NEWS

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New GW Battleground Poll: Public Opinion of Trump Improves; Voters Don't Think He'll Build a Wall at Mexican Border

Public Sees Action on 'Obamacare,' Infrastructure, Taxes as Most Likely; Country Remains Deeply Divided

WASHINGTON (Dec. 6, 2016)—Donald Trump's public image has notably improved since winning the presidency in November, according to the latest George Washington University Battleground Poll. Of the voters surveyed, 45 percent had a favorable opinion of the president-elect, while 49 percent viewed him negatively. This represents a large swing from the last edition of the GW Battleground Poll in mid-October, when only 36 percent rated favorably and 61 percent were unfavorable.

Trump's rising approval rate may have been helped by media coverage. Almost half (47 percent) of those polled said what they have seen, read or heard about Trump since the election has improved their impression of him. A few (11 percent) said it made no difference, and 38 percent said it gave them a less favorable impression.

Looking forward, voters were evenly split on their general outlook on the Trump presidency. Asked about the new shift to Republican Party control of the executive and legislative branches of government, half of those polled (49 percent) said they felt either concerned or scared, and half (47 percent) responded they were excited or hopeful.

"It's clear that the campaigns and the election results have jarred the nation," said Michael Cornfield, associate professor at GW's Graduate School of Political Management and research director of GW's Center for Political Management. "Twice as many registered voters chose 'scared' over 'excited' as their foremost emotional reaction. 'Division in the country' was the top issue they want the new administration and Congress to address. The anxious mood presents an opportunity for leadership through reassuring language and transparent policymaking."

Mixed Outlook on Trump's Signature Policies
That divided attitude carried through to voters' projections of whether they think Trump will actually achieve some of his trademark policy proposals. Poll respondents were asked to judge the likelihood of action on several issues now that there will be Republican control of the White House and both chambers of Congress. Most people were doubtful about the prospects of Trump's signature proposal, building a wall on the U.S.-Mexico border; 55 percent said it was not very or not at all likely, and 41 percent said it was very or somewhat likely.

People thought there was a much better chance of the Affordable Care Act being repealed and replaced with an alternative (79 percent chose "very" or "somewhat" likely, 17 percent chose "not very" or "not at all" likely). They also projected good odds for Trump's infrastructure plans (66 percent chose "very" or "somewhat" likely, 31 percent chose "not very" or "not at all" likely)

and tax code reform (71 percent chose "very" or "somewhat" likely, 24 percent chose "not very" or "not at all" likely).

"Voters will be watching Trump's actions closely. While many Americans may be pleased by Trump's seeming evolution on such issues as climate change and torture, those words will need to be backed up by deeds in order to convince a skeptical public of his intentions, abilities and willingness to disappoint his party's base," said pollster Celinda Lake, president of Lake Research Partners. "Democrats, for their part, would be wise to embrace the leadership of one of the few leaders who can broaden their ranks with something the party has been lacking for too long—a compelling economic message that marries Americans' desire for economic and political reform."

Almost two-thirds of survey respondents thought it was unlikely (63 percent said "not very" or "not at all") that U.S. military involvement in places like Western Europe and Japan will end. Expectations on whether action will be taken to defeat the Islamic State group and privatize Medicare were mixed.

Voters Prioritize Addressing Division and Economy
Voters were also asked what topics they considered most important for Trump and Congress to focus on within the first 100 days of the new administration. Given an array of choices, division in the country (21 percent) and the economy and jobs (15 and 8 respectively, 23 combined) tied for the most important issues for voters, followed by health care (11). Respondents were also asked to pick a second choice. The economy and jobs (18 and 11 percent) combined to lead that list.

"Voters have diverse views with every issue offered being selected by at least 5 percent of the electorate," said pollster Ed Goeas, president and CEO of The Tarrance Group. "Despite this diversity on issue concerns, if President-elect Trump and congressional leaders can work together to pass legislation on health care reform and on economic development with less rancor than the heavy handed partisan tactics used to pass Obamacare, a significant number of voters will have seen their top concern addressed."

Voters' concerns also showed in their feeling about the general direction of the country. Although the rating ticked up slightly, the public still sees it negatively. The percentage of those who think the country is on the wrong track fell from 63 to 58 percent. The amount who thought the country is headed in the right direction remained about the same (from 30 to 27 percent).

Major Political Players Have Mixed Reviews
President Barack Obama's approval rating remained essentially unchanged from the last GW Battleground Poll, holding steady at 53 percent approval and moving from 44 to 42 percent disapproval. Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton's ratings also stayed within the margin of error, moving from 45 to 42 percent favorable, and from 53 to 55 percent unfavorable. Senator and presidential primary candidate Bernie Sanders remains popular, with 56 percent of voters viewing him favorably, and 30 percent unfavorably.

Public favorability of the Vice President-elect, Mike Pence, stayed the same at 44, while his unfavorable rating grew slightly from 31 to 37 percent. His Republican counterparts were mixed: House Speaker Paul Ryan was evenly split (35 percent favorable, 36 percent unfavorable). Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, on the other hand, struggled for relevance: he only received approval from 17 percent of the public; a third (33 percent) disapproved of him, a quarter (25) had no opinion of him and a quarter (25) had never heard of him.

For complete data and results, including additional numbers on prominent figures from the 2016 elections and campaign conduct issues, visit the GW Battleground Poll homepage. Follow @GWmedia on Twitter for a deeper dive into the new GW Battleground Poll data.

