6.5*	*7.2*	*9.0*	*8.7*	*7.6*	*9.1*	*5.9*

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