

Released:
Monday, November 2, 2015

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NEW HAMPSHIRE: RUBIO RISING IN GOP RACE

Trump, Carson retain top two spots

West Long Branch, NJ – Donald Trump maintains his sizable lead in the New Hampshire Republican primary and Ben Carson holds onto second place, but the latest **Monmouth University Poll** has found a new occupant in the 3rd place slot – Marco Rubio. GOP primary voters are also unhappy with the recent budget deal reached by Congress, and their ire is directed at both parties.

One-in-four (26%) likely GOP primary voters in New Hampshire continue to back Donald Trump for the presidential nomination. Ben Carson (16%) places second and Marco Rubio (13%) comes in third, followed closely by John Kasich (11%). Other contenders include Ted Cruz (9%), Jeb Bush (7%), Carly Fiorina (5%), Chris Christie (5%), and Rand Paul (3%). None of the other six candidates included in the poll registers higher than 1%.

Most of these results are within a few points of each candidates' vote share back in September, except for Marco Rubio whose support has tripled from 4%. In the past two months, Christie's support has increased by 3 points, while support for Trump and Fiorina have each decreased by 2 points, all within the survey's margin of error. No other candidate's vote share changed by more than one percentage point since September. When voters' first and second choices are combined, Trump (35%), Carson (31%), and Rubio (27%) clearly stand out from the rest of the field, including Kasich (18%), Cruz (18%), Bush (17%), Fiorina (14%), and Christie (13%).

Other than Rubio's rise on the heels of a well-reviewed debate performance, the contours of the New Hampshire primary have not shifted significantly since September. There are few differences in levels of support among different demographic groups, although Carson actually does slightly better among those under the age of 50 (22%) than he does among older voters (13%). Carson also does better with women (20%) than men (12%), while Kasich does better with men (15%) than women (6%).

“Marco Rubio’s standout performance in the last debate seems to have paid dividends in a contest that was supposed to be dominated by his former mentor Jeb Bush,” said Patrick Murray, director of the independent Monmouth University Polling Institute in West Long Branch, NJ. “Rubio’s new-found support seems to be a little softer than for other candidates at the front of the pack, but it is not particularly solid for anybody.”

Currently, only 1-in-5 (20%) likely primary voters say they are completely decided on who they will support, 39% say they have a strong preference but are willing to consider other candidates, 22% have only a slight preference, and 19% say they are really undecided. Just 1-in-3 voters say they would be very (11%) or somewhat (21%) unhappy if their chosen candidate did not win the Republican nomination. Half (50%) say they would be okay with a different outcome and 18% say their feeling would depend on who becomes the nominee. Among the front-runners, Rubio supporters (18%) are the least likely to feel unhappy if someone else won the nomination.

There have been some shifts in fundamental voter opinion of the candidates over the past two months. Ben Carson continues to enjoy the best ratings in the field, but he is now joined by Marco Rubio who has very similar numbers. Carson’s 64% favorable and 19% unfavorable rating is slightly off his 73% - 10% high mark in September. Rubio’s 62% favorable and 19% unfavorable rating marks an increase from his already solid 50% - 26% showing two months ago.

Donald Trump’s 49% favorable and 43% unfavorable rating is somewhat less positive than his 54% - 36% rating in September. In fact, most of the leading candidates have seen their ratings slip. This includes slight declines for Carly Fiorina (54% favorable and 26% unfavorable now, compared to 58% - 21% in September) and Ted Cruz (46% - 32% now, compared to 50% - 28%), and much larger drops for John Kasich (45% - 31% now, compared to 54% - 19%) and Rand Paul (29% - 51% now, compared to 37% - 43%).

Two exceptions to this pattern are Jeb Bush and Chris Christie. Bush’s current rating of 44% favorable and 42% unfavorable is a slight improvement over his 39% - 45% showing in September. Christie’s rating has improved much more dramatically, now standing at a very positive 54% favorable and 32% unfavorable, compared to a negative 38% - 46% result two months ago.

