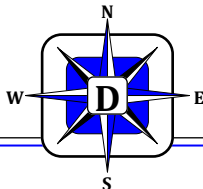


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Romney: Viewed as *Most Likely* to Beat Obama; *Least Likely* to Satisfy Conservatives on Managing Federal Budget ... but *Most Acceptable*. Will Libertarian Uprising Dash GOP Presidential Hopes in NC?

New Hampshire GOP Primary Voters: Republicans 49%; Independents 47%; Democrats: 4%; Conservatives 52%; Moderates/Liberals: 48%. Evangelical Christians: 22%.

New Hampshire GOP Primary Results: Romney: 39% (97,399); Paul: 23% (56,601); Huntsman: 17% (41,796); Gingrich: 10% (23,329); Santorum: 9% (23,204); Perry: 1% (1,762)

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“That’s one thing, they are telling the truth, because we are dangerous to the status quo of this country.”
 Ron Paul, Tuesday, January 10, New Hampshire “Victory Speech”

Romney’s NH GOP Primary Win Not as Big as “Acceptable” Win this Week

The most significant presidential campaign development this week was not Mitt Romney’s decisive win in New Hampshire. After all, he is New Hampshire’s “homeboy” as described by fellow GOP presidential contender Jon Huntsman. And, only about half of New Hampshire’s GOP Primary voters were either Republicans or self-described conservatives.

Tuesday’s [NBC Exit Poll](#) shows that only 49% of the New Hampshire Republican Primary voters think of themselves as Republican. Those who think of themselves as Independent made up 47% of the *GOP primary voters*; 4% think of themselves as Democrats!

The same exit poll shows that 48% of the New Hampshire GOP Primary voters think of themselves as either Moderate (35%) or Liberal (13%). Only 52% of New Hampshire Primary voters consider themselves Conservative! Only 22% say they are evangelical Christians.

So, what motivated New Hampshire GOP Primary voters to give Mitt Romney a big win? Answer: He is viewed as the most likely to defeat President Obama in November. *Note: His conservative bona fides were considered the least important in New Hampshire.*

- Can defeat Barack Obama 35%
- Has the right experience 26%
- Has strong moral character 22%
- Is a true conservative 13%

A combined 82% of New Hampshire GOP Primary voters polled said that they are either **“Dissatisfied, but not angry”** with the Obama administration (42%), or **“Angry”** with the Obama administration (40%). Why? It’s because a combined 95% are **“Very worried” about the direction of the nation’s economy** (69%), or are **“Somewhat worried”** (26%).

Bottom line: New Hampshire GOP Primary voters had two things on their mind when they gave Romney the big win Tuesday, other than being their “homeboy,” he has the best skill set to deal with their #1 issue, the economy (62%), and he is the most likely to defeat Obama (61%).

Big win for Romney Tuesday, but not as significant as Tuesday’s Gallup poll.

Gallup: 59% of Republicans See Romney as “Acceptable” Nominee

Far more significant than the New Hampshire GOP Primary win for Romney is [a new Gallup survey](#) released Tuesday showing that 59% of all Republicans around the country see Romney as an “acceptable GOP nominee for president.” According to Gallup, Romney is *“the only candidate with majority support on this measure.”*

The same survey shows only 46% of the nation’s Republicans see Gingrich as an acceptable nominee, and only 45% see Santorum would be acceptable. A majority of Republicans around the country say that Perry, Paul, and Huntsman are *unacceptable* as the GOP nominee.

The most positive result of the Gallup survey for Romney fans is that the same number of conservative Republicans found Romney an acceptable GOP nominee (59%) as Moderate/Liberal Republicans. That is a major breakthrough for Romney.

Bottom Line: Mitt Romney is the only GOP contender with broad acceptability across ideological lines among the nation’s Republicans. That decisive support can be seen in Gallup tracking polls that show Romney leading all other GOP contenders by better than 2-to-1 (Romney 34%; Santorum 15%; Gingrich 14%; Paul 13%; Perry 5%; Huntsman 2%).

Will Libertarian Uprising Dash GOP Presidential Hopes in North Carolina?

According to Gallup’s tracking on the question, “If the election were held today . . .,” President Obama would defeat Romney by 50% to 48%. Same result if Gingrich were the nominee.

Here in North Carolina, if the election were held today, Obama would defeat Romney by one point, 46%/45%, would tie Santorum 46%/46%, and would defeat all other GOP contenders by 5 points or more, according to polling by [Public Policy Polling from January 5 – 8, 2012](#).

The biggest threat to the Republican presidential game plan in North Carolina is a Libertarian uprising. You can see that threat clearly in the Public Policy Poll, showing that Libertarian Presidential candidate [Gary Johnson, former two-term Governor of New Mexico, would get 8% of the vote in North Carolina](#), most of which would hurt Romney if he is the GOP nominee.

[Johnson announced his switch to the Libertarian Party](#) in late December at a news conference in Santa Fe, New Mexico. “I have been a Republican my entire life,” he said. “I don’t view this as leaving the Republican Party as much as the Republican Party has left me.”

The least likely voters to concede the GOP nomination this year are the Ron Paul self-described “dangerous” supporters. “I sort of have to chuckle when they describe you and me as being dangerous,” Paul said with a big grin during his “victory speech” Tuesday night, “That’s one thing, they are telling the truth, because we are dangerous to the status quo of this country.”

That “status quo” clearly includes the Republican status quo.

Obama’s Best Hope for a Second Term

My view is that Obama will not do nearly as well in North Carolina as he did in 2008, when he won by only 14,171 votes out of 4,310,789 cast.

He has lost the surprise factor, lost the enthusiastic support of his base (African American voters excepted), and has raised serious doubts about whether he has the credentials for dealing with the most important issues facing the next president: managing the nation’s budget crisis, managing the nation’s debt crisis, and managing the nation’s private sector competitiveness crisis ... all three critical to the nation’s jobs crisis. Even if he wins a second term he is not likely to carry North Carolina.

Obama’s best hope for a second term is a GOP divided by the Ron Paul Libertarians, the Rick Santorum social conservatives and the Tea Party congressional Republicans who have helped drive the job approval of the U.S. Congress to historic lows.


Our nation’s problems are bigger than party or ideology. Irresponsible members of both parties got us into the mess we are in, and irresponsible members of both parties are keeping us in it.

What is the definition of irresponsible members? It is: *Those members who think their party or their ideology is more important than bipartisan collaboration on managing the nation’s budget crisis, managing the nation’s debt crisis, and managing the nation’s private sector competitiveness crisis ... all three critical to the nation’s jobs crisis.*

President Obama’s best hope for a second term is a dysfunctional Congress and a divided GOP.

- END -

Thank you for reading the John Davis Political Report!



John N. Davis, Editor