

# MARISTPOLL

## Marist College Institute for Public Opinion

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### POLL MUST BE SOURCED:

#### McClatchy-Marist Poll\*

### **Trump Approval Rating Slips to 38%... Cracks Forming in Republican Base For Immediate Release: Friday, March 31, 2017**

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#### **This McClatchy-Marist Poll Reports:**

President Donald Trump's job approval rating stands at 38%, down slightly from the 41% he received in the February McClatchy-Marist Poll. Trump's low approval rating is just the tip of the proverbial iceberg for the Commander-in-Chief. A majority of adults have an unfavorable opinion of him, and only 37% of voters grade his performance as either an "A" or "B" which falls short in comparison with the 58% who scored former President Barack Obama in this way as he approached his first 100 days in office.

"Donald Trump is spending political capital he didn't acquire on Election Day and hasn't cultivated since," says Dr. Lee M. Miringoff, Director of The Marist College Institute for Public Opinion. "Question by question, there is erosion at his base, making it more difficult to move his legislative agenda through Congress."

Trump also faces a population who is not convinced he is affecting positive change in the country. There has been a decline in the proportion of those who view the president as fulfilling his campaign promises, and many Americans say they are embarrassed by his conduct.

Majorities consider Trump's decisions as president and his meetings with foreign leaders to have weakened the United States' position on the global stage. A plurality also view Trump's relationship with Russian President Vladimir Putin to be detrimental to the United States. In addition, President Trump receives opposition from a majority who do not support his executive order limiting entrance to the United States of non-American citizens from six majority-Muslim countries. Fewer than one in five residents nationally report they feel safer from a terror attack under the Trump Administration.

\*All references to the survey must be sourced as "McClatchy-Marist Poll"

Although Americans are more positive about President Trump's role in strengthening the nation's economy than his approach to foreign policy, the verdict is still out. The president has a credibility problem. Many Americans say they trust their favorite news source more than Trump, and more than six in ten say they cannot rely on the White House to provide factual information.

Trump also has a problem with his Republican base. While many GOP'ers still support the president and his positions, the proportion of those who do, has declined in the past month.

President Donald Trump's job approval rating is upside down with 38% of registered voters reporting they approve and 51% saying they disapprove. This has dipped from the president's 41% job approval rating in late February.

There has been a shift in Republicans' views about Trump's job performance. While more than three in four Republicans, 78%, have a positive opinion of how the president is performing in his post, the proportion has declined from 85% last month. Comparatively, 84% of Democrats and 52% of independents *disapprove* of how Trump is doing his job as president.

When asked to describe President Trump's performance using a letter grade, 37% of registered voters think Trump deserves an "A," 15%, or "B," 22%. At this point in the presidency of Barack Obama, 58% of the electorate scored the former president with either an "A" or "B." Nearly half, 47%, grade Trump using either a "D," 15%, or "F," 32%. 15% give him a "C." 77% of Republicans rate Trump with above average grades while 81% of Democrats give him below average or failing marks.

President Trump's favorable score also remains upside down. 54% of Americans have an *unfavorable* impression of the president while 37% have a *favorable* one. These proportions are nearly identical to those reported in February, 54% and 38%, respectively. Here, too, fewer Republicans have a positive impression of Trump, 78%. This is down from 87% last time.

Americans are also not convinced that the president is changing the nation for the better. In fact, a plurality, 42%, perceive him to be changing the country for the worse. Nearly one in five, 19%, say he is not having any impact, and 36% report he is making positive changes to the nation. Three percent are unsure. There has been little change on this question since it was last reported.

There has been a profound shift in public opinion about whether or not President Trump is fulfilling campaign promises. 57% of Americans either strongly agree, 18%, or agree, 39%, that Trump is making good on the promises he made on the campaign trail. This is down from 71% in February. Regardless of party, fewer voters think he is keeping his word. Of note, 83% of Trump's Republican base, down from 96% previously, believe Trump is fulfilling campaign promises.

