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Contact:
PATRICK MURRAY
732-979-6769 (cell); 732-263-5858 (office)
pdmurray@monmouth.edu
Follow on Twitter: @PollsterPatrick

NATIONAL: GENERAL ELECTION PREVIEW – CLINTON LEADS TRUMP, CRUZ BUT NOT KASICH

Leading candidates have high negative ratings

West Long Branch, NJ – Hillary Clinton leads both Donald Trump and Ted Cruz in hypothetical general election match-ups, but currently trails John Kasich. It is still early days, but the latest **Monmouth University Poll** confirms other recent polling that suggests the major parties' most likely nominees are largely unpopular among American voters. At this stage, it is not clear how a viable third party candidate might shake up the race.

As the contours of the general election start to take shape, the leading Republican candidate seems to be in a poor position against the leading Democrat. In a hypothetical head-to-head race, Clinton has a putative 10 point lead – 48% to 38% for Trump. While Clinton gets the support of 89% of self-described Democrats – a fairly typical partisan support level at this stage of the race – Trump can only claim the support of 73% of Republicans. Working in Trump's favor is that independents are presently divided – 40% support him and 39% support Clinton.

This two-person race is fairly tight in the all-important "swing" states. Clinton holds a narrow 46% to 41% edge in ten states where the margin of victory in the 2012 presidential election was less than 7 percentage points. Clinton actually does better in "leaning" states. She has a 49% to 36% advantage over Trump in ten states where the margin of victory was between 7 and 12 percentage points and that generally went for Romney in 2012. Clinton also does better in solidly blue states (56% to 30% for Trump) than Trump does in solidly red states (48% to 38% for Clinton).

Looking at these results by candidate support in the ongoing nomination process shows that not all partisan voters are ready to get behind the current frontrunners, although this is more pronounced on the Republican side. Among Democrats who support Bernie Sanders for their party's nomination, 78% say they would vote for Clinton over Trump in November, while 12% would actually vote for Trump and

7% would not vote at all. In the Republican contest, two-thirds (68%) of voters who back Ted Cruz for the GOP nomination say they would vote for Trump in November, while 13% would vote for Clinton and 10% would not vote. Among Republicans who back John Kasich, just 50% would vote for Trump and 19% would vote for Clinton, with 22% saying they would sit out the general election.

Only 40% of registered voters have a favorable opinion of Clinton while 51% have an unfavorable view. These results have been fairly stable, although Clinton's negative rating is slightly higher than the 44% unfavorable rating she had in June 2015. Trump fares worse, with a 30% favorable and 60% unfavorable rating. His favorable rating is on par with where it has been in Monmouth polls taken after he announced his presidential run. However, his negative ratings have climbed from 54% in August and 50% in October. Importantly, more than one-third of Republican voters (37%) currently hold an unfavorable view of Trump.

"These results represent the electoral landscape before the general election campaign gets underway. This dynamic will certainly change, but it is telling that both parties' leading candidates come out of the box with voters holding largely negative views of them," said Patrick Murray, director of the independent Monmouth University Polling Institute. "The personal ratings are really the most important findings here. Both Clinton and Trump have seen their positive ratings hold steady over the past few months while their negatives have increased. Trump's rating has been more volatile and it would be wise to remember that Republican voters did a virtual 180 degree flip from having negative to positive views after he launched his campaign. Can he pull off a similar feat among all voters if he gets the nomination?"

While both leading candidates are largely unpopular, Clinton is seen as having a more presidential disposition than Trump. Specifically, 54% of voters say the Democratic frontrunner has the right temperament to be to be president, but just 27% say the same about the Republican frontrunner. While 87% of voters who would now support Clinton over Trump in the general election agree that she has an appropriate temperament, just 59% of potential Trump voters feel their preferred candidate has the right temperament for the job.

The *Monmouth University Poll* also tested other potential GOP nominees against Clinton. She holds a slim 5 point lead over Cruz – 45% to 40%. Results in the swing states (44% Clinton and 42% Cruz) and the leaning states (49% Clinton and 36% Cruz) are similar to the Clinton-Trump contest. However, Cruz does better than Trump does in solidly red states – 55% to 31% for Clinton.

Kasich on the other hand holds a 6 point edge over Clinton in this hypothetical November face-off. He leads in swing states (46% to 41%), leaning states (47% to 36%), and red states (59% to 26%). Kasich has the highest positive ratings and lowest negative ratings of any major party candidate left in the field, but he also has the highest number of voters who still have no opinion of him. Specifically 50% of

voters have a favorable opinion of Kasich and just 18% hold an unfavorable opinion, while one-third (32%) have no opinion of him. Kasich is the only candidate who gets a net positive rating from voters of the opposite party; 39% of Democrats have a favorable view of him and 20% have an unfavorable opinion.

