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NATIONAL: SPLIT DECISION ON MEXICO BORDER WALL

Republicans, Democrats, independents differ on Trump immigration plan

West Long Branch, NJ – The political rhetoric around illegal immigration has been heating up with the entrance of Donald Trump in the race for president. The **Monmouth University Poll** finds that most Americans disagree with the idea that illegal immigrants are more prone to crime, but the public is divided on the idea of building a wall along the Mexican border, with Republicans and Democrats landing on opposite sides of this proposal.

This issue has come to the forefront of the 2016 presidential campaign, at least on the GOP side. Fully-3-in-4 Americans see illegal immigration as either a very serious (45%) or somewhat serious (30%) problem. Republicans (66%), though, are more likely than independents (42%) or Democrats (33%) to see it as very serious.

Donald Trump made headlines in his announcement speech by claiming that Mexico sends its criminal class over the border to the U.S. Most Americans though, regardless of partisan leaning, do not believe that illegal immigrants are more likely to commit crimes than others living in the country. About 6-in-10 (59%) say that illegal immigrants are about as likely as other Americans to commit violent crimes such as rape or murder, 17% say they are more likely and 20% say they are less likely. A similar 57% say that illegal immigrants are about as likely as others to commit non-violent crimes such as burglary, 22% say they are more likely and 17% say they are less likely.

More Republicans than Democrats say that illegal immigrants exhibit a higher likelihood for both violent – 29% to 10% respectively – and non-violent – 34% to 14% – crimes. However, majorities of both parties say that illegal immigrants are no more likely than others to commit crime – 56% of Republicans and 61% of Democrats for violent crime and 54% of Republicans and 62% of Democrats for non-violent crime.

"While the rhetoric has certainly gotten heated, most Americans do not view illegal immigrants as a criminal class, other than the fact that they came here without authorization," said Patrick Murray,

director of the independent Monmouth University Polling Institute in West Long Branch, NJ. "Most people who have been following the Trump campaign disagree with his immigration plan, although opinion is divided on building a border wall."

Three-quarters (76%) of the public have heard about Trump's recently released immigration plan. Among those aware of the plan, just 34% approve of it and 56% disapprove. Most Republicans (59%) approve while fewer independents (34%) and Democrats (11%) agree.

Public opinion is divided on the specific issue of building a wall along the border with Mexico – 48% favor this while 43% are opposed. Republicans (73%) are much more likely than independents (47%) or Democrats (31%) to support building a wall.

"There is a clear partisan divide on how to deal with illegal immigration. Proposing a crackdown may help win the Republican nomination, but it's not clear this would play as well in the general election," said Murray.

Thinking about undocumented workers who have lived and worked in the U.S. for at least two years, the vast majority (69%) of Americans say these immigrants should be able to keep their jobs and eventually apply for legal status. Just 27% say they should be deported. Majorities of every partisan group prefer some legal pathway over deportation, but this view is more widespread among Democrats (83%) than among Republicans (53%), with independents (69%) falling in the middle.

Part of the reason for this attitude may be that most people do not feel that illegal immigrants have a negative impact on the U.S. job market. Just 26% say these workers mostly take jobs away from American citizens, while 59% say illegal immigrants mostly fill jobs that Americans don't want.

The poll also looked at Barack Obama's overall standing with the public. The president's job rating is basically unchanged from a month ago. He currently has a negative 45% approve to 49% disapprove rating with the American public. This is nearly identical to the 45% positive to 50% negative rating he held in August. Congress continues to earn a decidedly negative job rating at 19% approve to 71% disapprove in the current poll.

The *Monmouth University Poll* was conducted by telephone from August 31 to September 3, 2015 with 1,009 adults in the United States. This sample has a margin of error of $\pm$ 3.1 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. Do you approve or disapprove of the job Barack Obama is doing as president?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID		
		Yes	No	Rep	Ind	Dem
Approve	**45%**	45%	45%	7%	37%	86%
Disapprove	**49%**	51%	44%	88%	56%	9%
(VOL) No opinion	**6%**	5%	12%	5%	7%	5%

TREND:	September 2015	August 2015	July 2015	June 2015	April 2015	January 2015	December 2014	July 2013
Approve	45%	45%	47%	44%	42%	43%	41%	42%
Disapprove	49%	50%	46%	46%	48%	48%	49%	51%
(VOL) No opinion	6%	6%	7%	10%	10%	8%	10%	6%
Unwtd N	*1,009*	*1,203*	*1,001*	*1,002*	*1,005*	*1,003*	*1,008*	*1,012*

2. Do you approve or disapprove of the job the U.S. Congress is doing?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID		
		Yes	No	Rep	Ind	Dem
Approve	**19%**	17%	26%	12%	16%	30%
Disapprove	**71%**	74%	58%	77%	76%	61%
(VOL) No opinion	**11%**	9%	16%	11%	8%	10%

