

## **February 2014 Winthrop Poll of Likely GOP Primary Voters**

**--PRESS RELEASE--**

**Results of the Latest Winthrop Poll are in:**

**Incumbent U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham Has Support of 45% of Likely Republican Primary Voters, Though 35% Remain Undecided**

**Challengers to U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham Receive Single-Digit Support**

**Nearly 73% Approve of U.S. Sen. Tim Scott's Performance**

**Likely Republican Voters Object to Children Born Out of Marriage, 63% - One in Five Support Marijuana Usage**

**Interracial Marriage is Acceptable by Almost  $\frac{3}{4}$  of GOP Likely Voters**

**President Obama's Disapproval Rating By GOP Voters is at 93%**

**Nine Out of 10 likely GOP Voters Disapprove of Congress**

**S.C. Gov. Haley Viewed Positively By 78% of Likely GOP Voters**

**ROCK HILL, S.C. - The results of the latest Winthrop Poll of 901 likely Republican primary voters in South Carolina are in. The survey was in the field from Feb. 16-23, 2014.**

**After weights (for sex, age, and race) have been applied, results which use all respondents have a margin of error of approximately +/- 3.2% at the 95% confidence level. Results that use less than the full sample will naturally have a higher margin of error.**

**While U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham's level of support is 45%, Poll Director Scott Huffmon noted Graham is not in "real trouble" simply because his share is below the 50% run-off threshold. The vast majority of undecided could be distributed to the other candidates and, assuming Graham gets some share, it could easily be enough to put him over 50%, the political science professor noted.**

**However, Huffmon said, the fact that S.C.'s senior senator does not have significantly higher than the threshold means this race is not "completely safe" for him, either. While his support among those who approve of the Tea Party is roughly 25% lower than his support among the likely GOP primary voters as a whole, Graham still garners roughly a third of their support. While Tea Party approving voters like Graham much less than all likely voters, it is simply not accurate to say all Tea Party friendly voters are aligned against him.**

**The poll also gauged the support of Graham's challengers, which ranges from 2.9 to 8.5 %: S.C. Sen. Lee Bright of Spartanburg, Easley businessman Richard Cash, Orangeburg attorney Bill Connor and Charleston public relations executive Nancy Mace. Det Bowers announced he wanted to run and has filed paperwork with the FEC which would allow him to raise money, but by the time this survey was programmed, he had not raised any**

money and, therefore, was not included in the list of candidates.

Bright's support increases by almost 62% when looking at Tea Party approving likely voters, as opposed to all likely voters. Huffmon said this is clearly a place where support for Bright, and opposition to Graham, can be mined. The other candidates likely suffer from a lack of statewide name recognition, a situation that may begin to change as the official filing date - March 16 - approaches. Finally, if not all the candidates who have currently announced choose to actually file, Huffmon said, these numbers could shift.

This Winthrop Poll, which is partially underwritten by the John C. West Forum at Winthrop, contains a significant number of social questions. The October 2013 Winthrop Poll asked similar questions of all South Carolinians, while this February Winthrop Poll contains the opinions of just likely GOP primary voters.

For additional information on methodology, see this link.

<http://www.winthrop.edu/winthroppoll/default.aspx?id=9802>

For the questions and responses, see this link.

<http://www.winthrop.edu/winthroppoll/default.aspx?id=9804>

Other Winthrop Poll findings include:

- Respondents have very negative feelings toward President Barack Obama, 65%; and positive or somewhat positive views toward U.S. House Majority Leader John Boehner, 37%, and U.S. Sen. Tim Scott, R-SC, 69%. In this red state, the S.C. Republican Party is held in higher esteem than the National Republican Party. Former U.S. Sen. Jim DeMint, who resigned early and is now the head of the policy organization, the Heritage Foundation, received a 73% positive or somewhat positive reaction.
- More than half of the likely GOP voters have good feelings toward the Tea Party, overwhelmingly positive feelings regarding Christians (86%), but are less favorable to Jews (62%) and far less for Muslims (12%).
- Congress is poorly regarded by nearly 90% of the likely GOP voters, while President Obama has a little higher disapproval rating at 93%.
- S.C. Gov. Nikki Haley continues to tick up in approval ratings. GOP likely voters gave Haley high marks with a 78% approval rating.
- Regarding the S.C. General Assembly, 53% of respondents gave the lawmakers a thumbs up. Nearly 2 in 10 were not sure.
- Support for the Tea Party movement among the GOP voters is at 57%, while a quarter of respondents aren't familiar enough with the group to have an opinion. 12% said they considered themselves a Tea Party member (see Interpretation Note under T9).
- Nearly every respondent (95%) said our nation is headed in the wrong direction, although 67% think the Palmetto State is on the right track.
- Only 20% of the likely GOP voters thought presidential candidate Newt Gingrich could have beaten the incumbent Barack Obama if Gingrich had won the Republican

presidential nomination. South Carolina picked Gingrich in the GOP primary over eventual nominee Mitt Romney.