"Kasich seems to be best positioned to take on Clinton, but the fact that he is a blank slate for one-third of voters means that opinion could swing either way if he became the nominee," said Murray.

Cruz has a net negative 37% favorable to 43% unfavorable rating among American voters. The other remaining major party candidate, Bernie Sanders, is the only one besides Kasich with a net positive rating at 48% favorable and 37% unfavorable.

Monmouth also tested a potential three-way race involving Clinton, Trump, and former GOP governor, now Libertarian, Gary Johnson. In this hypothetical contest, Clinton earns 42% of the vote – down 6 points from the two-person race – and Trump gets 34% – down 4 points from the two-person race. Johnson takes 11%. In this contest, Clinton maintains her swing state lead – 44% to 37% for Trump and 9% for Johnson – while her leaning state lead narrows – 43% to 34% for Trump and 9% for Johnson. Johnson gets his highest vote share – 15% – in the red states. Johnson is largely an unknown commodity. Just 9% have a favorable opinion of him and 15% an unfavorable opinion, while 3-in-4 (76%) don't know enough about him to form an opinion.

"A vigorous third party campaign is a very real possibility this year, but it is not yet clear what the impact could be. Including Johnson's name in our polling seems to be more of a placeholder for voters who are not particularly thrilled with either major party choice right now," said Murray.

The *Monmouth University Poll* was conducted by telephone from March 17 to 20, 2016 with 1,008 adults in the United States.   The results in this release are based on a sample of 848 registered voters and have a margin of error of $\pm$ 3.4 percent. The poll was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute in West Long Branch, NJ.

DATA TABLES

The questions referred to in this release are as follows:
(* Some columns may not add to 100% due to rounding.)

[*Q1-5 previously released.*]

[*QUESTIONS 6 THROUGH 8 WERE ROTATED*]
6. If the election for President was today, who would you vote for if the candidates were Donald Trump the Republican and Hillary Clinton the Democrat? [*NAMES WERE ROTATED*]

	Registered Voter	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE		2012 SWING STATES			
		Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White, non-Hispanic	Other	Swing	Lean	Red	Blue
Donald Trump	**38%**	73%	40%	5%	45%	31%	30%	41%	39%	47%	16%	41%	36%	48%	30%
Hillary Clinton	**48%**	12%	39%	89%	44%	52%	53%	47%	47%	39%	72%	46%	49%	38%	56%
(VOL) Other candidate	**2%**	2%	3%	0%	2%	2%	2%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%	0%	2%
(VOL) No one	**9%**	9%	14%	3%	8%	10%	11%	8%	9%	10%	6%	9%	9%	8%	9%
(VOL) Undecided	**3%**	4%	4%	3%	2%	5%	5%	3%	3%	3%	4%	2%	3%	5%	3%

7. If the election for President was today, who would you vote for if the candidates were Ted Cruz the Republican and Hillary Clinton the Democrat? [*NAMES WERE ROTATED*]

	Registered Voter	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE		2012 SWING STATES			
		Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White, non-Hispanic	Other	Swing	Lean	Red	Blue
Ted Cruz	40%	79%	42%	4%	44%	37%	36%	45%	37%	47%	25%	42%	36%	55%	31%
Hillary Clinton	45%	9%	31%	90%	40%	49%	47%	41%	46%	36%	64%	44%	49%	31%	51%
(VOL) Other candidate	2%	2%	4%	0%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	2%	2%	4%	0%	4%	1%
(VOL) No one	9%	7%	17%	3%	10%	8%	11%	7%	11%	10%	6%	8%	9%	6%	12%
(VOL) Undecided	4%	4%	5%	3%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	3%	2%	6%	4%	5%

8. If the election for President was today, who would you vote for if the candidates were John Kasich [KAY-sick] the Republican and Hillary Clinton the Democrat? [*NAMES WERE ROTATED*]

	Registered Voter	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE		2012 SWING STATES			
		Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White, non-Hispanic	Other	Swing	Lean	Red	Blue
John Kasich	**45%**	83%	49%	10%	50%	41%	44%	50%	41%	52%	31%	46%	47%	59%	34%
Hillary Clinton	**39%**	7%	24%	82%	34%	44%	38%	36%	43%	32%	57%	41%	36%	26%	48%
(VOL) Other candidate	**2%**	1%	4%	0%	1%	2%	2%	1%	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%	2%	1%
(VOL) No one	**9%**	6%	17%	2%	10%	8%	8%	9%	10%	11%	4%	7%	8%	10%	11%
(VOL) Undecided	**5%**	2%	6%	5%	4%	5%	9%	3%	4%	4%	5%	4%	6%	2%	5%

