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Emerson College Poll: GOP Holds a Slight Lead in North Carolina Presidential and Senate Races

BOSTON, MA - A new Emerson College poll in North Carolina finds Donald Trump leading Hillary Clinton 45% to 43%, with Libertarian candidate Gary Johnson at 8%, Jill Stein at 2%, and 2% undecided. The poll of 800 likely voters was conducted August 27-29 and had a margin of error of 3.4 percentage points.

Clinton has a 14-point favorability deficit, with 42% of voters viewing her favorably and 56% unfavorably. Trump's gap is -18 points; 39% have a favorable view of him compared to 57% with an unfavorable opinion. Clinton has a 93% loyalty score, meaning 93% of those with a positive view of her plan to vote for her. Trump's loyalty score is 96%. While the ballot test is close, Clinton holds a 54% to 33% lead when voters are asked whom they expect to win the election. Ninety-two percent (92%) of Clinton voters believe she will prevail, while only 66% of Trump supporters think he will.

Both candidates are winning 81% of their own party's vote. Independents favor Trump over Clinton 45% to 34%, with Johnson getting 14%. Candidate preference continues to break by gender, with men supporting Trump 47% to 37% and women preferring Clinton 49% to 44%. Trump's strongest age cohort is the 35-54 group, where he is ahead 51% to 39%. Clinton does best with voters 18-34. She has a 46% to 32% advantage with that age group.

It appears race is playing a pivotal role in the race. White voters break for Trump 63% to 24%, while African-Americans favor Clinton 75% to 16%. She also has a wide lead with Hispanics (59% to 15%) and multiracial voters (94% to 6%).

Trump's strongest support is in the eastern and western parts of the state, where he is winning 47% to 45% and 53% to 36%, respectively. He and Clinton are in a statistical dead heat in the central region, with each having 42% of the vote. Clinton leads 62% to 31% in the Greensboro/Charlotte area.

In the U.S. Senate race, Republican incumbent Richard Burr holds a 4-point edge over his Democratic opponent Deborah Ross, 45% to 41%, with 5% choosing someone else and 8% undecided. However, Burr has an image problem with 40% of voters viewing him unfavorably compared to 32% who have a favorable opinion; 23% were undecided about him, and 6% had never heard of him. Ross suffers from lower name recognition, with 16% of voters having no recollection of her, and 35% of voters undecided. Among those who know of Ross, she has a 27% favorable/23% unfavorable rating.

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The Emerson College Polling Society North Carolina poll was conducted from August 27-29, 2016. The sample consisted of 800 likely general election voters with a margin of error of +/- 3.4%. It is important to remember that subsets based on gender, age and party breakdowns carry with them higher margins of error, as the sample size is reduced. Data was weighted by 2012 election results and regional weights. The state was broken into four regions based on Congressional districts. The East was comprised of districts 1,3,7, and 13; North Central included districts 4 and 6; South Central consisted of districts 2,8, and 9; Greensboro/Charlotte was made up of district 12, and the West encompassed districts 5,10, and 11. Data was collected using an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system of landlines only. The full methodology and results can be found at www.theecps.com.

Frequency Table

Voting Intention

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very likely	800	100.0	100.0	100.0

Party

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Democrat	309	38.6	38.6	38.6
	Republican	261	32.7	32.7	71.3
	Independent	230	28.7	28.7	100.0
	Total	800	100.0	100.0	

Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	male	363	45.4	45.4	45.4
	female	437	54.6	54.6	100.0
	Total	800	100.0	100.0	

2012 Ballot

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Barack Obama	387	48.4	48.4	48.4
	Mitt Romney	405	50.6	50.6	99.0
	Someone else	8	1.0	1.0	100.0
	Total	800	100.0	100.0	

Clinton Favorability

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	favorable	332	41.5	41.5	41.5
	unfavorable	444	55.5	55.5	97.0
	undecided	17	2.1	2.1	99.2
	never heard of	7	.8	.8	100.0
	Total	800	100.0	100.0	

Trump Favorability

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	favorable	314	39.3	39.3	39.3
	unfavorable	459	57.4	57.4	96.7
	undecided	24	3.0	3.0	99.7
	never heard of	2	.3	.3	100.0
	Total	800	100.0	100.0	

Burr Favorability

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	favorable	252	31.5	31.5	31.5
	unfavorable	316	39.5	39.5	71.0
	undecided	185	23.1	23.1	94.1
	never heard of	47	5.9	5.9	100.0
	Total	800	100.0	100.0	

Ross Favorability

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	favorable	213	26.7	26.7	26.7
	unfavorable	182	22.8	22.8	49.4
	undecided	281	35.1	35.1	84.5
	never heard of	124	15.5	15.5	100.0
	Total	800	100.0	100.0	

Presidential Ballot

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Donald Trump	359	44.8	44.8	44.8
	Hillary Clinton	347	43.4	43.4	88.2
	Gary Johnson	62	7.7	7.7	95.9
	Jill Stein	17	2.1	2.1	98.0
	Unsure	16	2.0	2.0	100.0
	Total	800	100.0	100.0	

PrezExpect

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Hillary Clinton	432	54.0	54.0	54.0
	Donald Trump	263	32.9	32.9	86.9
	Gary Johnson	9	1.2	1.2	88.1
	Jill Stein	6	.7	.7	88.8
	Unsure	90	11.2	11.2	100.0
	Total	800	100.0	100.0	

Senate Ballot

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Burr	362	45.2	45.2	45.2
	Ross	330	41.3	41.3	86.5
	someone else	42	5.3	5.3	91.8
	undecided	66	8.2	8.2	100.0
	Total	800	100.0	100.0	

Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-34	190	23.7	23.7	23.7
	35-54	294	36.8	36.8	60.5
	55-74	251	31.4	31.4	91.9
	75+	65	8.1	8.1	100.0
	Total	800	100.0	100.0	

Education

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	<HS	38	4.7	4.7	4.7
	HS	120	15.0	15.0	19.7
	Some College	287	35.8	35.8	55.6
	College	139	17.3	17.3	72.9
	Grad +	217	27.1	27.1	100.0
	Total	800	100.0	100.0	

Race

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	white	501	62.7	62.7	62.7
	black	110	13.7	13.7	76.4
	American Indian	37	4.7	4.7	81.1
	Hispanic	62	7.8	7.8	88.9
	2+/Other	78	9.8	9.8	98.6
	refused	11	1.4	1.4	100.0
	Total	800	100.0	100.0	

Congressional district

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	64	8.0	8.0	8.0
	2.00	37	4.6	4.6	12.6
	3.00	49	6.1	6.1	18.7
	4.00	57	7.1	7.1	25.8
	5.00	50	6.2	6.2	32.0
	6.00	68	8.5	8.5	40.5
	7.00	66	8.3	8.3	48.7
	8.00	60	7.5	7.5	56.3
	9.00	82	10.2	10.2	66.5
	10.00	64	8.0	8.0	74.4
	11.00	65	8.1	8.1	82.6
	12.00	70	8.8	8.8	91.3
	13.00	69	8.7	8.7	100.0
	Total	800	100.0	100.0	

Region

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	East	248	31.0	31.0	31.0
	North Central	124	15.6	15.6	46.6
	South Central	179	22.3	22.3	68.9
	Greensboro/Char.	70	8.8	8.8	77.7
	West	179	22.3	22.3	100.0
	Total	800	100.0	100.0	