



POLL MUST BE SOURCED:
NBC News/Marist Poll*

**2016 Wide Open GOP Field in Early Caucus and Primary States...
Clinton Solid Front-Runner on Democratic Side**

*** Complete Tables for Poll Appended ***

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This NBC News/Marist Poll reports:

Taking an early look at the key presidential caucus and primary states of Iowa, New Hampshire and South Carolina, a Republican front-runner fails to emerge. In **Iowa**, former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee, former Florida Governor Jeb Bush, and Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker vie for the top spot among the state's potential Republican electorate.

In **New Hampshire**, Bush, Walker, Senator Rand Paul of Kentucky, and New Jersey Governor Chris Christie each receives double-digit support. Turning to **South Carolina**, the state's favorite son, Senator Lindsey Graham, battles Bush, Walker, Huckabee, and retired neurosurgeon Ben Carson for the lead.

The picture is much clearer on the Democratic side. Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton is the odds-on favorite for her party's nomination. Clinton outpaces her closest Democratic competitors by very wide margins in **Iowa, New Hampshire, and South Carolina**.

However, in hypothetical general election matchups, despite edging her GOP rivals in Iowa and New Hampshire, Clinton falls short of 50% in each of the three states polled. In South Carolina, when paired against Bush or Walker, Clinton garners about what President Obama received in 2012 against Mitt Romney.

"Top tier? The morning line for these critical states points to a rough and tumble Republican nomination battle. Seven of the 11 potential GOP candidates has double-digit support in, at least, one of the states, but no one breaks 20% anywhere," says Dr. Lee M. Miringoff, Director of The Marist College Institute for Public Opinion. "Not so for the Democrats where Hillary Clinton has a commanding lead."

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2016 Republican presidential primary/caucus including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate			
Potential Republican Electorate			
	Iowa	New Hampshire	South Carolina
Mike Huckabee	17%	7%	10%
Jeb Bush	16%	18%	15%
Scott Walker	15%	15%	12%
Chris Christie	9%	13%	6%
Rand Paul	7%	14%	7%
Marco Rubio	6%	6%	4%
Ben Carson	6%	7%	10%
Rick Santorum	5%	1%	3%
Rick Perry	4%	1%	4%
Ted Cruz	2%	6%	1%
Lindsey Graham	1%	1%	17%
Undecided	14%	13%	11%

2016 Democratic presidential primary/caucus including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate			
Potential Democratic Electorate			
	Iowa	New Hampshire	South Carolina
Hillary Clinton	68%	69%	65%
Joe Biden	12%	8%	20%
Bernie Sanders	7%	13%	3%
Jim Webb	1%	2%	2%
Martin O'Malley	<1%	<1%	2%
Undecided	12%	7%	8%

Republicans and Democrats Satisfied with Candidates

Looking at the field of potential Republican and Democratic candidates, at least, a majority on both sides of the aisle are pleased with their party's, respective, options.

In South Carolina, Senator Lindsey Graham is "testing the waters" for a possible presidential run. Do voters think he should?

Poll points:

- 65% of the **Iowa potential Republican electorate are satisfied with the choice of candidates** they have for the nomination. 25% are dissatisfied. **On the Democratic side**, 60% of the Iowa potential Democratic electorate are pleased with their party's candidates for the nomination, and 27% are dissatisfied.

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- 59% of the **New Hampshire potential Republican electorate are satisfied** with their candidate options while 28% would prefer to see someone else emerge. Looking at **the Democratic side**, 61% of the New Hampshire potential Democratic electorate are happy with their choices for the nomination. 27% are not.
- 64% of the **South Carolina potential Republican electorate are pleased with their primary options** while 25% are displeased. 72% of the **South Carolina potential Democratic electorate are satisfied** with their party's primary candidates. 18% are not.
- 55% of South Carolina residents do not **think Senator Lindsey Graham should run** for president in 2016. 36% think he should toss his hat into the ring. The potential Republican electorate in the state mirrors the opinions of residents.

Clinton Ahead in Iowa and New Hampshire, Not in South Carolina

Poll Points:

- Among registered voters in Iowa, Clinton, 48%, is ahead of **Bush**, 40%. Clinton, 49%, also outpaces **Walker**, 38%, statewide.
- In New Hampshire, Clinton, 48%, edges **Bush**, 42%. Against **Walker**, Clinton has 49% to 42% for Walker.
- **Bush**, receives 48%, and Clinton, 45%, in South Carolina. Clinton garners 46%, and **Walker** receives 46% when matched in the state.

Voters on the Issues

In Iowa, New Hampshire, and South Carolina, more than six in ten voters in each state find a candidate who favors raising taxes on the wealthy to be acceptable. This is especially true in Iowa, where 73% of voters have this view. Majorities of voters in all three states also find a candidate who supports *repealing* the federal health care law, who backs immigration reform, or who promotes action to combat climate change to be preferable. A candidate who supports Common Core education or favors increased military action against ISIS is also deemed satisfactory to majorities of voters in Iowa, New Hampshire, and South Carolina.

However, registered voters are less likely to find a candidate who opposes same-sex marriage to be acceptable.

On many of these questions, there is a notable divide between the potential Republican and Democratic electorates.

