

September 2011 Press Release

September 2011 Winthrop Poll

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Winthrop Poll Results Of SC Registered Voters

Winthrop Poll Results Of September 2011

Among Republicans/GOP Leainers Definitely Planning to Vote in SC Primary

Rick Perry Gets Nod Over Mitt Romney 30.5% to 27.3%

Bachmann Losing Momentum While Cain Slowly Rising

11% Say They're Unsure Who They'll Vote For

Among SC Democrats, Republicans and Independents Combined

83% Disapprove of the Way Congress is Doing its Job

50% Feel Same Way About Obama, With 40% Giving Him a Thumbs-Up

Among SC Republicans/Republican Leainers

Almost 75% Say Term “Socialist” Describes President Well or Very Well.

36% Say He Was Definitely or Probably Born in Another Country

And Nearly 30% Say Obama’s a Muslim.

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67% Say They Are Not Part of Tea Party Movement.

But Almost 75% of Them Agree With Its Principles

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62% Cite Economy/Jobs As Most Important Problems Facing the U.S.

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Nearly 70% of SC Republicans/Republican Leaners Approve

of Nikki Haley’s Job Performance as SC Governor.

While 23% Say She’s Failed to Meet Their Expectations Since Taking Office

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The results of the latest Winthrop Poll taken between September 11-18, 2011 are in. The poll interviewed 1552 registered voters from South Carolina. Results which use all respondents have a margin of error of +/- 2.49% at the 95% confidence level.

The majority of questions, however, were only asked of Republicans and Independents who lean Republican. These results come from 596 Republicans and Republican leaners in SC who are also registered to vote and have a margin of error of +/- 4.01%. The margin of error for data using only those who “definitely” plan to vote in the 2012 Republican presidential primary is +/- 4.57%

Among the Winthrop Poll findings:

- When asked about Barack Obama’s job performance as president, 40% of all respondents approved, while 50.7% disapproved. Independents—whom many cite as a key factor in the 2012 election--disapproved by 56.5%.
- Among Republicans/Republican leaners definitely planning to vote in the GOP Primary, Rick Perry—who entered the race for the GOP nod during an appearance in SC—lead Mitt Romney by 30.5% to 27.3%—within the margin of error.
- When Republicans/Republican leaners who are definitely planning to vote in the Primary were asked who they thought the eventual 2012 Republican nominee would be—*regardless of the one they currently supported*—Rick Perry was named most frequently, by 35.4%, while 29.4% chose Mitt Romney.
- Michele Bachmann is polling back to where she was in Winthrop’s April 2011 Poll, when the two frontrunners—Huckabee and Romney—were chosen by 35.7% of Republicans/Republican leaners definitely planning to vote in the GOP Primary. In the new Winthrop Poll, the two frontrunners (Perry and Romney) collectively hold 57.8% of the support from that group. In absolute terms this means Bachmann is back to where she started in April. In relative terms, she has slipped.
- Herman Cain’s numbers, among Republicans/Republican leaners definitely planning to vote in the SC Primary, have gone from 2.1% in the Winthrop April 2011 Poll to 7.7% in this current poll.
- Among Republicans/Republican leaners, 67.8% said they did not consider themselves members of the Tea Party movement, but 74.4% of the same group said they generally agree with the Tea Party’s principles.
- Among Republicans/Republican leaners who are definitely planning on voting in the GOP Primary in SC, 59.9% said that it was more important to select a Republican presidential nominee who matched their beliefs, while 33.5% in this category disagreed, saying it was more important to select a candidate who could beat President Obama in 2012.
- Among Republicans/Republican leaners, 74.7% feel the term “socialist” describes President Obama very well or well.
- Among Republicans/Republican leaners, almost 30% believe President Obama is a Muslim.

- **Among Republicans/Republican leaners, 36% continue to believe the president was either probably, or definitely, born in another country. Even though a long-form birth certificate for the president was produced between the Winthrop April 2011 Poll and now—showing he was born in Hawaii—just 5.2% fewer respondents now believe Obama was born outside the country than those back in April (36% now vs. 41.2 % in April).**
- **Among Republicans/Republican leaners, 62.4% identify the economy/financial crisis and jobs/unemployment as the biggest problems facing the U.S.**
- **As events were recently held in the U.S. to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the September 11th attacks, nearly three-in-four (73.3%) Republicans/Republican leaners said they believed our country's efforts to combat terrorism have made it much more safe, or somewhat more safe. But when the same group was asked if the Obama Administration has been more or less effective than the George W. Bush Administration at combating terrorism, 42.3% said they felt it has been either somewhat less effective or much less effective than the Bush Administration.**

September 2011 Winthrop Poll – Results

NOTE:

The margin of error for data using **all respondents is **+/- 2.49%**. Results using a subset of all respondents will naturally have a higher margin of error.