Interview Opportunities
- **Michael Cornfield**, research director and associate professor at GW's Graduate School of Political Management (contact Jason Shevrin at 202-994-5631)
- **Ed Goeas**, president and CEO of The Tarrance Group (contact Brian Nienaber at 703-684-6688)
- **Celinda Lake**, president of Lake Research Partners (contact Anderson Gardner at 202-776-9066)

<u>The George Washington University Battleground Poll</u>
The George Washington University Battleground Poll is a nationally recognized series of surveys conducted by Republican pollster Ed Goeas of The Tarrance Group and Democratic pollster Celinda Lake of Lake Research Partners. GW's Graduate School of Political Management (GSPM) and the School of Media and Public Affairs (SMPA) serve as the university's home for the partnership. GW's Estelle and Melvin Gelman Library houses the data archive of the survey results dating back more than two decades.

The poll, which is distinguished from other surveys by its presentation of separate analyses from these top pollsters representing both sides of the aisle, surveyed 1,000 registered voters nationwide Nov. 28-Dec. 1 and included a protocol for reaching mobile phone users. It has a margin of error of plus or minus 3.1 percentage points.

-GW-

GW Battleground (LVXI)

FINAL DRAFT/November 28, 2016

STUDY #15500
THE TARRANCE GROUP and LAKE RESEARCH PARTNERS
N = 1,000 Registered voters
Margin of error ± 3.1%
Field Dates: November 28-December 1, 2016

Hello, I'm _____ of The Tarrance Group, a national survey research firm. We're talking to people today about public leaders and issues facing us all**.**

      IF CELL CODE = "N", ASK: May I please speak with the youngest (male/female) in the household who is registered to vote?

      IF CELL CODE = "Y", ASK:

CP-1.   Do you currently live in (state from cell sample sheet)?

                  Yes **(CONTINUE TO CP-3)**
                  No **(CONTINUE TO CP-2)**

      IF "NO" IN CP-1, ASK:

CP-2.   In what state do you currently reside?

         _____
      (RECORD STATE NAME)

      IF CELL CODE = "Y", ASK:

CP-3.   For your safety, are you driving right now?
                  Yes **(SCHEDULE CALL BACK)**
                  No

A.   Are you registered to vote in your state?

      IF "NO," ASK: Is there someone else at home who is registered to vote?
      (IF "YES," THEN ASK: MAY I SPEAK WITH HIM/HER?)

                  Yes **(CONTINUE)**
                  No **(THANK AND TERMINATE)**

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*=less than .5%

C. Are you, or is anyone in your household, employed with an advertising agency, newspaper, television or radio station, or political campaign?

Yes **(THANK AND TERMINATE)**
No **(CONTINUE)**

D1-1. In order to ensure an accurate sample: What is your age, please?

18-24	7%
25-29	6%
30-34	7%
35-39	13%
40-44	15%
45-54	13%
55-64	18%
65-69	7%
70-74	6%
75-79	3%
80-84	3%
85-89	1%
90 or over	1%
HARD REFUSE	1%

Now, thinking for a moment about things in the country--

2. Do you feel things in the country are going in the right direction, or do you feel things have gotten off on the wrong track?

IF CHOICE MADE, ASK: And do you feel strongly or somewhat about that?

Right direction/strongly	17%
Right direction/somewhat	11%
UNSURE **(DNR)**	14%
Wrong track/somewhat	11%
Wrong track/strongly	47%

(DIRECT)

Now, thinking about President Barack Obama…

3. How would you rate the job Barack Obama has been doing as President? Do you approve or disapprove of the job he is doing?
_____

IF CHOICE MADE, ASK:	Approve/strongly 42%
And do you feel *strongly*	Approve 11%
about that?	UNSURE **(DNR)** 5%
	Disapprove...8%
	Disapprove/strongly 34%

(BHOJA)

4.1-2 What do think is the <u>most</u> important issue for President Trump and Congress to focus on in the first 100 days of his term? Would you say it is:
(RANDOMIZE ISSUES)

IF CHOICE MADE, THEN ASK: And, what issue would you say is the next most important issue for them to focus on in the first 100 days?

	MOST IMPORTANT	NEXT MOST IMPORTANT
Jobs	8%	11%
The economy	15%	18%
Health care	11%	13%
Illegal immigration	6%	8%
Foreign threats	5%	8%
Social Security	3%	4%
Taxes	1%	5%
The deficit	2%	3%
Dysfunction in government	9%	13%
Division in the country	21%	11%
OTHER/ALL/MIXED **(DNR)**	16%	4%
UNSURE/REFUSED **(DNR)**	3%	2%

(MIIP1-2)

Now I would like to read you the names of several individuals. For each one, please tell me whether you have heard of that person and if so, whether you have a favorable or an unfavorable impression of them. If you do not recognize the name, just say so. Here is the first one …

WAIT FOR RESPONSE, THEN ASK: *Would that be a strongly (favorable/unfavorable) impression or just a somewhat (favorable/unfavorable) impression?*

(RANDOMIZE NAMES)	FAVORABLE Strng	Smwht	UNFAVORABLE Smwht	Strng	NO OPIN.	NEVER HEARD
5. Hillary Clinton (HRCID)	22%	20%	11%	44%	3%	*
6. Bernie Sanders (TKID)	31%	26%	12%	18%	11%	2%
7. Donald Trump (DTID)	26%	19%	8%	41%	6%	*
8. Mike Pence (MPID)	26%	18%	9%	28%	12%	7%
9. Paul Ryan (PRID)	9%	26%	19%	17%	18%	11%
10. Mitch McConnell (MMID)	2%	14%	12%	22%	25%	25%
11. Melania (**"MUH-lahn-ee-AH"**) Trump (MTID)	16%	19%	11%	17%	35%	4%

(END RANDOMIZATION)

Thinking specifically about Donald Trump for a moment…

12.   Thinking about what you have seen, read or heard about Donald Trump since he has become President-elect has it given you a more favorable or less favorable impression of him?

