

UMass Lowell/7News
Daily Tracking Poll of New Hampshire Voters, Release 1 of 8

January 29-31, 2016

N=1413 New Hampshire Registered Voters with a subsample of a 442 Democratic Primary Likely Voters and 461 Republican Primary Likely Voters.

The RV sample has an adjusted margin of error of +/-2.97% the Dem LV sample has an adjusted margin of error of +/-5.3% and the Rep LV sample has an adjusted margin of error +/-5.1%

See <http://uml.edu/polls> for full questionnaire/topline results and detailed methodology disclosure.

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Do you have a question about this poll? If so, tweet @UML_CPO and we'll get back to you.

HIGHLIGHTS

Trump and Sanders Lead by Wide Margins

Despite widespread skepticism that their leads would not hold, with just eight days until the New Hampshire Presidential Primary, both Donald Trump, the well-known and controversial businessman/reality show star from New York, and Independent Senator Bernie Sanders of Vermont lead in our survey of New Hampshire likely primary voters. Both lead by wide margins. Trump leads by 26 percentage points over his nearest opponent, Senator Ted Cruz of Texas, while Sanders leads by 31 percentage points over former Senator/Secretary of State and First Lady, Hillary Clinton.

Republicans Trumped

Trump is the frontrunner in a race without a clear challenger. Cruz takes 12% of the vote, while former governors John Kasich and Jeb Bush take 9% each, Senator Marco Rubio takes 8%, while former New Jersey Governor Chris Christie gets the support of 7% of likely voters. No other candidate is above 3% and former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee did not receive support (zero) from any Republican likely voters surveyed. Trump's voters are the most certain, with 72% saying that their votes are definite, while 28% say that they "could change their mind." For candidates like Bush and Rubio, majorities (59% and 57%, respectively) say they could change their mind.

Center for Public Opinion

Trump's support is strongest among men and those with lower levels of education. Those whose highest level of education is a high school diploma (and below) support Trump at 46%, compared to those with a post graduate degree who support Trump at only 18%. Interestingly, Trump's support is consistent across income levels, between Independents and Republicans and between Moderates and Conservatives. In fact, the only demographic category in which another candidate is preferred to Trump is among those who we identified as being very religious (attend church at least once a week and view scriptures as without any flaws). The most religious voters apparently prefer Ted Cruz to Trump, albeit by a narrow and not statistically significant margin, 27% to 24%.

Feeling the Bern

Bernie Sanders has opened up a huge margin on Hillary Clinton in New Hampshire, a state where he has led in almost every publically released poll since the beginning of January. Sanders' support is bolstered by young Democratic primary voters; 89% of 18-29 year old Democratic Primary Likely Voters prefer Sanders to Clinton. But even among older voters (those 65 and up), where Clinton polls best, she still trails Sanders by 4 points, 47% to 43%.

Despite the perception that he is the "left" candidate, Sanders' support is even stronger among self-described moderates (he leads Clinton 64% to 26%) than it is among liberals (he leads 62% to 32%). Independents who would choose the Democratic ballot increase Sanders' support; 71% of Independents choose Sanders over Clinton, as compared to 54% of Democrats. Independents make up 39% of Democratic Primary Likely Voters.

Distrust, Not Ideology, Fueling Both Sanders and Trump

One of the most fascinating parts of this primary appears to be lack of variation with respect to ideology. The front-running candidates in New Hampshire from both parties are gaining support from equal numbers of ideologues and moderates. However, one uniting metric where candidates do considerably better than their rivals are among those voters who express distrust in the federal government. Sanders has a 48 point margin (69% to 21%) over those who distrust the government the most, while Trump has a 42 point margin (53% to 11%) over his next closest rival, Senator Ted Cruz. Much has been made about 2016 as the year of the outsider. The fuel of these outsider candidacies could very well be that trust in the federal government, which has been bending for decades, has finally broken.

Clinton is Still the Favorite to be the Next President, According to New Hampshire Voters

Despite the fact that Hillary Clinton trails Bernie Sanders by a wide margin in New Hampshire, when asked who would ultimately become the next President, the most popular answer was Secretary Clinton (23%). Donald Trump is the next most popular, with 22%, followed by Senator Sanders, with 16%. No other candidate is predicted to win the Presidency by more than 3% of voters, and fully 30% are uncertain or failed to provide an answer.

Moving Forward

This marks the first release of our eight-day tracking poll of New Hampshire voters. The main advantage of such a poll is to be able to track the dynamics of a campaign, especially a campaign like a primary where so many voters are still apt to change their minds. At present, we see two important moments this week. Our first poll falls as Iowans get ready to head to their caucus sites this evening. This will lead to the selection of a handful of delegates for the upcoming conventions this summer, but the result will also set the stage for expectations going forward.

Who is Donald Trump's primary challenger right now? Iowa may clarify this. Large numbers of non-Trump supporters still state that they may change their mind. This might mean going to the front-runner, but more likely, many Republicans are waiting for a single challenger to emerge. The Iowa caucus might clarify things, or it might muddy the waters further, strengthening Trump's position in New Hampshire.

Meanwhile, Bernie Sanders has an opportunity to take a commanding lead in the nomination if he is able to win Iowa and then move to New Hampshire where he has built a seemingly insurmountable lead. If Clinton wins Iowa, however, perhaps the Democratic race will tighten, and Sanders' lead could shrink. The two are set to debate on Thursday night and we will be well positioned to see if debate performances affect the disposition of Democratic voters, along with any other surprises that might pop up during the last week of the campaign.