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TO: Interested Parties

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RE: Trump Approval Highlights

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An analysis of data collected by Change Research reveals geographic and demographic patterns in President Trump's approval ratings that will play a key role in the 2020 presidential election. Donald Trump remains quite polarizing, but has areas of strength and weakness in both geography and personal attributes.

Change Research analyzed data collected in:

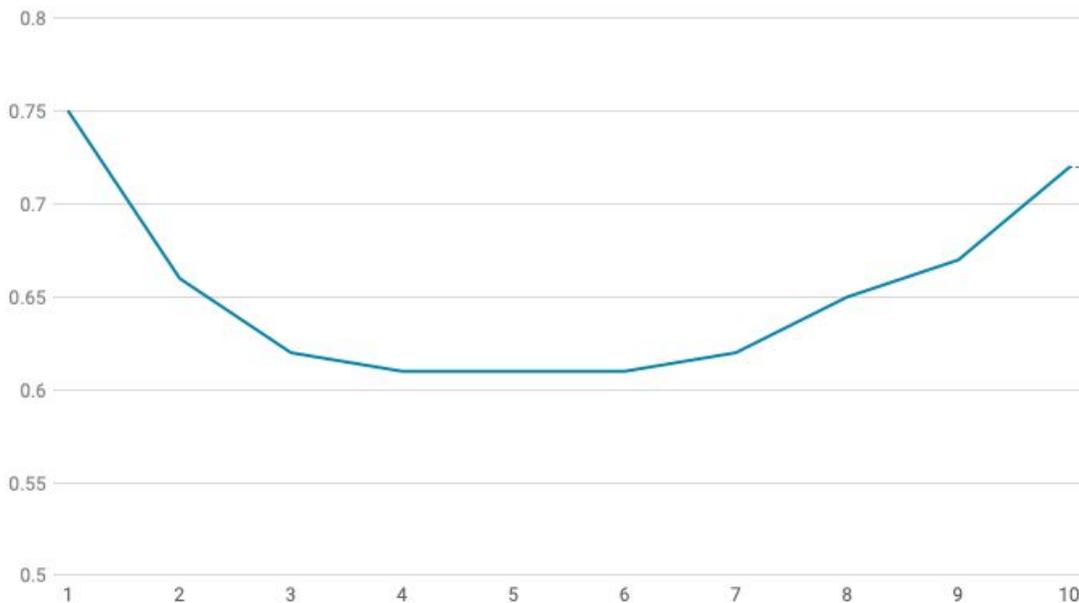
- hundreds of polls between July 2018 and June 2019 across the U.S.
- over 329,000 interviews total, all online
- many in-depth polls in partnership with Future Majority, including two June 2019 polls

Nationally, President Trump has a net approval rating of -8 points (45% positive/53% negative) across all polls. In a poll conducted in seven swing states (AZ, MI, MN, NC, NH, PA, WI) from June 9-12, Trump's net approval was -3 points (47% positive/50% negative), and in a poll conducted with Future Majority from June 8-9 in 43 Congressional districts that flipped from Republican to Democratic in 2018, Trump's net approval was -5 points (46% positive/51% negative).

Trump's popularity has not moved much since his election. As annoying as the New York Times profiles of midwestern Republicans in rural diners are, it's true that his supporters from 2016, particularly older voters and white male non-college graduates, continue to strongly support him. Democrats hate him more than Republicans love him, but the electoral landscape has not changed significantly since 2016--the contours have simply hardened.

Change Research asks about approval on a 1-10 scale, allowing voters to indicate small differences that are electorally predictive. Voters who respond with the highest rating (1) or the lowest rating (10) are substantially more likely to vote than anyone else:

Turnout score by Trump approval



Voters who rate Trump a 1 or a 10 are about 20% more likely to vote than those who rate him a 4, 5, or 6.

95% of 2016 Trump voters rate him positively, compared to only 3% who rate him negatively. 64% of Trump voters rate him a 10 out of 10. His popularity has slowly risen in the past year in this group: in July 2018, 57% of Trump voters rated him a 10 out of 10; today 64% rate him a 10.

On the other hand, 2016 Clinton voters are still solidly against Trump. 2% rate him positively, while 97% rate him negatively, and 91% rate him 1 out of 10. Although the proportion rating him 1 out of 10 dipped into the mid-80s in spring 2018, it has stayed constant at 91-92% in 2019. These voters are more negative about Trump than Republican voters are positive, but Trump voters love Trump more than Democrats love any of the current presidential candidates.