9. If the election for President was today, who would you vote for if the candidates were Donald Trump the Republican, Hillary Clinton the Democrat, and Gary Johnson the Libertarian? [*NAMES WERE ROTATED*]

	Registered Voter	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE		2012 SWING STATES			
		Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White, non-Hispanic	Other	Swing	Lean	Red	Blue
Donald Trump	**34%**	70%	34%	3%	40%	28%	25%	37%	36%	43%	14%	37%	34%	43%	26%
Hillary Clinton	**42%**	6%	28%	88%	37%	47%	40%	39%	47%	35%	59%	44%	43%	28%	50%
Gary Johnson	**11%**	13%	16%	4%	12%	10%	16%	14%	4%	10%	13%	9%	9%	15%	10%
(VOL) Other candidate	**1%**	1%	2%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	3%	1%	1%
(VOL) No one	**7%**	7%	10%	2%	6%	7%	8%	5%	8%	7%	6%	7%	7%	6%	7%
(VOL) Undecided	**5%**	2%	10%	3%	4%	7%	9%	4%	4%	4%	7%	4%	4%	7%	6%

10. Please tell me if your general impression of each of the following is favorable or unfavorable, or if you don't really have an opinion. [*NAMES WERE ROTATED*]

Hillary Clinton

	Registered Voter	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE White, non-Hispanic	Other	2012 SWING STATES			
		Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+			Swing	Lean	Red	Blue
Favorable	**40%**	8%	25%	83%	34%	45%	35%	38%	45%	33%	58%	41%	43%	27%	46%
Unfavorable	**51%**	88%	62%	9%	56%	46%	51%	54%	48%	59%	31%	51%	49%	69%	40%
No opinion	**9%**	5%	14%	8%	9%	9%	14%	7%	7%	8%	12%	8%	8%	3%	14%

Bernie Sanders

	Registered Voter	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE White, non-Hispanic	Other	2012 SWING STATES			
		Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+			Swing	Lean	Red	Blue
Favorable	**48%**	19%	50%	71%	48%	47%	60%	49%	38%	42%	59%	47%	43%	41%	55%
Unfavorable	**37%**	70%	33%	13%	42%	32%	30%	33%	45%	43%	24%	42%	37%	42%	29%
No opinion	**16%**	10%	17%	16%	10%	21%	10%	18%	17%	15%	18%	12%	20%	17%	16%

Ted Cruz

	Registered Voter	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE White, non-Hispanic	Other	2012 SWING STATES			
		Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+			Swing	Lean	Red	Blue
Favorable	**37%**	64%	32%	17%	39%	35%	34%	40%	34%	38%	36%	40%	35%	50%	26%
Unfavorable	**43%**	24%	45%	60%	48%	39%	45%	38%	48%	44%	40%	43%	39%	37%	50%
No opinion	**20%**	12%	23%	23%	13%	26%	21%	21%	18%	19%	24%	17%	26%	13%	24%

John Kasich

	Registered Voter	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE White, non-Hispanic	Other	2012 SWING STATES			
		Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+			Swing	Lean	Red	Blue
Favorable	**50%**	68%	48%	39%	55%	45%	44%	51%	52%	52%	47%	57%	44%	51%	46%
Unfavorable	**18%**	15%	19%	20%	20%	17%	19%	15%	21%	20%	12%	19%	15%	18%	20%
No opinion	**32%**	17%	33%	41%	26%	38%	37%	34%	27%	27%	42%	24%	40%	30%	35%

Donald Trump

	Registered Voter	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE White, non-Hispanic	Other	2012 SWING STATES			
		Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+			Swing	Lean	Red	Blue
Favorable	**30%**	54%	34%	4%	38%	21%	19%	33%	32%	37%	13%	32%	24%	39%	25%
Unfavorable	**60%**	37%	56%	83%	50%	69%	71%	55%	58%	55%	70%	60%	61%	53%	63%
No opinion	**11%**	8%	11%	13%	11%	10%	10%	12%	9%	8%	17%	8%	15%	8%	13%

Gary Johnson

	Registered Voter	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE White, non-Hispanic	Other	2012 SWING STATES			
		Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+			Swing	Lean	Red	Blue
Favorable	**9%**	7%	13%	8%	14%	4%	14%	11%	4%	7%	14%	9%	7%	10%	10%
Unfavorable	**15%**	18%	15%	13%	17%	13%	12%	13%	19%	16%	13%	19%	17%	12%	13%
No opinion	**76%**	75%	72%	80%	69%	82%	74%	75%	77%	77%	73%	72%	76%	78%	76%