TREND:	September 2015	August 2015	July 2015	June 2015	April 2015	January 2015	December 2014	July 2013
Approve	19%	18%	18%	19%	21%	18%	17%	14%
Disapprove	71%	72%	69%	71%	67%	70%	73%	76%
(VOL) No opinion	11%	11%	12%	10%	12%	11%	11%	10%
Unwtd N	*1,009*	*1,203*	*1,001*	*1,002*	*1,005*	*1,003*	*1,008*	*1,012*

3. How serious a problem do you think the issue of illegal immigration is for the United States right now – very, somewhat, not too, or not at all serious?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID		
		Yes	No	Rep	Ind	Dem
Very serious	**45%**	46%	38%	66%	42%	33%
Somewhat serious	**30%**	31%	28%	28%	30%	33%
Not too serious	**15%**	14%	18%	3%	16%	22%
Not at all serious	**9%**	7%	14%	3%	11%	11%
(VOL) Don't know	**2%**	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%

4. If you had to choose, what do you think should happen to most illegal immigrants who have lived and worked in the U.S. for at least two years: They should be given a chance to keep their jobs and eventually apply for legal status - OR - They should be deported back to their native country? [*CHOICES WERE ROTATED*]

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID		
		Yes	No	Rep	Ind	Dem
They should be given a chance to keep their jobs and eventually apply for legal status	**69%**	68%	73%	53%	69%	83%
They should be deported back to their native country	**27%**	28%	23%	43%	27%	14%
(VOL) Don't know	**4%**	4%	5%	4%	5%	3%

5. Do you think illegal immigrants coming to this country today take jobs away from American citizens, or do they mostly take jobs Americans don't want?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID		
		Yes	No	Rep	Ind	Dem
Take jobs away from American citizens	**26%**	28%	20%	39%	25%	18%
Take jobs Americans don't want	**59%**	58%	62%	48%	58%	70%
(VOL) Both	**10%**	9%	11%	9%	11%	8%
(VOL) Don't know	**6%**	5%	7%	3%	7%	5%

[*QUESTIONS 6 & 7 WERE ROTATED*]

6. Do you think illegal immigrants are more likely, less likely, or about as likely as other Americans to commit violent crimes like rape or murder?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID		
		Yes	No	Rep	Ind	Dem
More likely	**17%**	21%	5%	29%	15%	10%
Less likely	**20%**	19%	22%	11%	20%	26%
About as likely	**59%**	56%	70%	56%	62%	61%
(VOL) Don't know	**4%**	4%	3%	3%	3%	3%

7. Do you think illegal immigrants are more likely, less likely, or about as likely as other Americans to commit NON-violent crimes like burglary?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID		
		Yes	No	Rep	Ind	Dem
More likely	**22%**	24%	15%	34%	22%	14%
Less likely	**17%**	16%	18%	9%	19%	20%
About as likely	**57%**	55%	63%	54%	56%	62%
(VOL) Don't know	**4%**	4%	3%	3%	3%	4%

8. Do you favor or oppose building a wall along the U.S. border with Mexico?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID		
		Yes	No	Rep	Ind	Dem
Favor	**48%**	50%	39%	73%	47%	31%
Oppose	**43%**	41%	48%	21%	45%	59%
(VOL) Don't know	**10%**	9%	13%	6%	9%	10%

9. How much have you heard about Donald Trump's recently released immigration plan – a lot, a little, or nothing at all?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID		
		Yes	No	Rep	Ind	Dem
A lot	**35%**	39%	22%	36%	31%	42%
A little	**41%**	41%	41%	47%	42%	36%
Nothing at all	**24%**	20%	37%	17%	27%	23%

[*The following question was asked of those who have heard about Trump's immigration plan; n=796, m.o.e.+3.5*]

10. And from what you have heard, do you approve or disapprove of Trump's immigration plan?

	TOTAL	REGISTERED VOTER		PARTY ID		
		Yes	No	Rep	Ind	Dem
Approve	**34%**	34%	33%	59%	34%	11%
Disapprove	**56%**	56%	58%	28%	56%	84%
(VOL) No opinion	**10%**	10%	10%	13%	11%	5%

The *Monmouth University Poll* was sponsored and conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute from August 31 to September 3, 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). 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 3.1 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)

26% Rep	*49% Male*	*32% 18-34*	*66% White*
43% Ind	*51% Female*	*36% 35-54*	*12% Black*
31% Dem		*32% 55+*	*15% Hispanic*
			7% Asian/Other

MARGIN OF ERROR

	TOTAL	*REGISTERED VOTER*		*PARTY ID*		
		Yes	*No*	*Rep*	*Ind*	*Dem*
Unweighted N	*1,009*	*847*	*162*	*289*	*404*	*281*
moe	*3.1%*	*3.4%*	*7.7%*	*5.8%*	*4.9%*	*5.9%*

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