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“President Trump needs a major legislative win to get on track,” says Dr. Lee M. Miringoff, Director of The Marist College Institute for Public Opinion. “No doubt the GOP in Congress will be closely watching the president’s standing among Republican voters.”

When it comes to whether President Trump’s conduct makes Americans feel proud or embarrassed, there has also been a change among the GOP faithful. Two-thirds of Republicans, 66%, report the president makes them feel proud, down from 78% in February. Among the overall population, 60% of Americans say they are embarrassed by President Trump’s actions. 30% are proud. These proportions are similar to those reported last month.

Taking a closer look at the issues, a majority of Americans, 56%, think Trump has weakened the role of the United States on the world stage. 35% believe the country’s global position has been strengthened. These proportions are similar to those reported in late February. Again, Trump is down among Republicans. While 71% of the GOP believe the president has bolstered the United States’ role internationally, that proportion has declined from 82%.

A majority of Americans, 54%, think President Trump’s meetings with foreign leaders have weakened the standing of the United States. This is an increase from 48% previously. 37%, compared with 42% in February, report Trump’s talks with foreign leaders has strengthened the position of the United States. Republicans, 77%, down from 84%, think these meetings with international leaders have positively affected the standing of the United States. And, a plurality of Americans, 48%, still perceive Donald Trump’s relationship with Vladimir Putin to be a negative for the United States. 39% consider it to be advantageous. These proportions are little changed from the February survey.

52% of adults nationally also oppose President Trump’s executive order to limit entrance to the United States of non-American citizens from six majority-Muslim countries. 43% favor his executive action, and 5% are unsure. A partisan divide exists. 81% of Democrats and 55% of independents oppose the ban while 84% of Republicans favor it.

On national security, 19% of Americans think they are safer from a terror attack since Donald Trump took office. 33% believe they are less safe, and a plurality, 47%, think they are neither safer nor less safe from a terror threat. Partisan differences are in play. While a majority of Democrats, 56%, say the nation is less safe from a terror attack under the Trump Administration, a majority of Republicans, 54%, report they are about as safe as in the past from such an attack. Of note, fewer than four in ten Republicans, 38%, think they are safer. Among independents, nearly half, 49%, report their level of security from a terror attack is about the same as it has been.

The one positive for President Trump is that he comes out “right-side up” on the issue of the economy. 44% of Americans think he has strengthened the economy while 39% believe he has weakened it. A notable 17% are unsure. Looking at party, 80% of Republicans

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perceive Trump's decisions to have a favorable effect on the economy while 68% of Democrats say the president has weakened the U.S. economy. Independents divide, 44% to 38%.

However, nearly six in ten Americans, 57%, think the president's policies mostly favor people who are upper income. One in four, 25%, say they mostly bolster the middle class, and only 4% say they favor lower income residents. Most Democrats, 89%, and nearly six in ten independents, 58%, report Trump's policies are geared toward those with the highest incomes. A majority of Republicans, 56%, believe they favor those in the middle class. Still, nearly one in five Republicans, 19%, think the policies of the Trump Administration favor the upper class, and another 19% of GOP identifiers are unsure.

In the eyes of the American public, President Trump has a credibility problem. 70% of Americans with a favorite news source say they trust their preferred source of news over Donald Trump. 23% of residents nationally say they trust the president more. Last month, 67% said they had more faith in their favorite media outlet while 28% said they placed their trust in Trump. There has been a marked change among Republicans. They currently divide with 48% saying they trust Trump more and 43% reporting they trust their favorite news source. Previously, 68% of Republicans had more trust in the president compared with 28% who had more faith in their favorite news source.

More than six in ten Americans, 61%, also have little, 22%, or no, 39%, trust in the Trump Administration to deliver accurate and factual information to the public. 37% report they have a great deal, 13%, or good amount, 24%, of confidence in the White House to do so. This is little changed from when the McClatchy-Marist Poll previously reported this question.