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as president of the United States?

	All	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Approve	40.0	82.7	6.7	30.9
Disapprove	50.7	9.5	88.6	56.5
Not Sure	8.0	6.7	4.3	11.8
Refused	1.2	1.2	0.4	0.8

Do you approve or disapprove of the way the United States Congress is handling its job?

	All	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Approve	9.6	13.7	7.8	7.3
Disapprove	83.4	78.5	84.7	87.9
Not Sure	6.3	7.6	7.1	4.0
Refused	0.7	0.2	0.4	0.8

Thinking about the current path that our nation is taking, do you think our country is on the right track or headed in the wrong direction?

	All	Democrat	Republican	Independent
Right Track	19.7	43.6	3.4	10.8
Wrong Direction	70.9	40.8	93.8	79.6
Not Sure	8.5	14.1	2.6	8.8
Refused	0.9	1.6	0.2	0.8

NOTE: The following Questions were **only** asked of those who identified themselves as **Republicans or Independents who Lean Republican** (research as demonstrated that partisan leaners often behave in a more consistently partisan manner than weak party identifiers).

The margin of error for data using all **Republicans/ Republican Leaners is **+/- 4.01%**

The margin of error for data using only those who “definitely**” plan to vote in the **2012 Republican presidential primary** is **+/- 4.57%**

What do you think is the most important problem facing the **United States of America** today?

	Republican/ Republican Leaners Only
Economy/ Economic Financial Crisis	43.0
Jobs or Unemployment	19.4
Budget Deficit or Debt	13.7

What do you think is the most important problem facing the **state of South Carolina** today?

	Republican/ Republican Leaners Only
Jobs or Unemployment	34.2
Economy/ Economic Financial Crisis	29.3
Education	7.5

Although we do not yet know who his Republican opponent will be, how likely do you think it is that Barack Obama will be re-elected president in 2012? Very Likely, Somewhat Likely, Not Very Likely, or Not At All Likely?

	Republican/ Republican Leaners Only
Very Likely	6.7
Somewhat Likely	24.8
Not Very Likely	36.5
Not at All Likely	28.4
Not Sure	3.6
Refused	0.0

I'm going to read the titles and names of 9 people who have been mentioned as possible candidates for the 2012 Republican Presidential nomination. The names are in alphabetical order. Please listen to all the names before selecting one.

Thinking ahead to the **2012** Presidential election, who would you vote for as your **FIRST CHOICE** to be the next Republican nominee for President if the primary election were held today?

	Republican/ Republican Leaners Only	Those "Definitely" planning to vote in 2012 Repub. Pres. Primary
Minnesota Representative Michele Bachmann	4.2	3.5
Former CEO of Godfather's Pizza Herman Cain	6.8	7.7
Former Speaker Newt Gingrich	4.6	5.3
Former Utah Governor Jon Huntsman	1.3	1.6
Former Alaska Governor Sarah Palin	6.3	5.8
Texas Representative Ron Paul	4.2	4.2
Texas Governor Rick Perry	29.8	30.5
Former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney	26.5	27.3
Former Pennsylvania Senator Rick Santorum	2.6	1.5
Other	0.8	0.2
Not Sure	12.1	11.1
Refused	0.9	1.2

Regardless of who you currently support, who do you think the eventual 2012 Republican presidential nominee will be? [DO NOT RE-READ OPTIONS UNLESS ASKED]

	Republican/ Republican Leaners Only	Those "Definitely" planning to vote in 2012 Repub. Pres. Primary
Minnesota Representative Michele Bachmann	4.2	3.0
Former CEO of Godfather's Pizza Herman Cain	1.2	1.3
Former Speaker Newt Gingrich	1.5	1.6
Former Utah Governor Jon Huntsman	0.3	0.2
Former Alaska Governor Sarah Palin	2.8	2.5
Texas Representative Ron Paul	2.6	2.5
Texas Governor Rick Perry	33.4	35.4
Former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney	28.0	29.4
Former Pennsylvania Senator Rick Santorum	0.1	0.0
Other	0.4	0.4
Not Sure	25.0	22.8
Refused	0.6	0.8

Which of the following comes closest to your beliefs: [ANSWERS ROTATED]

It is more important to select a Republican presidential nominee who can beat Barack Obama in 2012.

or

It is more important to select a Republican presidential nominee who matches my beliefs.

