

Released:  
**Thursday, June 7, 2012**

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## **U.S. VOTERS: “VENTURE CAPITAL” NOT A DIRTY WORD**

### ***Obama holds 4 point edge over Romney***

The *Monmouth University Poll* finds little resentment of venture capital firms among American voters, a topic that is expected to dominate this year’s presidential contest. The national poll, conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute in New Jersey, also finds Pres. Barack Obama with a 4 point lead over presumptive GOP nominee Mitt Romney.

Currently, registered voters in the U.S. give a slight edge to the incumbent, with 46% saying they intend to support Obama in this year’s election compared to 42% for Romney. That advantage narrows to 47% – 46% among voters who are considered the most likely to vote at this time. Independent voters are split down the middle – 41% for Obama to 39% for Romney. Obama claims 85% support among Democrats and Romney has 84% of the GOP vote.

Romney’s prior ties to Bain Capital, a private equity firm, featured heavily in the Republican nomination contest and promises to be a focus of the incumbent’s campaign strategy. This led one Obama surrogate, Newark, NJ Mayor Cory Booker, to declare on national TV that he was “nauseated” by attacks on the industry.

About two-thirds of voters have heard about venture capital or private equity firms. The *Monmouth University Poll* finds that 42% of American voters familiar with the industry feel these firms are good for the nation’s economy compared to just 22% who say they are bad. Another 16% say they have no economic impact and 20% have no opinion. In the area of jobs – which has been the major thrust of attacks on Romney’s Bain connection – 36% say these firms tend to create jobs compared to 21% who say they eliminate jobs. Another 22% say they have no impact on jobs and 21% have no opinion. Among the 1-in-6 voters who report knowing a “great deal” about venture capital, 49% say these firms create jobs compared to 28% who say they eliminate jobs.

“For most American voters, venture capital is not a dirty word. That means the Obama campaign has to walk a fine line between attacking Romney’s individual record and impugning an industry which

many voters view positively,” said Patrick Murray, director of the New Jersey-based Monmouth University Polling Institute.

The poll also examined issues with religious implications. Gov. Romney’s faith was an issue throughout the nomination process as exit polls indicated Evangelical Christian voters were uncomfortable with his Mormonism. Pres. Obama’s recently announced support of gay marriage has also sparked a debate among segments of his own base who have faith-based objections to the policy.

Overall, voters are split on which candidate comes closer to sharing their own religious beliefs – 31% say it is Obama and 27% say it is Romney. Another 32% volunteer that neither man shares their religious beliefs. Among white evangelical voters, 43% feel they share common beliefs with Romney to just 15% who feel closer to Obama. Among white voters who are non-evangelical or non-Christian, just 26% relate to Romney’s beliefs while 29% feel closer to Obama’s. And among non-white voters of any faith – including evangelicals and others – 47% identify more closely with Obama on religion to just 16% for Romney.

While neither candidate has a real edge in the “faith-stakes,” more voters seem to be put off by the President’s gay marriage stand than by the GOP nominee’s Mormon beliefs. Specifically, 35% of U.S. voters say they are more concerned with Obama’s position compared to 13% who are more concerned with Romney’s religious denomination. Another 7% say both issues concern them equally. However, a plurality of voters (41%) volunteer that neither issue concerns them at all. Among white evangelical voters, just over half (51%) are concerned more with Obama’s gay marriage support while only 11% are bothered more by Romney’s Mormon faith.

“These religious views are unlikely to be a game changer come November. In the end, faith-based appraisals of either candidate are likely to reinforce voters’ pre-existing opinions based on other issues,” said Murray.

The poll also asked voters for their overall personal opinion of the two candidates. Neither has a stellar rating. Pres. Obama clocks in at 43% favorable to 40% unfavorable, while Gov. Romney registers an even split at 34% favorable to 34% unfavorable.

When asked which party they would like to see in control of Congress next year, voter preferences are evenly divided between Democrats (36%) and Republicans (35%). Another 27% of U.S. voters say it makes no difference who controls Congress next year.