IF CHOICE MADE, ASK:	
And do you feel strongly about that?	More favorable/strongly 32%
	More favorable..15%
	UNSURE **(DNR)**..5%
	NO DIFFERENCE **(DNR)** 11%
	Less favorable 5%
	Less favorable/strongly...33%

(DJTIF)

4

Thinking about the recent election for President of the United States

13.   Which candidate did you vote for? Was it:

*   Donald Trump,
*   Hillary Clinton,
*   Gary Johnson,
*   Jill Stein,
*   Evan McMullin,
*   Someone else, OR

Did you not vote for a Presidential candidate this time?

Trump 38%
Clinton 42%
Johnson 5%
Stein 1%
McMullin .... *
Another candidate...2%
Did not vote for President 5%
UNSURE/REFUSED **(DNR)** 6%

(PVOTE16)

IF "TRUMP" IN Q13, THEN ASK:

13-1.   Please tell me which ONE of these statements comes closer to your own view…
        (ROTATE CHOICES)

*   I was definite in my decision to vote for Donald Trump, OR
*   I reluctantly voted for Donald Trump.

Definitely Trump...79%
Reluctantly Trump..20%
BOTH/NEITHER/OTHER **(DNR)** .... *
UNSURE/REFUSED **(DNR)** 1%

IF "CLINTON" IN Q13, THEN ASK:

13-2.   Please tell me which ONE of these statements comes closer to your own view…
        (ROTATE CHOICES)

*   I was definite in my decision to vote for Hillary Clinton, OR
*   I reluctantly voted for Hillary Clinton.

Definitely Clinton...75%
Reluctantly Clinton...24%
BOTH/NEITHER/OTHER **(DNR)** 1%
UNSURE/REFUSED **(DNR)** .... *

ASK OF EVERYONE

As you may already know, after the election, Donald Trump is now President elect of the United States and Republicans have majority control of both the US House of Representatives and the US Senate. With this in mind…

14. Which of the following emotions <u>best</u> describes how you feel about the election results? Is it:

- Excited
- Hopeful,
- Concerned, or
- Scared?

Excited 14%
Hopeful 33%
Concerned 23%
Scared 26%
OTHER/MIXED/ALL/NONE **(DNR)** 4%
UNSURE/REFUSED **(DNR)** 1%

(PFEEL)

Some people have commented that the language used during this Presidential campaign was coarse and offensive.

15. Which of these statements <u>best</u> reflects your view on the sometimes coarse language used in this Presidential campaign:
    RANDOMIZE CHOICES

- This language was repulsive and had no place in a Presidential campaign,
- The language was offensive but understandable given the state of our media environment.
- This language was just the jolt our political system needs,
- This language was not a big deal to me?

Repulsive 52%
Offensive but understandable 20%
Needed jolt 6%
Not a big deal 18%
COMBINATION/OTHER **(DNR)** 2%
UNSURE/REFUSED **(DNR)** 3%

(PLANG)

And, still thinking about this issue…

16. Which of these statements <u>best</u> describes how this type of language affected your decision about voting for President? Would you say that it:

- Made you less likely to cast a vote for President,
- Made you less likely to vote for a specific candidate, OR
- Had no impact?

Less likely to vote for President 7%
Less likely to vote for a candidate 33%
No impact 54%
COMBINATION/OTHER **(DNR)** 2%
UNSURE/REFUSED **(DNR)** 4%

(VTLAN)

Now, thinking one last time about issues facing the country…

As you may already know, the Republican Party will be in control of the White House and both houses of Congress, beginning in January. With this in mind, please tell me if you think it is very likely, somewhat likely, not very likely, or not at all likely that action will be taken to deal with the following issues.

Here is the first one…
(RANDOMIZE ISSUES)

		VERY LIKELY	SMWHT LIKELY	NOT VERY LIKELY	NOT AT LIKELY	DK/ REF (DNR)
17.	Building a wall on the US-Mexican border and securing our Southern border. **(PROMPT: DO YOU THINK IT IS VERY, SOMEWHAT, NOT VERY, OR NOT AT ALL LIKELY THAT ACTION WILL BE TAKEN TO DEAL WITH THIS ISSUE?)**	17%	24%	25%	30%	5%
18.	Reforming the tax code	33%	38%	15%	9%	6%
19.	Ending trade deals like NAFTA **("NAF-tah")**	25%	35%	20%	8%	12%
20.	Repealing ObamaCare and replacing it with different health care reforms	44%	35%	11%	6%	4%
21.	Making improvements to roads and bridges	26%	40%	20%	11%	3%
22.	Ending U.S. military involvement in places like Japan and Western Europe.	8%	21%	38%	25%	9%
23.	Defeating ISIS **("EYE-suss")**	24%	29%	23%	18%	6%
24.	Privatizing Medicare	15%	33%	27%	16%	10%

(END RANDOMIZATION)

Now, just a few final questions for statistical purposes only…

D2.   What is the highest level of education you have completed?
        (DO NOT READ, JUST RECORD)

Some grade school (1-8)	*
Some high school (9-11)	3%
Graduated high school (12)	15%
Technical/vocational (12)	3%
Some college (13-15)	25%
Graduated college (16)	35%
Graduate/professional school (16 or more)	20%
Unsure/Refused	*

(EDUC)

D3.   When thinking about politics and government, do you consider yourself to be...
        (READ LIST, ROTATE TOP TO BOTTOM, BOTTOM TO TOP)

Very conservative	16%
Somewhat conservative	32%
MODERATE **(DNR)**	5%
Somewhat liberal	26%
Very liberal	14%
UNSURE/REFUSED **(DNR)**	7%

(IDEOL)

And,

D4.   Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, or an Independent?