Poll points:

Iowa			
Do you think a candidate who has the following position on an issue is totally acceptable, mostly acceptable, mostly unacceptable, or totally unacceptable to you:*			
	Registered Voters	Potential Republican Electorate	Potential Democratic Electorate
Supports Common Core education standards	65%	57%	73%
Supports immigration reform, including a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants	57%	49%	69%
Wants to repeal the federal health care law	53%	78%	28%
Believes climate change is man-made and action should be taken to combat it	58%	42%	78%
Opposes same-sex marriage	38%	50%	26%
Supports raising taxes on the wealthy	73%	54%	92%
Supports sending more U.S. troops to Iraq and Syria to combat ISIS	55%	69%	42%

*Presents percentage reporting 'totally acceptable/mostly acceptable'

New Hampshire			
Do you think a candidate who has the following position on an issue is totally acceptable, mostly acceptable, mostly unacceptable, or totally unacceptable to you:*			
	Registered Voters	Potential Republican Electorate	Potential Democratic Electorate
Supports Common Core education standards	56%	47%	67%
Supports immigration reform, including a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants	55%	43%	74%
Wants to repeal the federal health care law	53%	84%	24%
Believes climate change is man-made and action should be taken to combat it	64%	48%	82%
Opposes same-sex marriage	30%	43%	18%
Supports raising taxes on the wealthy	68%	42%	93%
Supports sending more U.S. troops to Iraq and Syria to combat ISIS	57%	69%	45%

*Presents percentage reporting 'totally acceptable/mostly acceptable'

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South Carolina			
Do you think a candidate who has the following position on an issue is totally acceptable, mostly acceptable, mostly unacceptable, or totally unacceptable to you:*			
	Registered Voters	Potential Republican Electorate	Potential Democratic Electorate
Supports Common Core education standards	60%	47%	79%
Supports immigration reform, including a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants	54%	46%	64%
Wants to repeal the federal health care law	57%	80%	28%
Believes climate change is man-made and action should be taken to combat it	52%	41%	64%
Opposes same-sex marriage	39%	45%	32%
Supports raising taxes on the wealthy	63%	49%	81%
Supports sending more U.S. troops to Iraq and Syria to combat ISIS	55%	70%	40%

*Presents percentage reporting 'totally acceptable/mostly acceptable'

Job Creation and Economic Growth Key Issue

Residents in Iowa, New Hampshire, and South Carolina consider job creation to be the most important issue in the 2016 election. Jobs and the economy is also the most pressing concern for the potential Democratic and Republican electorates with the exception of Iowa where the deficit and government spending is the top priority for the potential Republican electorate for 2016.

Poll points:

- 30% of adults in Iowa consider job creation and economic growth to be the **most important issue in the 2016 presidential election**. Deficit and government spending, 21%, military action against ISIS, 17%, and health care, 15%, follow. 11% cite income equality while looking out for the interests of women is the priority for 3% of Iowa residents.
- Among Iowa's potential Republican electorate, the deficit and government spending, 32%, tops the list followed by military action against ISIS, 25%, and jobs, 23%. The

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- potential Democratic electorate prioritizes jobs, 32%, followed by health care, 20%, and income equality, 19%.
- There is little consensus about **lowans' second most pressing issue**. Similar proportions of adults mention job creation, 24%, health care, 22%, and the deficit and government spending, 20%. 15% put military action against ISIS at the top of their list while 12% cite income equality. Six percent select looking out for the interests of women.
 - Job creation and economic growth, 33%, is the **most important issue to New Hampshire adults**. The deficit and government spending, 19%, health care, 18%, and military action against ISIS, 14% follow. 11% place income equality at the top of their priority list while only 2% think looking out for the interests of women to be the most important issue in the upcoming election.
 - When looking at New Hampshire's potential Republican electorate, jobs, 33%, rank number one. The deficit and government spending with 28% and military action against ISIS at 20% follow. Among the potential Democratic electorate, jobs, 34%, is tops followed by health care and income equality, each at 21%.
 - When it comes to the **second choice issue for New Hampshire adults**, job creation and economic growth, 22%, and health care, 22%, top the list. Military action against ISIS, 20%, and the deficit and government spending, 18%, are close behind. Income equality, 9%, and looking out for the interests of women, 7%, round out the list.
 - **32% of South Carolina adults think the key issue** in the 2016 election is job creation and economic growth. Health care, 20%, military action against ISIS, 18%, and the deficit and government spending, 15%, also rate highly. Eight percent believe income equality is the most crucial topic of discussion while women's interests receive 3%.
 - South Carolina's potential Republican electorate points to jobs, 29%, as the top priority for 2016. The issues of military action against ISIS with 28% and the deficit and government spending at 24% are also seen as important. For South Carolina's potential Democratic electorate, jobs, 35%, is crucial followed by health care, 28%, and income equality, 15%.
 - Looking at the **second most important issue for South Carolina adults**, 25% choose job creation and economic growth. 23% select health care and 22% pick the deficit and government spending. 14% mention military action against ISIS, and 8% cite income equality. Seven percent think looking out for the interests of women should be the priority.

U.S. Senate Race in New Hampshire Competitive

Looking at the 2016 election for U.S. Senate in New Hampshire, Democratic Governor Maggie Hassan and incumbent Republican Senator Kelly Ayotte are closely matched.

Poll points:

- 48% of New Hampshire registered voters support Hassan in the **race for U.S. Senate** while Ayotte garners 44%. Seven percent are undecided.

Approval Rating Roundup

In Iowa, New Hampshire, and South Carolina, President Barack Obama's job performance rating is upside down. The governors in each state are rated highly.

Poll points:

- 49% of **Iowans disapprove of how President Obama is doing his job** while 43% approve.
- 50% of **New Hampshire residents disapprove of President Obama's job performance.** 43% approve.
- 51% of **South Carolinians disapprove of how Mr. Obama is performing in office.** 44% approve.
- More than six in ten Iowa residents, 64%, approve of **the job Governor Terry Branstad** is doing in office. 28% disapprove.
- In New Hampshire, 68% of residents approve of **how Governor Maggie Hassan** is doing her job. 23% disapprove.
- In South Carolina, 61% of residents **approve of the job performance of Governor Nikki Haley.** 32% disapprove.