	Republican/ Republican Leaners Only	Those "Definitely" planning to vote in 2012 Repub. Pres. Primary
Beat Obama	32.0	33.5
Match Beliefs	61.3	59.9
Both [volunteered]	4.1	4.1
Not Sure	1.8	1.8
Refused	0.9	0.8

How would you rate the condition of the national economy these days? Is it very good, fairly good, fairly bad or very bad?

	Republican/ Republican Leaners Only
Very Good	1.4
Fairly Good	4.8
Fairly Bad	30.7
Very Bad	63.0
Not Sure	0.2
Refused	0.0

Right now, do you think that economic conditions in the country as a whole are getting better or getting worse?

	Republican/ Republican Leaners Only
Getting Better	13.2
Getting Worse	77.7
Not Sure	8.9
Refused	0.2

How would you rate the condition of the economy of South Carolina these days? Is it very good, fairly good, fairly bad or very bad?

	Republican/ Republican Leaners Only
Very Good	0.9
Fairly Good	26.9
Fairly Bad	48.2
Very Bad	21.2
Not Sure	2.3
Refused	0.5

Right now, do you think that economic conditions in South Carolina are getting better or getting worse?

	Republican/ Republican Leaners Only
Getting Better	33.9
Getting Worse	50.8
Not Sure	14.8
Refused	0.6

Right now, do you believe that economic conditions in South Carolina are better than those of the nation as a whole, worse than those of the nation as a whole, or about the same as those of the nation as a whole?

	Republican/ Republican Leaners Only
Better	24.8
Worse	15.4
Same	57.4
Not Sure	2.2
Refused	0.2

How would you rate your financial situation today? As excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

	Republican/ Republican Leaners Only
Excellent	8.7
Good	48.3
Only Fair	32.1
Poor	9.3
Not Sure	0.4
Refused	1.1

Right now, do you think that your financial situation as a whole is getting better or getting worse?

	Republican/ Republican Leaners Only
Getting Better	34.4
Getting Worse	47.9
Not Sure	16.2
Refused	1.6

In the ten years since the September 11th attacks, do you believe America's efforts to combat terrorism have made the country more safe, less safe, or neither more nor less safe?

[CALLER: if "more safe," or "less safe" ask "much or somewhat"]

	Republican/ Republican Leaners Only
Much More Safe	31.3
Somewhat More Safe	42.0
Neither More Nor Less Safe	20.3
Somewhat Less Safe	2.9
Much Less Safe	1.9
Don't Know	1.5
Refused	0.1

As it works to combat terrorism, do you think the U.S. government is or is not doing enough to protect the rights and freedoms of U.S. citizens?

	Republican/ Republican Leaners Only
IS Doing Enough	60.8
Is NOT Doing Enough	32.3
Don't Know	6.3
Refused	0.6

Do you think it is sometimes necessary for the government to sacrifice some rights and freedoms to fight terrorism, or is it never necessary to sacrifice rights and freedoms to prevent terrorism?

	Republican/ Republican Leaners Only
SOMETIMES Necessary	66.2
NEVER Necessary	26.8
Don't Know	6.0
Refused	1.0

When it comes to combating terrorism, do you feel the Obama administration has been more effective, less effective, or about equally effective to the former Bush administration?

[CALLER: if “more effective,” or “less effective” ask “much or somewhat”]

	Republican/ Republican Leaners Only
Much More Effective	2.7
Somewhat More Effective	1.6
Equally Effective	50.6
Somewhat Less Effective	19.0
Much Less Effective	23.3
Don't Know	1.9
Refused	0.9

Now, I am going to read you a list of words and phrases which people use to describe political figures. For each word or phrase, please tell me whether it describes Barack Obama Very Well, Well, Not Too Well, or Not Well At All.

The first term is “caring” Would you say that term describes Barack Obama Very Well, Well, Not Too Well, or Not Well At All?

	Republican/ Republican Leaners Only
Very Well	8.2
Well	32.1
Not Too Well	32.6
Not Well at All	22.9
Not Sure	2.8
Refused	1.4

The next term is “honest.” Would you say that term describes Barack Obama Very Well, Well, Not Too Well, or Not Well At All?

	Republican/ Republican Leaners Only
Very Well	5.0
Well	17.6
Not Too Well	36.8
Not Well at All	36.0
Not Sure	3.2
Refused	1.3

The next term is “intelligent.” Would you say that term describes Barack Obama Very Well, Well, Not Too Well, or Not Well At All?