IF REPUBLICAN OR DEMOCRAT, ASK: Would you call yourself a strong or a not very strong (Republican/Democrat)?

Republican/strong	20%
Republican/not strong	10%
Lean Republican	10%
Independent	14%

IF INDEPENDENT OR ANYTHING ELSE, ASK: Do you think of yourself as closer to the Republican or Democratic Party?

Lean Democrat	9%
Democrat/not strong	11%
Democrat/strong	24%
NO PREFERENCE **(DNR)**	1%
OTHER **(DNR)**	*
UNSURE/REFUSED **(DNR)**	1%

(PARTYID)

And,

D5.   Which of these statements best describes how you have usually voted in past elections?

(READ LIST, ROTATE TOP TO	Straight Republican..12%
BOTTOM, BOTTOM TO TOP)	Mostly Republican...22%
	A few more Republicans than Democrats 8%
	INDEPENDENT/THE PERSON **(DNR)**..................5%
	A few more Democrats than Republicans 8%
	Mostly Democratic 24%
	Straight Democratic 17%
	UNSURE/REFUSED (DNR)....................................4%

(PARTY)

D6.   Are you a member of a labor union, including trade unions, service employee unions, public employee unions, and teachers unions?

     IF NO, THEN ASK: Is anyone in your household a member of one of these types of labor unions?

           Labor Union Member...13%
           Labor Union Household...4%
           Non-Union Household 81%
           UNSURE/REFUSED **(DNR)** 2%

(UNION)

D7.   What is your current marital status -- are you -- • single and never married, • married, •   separated, • divorced, or •widowed?

           Single 24%
           Married 58%
           Separated 1%
           Divorced 10%
           Widowed 7%
           UNSURE/REFUSED **(DNR)** 1%

(MARITAL)

D8.   Do you have children under the age of 18 living at home?

           Yes 35%
           No 65%
           UNSURE/REFUSED **(DNR)** .... *

(CHILD)

D9. What is the church you or your family attends most often?

Roman Catholic 20%
Baptist 16%
Methodist 6%
Episcopalian 1%
Evangelical 2%
Presbyterian 2%
Lutheran 5%
Other Protestant 13%
Greek Orthodox .... *
Jewish 2%
Mormon / LDS 2%
Quaker / Amish .... *
Other **(SPECIFY)**_____ 3%
NONE **(DNR)** 25%
Refused **(DNR)** 4%

(DENOM)

IF ANY RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION IN D9, ASK:

D9-1. And how often do you attend church (or synagogue)?

More than once a week 13%
Once a week 30%
Several times a month 18%
Once a month 5%
Several times a year 16%
Only on holidays 10%
NEVER/DON'T ATTEND 6%
UNSURE/REFUSED 1%

(DENOMFRQ)

IF ANY RELIGION NAMED IN D9, THEN ASK:

D9-2. Do you consider yourself to be a born-again or evangelical Christian?

Born-again/evangelical 41%
Not born-again 53%
REFUSED **(DNR)** 7%

(BORN)

ASK OF EVERYONE

D10. What do you consider to be your race? Are you white, African-American, Hispanic, Asian, Native American or some other race?

White 77%
Black/African-American 13%
Hispanic/Latino **(TO D11)** 6%
Asian/Pacific American 1%
Native American 1%
Other **(Specify _____)** 1%
UNSURE/REFUSED **(DNR)** 2%

(RACE)

D10-1.   And, do you consider yourself a Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish-speaking American?

Yes 4%
No 96%
UNSURE/REFUSED **(DNR)** 1%

(HISP)

ASK OF EVERYONE

And, thinking about your economic class…

D11.   Do you consider yourself to be:
(ROTATE CHOICES, TOP TO BOTTOM, BOTTOM TO TOP)

- Upper class,
- Middle class,
- Low income?

Upper class.. 8%
Middle class 69%
Low income 20%
Working class **(DNR)** 1%
Unemployed **(DNR)** 1%
Refused **(DNR)** 2%

(ECONCLA2)

D12.   Sex/Emp **(BY OBSERVATION)**

ASK OF EVERYONE: Are you employed outside the house, are you a homemaker, or are you retired?

Male/employed 31%
Male/homemaker 1%
Male/retired 10%
Male/not in labor force 3%

Female/employed 31%
Female/homemaker 6%
Female/retired...13%
Female/not in labor force 3%

MALE/REFUSED **(DNR)** 1%
FEMALE/REFUSED **(DNR)** 1%

(SEXEMP)

D13.   REGION CODE (2)
D14.   STATE/COUNTY CODE (2 / 3)
D15.   DMA (3)
D16.   CD CODE (2)
D17.   URBAN/SUBURBAN/RURAL CODE (1)
D18.   CELL CODE (1)
D19.   YOUTH CODE (1)
D20.   ZIP CODE (5)

DISCLOSURE INFO
IN WISCONSIN (STATE CODE 55)

NOTE TO INTERVIEWER: UNDER WISCONSIN STATE LAW, <u>IF ASKED,</u> YOU <u>MUST</u> TELL THE RESPONDENT THE NAME OF THE ORGANIZATION WHO IS SPONSORING THIS INTERVIEW, AS WELL AS THEIR ADDRESS, AND IF IT IS A POLITICAL CAMPAIGN THE NAME OF THEIR TREASURER.

