



**POLL MUST BE SOURCED:**  
**NBC News/Wall Street Journal/Marist Poll\***

**Trump Leads in Iowa, New Hampshire, and South Carolina...  
Clinton and Sanders Competitive in Iowa,  
Sanders up in New Hampshire,  
Clinton Leads in South Carolina  
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**These NBC News/Wall Street Journal/Marist Polls report:**

First things first, in Iowa, both businessman Donald Trump and Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders are banking on inspiring potential first time attendees to caucus. In contrast, Texas Senator Ted Cruz and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton draw strength from voters who have been down this path before.

The latest results in Iowa for the GOP show Trump, 32%, has taken the lead over his nearest rival, Cruz, 25%, by 7 points among likely Republican caucus-goers statewide including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate. Trump's support has increased by 8 points while Cruz's has decreased by 3. Florida Senator Marco Rubio, 18%, remains in third place but has improved his standing by 5 points. Cruz, 28%, edged Trump, 24%, by 4 points in the previous NBC News/Wall Street Journal/Marist Poll of the state earlier this month.

In New Hampshire, Trump, 31%, has a 19 point lead over his closest competitor, Cruz, 12%, among likely Republican primary voters including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate or voted absentee. Rubio and Ohio Governor John Kasich follow, each with 11%. Trump's lead is comparable to the 16 point advantage he had over Rubio, who was his closest competitor, earlier this month. Of note, New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, who was in third place with 12%, now receives 7% of likely Republican primary voters in New Hampshire and places sixth behind former Florida Governor Jeb Bush with 8%.

In South Carolina, Trump, 36%, also has a double-digit lead over, Cruz, 20%, among likely Republican primary voters including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a

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candidate. Rubio is in third with 14% and is the only other candidate with double-digit support.

It's worth noting that in all three states, Cruz is the preferred second choice candidate among likely Republican voters with a candidate preference followed by Rubio in each state.

"Trump is positioned to run the house in these first three states. His supporters are committed and plan to turn out," says Dr. Lee M. Miringoff, Director of The Marist College Institute for Public Opinion. "Will it happen? The answer depends on when or if anti-Trump sentiment will coalesce to interrupt his march to the nomination."

In Iowa, when compared with the previous NBC News/*Wall Street Journal*/Marist Poll, Trump is now ahead or closely competitive with Cruz among key voting groups. Trump has increased his support since last time among likely Republican caucus-goers who are Tea Party supporters (+16), those who practice a religion (+13), white Evangelical Christians (+12), conservatives (+12), independents (+12), those without a college education (+12), or men (+11). Cruz and Trump now divide Tea Party supporters, 39% for Cruz and 38% for Trump.

In New Hampshire, Trump continues to lead among all key demographic groups. His support is especially bolstered by those who say they strongly support their choice of candidate, are not married, do not practice a religion, are under 45 years old, are men, do not have a college degree, or identify as Republican.

In South Carolina, Trump also has the advantage over his GOP rivals among all demographic groups. Trump does best among likely Republican primary voters in South Carolina who strongly support their choice of candidate, do not practice a religion, earn less than \$50,000 annually, have not voted in a previous Republican presidential primary, or do not have a college degree. He also does well among men, those who are not married, or are Tea Party supporters. Also noteworthy, Trump leads Cruz by 8 points among white Evangelical Christians in the state.

**2016 Republican Presidential Caucus/Primary**  
Including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate

	Republican Likely Caucus-Goers/Primary Voters		
	Iowa	New Hampshire	South Carolina
Donald Trump	32%	31%	36%
Ted Cruz	25%	12%	20%
Marco Rubio	18%	11%	14%
Ben Carson	8%	5%	8%
Jeb Bush	4%	8%	9%
Carly Fiorina	2%	4%	1%
John Kasich	2%	11%	1%
Rand Paul	2%	4%	1%
Chris Christie	2%	7%	2%
Mike Huckabee	2%	1%	2%
Other	0%	1%	0%
Undecided	3%	5%	6%

In Iowa, 61% of likely Republican Iowa caucus-goers with a candidate preference, including 76% of Trump backers but only 58% of Cruz supporters, are strongly committed to their choice of candidate. Three percent of likely Republican caucus-goers are still undecided, and 11% report they might vote differently.

In New Hampshire, 59% of likely Republican primary voters with a candidate preference strongly support their candidate selection. 72% of Trump's supporters say they will not waver in their commitment to him compared with 59% of Cruz's backers. Five percent are undecided, and 12% say they might vote differently.

In South Carolina, 56% of likely Republican primary voters with a candidate preference, including 68% of Trump's backers, say they are strongly committed to their choice of candidate. 57% of Cruz's supporters and 37% of voters behind Rubio express a similar level of support for their candidate. Six percent are undecided, and 13% might vote differently.

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**2016 Republican Presidential Caucus/Primary Second Choice**  
Including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate

**Republican Likely Caucus-Goers/Primary Voters  
with a Candidate Preference**

	Iowa	New Hampshire	South Carolina
Ted Cruz	21%	19%	21%
Marco Rubio	19%	15%	17%
Donald Trump	12%	10%	15%
Ben Carson	12%	6%	13%
Rand Paul	7%	5%	2%
Jeb Bush	6%	13%	9%
Chris Christie	5%	12%	5%
Mike Huckabee	5%	2%	5%
Carty Fiorina	4%	6%	3%
John Kasich	3%	9%	3%
Other	1%	0%	1%
Undecided	5%	5%	6%

On the Democratic side, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, 48%, and Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders, 45%, remain competitive among likely Democratic caucus-goers in Iowa including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate, unchanged from earlier this month.