The latest *Monmouth University Poll* was conducted by telephone with 1,395 registered voters from June 4 to 6, 2012. This sample has a margin of error of  $\pm 2.6$  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			RACE & RELIGION		
			Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic	White Evang.	White Non	Other Race
Romney	<b>42%</b>	<b>46%</b>	84%	39%	11%	44%	40%	35%	43%	46%	50%	4%	28%	65%	42%	22%
Obama	<b>46%</b>	<b>47%</b>	7%	41%	85%	43%	49%	53%	45%	43%	38%	90%	57%	22%	46%	67%
Other candidate	<b>5%</b>	<b>3%</b>	4%	9%	2%	5%	5%	6%	5%	4%	5%	0%	4%	6%	5%	3%
(VOL) Undecided	<b>7%</b>	<b>4%</b>	4%	12%	3%	7%	6%	7%	7%	7%	6%	6%	11%	7%	6%	7%

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			RACE & RELIGION		
			Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic	White Evang.	White Non	Other Race
Favorable	<b>34%</b>	<b>38%</b>	69%	30%	12%	38%	31%	27%	33%	41%	40%	9%	25%	50%	35%	20%
Unfavorable	<b>34%</b>	<b>37%</b>	6%	35%	57%	34%	34%	29%	35%	36%	34%	44%	24%	21%	41%	33%
No opinion	<b>32%</b>	<b>25%</b>	25%	35%	31%	28%	35%	45%	32%	23%	26%	47%	51%	29%	24%	47%

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			RACE & RELIGION		
			Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic	White Evang.	White Non	Other Race
Favorable	<b>43%</b>	<b>45%</b>	7%	39%	80%	41%	45%	44%	44%	43%	37%	85%	47%	21%	44%	60%
Unfavorable	<b>40%</b>	<b>43%</b>	77%	39%	11%	43%	37%	32%	41%	45%	48%	3%	28%	61%	42%	19%
No opinion	<b>17%</b>	<b>11%</b>	15%	22%	10%	16%	18%	24%	15%	13%	15%	12%	25%	18%	14%	20%

4. Which candidate comes closer to sharing your religious beliefs – Mitt Romney or Barack Obama?

	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE			RACE & RELIGION		
			Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic	White Evang.	White Non	Other Race
Romney	<b>27%</b>	<b>28%</b>	53%	23%	10%	28%	25%	22%	28%	29%	31%	7%	19%	43%	26%	16%
Obama	<b>31%</b>	<b>31%</b>	8%	22%	58%	29%	32%	31%	33%	28%	24%	68%	34%	15%	29%	47%
(VOL) Neither	<b>32%</b>	<b>31%</b>	30%	40%	25%	34%	30%	36%	27%	34%	34%	15%	40%	35%	34%	27%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>11%</b>	<b>10%</b>	8%	15%	6%	9%	13%	11%	11%	9%	11%	10%	7%	8%	12%	10%

5. Which concerns you more – that Mitt Romney is a Mormon or that Barack Obama supports gay marriage?

	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE			RACE & RELIGION		
			Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic	White Evang.	White Non	Other Race
Romney's Mormonism	<b>13%</b>	<b>13%</b>	9%	12%	20%	11%	15%	22%	9%	12%	13%	13%	13%	11%	15%	13%
Obama's gay marriage support	<b>35%</b>	<b>36%</b>	52%	30%	27%	36%	34%	33%	36%	35%	36%	36%	34%	51%	29%	33%
(VOL) Both concern equally	<b>7%</b>	<b>6%</b>	5%	8%	6%	6%	7%	4%	6%	8%	7%	8%	2%	11%	5%	5%
(VOL) Neither concerns at all	<b>41%</b>	<b>40%</b>	30%	46%	43%	42%	40%	38%	43%	41%	40%	35%	49%	22%	48%	42%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>5%</b>	<b>4%</b>	4%	4%	4%	5%	4%	3%	5%	5%	4%	8%	2%	5%	3%	6%

6. Who would you rather see in control of Congress next year – the Democrats, the Republicans, or does it make no difference?

