NBC News/Marist Poll:
Obama and Romney in Close Contest in North Carolina
*** Complete Tables for Poll Appended ***

For Immediate Release: Thursday, June 28, 2012

Contact: Lee M. Miringoff
Barbara L. Carvalho
Mary E. Azzoli
Marist College
845.575.5050

This NBC News/Marist Poll Reports:

President Barack Obama and Mitt Romney are competitive in the presidential contest in North Carolina. Among registered voters including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate, 46% support Obama while 44% favor Romney. One percent backs another candidate, and 9% are undecided.

“In 2008, President Obama narrowly edged out John McCain in the state,” says Dr. Lee M. Miringoff, Director of The Marist College Institute for Public Opinion. “The electorate is similarly divided this presidential contest.”

Key points:

- **By party**, 82% of Democrats are behind Obama while 91% of Republicans back Romney.
- Romney carries independent voters. Romney receives 47% compared with 38% for Obama.
- Most voters who say they are strong Democrats -- 91% -- back the president. However, Mr. Obama loses support among those who identify as soft Democrats, registered voters who are not strong Democrats or Democratic leaning independents. Among this group, 69% are for the president while about one in five -- 21% -- is for Romney. Among those who say they are just independent, Romney -- 40% -- leads Obama -- 29%. However, a notable 25% of these voters are unsure. 97% of strong Republicans favor Romney. Among soft Republicans, Romney loses some ground, but still has the backing of 82%.
- Looking at those who have an **excellent or good chance of voting**, the electorate divides. 47% support Obama while 45% favor Romney.
- The president -- 52% -- leads Romney -- 43% -- among registered voters in North Carolina who express a high **level of enthusiasm** about the presidential election.
Voters who are moderately enthusiastic divide. 46% are for Mr. Obama while 44% are behind Mr. Romney. Romney -- 46% -- has the advantage among voters who have a low degree of enthusiasm. Here, the president receives 32%.

- Among voters in North Carolina who have a high level of interest in the presidential contest, half -- 50% -- back the president while Romney receives 44%.
- 57% of voters who strongly support their choice of candidate support Obama while 43% are for Romney.
- Romney receives the support of 48% of men compared with 45% for Obama. Among women, Obama -- 47% -- is ahead of Romney -- 41%.
- President Obama -- 57% -- leads Romney -- 35% -- among voters under the age of 30. The president -- 47% -- is also ahead of Romney -- 40% -- among voters 30 to 44. Older voters divide. Romney receives the support of 48% of voters 45 to 59 years old while Obama garners 45%. Among voters 60 and older, 45% back Romney while 44% support the president.

Nearly Three in Four Firmly in Candidate’s Camp

73% of registered voters in North Carolina strongly support their choice of candidate. 21% are somewhat behind their pick while 4% report they might change their minds. Two percent are unsure.

Key points:

- Among voters who are for President Obama, 80% strongly support him. 66% of Romney’s backers have a similar degree of support.

Nearly Half Express High Level of Enthusiasm about Voting

Looking at voters’ degree of enthusiasm, 48% say they are very enthusiastic about casting their ballot in the fall. 32% are somewhat enthusiastic, and 13% are not too enthusiastic. Six percent are not enthusiastic at all.

Key points:

- A majority of President Obama’s backers -- 56% -- are very enthusiastic. This compares with 48% of Romney’s supporters who have a similar level of support.

Voters Divide about Obama’s Job Performance

47% of registered voters in North Carolina approve of the job President Obama is doing in office. The same proportion -- 47% -- disapproves, and 6% are unsure.
Split Decision on Favorability

When it comes to favorability, 48% of voters think well of President Obama. However, 45% have an unfavorable impression of him, and 7% percent are unsure.

Voters also divide about Romney’s image. While 40% have a favorable impression of the candidate, 42% have an unfavorable one. 18% are unsure.

Candidates Both Viewed As Capable On Economy, Obama Tops on Foreign Policy

43% of voters believe President Obama is the candidate who will better handle the nation’s economy. The same proportion -- 43% -- says Romney will more effectively manage the issue. 14% are unsure.

On foreign policy, nearly half -- 48% -- think Obama will better handle that policy area. This compares with 37% who say Romney is the stronger candidate. 15% are unsure.

Obama Inherited Economy, Says Majority

55% of voters statewide believe President Obama inherited the nation’s tentative economic conditions from his predecessor. This compares with 33% who report the president’s policies are mostly to blame. 12% are unsure.

When it comes to the future of the nation’s economy, 49% say the worst is over. 41% believe the worst is still ahead, and 10% are unsure.

56% Think Country’s Compass is Broken

When it comes to the direction of the country, 56% of voters believe things in the nation have fallen off track. 36%, however, think things are moving in the right direction. Eight percent are unsure.

McCrory and Dalton Competitive in Governor’s Race

In the race for North Carolina governor, Republican Pat McCrory receives the support of 43% of voters. This compares with 41% who are behind Democrat Walter Dalton. 17% are undecided.