2016 Gary Johnson voters (over 3% of the electorate) are almost evenly split on Trump, with 55% rating him negatively and 45% rating him positively. Their 2018 Congressional vote was determined almost completely by their response to Trump: if they rated him very negatively (1 or 2), they were more than 90% likely to vote Democrat; if they rated him somewhat negatively (3 or 4), most did not vote and others split their vote evenly; if they were neutral or positive (5 or above), they were more than 90% likely to vote for a Republican for Congress.

People who did not vote in 2016 are less polarized, with 31% rating Trump positively and 61% rating him negatively. These people tend to be less engaged than the rest of the electorate, which partially explains their lack of polarization.

Independents are about twice as likely (39% vs. 20%) to rate Trump as a 1 than as a 10, with a smattering in the middle. 84% of Democrats rate him as a 1, and 60% of Republicans rate him a 10, with 25% of Republicans giving him an 8 or a 9.

Trump has lost more support among women who voted for him than among men, but he still performs well in the South and in rural areas.

Group	Strong Positive (10)	Positive (6- 9)	Neutral/ Negative (1-5)
Female Trump voters	59%	34%	7%
Male Trump voters	60%	33%	4%
Southern female Trump voters	60%	33%	7%
Southern male Trump voters	62%	34%	4%
Rural female Trump voters	60%	33%	7%
Rural male Trump voters	61%	35%	4%

Barack Obama is the only national political figure more popular than Trump in swing states -- the 2020 Democratic candidates and Democratic members of Congress all lag behind.

Official	Positive	Negative	Net Positive
Barack Obama	55%	45%	+10
Joe Biden	44%	52%	-8
Bernie Sanders	43%	55%	-12
Elizabeth Warren	41%	48%	-7
Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez	39%	50%	-12
Nancy Pelosi	38%	55%	-17

Voters split on whether President Trump is keeping us safe. In a November 2018 poll with Future Majority, respondents in the Midwest and early primary states were evenly split (48% yes, 48% no in both cases) on whether President Trump keeps America safe. A similar split emerged on the question of whether America is stronger under Trump's leadership: in the Midwest, 47% said yes and 48% said no, while in early primary states, 47% said yes and 49% said no.

A January 2019 poll with Future Majority asked respondents about different descriptors, and whether they apply to President Trump.

- 55% said he is intelligent compared to just 15% of black voters
- 82% said he shakes things up, but only 64% of Democrats said so
- 52% said he is deceptive, including 70% of undecided 2020 general election voters
- 47% of all voters said he is honest. Undecided 2020 voters disagree -- only 25% of them said so.
- 72% said he is spiteful, including 67% of Trump 2016 voters who are undecided for 2020
- 61% said he is childish, including 88% of undecided 2020 general election voters, 97% of black voters, and 24% of Republicans
- 57% say he is not presidential, including 16% of Republicans

