To: M&A Clients, Colleagues, Friends & the Media
From: John & Jim McLaughlin
Re: National Survey Results
Date: August 18, 2014

National Survey Results

Methodology: This national survey of 1,000 likely 2014 general election voters was conducted from August 4th to 7th, 2014. All interviews were conducted online; survey invitations were distributed randomly within predetermined geographic units. These units were structured to correlate with actual voter turnout in a nationwide general election. This poll of 1,000 likely general election voters has an accuracy of +/- 3.1% at a 95% confidence interval.

Survey Results: We Still Can't See the Tsunami.

Back in May we conjectured about a "Midterm Tsunami" and this month, just over 2 months from election day, the results of our 2014 Monthly McLaughlinOnline National Poll still leave us wondering.

Since January, many of the opinions held by likely voters remain constant. President Obama's job approval remains upside-down with 55% disapprove to only 42% approve. That's a double digit net negative rating. Republicans, however, hold a very narrow, statistically insignificant 2 point lead over the Democrats on the generic ballot for Congress 42%-40% with a large 18% who are undecided. Essentially the generic Congressional vote is tied.

In fact, those who are undecided for Congress give the President an even more negative job rating - only 26% approve while 64% disapprove. That's a -38% negative rating.

Voters prefer the Republicans to be a check and balance on the President rather than the Democrats helping him pass his agenda 48%-40%. Voters who are undecided on the generic ballot for Congress prefer Republicans as a check and balance 42%-17%, but 41% don't know.

The majority of voters disapprove of Obamacare, 53%, to only 42% who approve. Once again, the undecided Congressional voter disapproves even more strongly, 57%, to only 28% who approve.

As far as the economy goes, almost two-thirds, 62%, of all voters tell us that they think the economy is still in a recession. Only 29% say we're not in a recession. The undecided Congressional voters are more likely to say that the U.S. is in a recession 72% to 15%.

With the President receiving such a negative rating, Obamacare being disliked and the belief that the economy is still in a recession, why are so many voters still undecided and not breaking for Republicans? Why aren't these undecided voters breaking against the unpopular President and his party?

Have the Republicans underestimated President Obama's political skills once again?
Over four years ago, in a national survey reported in National Review, we identified the Tea Party movement as a major asset to Republicans that would eventually help them regain their House majority. Since then, the President and his allies in the media have relentlessly attacked our friends and allies in the Tea Party and four years of attacks have taken a toll. Today, the Tea Party is as polarizing as the President. Only 37% of all voters are favorable to the Tea Party; 40% are unfavorable to the Tea Party. Among those who are undecided for Congress, they're equally as divided with only 24% favorable to the Tea Party and 29% unfavorable. In fact, 15% of ALL voters disapprove of BOTH the Tea Party and President Obama, but only 46% of those voters, vote Republican for Congress while 35% vote for Democrats. They dislike both and split their vote. It appears that the President's strategy is clear. He knows that his policies aren't liked, but he'll do what he has to do to make sure you don't like his political opposition as well.

Finally, we asked a question that a longtime friend and successful Republican strategist Carter Wrenn suggested to get to the heart of the deadlock: "A lot of Americans are fed up with typical Washington politics. Who do you think is most responsible for our broken political system?", the plurality of voters, 43%, say BOTH Republicans in Congress and the Tea Party vs President Obama and the Democrats in Congress. Only 26% blame Obama and the Democrats. Only 27% say Congressional Republicans and the Tea Party. Most of those who are undecided for Congress, 65%, now blame both parties. Among the undecided voters only 16% blame the Democrats and only 12% blame the Republicans. As long as these undecided swing voters are blaming both parties they will remain undecided for Congress and deflate the Midterm Tsunami.

Back in May we speculated that "November 4 is a long way away, and time allows Republicans to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory.". Three months later, after a divisive primary season among Republicans and the President demonizing the Tea Party and blaming Republicans for his lack of success, the President and Democrats are stalling the Republicans hopes of expanding their majority. The Republicans need to get back on offense and set an election agenda with a winning contrast. November 4th is coming fast.

**Demographic Breakdown 08-07-2014**

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