- Sixty-two % of respondents said they felt that generations of slavery and discrimination do NOT make it difficult for blacks to work their way out of the lower class.

- Poll respondents for this February 2014 poll were split almost evenly between men and women. Nearly 80% of respondents are older than 45, overwhelmingly white (95%), Protestant (84%) who pray several times a day (60%) and a majority who describe themselves as Evangelical or “born again.” 71% of Protestant respondents described themselves as Evangelical or “born again.”

- Likely GOP voters are more conservative than S.C.'s general population. In the October 2013 Winthrop Poll, nearly half of S.C. residents said having a child without being married is acceptable; 83% said interracial marriage between whites and blacks is acceptable, though more blacks agreed than whites; and around 42% said smoking marijuana by adults was acceptable. In this February 2014 Winthrop Poll, 63% likely GOP voters found it unacceptable to have children out of wedlock; 73% said marriage between whites and blacks was acceptable; and only 22% said adults smoking marijuana was acceptable.

For more information or to set up an interview with Poll Director Scott Huffmon, contact Judy Longshaw, news and media services manager, at [803/323-2404](tel:8033232404) or e-mail her at [longshawj@winthrop.edu](mailto:longshawj@winthrop.edu).

--END PRESS RELEASE--

## RESULTS

**Demographics:** These demographics very closely reflect the demographics for the GOP primary voters in 2010, the last non-presidential year GOP primary, and closely resemble the demographics for the voters in the 2012 presidential primary

<b>Sex</b>	
Male	50.2
Female	49.8
<b>Age</b>	
18-24	1.6
25-44	19.8
45-64	43.5
65+	32.7
Refused	2.4
<b>Race</b> (these are the only racial destinations noted by the SC State Election Commission)	
White	95.3
Non-white	3.8
Refused	0.9

NUMBERS MAY NOT SUM TO 100 DUE TO ROUNDING

**T1** Do you approve or disapprove of the way **Barack Obama** is handling his job as President of the United States?

Approve	4.8
Disapprove	92.9
Don't Know	1.6
Refused	0.6

**T2** Do you approve or disapprove of the way **Congress** is handling its job?

Approve	5.4
Disapprove	89.6
Don't Know	4.2
Refused	0.8

**T3** Do you approve or disapprove of the way **Nikki Haley** is handling her job as Governor of South Carolina?

Approve	78.3
Disapprove	11.3
Don't Know	9.4
Refused	1.0

**T4** Do you approve or disapprove of the way **the South Carolina State Legislature** is handling its job?

Approve	52.6
Disapprove	27.0
Don't Know	18.7
Refused	1.6

**T5** Do you approve or disapprove of the way **Tim Scott** is handling his job as a United States Senator for South Carolina?

Approve	72.8
Disapprove	6.5
Don't Know	19.3
Refused	1.4

**T6** If the **Republican Party Primary** election for **United States Senate** were held today would you vote for:  
[NOTE: names were rotated during the survey]

	All Respondents	Those who APPROVE of Tea Party (57.4% of respondents)
Lee Bright	8.5	13.7
Richard Cash	2.9	4.3
Bill Connor	3.5	4.5

Lindsey Graham	45.0	33.9
Nancy Mace	3.7	3.8
Not sure/Undecided	34.9	39.4
Refused	1.6	0.4

INTERPRETATION NOTE: There is no simple headline for this data. Lindsey Graham is not “in real trouble” simply because his share is below the 50% run-off threshold. The vast majority of undecided could be distributed to the other candidates and, assuming Graham gets some share, it could easily be enough to put him over 50%. However, the fact that Lindsey Graham does not have significantly higher than the threshold means this race is not “completely safe” for him, either. While his support among those who approve of the Tea Party is roughly 25% lower than his support among the likely GOP primary voters as a whole, he still garners roughly a third of their support. While Tea Party approving voters like Lindsey Graham much less than all likely voters, it is simply not accurate to say all Tea Party friendly voters are aligned against him. Lee Bright’s support increases by almost 62% when you look at Tea Party approving likely voters as opposed to all likely voters. This is clearly a place where support for him, and opposition to Graham, can be mined. The other candidates likely suffer from a lack of statewide name recognition, a situation that may begin to change as we approach the official date when filing for the primary begins (March 16, 2014). Det Bowers announced he wanted to run and has filed paperwork with the FEC which would allow him to raise money, but by the time this survey was programmed, he had not raised any money and, therefore, was not included in the list of candidates. Finally, if not all the candidates who have currently announced choose to actually file with the S.C. State Election Commission, these numbers could shift. **TL;DR version: Headlines EITHER of “Graham in real trouble” or “Graham completely safe” will be inaccurate**

