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NATIONAL: TRUMP HOLDS LEAD, CARSON 2nd

Trump tops all but Carson head-to-head

West Long Branch, NJ – Donald Trump has increased his GOP vote share since last month's debate. The latest **Monmouth University Poll** of Republican voters nationwide also finds Ben Carson moving into second place, Jeb Bush slipping to third, and Scott Walker fading into the background. The poll also tested Trump directly against nine opponents in head-to-head match-ups and found that only Carson is able to get the better of him.

When Republicans and Republican-leaning voters are asked who they would support for the GOP nomination for president, Donald Trump leads the pack at 30%, which is up 4 points from early August before the first debate. Ben Carson (18%) has increased his vote share by 13 points and now holds second place. Jeb Bush (8%) has dropped by 4 points and now stands in a tie for third with Ted Cruz (8%). Following behind are Marco Rubio (5%), Carly Fiorina (4%), and Mike Huckabee (4%).

Scott Walker (3%), who held third place in Monmouth's August poll, has dropped 8 points since then. Chris Christie, John Kasich, and Rand Paul each get 2%. The remaining six candidates included in the poll score no higher than 1% each.

"None of the establishment candidates is having any success in getting an anti-Trump vote to coalesce around them. In fact, any attempt to take on Trump directly only seems to make him stronger," said Patrick Murray, director of the independent Monmouth University Polling Institute in West Long Branch, NJ.

The *Monmouth University Poll* tested the strength of Donald Trump's support by presenting Republican voters with nine hypothetical head-to-head match-ups. Trump tops the field in all but one of those contests. If it came down to just two candidates, Trump beats the putative establishment favorite Jeb Bush by a 56% to 37% margin. Trump also gets the better of Chris Christie (63% to 30%), John Kasich (62% to 29%), Rand Paul (60% to 27%), Scott Walker (53% to 38%), Marco Rubio (52% to

38%), Carly Fiorina (50% to 37%), and Ted Cruz (48% to 41%). The only candidate who is able to take on The Donald and win is Ben Carson, who gets 55% support to 36% for Trump in a hypothetical match-up.

"The fact that the only one who can challenge Trump is the only other candidate who has never held or run for elected office speaks volumes to the low regard GOP voters have for the establishment," said Murray.

By a more than 2-to-1 margin, Republican voters nationwide say the country needs a president from outside government who can bring a new approach to Washington (67%) rather than someone with government experience who knows how to get things done (26%).

Murray added, "Conservative activists believe the Republican Party has abandoned its principles. Moderates feel their leadership is ineffective. So Republican voters have created their own job description for the next nominee - Wanted: Someone who can shake up Washington; No elected officials need apply."

As with Monmouth's August poll, Trump continues to dominate all Republican demographic groups in voter support, with Ben Carson now placing second in most cases:

- *Ideology* – Trump (28%), Carson (20%), and Cruz (17%) are the top vote getters among very conservative voters; Trump (29%) leads Carson (21%) among somewhat conservative voters; and Trump (34%) has a commanding edge over Carson (14%) and Bush (11%) among moderate to liberal voters.

- *Tea Party* – Tea Party supporters back Trump (36%) by a wide margin over Carson (19%) and Cruz (15%). Non-Tea Party supporters give Trump (28%) a narrower edge over Carson (17%).

- *Age* – Trump (34%) has a clear lead over Carson (17%) among voters under age 50 as well as an advantage (28%) over Carson (18%), Cruz (11%), and Bush (10%) among those age 50 and older.

- *Gender* – Trump holds a wide lead over Carson among men (37% to 18%) and a smaller lead among women (23% to 18%).

The *Monmouth University Poll* also found that GOP voter opinion of Donald Trump has ticked up another notch in the past month. It now stands at 59% favorable to 29% unfavorable. It was 52% favorable to 35% unfavorable four weeks ago, and as recently as June, it stood at a significantly negative 20% favorable to 55% unfavorable.

Ben Carson's rating has also gone up, now standing at 67% favorable to 6% unfavorable, compared with 45% to 10% just before the first debate. Carly Fiorina, who received positive reviews for her performance in the "Happy Hour" debate – and is on track to be added to the main stage for this month's debate – also saw her numbers go up. She now has a 43% favorable to 13% unfavorable rating,

compared with 30% to 11% last month. However, 43% of Republican voters nationwide still have no opinion of her.

John Kasich, who just made it onto the main debate stage last month, has not seen his national numbers move much at all. He gets a 23% favorable to 18% unfavorable rating, which is slightly lower than the 27% to 14% rating he earned in August. Nearly 6-in-10 (59%) GOP voters continue to have no opinion of him.

Both Jeb Bush and Scott Walker have seen their personal ratings decline in the past month. Republican voter opinion of Bush now stands at 41% favorable to 39% unfavorable, compared with 52% to 30% last month. Walker's rating is 42% favorable to 15% unfavorable, compared with 50% to 10% last month.