TREND: *Registered Voters*	Favorable	Unfavorable	No opinion
Hillary Clinton	**40%**	**51%**	**9%**
--October 2015	*41*	*48*	*11*
--August 2015	*38*	*48*	*14*
--June 2015	*41*	*44*	*14*
Bernie Sanders	**48%**	**37%**	**16%**
--October 2015	*35*	*30*	*35*
--August 2015	*24*	*26*	*50*
--June 2015	*15*	*24*	*61*
Ted Cruz	**37%**	**43%**	**20%**
--October 2015	*29*	*36*	*36*
--August 2015	*27*	*33*	*40*
--June 2015	*25*	*34*	*41*
John Kasich	**50%**	**18%**	**32%**
--Prior polls	*n/a*	*n/a*	*n/a*
Donald Trump	**30%**	**60%**	**11%**
--October 2015	*32*	*50*	*18*
--August 2015	*31*	*54*	*14*
--June 2015	*18*	*57*	*25*
Gary Johnson	**9%**	**15%**	**76%**
--Prior polls	*n/a*	*n/a*	*n/a*

[*QUESTIONS 11 & 12 WERE ROTATED*]

11. Regardless of whether you would vote for him, do you think Donald Trump does or does not have the right temperament to be president?

	Registered Voter	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE		2012 SWING STATES			
		Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White, non-Hispanic	Other	Swing	Lean	Red	Blue
Does	**27%**	48%	30%	7%	36%	19%	27%	27%	26%	32%	15%	25%	28%	36%	22%
Does not	**68%**	48%	64%	90%	60%	76%	68%	67%	70%	64%	80%	72%	68%	57%	72%
(VOL) Don't know	**5%**	5%	7%	3%	4%	5%	4%	5%	4%	4%	5%	2%	4%	7%	6%

12. Regardless of whether you would vote for her, do you think Hillary Clinton does or does not have the right temperament to be president?

	Registered Voter	PARTY ID			GENDER		AGE			RACE		2012 SWING STATES			
		Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	18-34	35-54	55+	White, non-Hispanic	Other	Swing	Lean	Red	Blue
Does	**54%**	28%	44%	89%	51%	57%	59%	54%	52%	47%	71%	59%	51%	41%	60%
Does not	**42%**	69%	51%	9%	46%	39%	38%	43%	44%	50%	24%	38%	45%	57%	34%
(VOL) Don't know	**4%**	3%	5%	2%	4%	3%	3%	3%	4%	3%	5%	3%	3%	2%	5%

[*Q13-25 previously released.*]

* 2012 Presidential Election Regions
Swing States (<7% margin): CO, FL, IA, NV, NH, NC, OH, PA, VA, WI
Leaning States (7-12% margin): AZ, GA, IN, MI, MN, MS, MO, NM, OR, SC
Red States (>12% GOP margin): AL, AK, AR, ID, KS, KY, LA, MT, NE, ND, OK, SD, TN, TX, UT, WV, WY
Blue States (>12% Dem margin): CA, CT, DE, HI, IL, ME, MD, MA, NJ, NY, RI, VT, WA plus DC

The *Monmouth University Poll* was sponsored and conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute from March 17 to 20, 2016 with a national random sample of 1,008 adults age 18 and older. This includes 656 contacted by a live interviewer on a landline telephone and 352 contacted by a live interviewer on a cell phone, in English. The results in this poll release are based on a subsample of 848 registered voters. Monmouth is responsible for all aspects of the survey design, data weighting and analysis. Final sample is weighted for region, age, education, gender and race based on US Census information. Data collection support provided by Braun Research (field) and SSI (RDD sample). For results based on this sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling has a maximum margin of plus or minus 3.4 percentage points (unadjusted for sample design). Sampling error can be larger for sub-groups (see table below). In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

POLL DEMOGRAPHICS (weighted)

30% Rep	*49% Male*	*23% 18-34*	*69% White*
36% Ind	*51% Female*	*39% 35-54*	*12% Black*
34% Dem		*38% 55+*	*13% Hispanic*
			6% Asian/Other

	Registered	*PARTY ID*			*GENDER*		*AGE*			*RACE* White, non-		*2012 SWING STATES*			
	Voter	*Rep*	*Ind*	*Dem*	*Male*	*Female*	*18-34*	*35-54*	*55+*	*Hispanic*	*Other*	*Swing*	*Lean*	*Red*	*Blue*
Unweighted N	*848*	*252*	*277*	*302*	*412*	*436*	*120*	*266*	*457*	*656*	*177*	*235*	*157*	*176*	*280*
moe	*3.4%*	*6.2%*	*5.9%*	*5.6%*	*4.8%*	*4.7%*	*9.0%*	*6.0%*	*4.6%*	*3.8%*	*7.4%*	*6.4%*	*7.8%*	*7.4%*	*5.9%*

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