	Republican/ Republican Leaners Only
Very Well	36.1
Well	42.2
Not Too Well	13.5
Not Well at All	8.2
Not Sure	0.0
Refused	0.0

The next term is “socialist.” Would you say that term describes Barack Obama Very Well, Well, Not Too Well, or Not Well At All?

	Republican/ Republican Leaners Only
Very Well	46.8
Well	27.9
Not Too Well	12.7
Not Well at All	5.5
Not Sure	6.1
Refused	1.0

Now, thinking about Barack Obama’s religious beliefs... Do you happen to know what Barack Obama’s religion is? Is he Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, atheist, agnostic, or something else?

	Republican/ Republican Leaners Only
Christian	33.8
Jewish	0.0
Muslim	29.5
Buddhist	0.5
Hindu	0.6
Atheist	0.8
Agnostic	2.1
Something Else/ Multiple	17.5
Refused	15.3

Do you think Barack Obama was definitely born in the United States, probably born in the United States, probably born in another country, or definitely born in another country?

	Republican/ Republican Leaners Only	Repub & Leaners from April Poll – BEFORE long form birth certificate was released
Definitely Born in the US	23.9	16.5
Probably Born in the US	29.3	28.1
Probably Born in Another Country	23.6	25.3
Definitely Born in Another Country	12.4	15.9
Not Sure	9.5	13.5
Refused	1.4	0.7

Do you approve or disapprove of the way Nikki Haley is handling her job as governor of the South Carolina?

	Republican/ Republican Leaners Only
Approve	69.3
Disapprove	18.2
Not Sure	12.4
Refused	0.2

Whether you approve or disapprove of her overall performance, I'd like for you to think about your expectations for Nikki Haley's performance as governor of South Carolina. Since her inauguration as governor in early January of this year, would you say that her performance has exceeded your expectations, met your expectations, or failed to meet your expectations?

	Republican/ Republican Leaners Only
Greatly Exceeded Expectations	4.2
Somewhat Exceeded Expectations	7.0
Met Expectations	59.5
Somewhat Failed to Meet Expectations	16.2
Greatly Failed to Meet Expectations	7.2
Not Sure	5.7
Refused	0.2

[NOTE: This question was ONLY asked of Protestants – Protestants made up 74.6% of the Republican/Leaner population] Would you describe yourself as a “born again” or evangelical Christian?

	Republican/ Republican Leaners Only
Yes	67.2
No	26.0
Not Sure	4.5
Refused	2.2

[NOTE: Most research on religion in America does not classify non-Protestant individuals as Evangelicals. This data may be understood to mean that 67.2% of Protestant Republicans/Leaners are Evangelicals, NOT that 67.2% of all Republicans/Leaners are Evangelicals]

Would you consider yourself a **MEMBER** of the **Tea Party Movement**?

	Republican/ Republican Leaners Only
Yes	27.8
No	67.8
Not Sure	4.5
Refused	0.0

Regardless of whether you consider yourself a member of the Tea Party movement or not, would you say that you generally agree with the principles of the Tea Party movement or generally disagree with the principles of the Tea Party movement?

	Republican/ Republican Leaners Only
Agree	74.4
Disagree	9.7
Neither Agree nor Disagree [volunteered]	7.3
Not Sure	8.0
Refused	0.7

EXCLUSIVE QUESTIONS FOR THE STATE

[ONLY ASKED OF THOSE CURRENTLY RECEIVING SOCIAL SECURITY OR MEDICARE]

Would you be willing to have your current Social Security or Medicare benefits reduced in order to address national budget concerns?

	Republican/ Republican Leaners Only
Yes	24.3
No	73.2
Not Sure	1.9
Refused	0.6

[ONLY ASKED OF THOSE NOT CURRENTLY RECEIVING SOCIAL SECURITY OR MEDICARE] Would you be willing to have your future Social Security or Medicare benefits reduced in order to address national budget concerns?

	Republican/ Republican Leaners Only
Yes	37.1
No	53.6
Not Sure	8.8
Refused	0.5

[ONLY ASKED OF THOSE NOT CURRENTLY RECEIVING SOCIAL SECURITY OR MEDICARE] Would you be willing to have the retirement age at which you can receive full Social Security or Medicare benefits raised to 70 years old in order to address national budget concerns?

	Republican/ Republican Leaners Only
Yes	43.0
No	52.9
Not Sure	3.8
Refused	0.3

Would you be willing to cut defense spending in order to address national budget concerns?

	Republican/ Republican Leaners Only
Yes	37.5
No	56.6
Not Sure	5.6
Refused	0.2

Do you think it is possible to address national budget concerns without any tax increases on any groups, or would some tax increases be required to address national budget concerns?

