

**UMass Lowell/7News
Survey of New Hampshire Voters**

October 28-November 2, 2016

N=901 New Hampshire Registered Voters with a subsample of a 695 Likely Voters

The RV sample has an adjusted margin of error of +/-3.78%; the LV sample has an adjusted margin of error +/-4.28

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

Presidential Election – Clinton and Trump now tied at 44%

In a poll taken entirely after last Friday's revelation that FBI Director James Comey had informed Congress of new materials in the investigation of Hillary Clinton's use of a private email server, the race in New Hampshire is now a dead heat, with less than a week before New Hampshire voters go to the polls to determine how the four electoral votes in the Granite State will be allocated. Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton are tied at 44% among likely voters, with Libertarian Gary Johnson at 5% and Green Party candidate Jill Stein at 2%; 4% are undecided. Clinton led by 6 points in the 4-way trial heat in a previous poll that we fielded October 7-11, 2016.

Anti-Clinton sentiment appears to be driving increasing enthusiasm among Republicans. Clinton dropped only one point since our last survey, but Trump has gained 5 points. Notably, Trump appears to be drawing much stronger support from Republicans, increasing the partisan loyalty of Republican identifiers to 81% (up 4 points). Meanwhile, support for Gary Johnson has decreased from 9% to 5% and Trump appears to be the primary beneficiary of that shift.



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Most voters have made up their minds, with 87% of Trump supporters and 90% of Clinton supporters saying they will “definitely vote for” their chosen candidate. However, 13% of Trump supporters compared to 8% of Clinton supporters say they could still change their mind, indicating a potential opening for Clinton in the last week.

Clinton’s support is coming from voters with college degrees, women and younger voters, while Trump does best among men, those that have never attended college and those 40-49 years old. The gender gap has remained a significant part of this story; Clinton leads by 16 points among women and Trump leads by 19 points among men. While this is a large gender gap, it is not unprecedented in the Granite State; in a 2014 UMass Lowell/7News poll conducted in the New Hampshire Senate race between Democrat Jeanne Shaheen and Republican Scott Brown, Shaheen lead by 17 points among women. Therefore, despite the attention focused on women with the historic candidacy of Hillary Clinton and controversial remarks made by Donald Trump, voters appear to be largely adhering to their party identity.

There has also been a clear shift in voters’ sense of who will win. While a majority (52%) believe Hillary Clinton will win the election, that number is down 8 points from our previous poll, while the belief that Trump will win has increased from 26% to 34%.

Motivated Reasoning and the Effect of Controversies

Our poll included questions about 3 important campaign “events” that have occurred in the last 6 weeks: (1) the revelation that the FBI was continuing to investigate Hillary Clinton’s emails, (2) the accusations of 11 women that Donald Trump has engaged in inappropriate sexual behavior and (3) the effect of the debate. Our general findings point to notion that co-partisans are able to filter and dismiss controversies, but these controversies can serve as motivating factors for those from the other party.

On the question of the FBI’s review of additional emails from Hillary Clinton, 28% of likely voters say that they are less likely to vote for Clinton because of this news, while 68% say it does not make a difference (3% say “more likely). However, among Democrats, 89% say it makes no difference, 4% say it makes them more likely to support Clinton, and only 6% say they are less likely to vote for Clinton because of this news. Among Republicans and independents, however, we see greater attrition; 44% of Republicans and 33% of independents say that this news makes them less likely to vote for Clinton. But, we hasten to note that many of these voters were already not supporting Clinton and she still leads Trump among Independents 38% to 32%.

We see a very similar pattern with regards to the allegations by several women about Trump’s inappropriate behavior. Looking at all likely voters, 26% say that this makes them “less likely”

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to support Trump, but among Republicans, that number drops to 8%, with 86% saying it makes no difference and 6% saying it makes them more likely to vote for Clinton.

Even on the debates, where New Hampshire voters agree by a wide margin that Clinton was the winner of the debates (55% say Clinton performed better compared to only 25% for Trump), only 4% say that the debates changed their vote – 3% of Clinton voters and 5% of Trump voters.

Policy Issues

One part of the electoral process that has been strangely absent from public discourse is significant policy debate. New Hampshire voters were asked who they trust more on 11 policy issues, and we may be able to understand part of Donald Trump's surge and the closeness of this election by their answers. Majorities of New Hampshire likely voters trust Trump more than Clinton on the Economy (52-41%), Immigration (50-46%), Terrorism and National Security (50-46%), Creating the kind of change we need (49-40%), and understanding the issues that are most important in New Hampshire (44-43%). At the same time, majorities of New Hampshire voters trust Clinton more than Trump on Foreign Policy (54-41%), our relationship with Russia (46-45%), Abortion (53-38%), Social Security and Medicare (49-43%), race relations (56-36%), and women's issues (63-30%).

U.S. Senate Race Remain Close; Hassan +1

In our October poll, incumbent Republican Senator Kelly Ayotte led her challenger, Governor Maggie Hassan by just one point. Hassan is now polling one point ahead of Ayotte, 47% to 46%, in a race that continues to be too close to call, and within the margin of error. Libertarian Brian Chabot remains at 4% and only 3% of likely voters report being undecided. While there has been some concern about top-of-ticket forces on this race, as Trump's standing has improved, Ayotte's has not. Her net favorability dropped from +11 earlier in October to just +4 now, while Hassan's increased from +8 to +10. Still, these are two well-liked and well-known incumbents in the state and the race will likely be decided by turnout at the margins.

Governor's Race Also Very Competitive; Sununu is up +4

In the open seat gubernatorial race between Democrat Colin Van Ostern and Republican Chris Sununu, Sununu is up by 4 points, 47% to 43%, a lead that is still inside the margin of error. The biggest change in this race has been that undecided voters have made choices in the last 3 weeks – on October 13th, 14% of New Hampshire likely voters were undecided compared to only 4% in this release. The 10% increase was distributed between both candidates, with Van Ostern improving his position 4 points and Sununu improving his position 6 points. The



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partisan loyalty rates are nearly equivalent with 86% of Democrats and 83% of Republicans supporting their candidate. Sununu, however, is winning independent 38-34%.

Van Ostern continues to suffer from the fact that many New Hampshire voters either do not know who he is (11%) or have yet to develop an opinion about him (16%). These numbers are improved, but only 1% of New Hampshire voters have never heard of Chris Sununu.

Election Postscript

Regardless of what happens next Tuesday, New Hampshire voters believe that the country will not unify (20%) behind the winner, but rather will remain divided (71%). A large majority also believes that it is very important (60%) or somewhat important (17%) that the losing candidate of the election accepts the results of the election and concedes to the winner. However, there are notable differences among the supporters of the candidates: 83% of Clinton supporters say its “very important” compared to only 37% of Trump supporters.