THE INFORMATION FOR THIS SURVEY IS AS FOLLOWS:
ORGANIZATION NAME: <u>The George Washington University</u>
ORGANIZATION ADDRESS: <u>2121 Eye Street, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20052</u>

IF A RESPONDENT ASKS DURING THE COURSE OF THE INTERVIEW, PLEASE TELL THEM THAT YOU WILL GIVE THEM THE INFORMATION AT THE END. IF THEY INSIST, AND WILL GO NO FURTHER WITH THE INTERVIEW UNTIL YOU DIVULGE, GIVE THEM THE INFORMATION AND <u>TERMINATE</u> THE INTERVIEW. YOU CANNOT ALLOW AN INTERVIEW TO CONTINUE ONCE THE RESPONDENT HAS BEEN TOLD WHO IS SPONSORING IT.

** INTERVIEWER <u>MUST</u> READ IN VIRGINIA (STATE CODE 51) **

The Tarrance Group wishes to thank you for participating in this survey – which was commissioned and paid for by The George Washington University.

** INTERVIEWER <u>MUST</u> READ IN NEW HAMPSHIRE (STATE CODE 33) **

The Tarrance Group wishes to thank you for participating in this survey – which was commissioned and paid for by the George Washington University … 202-994-1000.   Good night.

Democratic Strategic Analysis:

By Celinda Lake, Daniel Gotoff, Corey Teter, and Olivia Myszkowski

In the aftermath of one of the most bitter campaigns in modern memory, many Americans remain deeply unsettled, struggling to make sense of the country's new trajectory. President-elect Trump's ascent to power fundamentally defied familiar partisan and political patterns. As such, the national mood is defined by widespread uncertainty about a President-elect whose favorability has improved but is still quite negative, as well as doubts about Trump's ability to square his campaign promises with his Party's Congressional leadership. At the same time, with Democrats' political strength now at a record low, the opposition Party must work quickly to find its bearings, especially focusing on defining a clear set of goals and principles when it comes to economic and political reform.

As Democrats turn their strategic attention to midterm elections in 2018, it will be crucial to focus on the key constituencies that they fell short with in 2016 – independents, women, rural voters, older voters, and voters in the Midwest. Independents, in particular, will present a challenge. Eager for change, a plurality of these voters went for Trump on November 8th, and are largely optimistic about the prospect of a Trump administration. Still, when asked about the direction of the country in the weeks following the election, the majority of independents report that they believe the country is on the 'wrong track'. Like their Democrat and Republican counterparts, independent voters are highly concerned with jobs and the economy – issues that the Democratic Party will need to establish a stronger platform on to move forward successfully.

The Post-Election Environment

Nearly one month since Election Day, a sense of anxiety continues to pervade the electorate. Dissatisfaction with the trajectory of the country remains, with a solid majority of voters (58%) believing the nation has gotten off on the wrong track compared to only 27% who say it is heading in the right direction. Unsurprisingly, the most pessimistic voters are those who are dismayed by the election results; more than seven-in-ten Democrats (72%) believes the country is off on the wrong track, a majority of independents (56%) agree, and even Republicans are divided in their outlook on the future (44% 'right direction' and 44% 'wrong track').

Moreover, when asked to describe how they feel about the results of the election, nearly half of voters say that they are either 'concerned' (23%) or 'scared' (26%), with slightly more expressing the most troubling of these two options. At the same time, one-in-seven voters is 'excited' (14%) and one-in-three is 'hopeful' (33%). Roughly mirroring the demographic divides in the election, levels of fear and concern and highest among younger and minority voters—particularly African Americans (35% 'concerned', 49% 'scared'), Latinos (34% 'concerned', 35% 'scared'), and millennials (36% 'concerned', 23% 'scared')—while hope and excitement are most prevalent among white men (42% 'hopeful', 20% 'excited'), evangelical Christians (41% 'hopeful', 20% 'excited'), and white non-college graduates (44% 'hopeful', 19% 'excited'). Independents are largely hopeful about the next administration (44% 'hopeful', 10% 'excited'), though nearly one-quarter report being 'concerned' (22%), and 16% report being 'scared'. It is notable, however, that even the groups most ardently supportive of Trump tend to express optimism rather than excitement.

Despite the polarized responses to the final outcome, the data clearly show that most voters are happy to see the election over, with a majority (52%) saying they found the coarse langue of the campaign 'repulsive'. However, vast differences emerge along partisan lines, with Democrats the most offended by

the tenor of the race (78% 'repulsive') and Republicans largely responding to it with a shrug—31% saying it was not a big deal and 30% saying it was offensive, but understandable. Among independents, fully 49% say the coarse language was repulsive, and 17% found it offensive, but understandable. At the same time, however, a majority of Americans (54%) also says that the tone of the election had no impact on whether they voted or how they cast their ballot, though roughly one-third (33%) say it did make them less likely to vote for one of the candidates and 7% say it made them less likely to vote for President. Women were more turned off by the tone of the race than their male counterparts, with 37% of women saying the tone of the race made them less likely to vote for a candidate, compared to 27% of men. Less surprisingly, among Trump voters, 84% report the language in the campaign made no difference in their behavior, while a 56% majority of Clinton voters say the language made them less likely to vote for one of the candidates. In perhaps an inauspicious sign for the civility of future races, a majority of independents (57%) also say the language had no impact on their vote.

The contentious nature of the long election has reframed the issue agenda for American voters. Economic anxiety continues to fuel widespread desire for Washington lawmakers to focus on jobs (8% most important issue) and the economy (15%). Division in the country is at the top of Americans' issue agenda, as well; one-in-five (21%) say that it is the most important issue that needs to be addressed. Healthcare (11% most important issue), dysfunction in government (9%), and foreign threats (5%) round out the top issue concerns.

