



**President Trump's Approval Rating at 42%...
Highest Since Taking Office**

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This Marist Poll Reports:

More than four in ten Americans (42%) approve of President Donald Trump's job performance. This is the highest job approval rating for Trump since he took office and is an increase from the 38% score he received in Marist's survey conducted February 20th through February 21st. 50% of U.S. residents, down slightly from 54%, disapprove of how the president is performing in office, and 8% are unsure.

The proportion of Americans who strongly *approve* of how Trump is doing his job (24%) is at its height and is identical to the proportion who had this view in early February. When Marist last asked this question in its late February survey, 21% had this view. Similarly, the proportion of residents who strongly *disapprove* of how Trump is doing his job is at its lowest (37%) since mid-September 2017. When Marist last reported this question, 40% had this opinion.

President Trump's rating is now above water in the South. It is the only region in the country where the president's job performance is viewed more positively (49%) than negatively (44%). In late February, 42% of residents in the South approved of Trump's job performance. 50% disapproved.

Turning to the issues, a plurality of Americans (42%) think adding a tariff to imported steel and aluminum will hurt the nation's economy. 27% believe it will help it, and 18% say it will have no impact. 13% are unsure.

Nearly six in ten Democrats (59%) and a plurality of independents (46%) consider tariffs on imported steel and aluminum to be harmful to the American economy. Among Republicans, a plurality (45%) say the tax would be beneficial. 23% of the GOP believe the tax will hurt the national economy, 16% say it will not have an impact, and 16% are unsure.

"Even if President Trump's policies are not initially popular, he benefits from focusing discussion on the issues," says Dr. Lee M. Miringoff, Director of The Marist College Institute for Public Opinion. "If the White House chatter distracts and overshadows the president's agenda, his

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standing suffers.”

Also of note, a plurality of Americans who say they supported President Donald Trump in the 2016 election (46%) perceive a tariff on imported steel and aluminum positively. There is less consensus among white residents without a college degree. 35% say such a tax will improve the economy, 32% believe it will hurt it, and 16% say it will make no difference. 17% are unsure.

Opinions also differ based on where Americans call “home.” 51% of urban residents, 46% of those who reside in small cities, and 48% of those who live in the suburbs anticipate harmful economic effects from a tariff on steel and aluminum coming in from other countries. Among rural residents, 39% say such a tax will improve the economy, and 29% believe it will be harmful. Among small town residents, 35% say a tariff on steel and aluminum imports will be a detriment to the U.S. economy, and 33% report it will be beneficial.

64% of Americans overall think a tariff on these materials will increase the prices of products they purchase. Only 4% believe this tax will drive prices down. 24% do not think there will be any difference, and 8% are unsure.

Regardless of demographic group, at least a majority say prices will increase as a result of a tariff on steel and aluminum. Even 56% of Republicans and 54% of Trump supporters have this view.

Do Americans expect Russia to meddle in this year’s midterm elections? 51%, up slightly from 48% in Marist’s late February survey, say it is either very likely or likely Russia will interfere in the midterm elections. 41% think it is not very likely or not likely at all Russia will have a hand in the process, down slightly from 44%. Seven percent are unsure.

A majority of Americans (51%) think Special Counsel Robert Mueller’s investigation into Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election has been fair. 26% say it has been unfair, and 23% are unsure. These findings are little changed from a Marist survey conducted in early February.

But, what about President Trump’s dealings with Russia and Russian President Vladimir Putin? 53% of Americans say the president has either done something illegal (26%) or has done something unethical but not illegal (27%) in his interactions with Russia. 36% say Trump has done nothing wrong, and 11% are unsure. When this question was last asked in early February, 57% thought the president acted illegally (29%) or unethically but not illegally (28%). 36%, at that time, said President Trump did nothing wrong.