The *Monmouth University Poll* was conducted by telephone from August 31 to September 2, 2015 with 1,009 adults in the United States. This release is based on a sample of 366 registered voters who identify themselves as Republicans or lean toward the Republican Party. This voter sample has a margin of error of +5.1 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*]

	September 2015	August 2015	July 2015	June 2015	April 2015
Jeb Bush	**8%**	12%	15%	9%	13%
Ben Carson	**18%**	5%	6%	11%	7%
Chris Christie	**2%**	4%	2%	4%	5%
Ted Cruz	**8%**	6%	9%	5%	11%
Carly Fiorina	**4%**	2%	1%	2%	1%
Jim Gilmore	**0%**	0%	0%	*n/a*	*n/a*
Lindsey Graham	**0%**	1%	<1%	2%	1%
Mike Huckabee	**4%**	6%	7%	8%	9%
Bobby Jindal	**<1%**	1%	2%	1%	1%
John Kasich	**2%**	3%	1%	1%	1%
George Pataki	**<1%**	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Rand Paul	**2%**	4%	6%	6%	6%
Rick Perry	**1%**	2%	2%	4%	5%
Marco Rubio	**5%**	4%	6%	9%	5%
Rick Santorum	**0%**	1%	2%	3%	1%
Donald Trump	**30%**	26%	13%	2%	7%
Scott Walker	**3%**	11%	7%	10%	11%
(VOL) Other	**0%**	0%	0%	0%	1%
(VOL) No one	**2%**	1%	1%	2%	2%
(VOL) Undecided	**9%**	10%	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	**41%**	**39%**	**20%**
--August 2015	*52*	*30*	*18*
--July 2015	*50*	*30*	*20*
--June 2015	*40*	*35*	*25*
--April 2015	*49*	*31*	*21*
--December 2014	*39*	*30*	*31*
Commentator and Doctor Ben Carson	**67%**	**6%**	**26%**
--August 2015	*45*	*10*	*45*
--July 2015	*48*	*11*	*41*
--June 2015	*45*	*12*	*43*
--April 2015	*39*	*16*	*45*
--December 2014	*32*	*12*	*57*
Businesswoman Carly Fiorina	**43%**	**13%**	**43%**
--August 2015	*30*	*11*	*58*
--July 2015	*30*	*18*	*51*
--June 2015	*29*	*18*	*54*
--April 2015	*18*	*20*	*62*
--December 2014	*n/a*	*n/a*	*n/a*
Ohio Governor John Kasich	**23%**	**18%**	**59%**
--August 2015	*27*	*14*	*58*
--July 2015	*19*	*16*	*65*
--June 2015	*20*	*18*	*62*
--April 2015	*24*	*14*	*61*
--December 2014	*21*	*11*	*69*
Businessman Donald Trump	**59%**	**29%**	**12%**
--August 2015	*52*	*35*	*13*
--July 2015	*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%**	**15%**	**42%**
--August 2015	*50*	*10*	*40*
--July 2015	*42*	*11*	*46*
--June 2015	*42*	*12*	*46*
--April 2015	*44*	*9*	*46*
--December 2014	*30*	*10*	*61*

3.   Who would you vote for if the only two candidates for the Republican nomination were Donald Trump and [*NAME*]?

	Trump	Other	(VOL) No one	(VOL) Don't know
Jeb Bush	56%	37%	5%	2%

[*The remainder were rotated and asked of random half-samples: moe= ± 7.3%*]

	Trump	Other	(VOL) No one	(VOL) Don't know
Ben Carson	36%	55%	1%	8%
Marco Rubio	52%	38%	1%	9%
Chris Christie	63%	30%	2%	5%
John Kasich	62%	29%	3%	7%
Ted Cruz	48%	41%	4%	7%
Cary Fiorina	50%	37%	5%	8%
Scott Walker	53%	38%	3%	6%
Rand Paul	60%	27%	5%	8%

4.   Regardless of who you support, what do you think the country needs more in the next president: someone with government experience who knows how to get things done or someone outside of government who can bring a new approach to Washington? [*CHOICES WERE ROTATED*]

	September 2015
Someone with government experience	26%
Someone outside of government	67%
(VOL) Both	4%
(VOL) Don't know	3%

The *Monmouth University Poll* was sponsored and conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute from August 31 to September 2, 2015 with a national random sample of 1,009 adults age 18 and older. This includes 707 contacted by a live interviewer on a landline telephone and 302 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 366 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 5.1 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	*32% 18-34*	*66% White*
51% Female	*36% 35-54*	*12% Black*
	32% 55+	*15% Hispanic*
		7% Asian/Other

POLL DEMOGRAPHICS (weighted)
REPUBLICAN VOTERS ONLY

52% Male	*16% 18-34*	*85% White*
48% Female	*42% 35-54*	*1% Black*
	42% 55+	*10% Hispanic*
		4% 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	*366*	*259*	*107*	*188*	*178*	*149*	*193*	*152*	*102*	*107*
moe	*5.1%*	*6.1%*	*9.5%*	*7.2%*	*7.4%*	*8.0%*	*7.1%*	*8.0%*	*9.7%*	*9.5%*

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