Democrats (32%) place much more of an emphasis on division in the country, with Republicans (12%) seemingly less concerned with the idea of unifying a fractured populace. Among independents, the economy (14%) and jobs (8%), division (13%), and dysfunction in government (14%) all compete for attention. Younger voters under the age of 45 (26%), nonwhite voters (26%), and college educated voters (25%) also consider division in the country to be the chief concern.

Leadership in the Democratic Party Moving Forward
Despite winning the popular vote by over two million votes, and more votes overall in Congressional races, Democrats now find themselves at a historic low point in terms of political strength, both in Washington and across the country—badly outnumbered when it comes to governorships and state legislatures. In addition to the challenge of negotiating with a unified Republican government for the next two years, Democrats also must find a common voice and agenda with which to define their brand of leadership in this new era. A solid economic message and frame will be the most critical element of the Democratic platform moving forward.

As the Democratic Party begins the process of soul-searching and rebuilding, the data suggests that Senator Bernie Sanders can serve as a source of strength and leadership for Democrats, both in their efforts to unite internal divisions as well as to expand their ranks. In part, Sanders' profile remains strong because he wasn't attacked in the general election. A solid majority (56%) of voters hold a positive opinion of him – a stronger favorability rating than other leaders in Washington, including the President-elect.

The data reveal Sanders' potential to appeal to a diverse group of voters. In addition to remaining popular with key groups of the Democratic base, such as millennials (67% favorable), non-white voters (72% favorable), and women (60% favorable), Sanders also holds unique appeal among independents (55% favorable), moderates (57% favorable), and white voters (51% favorable). Sanders is also net positive among non-college educated voters (49% favorable, 35% unfavorable), though his profile is only split among non-college educated whites (40% favorable, 39% unfavorable). In the Midwest, Sanders is particularly popular (61% favorable, 27% unfavorable).

In addition to Senator Sanders, President Obama remains quite popular, with a majority of voters offering a positive opinion of his tenure in office (53% approve, including 42% strongly approve), putting him on track to be one of the most popular outgoing Presidents in recent history.

The President's support remains intense among key components of the Democratic base, including young, minority voters – his highest approval ratings coming from voters under 45 (58% approve, 38% disapprove) and African Americans (91% approve, 3% disapprove). Since the last Battleground survey, the President's approval rating has flipped among white women (49% approve, 47% disapprove), and remains solidly net-positive among independents (49% approve, 40% disapprove). This data suggests that the President can play a major role in motivating key components of the Democratic coalition over the next several years if he chooses to be involved.

Post-Election Image of the President-Elect and Republican Leadership
Despite a boost in popularity from his election night victory, President-elect Trump still remains an unpopular and deeply divisive figure. Trump's profile remains net-negative overall, with 45% expressing a positive opinion of the candidate compared to 49% who view him unfavorably. Although Trump's personal image has improved significantly since the last Battleground poll (36% favorable, 61% unfavorable), he is still far behind where President Obama was after his victory in 2008 (75% favorable, 22% unfavorable) and slightly behind President Bush's approval rating in 2000 (48% favorable, 39% unfavorable).

As was consistently the case throughout the election, perceptions of Trump's personal image are sharply divided along gender, racial, partisan, and generational lines. While men have a net positive opinion of Trump (50% favorable, 43% unfavorable), a majority of women continue to express negative views of him (41% favorable, 54% unfavorable), though his image has improved noticeably among women since the last poll (32% favorable to 62% unfavorable). Republicans (85% favorable, 11% unfavorable), white voters (53% favorable, 41% unfavorable) and voters over the age of 65 (53% favorable to 40% unfavorable) represent Trump's strongest bloc of supporters, while non-white voters (21% favorable, 72% favorable), and millennials (32% favorable, 73% unfavorable) are some of his most adamant detractors. Independents, in particular, appear to be warming to Trump. In the last Battleground survey, independents were solidly net-negative in their opinion of Trump (28% favorable, 64% unfavorable); today, they are closely divided in their opinions of him (44% favorable, 42% unfavorable).

Trump has had some success since being elected, and many swing voters want to give him the benefit of the doubt. Indeed, the data suggests that Trump is improving how the public perceives him, with nearly half of Americans (47%) saying that what they have seen of the President-elect since his victory has improved their impression of him, including nearly one-in-three (32%) who say they feel this way strongly. Nearly four-in-ten (38%) voters say that what they have seen of Trump since the election has made them feel less favorable towards the President-elect, and just over one-in-ten (11%) say his actions in the intervening weeks have made no difference in their opinion of him. Independents are more positive about the Trump, with half (50%) saying they feel more favorable towards him since the election, and less than one third (30%) saying they feel less favorable towards the President-elect.

Americans are generally ambivalent, at best, about other members of the Republican leadership team. Vice President-elect Mike Pence's ratings may be wanting (44% favorable, 37%% unfavorable), but they are more positive than those afforded Trump. Voters are split in their feelings towards Paul Ryan (35% favorable, 36% unfavorable), though Democrats (15% favorable, 60% unfavorable) and independents (27% favorable, 35% unfavorable) are more critical of the House Speaker. Senate Majority

Leader Mitch McConnell draws solidly net-negative ratings (17% favorable, 33% unfavorable), even as his familiarity is limited (25% no opinion, 25% never heard).

Looking Ahead to the New Administration
President-elect Trump's candidacy was defined in part by bold and often dubious promises about the country's future. Less than two months before he enters the Oval Office, voters have mixed expectations of Trump's ability to deliver on those promises. The President-elect's signature campaign pledge—building a wall on the US-Mexican border, paid for by our neighbor to the south—elicits particularly strong doubts; just 17% of voters find it very likely that action will be taken to build a wall, 24% think it is somewhat likely, while a majority thinks it is either not very likely (25%) or not likely at all (30%). Nearly two-thirds of voters are also skeptical of the Trump administration's ability to end America's military involvement overseas (8% very likely, 21% somewhat likely, 38% not very likely, 25% not at all likely).

