NBC News/WSJ/Marist Poll: 
Tight Contest in New Hampshire

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This NBC News/WSJ/Marist Poll Reports:

In New Hampshire, President Barack Obama and Vice President Joe Biden -- 49% -- are closely matched with Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan -- 47% -- among likely voters statewide, including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate and those who voted absentee. One percent is behind another candidate, and 3% are undecided.

“The battle for New Hampshire’s four electoral votes has gotten very close,” says Dr. Lee M. Miringoff, Director of The Marist College Institute for Public Opinion. “The president is not getting anywhere near what he got four years ago when he carried the state by nine points.”

When NBC News/WSJ/Marist last reported this question at the end of September, Obama and Biden had the support of 51% of likely voters, including those who were undecided yet leaning toward a candidate. Romney and Ryan had the backing of 44%. One percent was for another candidate, and 4%, at that time, were undecided.

Key points:

- **Party ID.** 97% of likely voters who are Democrats support Obama. This compares with 94% of Republicans likely to cast a ballot who are for Romney. Independents who are likely to vote divide. Romney receives the support of 47% compared with 46% for Obama. Last month, Obama led Romney among this key group, 53% to 40%.
• **Enthusiasm.** 66% of likely voters are very enthusiastic about casting a ballot. 68% of Obama’s supporters and 71% of Romney’s backers express a high degree of enthusiasm. In last month’s survey, 59% of likely voters were very enthusiastic about voting.

• **Intensity of support.** 91% of likely voters who support a candidate strongly back their choice. Eight percent are somewhat behind their pick, and 1% might vote differently. Looking at each candidate’s supporters, 91% of Romney’s backers are firmly committed to him while 90% of those behind Obama say the same. Last month, 86% of likely voters in New Hampshire who preferred a candidate reported they would not waver in their support. At that time, 86% of Obama’s supporters and 85% of Romney’s backers were firmly in their candidate’s camp.

• **Gender.** Obama -- 56% -- leads Romney -- 40% -- among New Hampshire likely voters who are women. Among men who are likely to cast a ballot, Romney -- 53% -- is ahead of Obama -- 42%.

• **Early voters.** 10% of registered voters in New Hampshire have already voted or plan to do so before Election Day. Among this group, 56% support Obama compared with 42% for Romney. Likely voters who plan to go to the polls on Election Day divide. 48% back Romney, and 47% support Obama.

Among registered voters in New Hampshire, including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate and those who voted absentee, 49% support Obama and Biden compared with 46% for Romney and Ryan. One percent throws their support behind another candidate, and 4% are undecided.

**Half Views Obama Favorably…Improved Reviews for Romney**

50% of likely voters in New Hampshire have a favorable impression of President Obama. 46% have an unfavorable view of him, and 4% are unsure. Last month, 54% thought well of the president while 43% did not. Three percent, at that time, were unsure.

For Romney, 49% of New Hampshire likely voters have a positive opinion of him while 46% do not. Six percent are unsure. At the end of September, 43% of likely voters statewide had a favorable view of Romney. 52% of likely voters had an *unfavorable* perception of the candidate, and 5% were unsure.
Romney Edges Obama on Economy, Obama Still Takes Top Spot on Foreign Policy

Which candidate will better handle the U.S. economy? 48% of registered voters in New Hampshire believe Romney is the stronger candidate on the nation's economy compared with 45% who view Obama as more capable on the issue. Six percent are unsure. Among likely voters, 49% think Romney has the upper hand on the issue of the economy while 46% think Obama is better able to turn things around. Five percent are unsure.

In September, 49% of New Hampshire registered voters said Obama was better prepared to handle the U.S. economy while 45% thought Romney was. Seven percent, at that time, were unsure.

When it comes to foreign policy, 51% of registered voters think Obama is the stronger candidate compared with 42% who believe Romney is. Seven percent are unsure. Among likely voters in New Hampshire, Obama -- 51% -- outpaces Romney -- 43% -- in the foreign policy realm. Six percent are unsure.

In NBC News/WSJ/Marist’s previous survey, 54% of registered voters thought Obama was more capable on foreign policy. 39% had this opinion of Romney, and 7% were unsure.

Voters Divide Over Obama’s Job Performance

Among registered voters in New Hampshire, 48% approve of the job the president is doing in office. 47% disapprove, and 5% are unsure.

In September, 50% of registered voters statewide applauded Obama’s job performance. 45% thought he missed the mark, and 5%, then, were unsure.

A Nation Off Course, Says Majority

53% of registered voters in New Hampshire believe the nation is moving in the wrong direction. 41% believe it is on the proper path, and 6% are unsure.

At the end of September, 51% said the country was off track while 44% thought it was on the right road. At that time, 6% were unsure.
Hassan Ahead of Lamontagne by 5 Points in NH Governor’s Race

In the race for governor in New Hampshire, Democrat Maggie Hassan -- 49% -- and Republican Ovide Lamontagne -- 44% -- are in a competitive contest among likely voters, including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate and those who voted absentee. One percent is for another candidate, and 6% are undecided.

Last month, 47% of likely voters, including those who were undecided yet leaning toward a candidate, supported Hassan, and 45% were for Lamontagne. One percent backed another candidate, and 7% were undecided.

Among registered voters, including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate and voted absentee, Hassan has the support of 49% to 43% for Lamontagne. One percent is behind another candidate, and 7% are undecided.