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Suffolk University/USA TODAY/Boston Globe Poll: Biden Leads in NH, Most GOP Voters Still Loyal to Trump

Fears over the future of democracy motivating many voters, survey shows

BOSTON—President Joe Biden is leading former President Donald Trump among likely New Hampshire voters, holding a lead of more than seven points, according to a new Suffolk University/*Boston Globe/USA TODAY* poll. But committed Republican primary voters still prefer Trump by some 20 points to the next closest candidate, former UN Ambassador Nikki Haley, and appear likely to vote for him in the January 23 primary contest there.

Haley has gained steam with GOPers in New Hampshire and elsewhere in the country in recent weeks—and won the support of New Hampshire Governor Chris Sununu—but the Suffolk/*Globe/USA TODAY* poll found just 26% of likely Republican primary voters in the Granite State favored her, compared to a solid bloc of 46% who plan to vote for Trump. Former New Jersey Governor Chris Christie was trailing in third place with 12%, followed by Florida Governor Ron DeSantis at 8%.

These voters seem unlikely to make a last-minute change of allegiance in the nationally watched primary: 83% of GOP primary voters, and 92% of Trump voters, said they're not likely to change their minds before January 23.

Could Haley continue to rise and challenge Trump's current dominance in New Hampshire? David Paleologos, director of the Suffolk University Political Research Center, said Haley would probably need several things to happen quickly, including Christie dropping out and turning his support her way.

“It’s not impossible, but it’s improbable right now,” said Paleologos. “Christie voters have indicated by a 7-1 margin that they prefer Haley to Trump, so his endorsement would be a significant boost.”

Other factors cited by Paleologos for Haley to overtake Trump include vastly outperforming expectations in Iowa, coupled with a disproportionate number of independents selecting a Republican primary ballot.

In the poll’s hypothetical general election showdown between the front-runners, Biden received nearly 42 percent to Trump’s 34 percent—a margin similar to Biden’s performance against Trump in New Hampshire in 2020.

Voters across the political spectrum were united on one thing: The future of democracy is their top issue at the ballot box. Nearly half of Democrats, and nearly 30% of independents, ranked it as more important than immigration (24%) and even the economy (17%).

But immigration nevertheless remains a top concern. Half of voters called the US border “an emergency situation,” and another 32% said it is “a major problem.” Most voters limit their concern to the southern US border, however, as more than 60% of those polled said they were “not very” or “not at all” concerned about the security of New Hampshire’s northern border with Canada.

The poll results overall show more hope for Democrats, who have been dogged by criticism that Biden at age 81 is too old for the job, and his campaign is not generating enough enthusiasm among voters.

A majority of voters (55%) said the president’s position on abortion was a very important or somewhat important issue influencing their vote in his favor.

“The view that Biden is willing to defend democracy and safeguard reproductive rights may continue to fuel his support in New Hampshire, despite voters’ lack of enthusiasm for him in general,” Paleologos said.

Methodology

This survey of 1,000 New Hampshire voters was conducted January 3-7, and is based on live telephone interviews of adults who indicated they were planning to vote in the general election for president in November 2024. Each area’s quota and demographic information were determined from 2020 Census data and exit polling from like elections. Samples of both standard landline (11 percent) and cell phones (89 percent) were called using a probability-proportionate-to-size method, which means that the phone numbers assigned to each county were proportional to the number of likely voters expected based on past elections. The margin of error for the subset of 318 respondents who indicated they are likely to vote in the New Hampshire Democratic primary is +/- 5.5 percentage points; the margin of error for the subset of 491 respondents who indicated they are likely to vote in the New Hampshire Republican primary is +/- 4.4 percentage points. Marginals and full cross-tabulation data are posted on the [Suffolk](#)

[University Political Research Center](#) website. For more information, contact David Paleologos at 781-290-9310, dpaleologos@suffolk.edu.

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