Voters are more sanguine about Trump's professed ability to defeat ISIS (24% very likely, 29% somewhat likely, 23% not very likely, 18% not at all likely). And there is somewhat more faith even in Trump's capacity to accomplish aspects of his economic platform, such as reforming the tax code (33% very likely, 38% somewhat likely, 15% not very likely, 9% not at all likely) and ending trade deals (25% very likely, 35% somewhat likely, 20% not very likely, 8% not at all likely). Voters largely believe that Trump will repeal Obamacare (44% very likely, 35% somewhat likely, 11% not very likely, 6% not at all likely), but are less convinced that he will privatize Medicare (15% very likely, 33% somewhat likely, 27% not very likely, 16% not at all likely). Many are hopeful that the Trump administration will deliver on improvements to roads and bridges (26% very likely, 40% somewhat likely, 20% not very likely, 11% not at all likely). Democrats may have some difficulty gaining traction and impact in their public critiques of Trump, because voters are already skeptical of his administration's ability to follow through on his campaign promises.

As his ability to fulfill these campaign commitments will bear heavily on judgments of his abilities as President, voters will be watching Trump's actions closely. While many—most—Americans may be pleased by Trump's seeming evolution on such issues as climate change and torture, those words will need to be backed up by deeds in order to convince a skeptical public of his intentions, abilities, and willingness to disappoint his Party's base, especially in Washington, D.C. Democrats, for their part, would be wise to embrace the leadership of one of the few leaders who can broaden their ranks with something the Party has been lacking for too long—a compelling economic message that marries Americans' desire for economic *and* political reform.

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<u>**Battleground 61:**</u>
<u>**A New Era Begins in Washington**</u>
Republican Analysis
By: Ed Goeas and Brian Nienaber

The conventional wisdom defying victory by Donald Trump and the continued Republican control of Congress is ushering in a new era in Washington. For the first time in more than a decade, Republicans will be in control of both the Executive and the Legislative branches of the federal government.

While Donald Trump's victory was shocking to many voters, there are clear signs in this data that voters are optimistic and enthusiastic about this new era in Washington. More than two-in-five voters select that their emotional reaction to Trump winning and the GOP maintaining control of Congress is hopeful (33%) or excited (14%). In contrast, just twenty-six percent (26%) of voters select that they are scared.

An additional defiance of conventional wisdom is seen on an information flow question about President-elect Trump. While much of the earned media and commentary has focused on the foibles of this transition effort, when voters are asked for impact of what they have seen, read, or heard about Donald Trump since his election, a plurality of voters (47%) say this information has given them a more favorable view of Trump. This positive information flow is remarkable given all the negative earned media and critical commentary that has been directed at President-elect Trump since Election Day. Fully forty-three percent (43%) of Johnson voters and fourteen percent (14%) of Clinton voters indicate their views about Trump have become more favorable since Election Day.

This is not to understate the rough and tumble nature of the 2016 Presidential campaign. When voters were asked their view of the language used in this campaign, a majority of voters (52%) select that this language was repulsive and had no place in a Presidential campaign. Despite this view of this language, most voters (54%) say that the language used on this campaign had <u>no impact</u> on their decision about voting for President. All of the concern about the bruising rhetoric of this Presidential campaign was unfounded to the majority of the electorate.

Looking to the year ahead, voters are ready to give President-elect Trump and the Republican Congress the benefit of the doubt. While President-elect Trump still has an image rating that is upside down (45% favorable/49% unfavorable), this represents a twenty-point positive shift, and he now has the highest favorable rating and the lowest unfavorable rating since he entered the Presidential race. In contrast, Secretary Clinton continues to have a majority unfavorable rating (55%) and her favorable rating is lower and showing no improvement from earlier surveys. Elections often have a strong impact on the image of candidates and here that is clearly the case.

A similar trend is seen when Presidential election voters are probed on the reasoning behind their vote. Trump (79%) has more supporters than Clinton (75%) who describe themselves as definite in their decision. Trump (20%) also has fewer voters than Clinton (24%) who describe their support as reluctant. Trump will begin his Presidency with a significant number of voters who made a definite, affirmative choice to select him as their President.

In looking at the reaction of Trump voters to the outcome, the optimism of these voters is even more evident. Those voters who were definite Trump voters were most likely to describe themselves as hopeful (55%) or excited (38%) about the 2016 election results. Those voters who were reluctant Trump voters described themselves as hopeful (69%) at an even higher rate while another nineteen percent (19%) described their reaction as excited. So, even for those voters who were less enthusiastic about Trump, they will enter 2017 with hope and excitement.

On images, for the Republican Congress, Vice President-elect Mike Pence (44% favorable/37% unfavorable) has a net positive image. And, while House Speaker Paul Ryan is at a one-to-one ratio (35% favorable/36% unfavorable), he still has more than one-quarter (29%) of the electorate who do not yet have an image of him. Though he has a more negative image rating (17% favorable/33% unfavorable), Senate Majority Leader McConnell has a similar opportunity with fully half of the electorate not yet holding an image of him. All of these figures have a great opportunity to define themselves as attentive and accomplished leaders if they can shepherd legislative solutions on key issues through Congress.

Voters were asked to select their top two issues for President Trump and Congress to make their focus in the first 100 days. As seen below, voters have diverse views with every issue offered being selected by at least five percent of the electorate.