	Republican/ Republican Leaners Only
Possible to Do Without Tax Increase	45.3
NOT Possible to Do Without Tax Increase	46.6
Not Sure	7.4
Refused	0.7

Full Methodology Statement

The September 2011 Winthrop Poll interviewed 1552 registered voters from South Carolina. Results which use all respondents have a **margin of error of +/- 2.49%** at the 95% confidence level. Reported results using a subset of the entire sample will naturally have a higher margin of error.

The majority of questions, however, were **only** asked of Republicans and Independents who lean Republican (previous research has shown that leaners often behave in a more consistently partisan manner than weak party identifiers). These results come from 596 Republicans and Republican leaners in SC who are also registered to vote and have a **margin of error of +/- 4.01%** at the 95% confidence level. Reported results using a subset of the entire sample will naturally have a higher margin of error.

The survey was in the field from September 12-18, 2011. Phone calls were made during weekday evenings, all day Saturday, and Sunday afternoon and evening. Weekday daytime calls are generally not made to avoid oversampling those who are more likely to be at home during the day (e.g. retirees, stay-at-home-moms, etc.). Weekday daytime calls are generally only made when a respondent has specifically requested a daytime call back to complete the survey. Conducting weekend calls is important to avoid systematically excluding certain populations (such as those who may work 2nd or 3rd shift during the week).

The survey used (1) Sample drawn from lists of registered voters in SC, also called Registration Based Sample (RBS), (2) Random Digit Dialing (RDD), and (3) wireless phone number sampling. The registered voter sample was purchased from Aristotle/Voter Lists Online. However, because these lists have a natural lag of six or so months – AND since SC does not collect and update phone information -- ONLY using Registration Based Sample would produce a systematic bias. RDD and wireless samples are crucial to ensure no adult in the geographical area of interest is systematically excluded from the sample. Both the RDD sample and the wireless sample were purchased from Survey Sampling International (SSI). A further explanation of RDD methodology, with descriptions taken from SSI's website, may be found below.

Phone numbers selected for the survey were re-dialed five or more times in an attempt to reach a respondent. Once a household was reached, we also employed procedures to randomize within households.

Additionally, we:

(1) purge RDD and wireless against registered voter sample (RBS) before going into the field to ensure that no number can appear in multiple samples and, therefore, have a higher probability of being selected

(2) Screen RDD and wireless sample for registration status and confirm with respondents selected from the RBS sample that they are, in fact, registered to vote

(3) Screen the wireless sample for **cell-only** status since individuals who have a cell phone and a land line already have an established probability of appearing in either the RDD or RBS sample

(4) weight responses from RDD and wireless samples by the proportion of registered voters on the original voter list who had no phone number listed and weight the responses from the registered voter sample (RBS) by the proportion of registered voters who did have a phone number available from the registered voter list.

and

(5) Weight responses based on sex, age, and race according to the known population of registered voters.

These methods are consistent with recommendations from

Mitofsky, W., Bloom J., Lenski, J., Dingman, S., & Agiesta, J. (2005). "A dual frame RDD/registration-based sample design: Lessons from Oregon's 2004 National Election Pool Survey." *Proceedings of the Survey Research Methods Section of the American Statistical Association*, Alexandria, VA, 3929–36)

Computerized autodialers were not used in order to ensure the survey of wireless phones complied with the Telephone Consumers Protection Act and all FCC rules regarding contacting wireless telephones.

The Winthrop Poll is paid for by Winthrop University with additional support from The West Forum on Politics and Policy at Winthrop University.

**Additional Explanation of RDD Methodology :
(with descriptions taken from SSI website)**

Samples are generated using a database of "working blocks." A block (also known as a 100-bank or a bank) is a set of 100 contiguous numbers identified by the first two digits of the last four digits of a telephone number. For example, in the telephone number 203-567-7200, "72" is the block. A block is termed to be working if some specified number of listed telephone numbers are found in that block.

Samples of random numbers distributed across all eligible blocks in proportion to their density of listed telephone households are selected. All blocks within a county are organized in ascending order by area code, exchange, and block number. Once the quota has been allocated to all counties in the frame, a sampling interval is calculated by summing the number of listed residential numbers in eligible blocks within the county and dividing that sum by the number of sampling points assigned to the county. From a random start between zero and the sampling interval, blocks are systematically selected in proportion to their density of listed households. Once a block has been selected, a two-digit number is systematically selected in the range 00-99 and is appended to the exchange and block to form a 10-digit telephone number.