Seven in ten Americans, 70% up slightly from 66%, consider the president's communication through Twitter to be reckless and distracting. 19%, down from 25%, think it is an effective and informative tool. Here, the largest change has been among the president's own party. A plurality of Republicans, 45%, think Trump's use of Twitter is reckless and distracting while 36% say it is effective and informative. Last month, a majority of the GOP, 54%, described Trump's Twitter communication as *effective and informative*, and 29% said it was *reckless and distracting*.

Congress fares worse than the president. Americans are dissatisfied with how the Republicans and Democrats are doing their jobs on Capitol Hill. 62% of registered voters, up from 57%, *disapprove* of how the Republicans in Congress are performing in office while 27%, down from 32%, *approve*. Nearly three in ten Republicans, 29%, are dissatisfied with how the GOP in Congress is performing.

A majority of voters nationally, 54% *disapprove* of how the Democrats in Congress are doing their job, and 35% *approve*. These proportions are similar to those released last month.

What do Americans think Congress should do about the issue of health care? 64% of residents want Congress to either let the Affordable Care Act stand, 18%, or change it so that it does more, 46%. This is a slight increase from 60% of Americans who had these views in February. It is of note that the proportion of those who want to expand Obamacare has increased from 39% last month. 33% of Americans currently, compared with 36% previously, say they want it changed to do less, 7%, or to repeal it completely, 26%. Among Republicans, 30% up from 21%, think Obamacare should be left alone, 7%, or should be expanded, 23%. Here, too, the proportion who want Obamacare to do more has increased from 16% in February.

Most Americans, 83%, favor providing a “Pathway to Citizenship” for undocumented immigrants who are currently in the United States as long as they meet certain criteria. 15% oppose such legislation. There has been little change on this question since last month.

Looking ahead to the 2018 election for Congress, 47% of registered voters say they would support the Democratic candidate in their district. 38% would back the Republican, and 8% say they would not support either candidate. Seven percent are undecided. There is a wide partisan divide. Among independents, 41% say they would cast their ballot for the Democrat, and 30% report they would support the Republican. 16% would not choose either.

Not surprisingly, Americans perceive a disconnect between their elected officials and the public. Nearly eight in ten Americans, 78%, say that individuals who are in positions to make decisions for the country mostly see things differently than the public. In contrast, only 15% report those in power see things the way the public does. When this question was last reported in December 2016, 73% of adults thought the two did not see eye-to-eye. 22% thought elected officials and the public were on the same page.

Do Americans trust the institutions of the United States? Residents are more likely to have a great deal or a good amount of trust in the Intelligence Community such as the CIA and the FBI, 61%, in the courts, 61%, or in the fairness of elections, 55%, than in public opinion polls, 36%, the Trump Administration, 35%, the media, 34%, or Congress, 27%.

National Adults						
How much do you trust each of the following:						
A great deal, a good amount, not very much, not at all?						
	A great deal/ A good amount	A great deal	A good amount	Not very much	Not at all	Unsure
National Adults						
The Intelligence Community such as the CIA and FBI	61%	19%	42%	22%	13%	4%
The Courts	61%	23%	38%	26%	11%	2%
That elections are fair	55%	22%	33%	27%	16%	2%
Public opinion polls	36%	7%	29%	39%	22%	4%
The Trump administration	35%	14%	21%	22%	40%	3%
The media	34%	9%	25%	32%	32%	2%
Congress	27%	4%	23%	49%	21%	3%

McClatchy-Marist Poll National Adults

March 2017

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Nearly six in ten Americans, 59%, think the nation is moving in the wrong direction while 34% say it is moving in the right one. In February, 55% reported that the nation was off course, and 38% said it was traveling in the right direction. Among Republicans, the proportion of those who believe the country has gone off the rails has nearly doubled since last month, 26% up from 14%. 68% of the GOP currently believe the country is on track, down from 82% previously.