



To: All Interested Parties
From: John McLaughlin & Jim McLaughlin
Re: Media Polling, M&A Polling and President Trump’s Ratings
Date: April 27, 2017

At the time of this writing the “unbiased” and “non-partisan” media polls are claiming that President Trump has the “lowest” approval rating for any President this early in their tenure with a Real Clear Politics average of recent media polls of only 42% approve to 52% disapprove. However, unlike partisan candidate or party polls that are often held to more accountability and transparency to examine their internal political and demographic composition, media polls are not held to that standard and often just taken as fact in spite of very significant diversions from the actual electorate.

Thanks to the national media exit polls take on election day every two years it’s pretty easy to get a sense of the partisanship of the electorate. In the past two midterm elections the parties were about equal. While in the last two presidential elections the Democrats had a six point advantage with President Obama leading the ticket that fell to three points with Hillary Clinton as the nominee.

Year	Republican	Democrat	NET	Voter Turnout
2010	35%	35%	0%	91 Million
2012	32%	38%	-6%	130 Million
2014	36%	35%	+1%	83 Million
2016	33%	36%	-3%	139 Million
4 Yr. Avg.	34%	36%	-2%	

Exit poll source: CNN. Turnout source: United States Elections Project www.electionsproject.org

In each election the percent of Republicans was over 30% and pretty close to the percent of Democrats. However, as we head for another midterm election many media sponsored polls for some undisclosed reason fall outside of this range. This partisan bias for the Democrats could explain why their findings seem more negative towards President Trump and the Republicans.

This becomes a very important distinction since we are in an age of hyper-partisanship where a single-point shift adds a point or deletes a point from the President’s ratings.

For example, in our recently completed national poll Republicans approve the job the President is doing 90% to 8% disapprove. In contrast among Democrats only 17% approve of the President while 80% disapprove. So for each point you take away from a poll’s Republican affiliation, you’re taking a point away from the President’s job approval. Conversely, when you add five points more Democrats, you’re adding four points to the President’s disapproval. It’s that simple.

Therefore, the methodology and sample model of the poll becomes very important to pre-determine the outcome. Although last year a record 139 million voters turned out, 91 million adults who were eligible didn’t vote. In the 2014 mid-term election 144 million eligible adults were not persuaded to vote. So those media polls that are taken among “adults” have a large share of respondents who will not vote which makes it easier to dilute Republican partisans and hence reduce the President’s job approval. These polls when done via random digit dial are significantly less expensive to complete. Screening for “registered voters” still includes segments of voters will not vote. On the other hand, screening for likely voters from known lists of actual voters is more expensive, but is more likely to have a higher level of Trump voters.

Then there is the wording of the questions in some polls which if negative to the President could cause Trump voters to disconnect or refuse to take the poll.

These differences probably accounted for many media pollsters to proclaim Hillary Clinton with an “electoral lock” last Fall and miss the possibility that Donald Trump was about to win in the biggest anti-establishment election upset in the country’s history.

So let’s look at the partisan composition and methodology of the most recent media polls, taken either just before or while our national poll was in the field, which were cited on the realclearpolitics.com website. Even though the last four national elections had Republicans significantly over 30%, only two of nine media polls did. The Washington Post/ABC poll had Republicans as low as 24%; the Economist and Quinnipiac even lower at 23%. That’s ten points lower than Election Day. Also while the largest partisan margin for the Democrats was +6% in 2012 and the average was +2%, the average margin for these polls was +7% Democratic and six of the nine polls gave the Democrats a partisan edge of 6-points or better.

Source	Sample/Method	Date	Rep.	Dem.	NET	Trump Approve	Trump Disapprove	NET
WASHPO/ABC	1,004/Adults	4/20	24%	31%	-7%	42%	53%	-11%
WSJ/NBC	900/Adults	4/20	28%	33%	-5%	40%	54%	-14%
PPP	648/Reg. Voters	4/18	34%	40%	-6%	43%	50%	-7%
ECONOMIST	1,291/Reg. Voters	4/18	23%	39%	-16%	44%	50%	-6%
QUINNIPIAC	1,062/Reg. Voters	4/18	23%	31%	-8%	40%	56%	-16%
REUTERS/IPSOS	1,843/Adults	4/17	35%	42%	-7%	43%	52%	-9%
MARIST	869/Reg. Voters	4/12	28%	33%	-5%	39%	49%	-10%
CBS	1,006/Adults	4/9	26%	30%	-4%	43%	49%	-6%
PEW RESEARCH	1,501/Adults	4/11	25%	31%	-6%	39%	54%	-15%
AVG.			27%	34%	-7%	41%	52%	-11%

At some level when aggregated there seems to be a prevalent media polling bias for the Democrats at the President’s expense. Not only does it affect his job rating and favorable rating, it also affects the policies and issues these polls purport to measure. Maybe this is why so many Republicans, Independents and Trump voters seem to disregard media polls. It appears the media is once again sacrificing their credibility for their liberal, anti-Trump bias.

With that in mind we can once again look at our national poll results conducted among likely voters with the sample modeled after the 2016 national exit polls. Here’s what our latest national poll which was conducted among 1,000 likely voters between April 21st and 24th found:

- Voters opinions about the direction of the US has improved to where four-in-ten voters, 39%, say the country is headed in the right direction, while 52% say that it’s on the wrong track. This is a decisive improvement over the past four years where two-thirds of all voters consistently said that the country was on the wrong track. Voters who are most concerned with security issues say that the country is in the right direction 50%-42%. Voters most concerned with jobs and taxes say we’re still on the wrong track 63% to only 28% right direction. Nothing that a good pro-growth, tax cut couldn’t fix.
- By a 5 to 4 ratio, 48%-41%, voters prefer the country change and move away from the policies of Barack Obama over continuing Obama's policies.
- The President's job approval rating is net positive again; approve 49% to disapprove 46%.
- The President's favorable to unfavorable rating is polarized at 48% favorable to 48% unfavorable, with Republicans liking him 89% to 9% with the very favorable rating at 54%.



- The generic ballot for Congress is tied 43% Republican to 43% Democratic.
- When asked what the top priority for the President and Congress should be, creating jobs, 32%, and keeping America secure from terror, 24%, are the top two issue goals. Security rises among those who approve of the President to 31%, while creating jobs is 46% among those who currently disapprove of the President and growing the economy should bring him new support.
- The majority of the voters, 53%, says the economy is getting better. Only 32% say it's getting worse.
- In spite of Congress failure to act yet, the majority of voters still favor repealing and replacing Obamacare 54% to 40%. It's just not as high a priority as jobs and terror.
- The majority favors smaller government with fewer services, 51%, vs larger government with more services, 34%.
- Nearly three-in-ten voters, 28%, follow the President on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and they are clearly more favorable to the President giving him a favorable rating of 74% to only 22%, unfavorable.