“Candidate ratings can be a leading indicator for potential shifts in the vote choice. These results could be good news for Christie and bad news for Kasich. However, both have to contend with a surging Rubio,” said Murray

The *Monmouth University Poll* also found that 54% of likely Republican primary voters are aware of the federal budget plan that was passed by Congress last week. Among this group, just 29% approve of the deal and 58% disapprove. A majority (62%) feels that Congressional Democrats did not compromise enough in reaching this deal. Only 19% say the Democrats compromised the right amount

and 9% say they compromised too much. Likely voters in the Granite State primary are also dissatisfied with Congressional Republicans. Over half (53%) say GOP members of Congress compromised too much to get this deal, compared to 24% who say they compromised the right amount and 16% who say they compromised too little.

The *Monmouth University Poll* was conducted by telephone from October 29 to November 1, 2015 with 410 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]**

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

2. And who would be your second choice?

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

	November 2015
Completely decided	20%
Strong preference	39%
Slight preference	22%
Undecided	19%

[QUESTION 4 WAS ASKED OF THOSE WITH A FIRST CHOICE; n=395, moe = +/-4.9%.]

4. How would you feel if someone other than [FIRST VOTE CHOICE] won the Republican nomination – would you be very unhappy, a little unhappy, or would you be okay with it?

	November 2015
Very unhappy	11%
A little unhappy	21%
Would be okay with it	50%
(VOL) Depends on who wins	18%
(VOL) Don't know	0%

5. 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	44%	42%	14%
--September 2015	39	45	16
--July 2015	47	37	16
Commentator and Doctor Ben Carson	64%	19%	16%
--September 2015	73	10	16
--July 2015	45	15	40
New Jersey Governor Chris Christie	54%	32%	14%
--September 2015	38	46	16
--July 2015	42	40	19
Texas Senator Ted Cruz	46%	32%	21%
--September 2015	50	28	22
--July 2015	44	32	24
Businesswoman Carly Fiorina	54%	26%	20%
--September 2015	58	21	20
--July 2015	47	17	36
Ohio Governor John Kasich	45%	31%	23%
--September 2015	54	19	27
--July 2015	45	15	40
Kentucky Senator Rand Paul	29%	51%	20%
--September 2015	37	43	20
--July 2015	43	31	25
Florida Senator Marco Rubio	62%	19%	18%
--September 2015	50	26	25
--July 2015	53	22	25
Businessman Donald Trump	49%	43%	8%
--September 2015	54	36	9
--July 2015	47	44	9

6. Have you read or heard anything about the federal budget plan that was just passed by Congress, or not?

	November 2015
Yes, have heard	54%
No, have not heard	46%

[THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WERE ASKED OF THOSE WHO HAVE HEARD ABOUT THE FEDERAL BUDGET PLAN; n=227, moe = +/-6.5%.]

7. Do you approve or disapprove of this plan?

	November 2015
Approve	29%
Disapprove	58%
(VOL) Don't know	12%

[QUESTIONS 8 & 9 WERE ROTATED]

8. Do you think the Republicans in Congress compromised too much, not enough, or the right amount in reaching this budget deal?

	November 2015
Too much	53%
Not enough	16%
Right amount	24%
(VOL) Don't know	6%

9. Do you think the Democrats in Congress compromised too much, not enough, or the right amount in reaching this budget deal?

	November 2015
Too much	9%
Not enough	62%
Right amount	19%
(VOL) Don't know	9%

The *Monmouth University Poll* was sponsored and conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute from October 29 to November 1, 2015 with a statewide random sample of 410 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 non-voters who say they are likely to register and vote in the Republican primary. This includes 286 contacted by a live interviewer on a landline telephone and 124 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)		
64% Reg Rep	53% Male	10% 18-34
28% Reg Indep	47% Female	25% 35-49
8% New voter		39% 50-64
		25% 65+

MARGIN OF ERROR										
	LIKELY VOTERS	GENDER		SELF-ID PARTY		POLITICAL IDEOLOGY			TEA PARTY SUPPORTER	
		Male	Female	Rep	Ind	Very cons.	Somewhat cons.	Mod/ Lib	Yes	No
Unweighted N	410	223	187	206	204	108	123	171	122	279
moe	4.8%	6.6%	7.2%	6.8%	6.9%	9.4%	8.8%	7.5%	8.9%	5.9%

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