	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE			RACE & RELIGION		
			Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic	White Evang.	White Non	Other Race
Democrats	<b>36%</b>	<b>38%</b>	2%	25%	78%	34%	38%	34%	34%	40%	33%	65%	35%	19%	39%	45%
Republicans	<b>35%</b>	<b>40%</b>	81%	30%	3%	38%	33%	26%	38%	39%	41%	6%	25%	54%	35%	21%
No difference	<b>27%</b>	<b>20%</b>	15%	44%	18%	26%	28%	39%	26%	20%	25%	29%	40%	25%	24%	33%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>2%</b>	<b>1%</b>	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%	0%	0%	2%	2%	1%

7. How much have you read or heard about venture capital and private equity firms – a great deal, some, just a little, or nothing at all?

	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE			RACE & RELIGION		
			Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic	White Evang.	White Non	Other Race
A great deal	<b>17%</b>	<b>20%</b>	17%	19%	16%	25%	11%	12%	17%	21%	18%	15%	15%	13%	21%	15%
Some	<b>26%</b>	<b>29%</b>	30%	26%	23%	27%	25%	22%	25%	28%	27%	22%	20%	27%	27%	23%
Just a little	<b>24%</b>	<b>24%</b>	23%	20%	30%	22%	26%	23%	26%	22%	26%	23%	17%	24%	27%	19%
Nothing at all	<b>32%</b>	<b>26%</b>	29%	34%	30%	26%	38%	41%	31%	27%	29%	40%	48%	36%	25%	41%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>1%</b>	<b>1%</b>	2%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%

[QUESTIONS 8 AND 9 WERE ROTATED AND ASKED ONLY OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE HEARD AT LEAST A LITTLE IN Q7: moe=+/-3.1%]

8. On the whole, are venture capital and private equity firms good for the economy, bad for the economy, or do they have no impact on the economy?

	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE			RACE & RELIGION		
			Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic	White Evang.	White Non	Other Race
Good	<b>42%</b>	<b>43%</b>	61%	42%	27%	49%	34%	40%	43%	42%	43%	30%	42%	46%	42%	37%
Bad	<b>22%</b>	<b>23%</b>	10%	20%	34%	23%	21%	22%	20%	23%	21%	25%	25%	17%	22%	24%
No impact	<b>16%</b>	<b>15%</b>	11%	18%	18%	15%	17%	14%	16%	17%	15%	20%	18%	14%	16%	18%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>20%</b>	<b>19%</b>	19%	21%	21%	13%	28%	23%	21%	18%	20%	24%	15%	23%	20%	21%

9. Do venture capital and private equity firms tend to create jobs, eliminate jobs, or do they have no impact on jobs?

	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE			RACE & RELIGION		
			Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic	White Evang.	White Non	Other Race
Create jobs	<b>36%</b>	<b>38%</b>	59%	29%	24%	43%	29%	37%	35%	37%	36%	22%	43%	42%	34%	36%
Eliminate jobs	<b>21%</b>	<b>23%</b>	7%	22%	31%	21%	21%	19%	22%	21%	20%	23%	30%	12%	22%	24%
No impact	<b>22%</b>	<b>20%</b>	17%	24%	24%	23%	22%	21%	23%	22%	22%	33%	16%	21%	22%	24%
(VOL) Don't know	<b>21%</b>	<b>20%</b>	16%	24%	21%	13%	29%	24%	20%	19%	22%	22%	10%	24%	21%	16%

The *Monmouth University Poll* was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute on June 4 to 6, 2012 with a national random sample of 1,395 registered voters, including 513 via live interview on a landline telephone, 585 via interactive voice response (IVR) on a landline telephone, and 297 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 2.6 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>			
30% Rep	46% Male	25% 18-34	71% White
35% Dem	54% Female	38% 35-54	11% Black
35% Ind		38% 55+	12% Hispanic
			6% Asian/Other

	Registered Voters	Likely Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE			RACE & RELIGION		
			Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White	Black	Hispanic	White Evang.	White Non	Other Race
<i>Unweighted N</i>	1395	1152	416	484	466	641	754	262	476	648	1066	136	94	319	731	313
<i>moe</i>	2.6%	2.9%	4.8%	4.5%	4.5%	3.9%	3.6%	6.1%	4.5%	3.9%	3.0%	8.4%	10.1%	5.5%	3.6%	5.5%

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