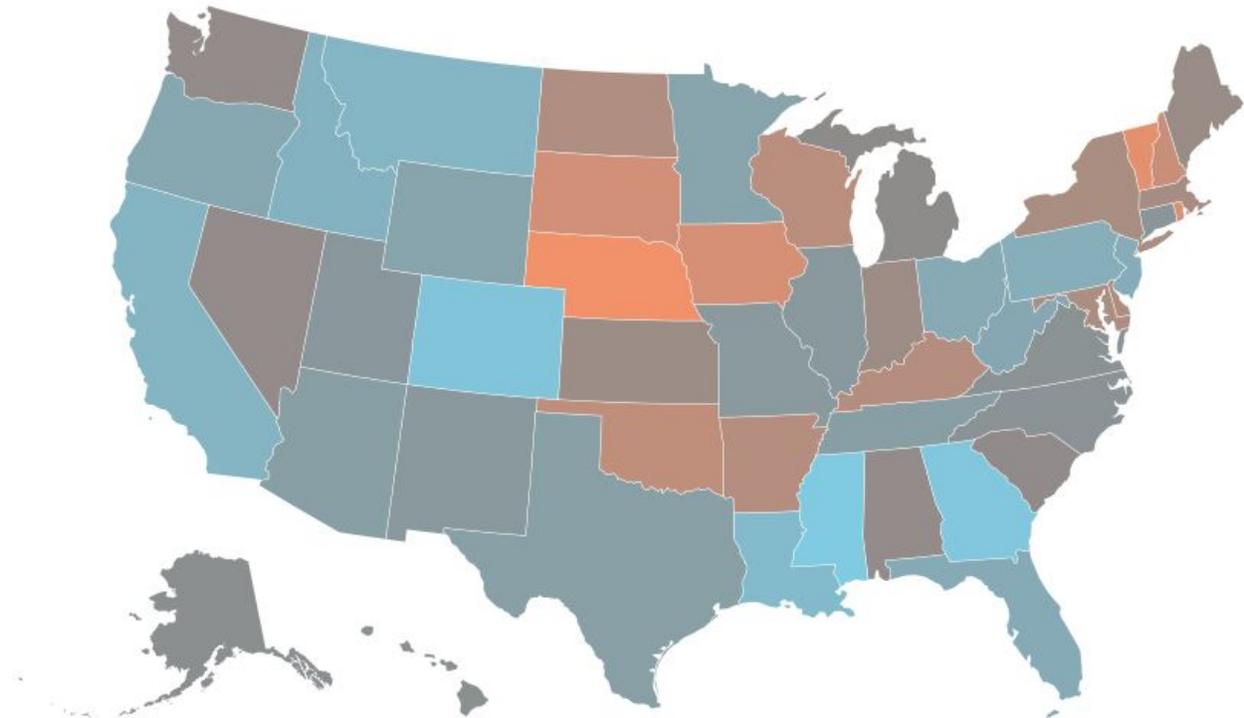
- 28% say he is disciplined, including only 14% of undecided 2020 general election voters
- 59% say he is thin-skinned, including 30% of Republicans

Women consistently rate Trump about 10-20 points worse than men rate him on these descriptors (e.g. for positive descriptors, more women say that they do not apply, and for negative descriptors, more women say that they apply).

Change Research’s Trump approval model highlights areas where Trump is more or less popular than he was in 2016. Trump has gotten more popular in the deep South (MS, GA, LA) and in the Mountain West (CO, MT), but is less popular in the western edge of the Midwest (NE, IA, SD, OK, WI) and in Kentucky. The map below depicts the change in approval (relative to expectations):

Change in Trump approval

- Strongly underperforming
- Somewhat underperforming
- Somewhat overperforming
- Strongly overperforming



Among voters who supported Trump in 2016 and a Democrat in 2018, a majority rate him a 6 or better out of 10.

Strong negative	Negative/neutral	Positive	Strong positive
(1)	(2-5)	(6-9)	(10)
26%	19%	33%	22%

As this illustrates, Democrats should not count on all 2016 Trump/2018 Democrat voters sticking with them: these voters still like Trump more than they dislike him.

Trump has improved his standing in many districts with large Hispanic populations. For example, FL-25 is 65% Hispanic, and Trump's approval is 3% higher than his 2016 baseline. Trump has done better in heavily Hispanic districts for different reasons in different states: in Florida districts with large Hispanic populations, Trump outperforms among Hispanics but not among whites; in similar districts in California, he outperforms among whites but not Hispanics.

Voters generally approve of Trump's handling of the economy. 50% of voters in swing Congressional districts say he is doing a good job, compared to 47% that say he is not. Voters in swing states are similar, with 52% positive and 46% negative. Trump gets better marks on his handling of the economy than his overall ratings across all voter groups across gender, age, educational attainment, and party lines.

Public perceptions of the President have been as stable as Trump has been unstable. We are not closer to answering the important questions of this moment in time than we were on 11/9/2016. Was his 2016 victory a fluke or a genuine reflection of America? Is the "populist surge" attributed to him over or will it continue in ways that will define this election and the country going forward? What do we want America to be and how do we get there? Our data indicate that voters are completely split on this. Democrats and Republicans have completely different visions for what they want America to be and who should lead them. This will be a close and hard fought contest, especially in the key battlegrounds in the Midwest and across the country, but with an incumbent with distinct personal and policy weaknesses our polling has shown can be exploited to undermine him further. The even harder part will come afterwards in reconciling people's differing attitudes and policy preferences to begin to solve the challenges facing our economy, health care and public education systems, and the many other things not currently being addressed as Trump's issues dominate our public life.

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