	Most Important Issue	Next most Important Issue	Combined responses
The economy	15%	18%	33%
Division in the country	21%	11%	32%
Health care	11%	13%	24%
Dysfunction in government	9%	13%	22%
Jobs	8%	11%	19%
Illegal immigration	6%	8%	14%
Foreign threats	5%	8%	13%
Social Security	3%	4%	7%
Taxes	1%	5%	6%
The deficit	2%	3%	5%

Despite this diversity on issue concerns, if President-elect Trump and Congressional leaders can work together to pass legislation on health care reform and on economic development with less rancor than the heavy handed partisan tactics used to pass Obamacare, a significant number of voters will have seen their top concern addressed.

In fact, when looking at voter expectations on an issue by issue basis for President-elect Trump and the Republican controlled House and Senate, a much clearer path for a legislative agenda surfaces.

First, there are several issues where voters' expectations for legislative action score fairly low. The number of voters saying it is "very" likely to be met with legislative action; U.S. military involvement abroad (8%), privatizing Medicare (15%), building a border wall with Mexico (17%), and defeating ISIS (24%). When looking at the combined response of "very" likely and "somewhat" likely, only defeating

ISIS (53%), receives a slight majority response from the voters.

There are several issues, however, where an overwhelming majority of voters believe action is either "very" or "somewhat" likely with Republican control of the White House and both houses of Congress – reforming the tax code (70%), ending trade deals like NAFTA (60%), making improvements to roads and bridges (66%), and repealing and replacing Obamacare with different health care reforms (80%).

It is also notable that on these key issues – tax reform, trade reform, infrastructure improvement, and health care reform – strong majorities of Republicans, Independents, and Democrats believe that it is very or somewhat likely that action will be taken on these issues. In addition, more than six-in-ten middle class voters believe that action is very or somewhat likely on these issues.

This is an important political environmental note for the coming year. For a majority of voters, particularly middle class voters, their expectations will be exceeded if Congress passes a tax reform package, rejects an "unfair" trade deal like the Trans-Pacific Partnership, and passes an infrastructure improvement package. Most importantly, the majority of the electorate will truly have their expectations exceeded if Republicans can repeal and replace Obamacare, an effort that they have been studying and discussing for years.

In sum, while the results of this Presidential election might have been shocking to many observers, voters have clearly processed these results and are willing to give President-elect Trump and the Republican controlled Congress an opportunity to lead and to succeed. Congressional leaders on both sides of the aisle will have the opportunity to provide the solutions on the issues that matter so much to so many voters. They will be judged on their work on everyday issues like providing economic opportunity and reforming health care as well as broader issues like restoring the image of Washington and its leaders both at home and abroad. Voters elected a Presidential candidate whose primary message was a promise to bring substantial change to Washington. In the last four weeks since the election, voters have shown a positive response to this new era in Washington while keeping their expectations high for several key areas that affect their daily lives. In just a few weeks, the real work begins, and Congress and the President-elect will have an opportunity to further respond to this desire from the electorate for meaningful change.

Editor's Note: The intent of this latest G. W. University Battleground poll was to analyze where the American Voters' were one month after the 2016 Presidential Election, not analyze what happened in the election. When looking at both the results of the election and the exit polls from the election, it was clearly a victory for both President Elect Trump and the Republican Party as a whole. Not only did President-Elect Trump score a big win in the Electoral College, winning 306 Electoral votes, but Republicans in the Senate will maintain a majority of the Senate with 52 Senators, and in the House Republicans held a strong majority in the House holds the net loss of Congressmen to the single digits (-6). Additionally, Republicans added a net two governors to their ranks and now have 33 of the 50 states being held by Republicans, and gained over 100 legislators and now control 69 of the 98 state legislative bodies.

Polling has come under some criticism but in the end the national polls were pretty much on the mark, with the average of the national polls having Clinton leading going into Election Day with a three percent (3%) lead and ending up winning the popular vote by about two percent (2%). The state polls have taken a hit, but in reality most in the state polling averages, included polls that ended a week out from the election. (At The Tarrance Group we conducted polls in the last week in OH, FL, NC, and PA all showing both Trump and the Senate candidates ahead on the ballot and moving in a positive direction – clearly the election broke in the last week for Donald Trump in most of these states).

Three factors appear to have played a major factor in the final vote.

First, with that group of voters that were unique in this election – the 18-20 % who were unfavorable towards both presidential candidates throughout the general election – broke late for Trump. In the national exit polling Clinton won 98% of the voters who were favorable towards Clinton, unfavorable towards Trump and Trump won 98% of the voters who were favorable towards Trump and unfavorable towards Clinton, but with the 18% of voters who were unfavorable towards both Donald Trump won by a 49% to 29% margin. In the battleground presidential states (PA, NC, FL, OH, WI), Trump won a majority of that group of voters who were unfavorable towards both, in most cases by a two to one margin. Democrats like to point to the Comey/FBI letter to Congress as a major reason for her loss, but The Trump campaigns message discipline in the final weeks also played a major role with these late deciding voters.

Second, both the ground game by the RNC and the key Senate races, combined with the higher intensity (+8%) of the Trump voter outside the major cities/suburbs played a major role in the victories in every one of the target presidential states. Clinton touted a ground game equal to that of the Obama 2012 campaign, but ran a campaign that in many ways never connected with key voter constituencies. You have to have both, and in the end you have to have a message that excites voters, connects with voters, or your ground game falls flat.

Finally, in the end the candidate quality that mattered most was "change." On the Presidential exit polling, "change" was the top response at thirty-nine percent (39%), and Donald Trump won the vote with that group of voters by eighty-two percent (82%).