It's a different story in New Hampshire where Sanders, 57%, has opened up a 19 point lead over Clinton, 38%, among likely Democratic primary voters statewide including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate or voted absentee. Previously, Sanders had 50% to 46% for Clinton.

In South Carolina, Clinton's firewall is intact. Among likely Democratic primary voters including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate, Clinton, 64%, outpaces Sanders, 27%, by more than two-to-one.

"The stakes are sky high for Clinton and Sanders in Iowa," says Dr. Lee M. Miringoff, Director of The Marist College Institute for Public Opinion. "If Clinton carries Iowa, she can

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absorb a defeat to Sanders who has a home field advantage in New Hampshire and then move on to South Carolina. But, if Sanders carries Iowa and then New Hampshire, this contest will, indeed, be a marathon.”

### 2016 Democratic Presidential Caucus/Primary Including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate

#### Democratic Likely Caucus-Goers/Primary Voters

	Iowa	New Hampshire	South Carolina
Hillary Clinton	48%	38%	64%
Bernie Sanders	45%	57%	27%
Martin O'Malley	3%	2%	2%
Other	0%	0%	0%
Undecided	4%	3%	7%

In Iowa, the contest is unchanged from earlier this month. Clinton leads among those age 45 or older, Democratic Party identifiers, women, or those who have participated in a previous Democratic presidential caucus. Sanders leads among those who consider themselves independents, are under 45 years old, men, or are first time participants.

In New Hampshire, Sanders now leads Clinton among most key demographic groups. The biggest change has occurred among those who identify as Democrats. Sanders is now ahead of Clinton by 8 points among the party's base. Previously, Clinton had an 18 point advantage over Sanders among Democratic identifiers who are likely to vote in the primary.

In South Carolina, Clinton outpaces Sanders by more than three to one among likely primary voters who consider themselves Democrats. However, independents divide in their support, 47% for Clinton to 46% for Sanders. Six in ten likely Democratic primary voters in the state are African American, and Clinton leads Sanders by 57 points among this group.

Looking at intensity of support, 77% of likely Democratic caucus-goers with a candidate preference in Iowa, including 79% of Clinton supporters and 76% of those who are for Sanders, strongly support their choice of candidate. Four percent are undecided, and 6% say they might vote differently.

Three in four likely Democratic primary voters in New Hampshire with a candidate preference, 75%, have a high level of commitment to their candidate selection. 77% of Clinton's supporters and 76% of Sanders' backers strongly support their choice of candidate. Three percent are undecided, and 5% report they might vote differently.

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Nearly two-thirds of likely Democratic primary voters in South Carolina with a candidate preference, 65%, including 68% of Clinton’s supporters and 58% of Sanders’ backers, are firmly behind their choice of candidate. Seven percent are undecided, and 10% say they might vote differently.

South Carolinians consider job creation and economic growth, 27%, to be the most important issue of the 2016 presidential campaign. National security and terrorism, 24%, follows closely behind. However a partisan divide exists. Among likely Republican primary voters in South Carolina, national security and terrorism, 34%, is the issue driving the campaign. For likely Democratic primary voters in South Carolina, job creation and economic growth, 42%, is most mentioned.

**Which one of the following issues is most important to you for the 2016 presidential election?**

	Adults	South Carolina Likely Primary Voters	
		Republican	Democrat
Job creation and economic growth	27%	15%	42%
National security and terrorism	24%	34%	13%
Health care	13%	6%	19%
The deficit and government spending	11%	15%	6%
Religious and moral values	10%	15%	4%
Immigration	5%	8%	2%
Climate change	2%	0%	5%
All equally	5%	5%	6%
None of these	0%	0%	0%
Other	1%	1%	1%
Unsure	1%	0%	1%

When it comes to other pressing issues in the campaign, opinions mostly align along party lines. Likely Republican primary voters in South Carolina are more likely to support sending combat troops to fight ISIS in Iraq and Syria and banning Muslims from entering the United States. They oppose same-sex marriage, creating stricter gun laws, providing a pathway to citizenship for undocumented immigrants, and government action to combat climate change.

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same-sex marriage. They are more likely to oppose banning Muslims from entering the United States and sending combat troops to fight ISIS in Iraq and Syria.

The one issue on which likely Republican and Democratic primary voters agree is free trade. About six in ten in each party support free trade with foreign countries.

### South Carolina Likely Primary Voters

	Support		Oppose		Unsure	
	Republican	Democrat	Republican	Democrat	Republican	Democrat
Do you support or oppose sending U.S. combat troops to Iraq and Syria to fight ISIS?	68%	35%	25%	57%	7%	9%
Do you support or oppose free trade with foreign countries?	62%	62%	28%	25%	10%	13%
Do you support or oppose banning Muslims from entering the United States?	48%	16%	42%	75%	10%	9%
Do you support or oppose the government taking action to combat climate change?	35%	72%	57%	17%	8%	11%
Do you support or oppose immigration policies which include a pathway to citizenship for undocumented or illegal immigrants?	35%	60%	59%	32%	6%	8%
Do you support or oppose making laws covering the sale of firearms more strict?	28%	81%	67%	16%	4%	3%
Do you support or oppose same-sex marriage, that is, allowing gay or lesbian couples to legally marry?	23%	57%	73%	38%	5%	4%

Turning to the U.S. Senate race in New Hampshire, Republican incumbent Kelly Ayotte, 45%, edges her Democratic challenger Governor Maggie Hassan, 40%, among registered voters statewide.

Looking at President Barack Obama’s job approval rating, his score is upside down in all three states. Among residents in Iowa, 42% approve of his job performance. 43% of those in New Hampshire, and 42% of South Carolina residents agree.

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