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Newsmax/Fabrizio Lee Poll Shocker: Trump Trounces Clinton Among Independents



By David A. Patten | Wednesday, 09 Mar 2016 07:28 PM

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GOP presidential front-runner Donald Trump enjoys a commanding 47 to 31 percent lead over expected Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton among independent voters, according to an **exclusive Newsmax/Fabrizio, Lee & Associates survey** that the organizations released Wednesday afternoon.

While the **online survey of 1,500 registered voters** shows the former

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The results fly in the face of most pundits' predictions that Trump's strong personality and tough policies would alienate the temperate "swing" voters, who often decide the outcome of national elections.

Trump continues to have high negatives after a bruising primary season, but Hillary appears to be in even worse shape.

"They don't necessarily like him. But they dislike her more," said Tony Fabrizio, a veteran of four presidential campaigns and co-founder and partner of the polling firm Fabrizio, Lee & Associates.

Fabrizio is a nationally recognized GOP strategist and pollster who played a pivotal role in electing Florida Gov. Rick Scott and Kentucky Gov. Matt Bevin, the surprise tea party winner in the Bluegrass State last year. Fabrizio has worked for nearly two dozen U.S. senators and over 50 members of Congress.

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The public-opinion expert bluntly says **the poll results** show Trump can defeat Hillary Clinton in a general election and win the presidency for the Republicans.

He contends that Trump's large lead among independents indicates the voter anger fueling Trump's populist rise in the GOP primaries is spilling over into the electorate at large. If so, that would turn the 2016 election on its head and give the outsider Trump a built-in advantage.

"The voter anger is leaking over to the general, absolutely," says Fabrizio. "Independents want somebody who is going to speak their mind just as much as Republicans do. Looking at responses that measure the frustration level people have with politics and politicians, there's no question that independents, while maybe not as frustrated as Republicans, are far closer to Republicans on their level of frustration than they are to Democrats."

Fabrizio perceives a host of other troublesome indicators for Clinton in a hypothetical match-up with Trump. Among them:

- The poll's undecided voters prefer a Republican in a generic presidential ballot over a Democrat, by almost a 3-to-1 margin, 41 percent to 14.
- Undecided voters are much more likely to rate President Obama's job performance negatively.
- Those expressing no preference between Clinton and Trump favor smaller, rather than bigger, government.
- A majority of undecided voters state they intend to vote for a Republican, rather than a Democrat, in their local congressional race.

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Overall, 10 percent of respondents



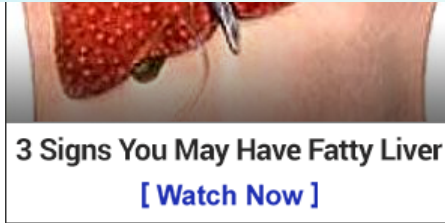
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either party were almost twice as likely to be undecided, at 23 percent.

One reason the poll's undecided voters appear to be leaning so Republican, Fabrizio suggests, is that many of them are indeed natural GOP voters.



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Fabrizio concludes Trump's firebrand rhetoric about immigrants and his proposal to suspend issuance of visas to Muslims have rendered some GOP voters uncertain over which candidate to support.

That a significant share of Republican voters aren't sure they can support Trump against Clinton actually is bad news for Democrats, many of whom have been champing at the bit to see Trump win the nomination.

"Undecideds haven't gone to Clinton because they don't like her, they haven't gone to Trump because they don't necessarily like him," he says. "But all other things being equal, Trump would have an easier time getting them back than she would, just based on party fidelity and ideological grounds. So there's upside for him that isn't built-in for her."

Current undecided voters "are decidedly more Republican than they are Democrat," Fabrizio says.

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Clinton is expected to roll out a polished media campaign, augmented by a barrage of attack ads, to help woo moderate voters.

A Quinnipiac poll in December showed 59 percent of voters rated Clinton as "not honest and trustworthy," which could lead many voters to discount her messaging.

The Newsmax/Fabrizio poll confirms both candidates have a lot of work to do to address high negatives. A case in point: 21 percent of voters who are sitting on the fence described Trump as either "arrogant," "a bully," or a "jerk."

The bad news for Clinton: She fared even worse.

Forty-three percent of voters without a strong inclination to support either candidate used words like "untrustworthy," "liar," and "don't trust her" to describe the former senator from New York – another indication that Clinton could face stiff headwinds in November from voters who are tired of politics as usual.

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"Everybody focuses on how polarizing Trump is," Fabrizio notes. "The truth of the matter is Clinton is just as polarizing in many respects." The survey found 23 percent of respondents described Trump as "very conservative," while Clinton was branded as "very liberal" by 42 percent.

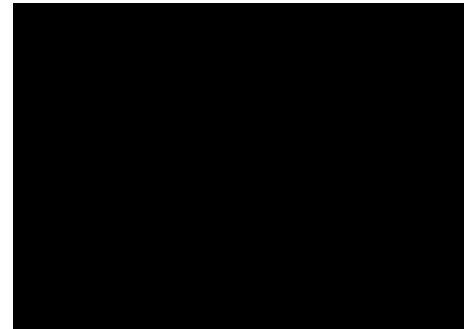
- Americans prefer Trump's campaign theme over Hillary's. A whopping 63 percent of voters agree with Trump's core theme that it's time to make America great again. That compares to just 36 percent who agree with Clinton's assertion that American greatness has not lapsed.
- Voters are very open to Trump's brash style. By a 51 percent to 22 percent margin, voters say they prefer a candidate who speaks candidly even if the views expressed are often controversial, rather than a candidate who sanitizes remarks to make them more palatable.



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Fabrizio hastens to add that it is much too early to try to use the survey results to predict the electoral outcome, should Trump and Clinton go on to win their parties' respective nominations.

Rather, he stated the results suggest the likely strengths and vulnerabilities the candidates would carry into the general election, along with the predisposition and temperament of the electorate.

"The establishment's notion that a Trump campaign in the general election is doomed is not true," he says. "Trump is not only competitive, but there are several avenues I can see for a Trump victory over Clinton."

The Newsmax/Fabrizio, Lee & Associates survey poll was conducted online of 1,500 registered voters from March 3 to March 5, and has a margin of error of plus or minus 2.5 percent. Some results were rounded up, affecting the totals.

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