**T7** Now I'm going to read you the names of several public figures and groups. I'd like you to rate your feelings toward each one as very positive, somewhat positive, neutral, somewhat negative, or very negative. If you don't know the name, please just say so

[NOTE: the following list was randomized for each respondent]

	Very Positive	Somewhat Positive	Neutral	Somewhat Negative	Very Negative	Not Sure	Refused
Barack Obama	1.7	3.1	7.1	22.1	64.9	0.4	0.6
John Boehner	5.9	31.5	21.7	18.5	8.0	13.7	0.8
Tim Scott	44.7	24.3	11.8	2.8	0.8	14.6	1.1
The National Republican Party	9.9	43.2	24.1	15.4	4.3	2.5	0.6
The SC Republican Party	19.8	46.9	16.3	9.9	2.2	4.3	0.6
Lindsey Graham	24.5	34.9	12.3	15.2	11.0	1.6	0.5
Nikki Haley	41.7	41.2	7.7	5.0	2.9	1.1	0.3
Jim DeMint	37.6	35.0	12.2	6.0	3.5	5.4	0.3
The Tea Party Movement	23.7	31.9	20.2	10.3	6.2	6.6	1.1
Christians	71.2	15.1	7.8	0.4	0.5	3.5	1.5
Muslims	3.3	8.2	30.5	19.4	26.9	8.3	3.3
Jews	37.9	23.8	24.5	1.7	0.2	9.6	2.3

**T8** In general, would you say you approve or disapprove of the Tea Party movement or are you not familiar enough with the Tea Party movement to have an opinion?

Approve	57.4
Disapprove	15.1

Not Sure/Not familiar enough to have opinion	26.1
Refused	1.3

**T9** Would you consider yourself a **MEMBER** of the **Tea Party Movement**?

Yes	12.4
No	82.6
Not Sure	4.1
Refused	0.9

INTERPRETATION NOTE: We see from T8 that a solid majority of likely GOP voters are supportive of the Tea Party. Is 12.4% of likely GOP primary voters who say they are fully “members” of the Tea Party a small number? No. A little math will show why. 582,547 people voted in the 2012 GOP presidential primary. 12.4% of that number is 72,236. Using the more conservative turnout from the 2010 GOP primary of 474,640, 12.4% would be 58,855. If this number were somehow unnaturally spread out evenly across all counties, this would be 1,279 members, not just people who approve of the movement, but actual MEMBERS, per county. I doubt even the most robust official Tea Party organizations regularly boast that many attendees. However, not everyone can attend every meeting. The church where I am a member has over 900 members on the books, but average Sunday attendance is only a little over 300. Using the 1/3 rule, we might expect 426 attendees at each meeting of our hypothetically evenly spread out Tea Party Membership. I suspect, other than special meetings or conventions, most regular meetings do not have this many attendees. So 12.4% is not small and (using 2010 turnout) is, in fact, -- at an estimated 58,855, a significant number. Finally, if the Tea Party is “only” (a word that leads to inaccurate conclusions) 12.4%, why do they yield so much power? The short answer is through their organization. Since T8 showed that a majority of Republicans approve of the Tea Party, if a candidate raises the ire of this passionate 12.4%, they will be punished electorally by all those who approve of that 12.4%. The more organized that 12.4% is, the more they can make this a reality.

**T10** I'm going to read a couple of things that some people do. For each, thinking about your own values and morals, I'd like you to tell me whether you think it is acceptable or unacceptable.

The first is having a child without being married.

	October 2013 (General Population)	February 2014 (Likely 2014 GOP Primary Voters)
Strongly Acceptable	22.0	9.4
Somewhat Acceptable	27.8	21.3
Somewhat Unacceptable	19.2	23.2
Strongly Unacceptable	25.6	39.9
Don't Know/ Not Sure	3.7	3.6
Refused	1.7	2.6

**T11** Marriages between blacks and whites.

	October 2013 (General Population)	February 2014 (Likely 2014 GOP Primary Voters)
Strongly Acceptable	61.4	39.1
Somewhat Acceptable	21.7	33.8

Somewhat Unacceptable	5.3	7.7
Strongly Unacceptable	8.8	13.0
Don't Know/ Not Sure	2.0	5.2
Refused	0.8	1.2

**T12** Adults smoking marijuana.

	October 2013 (General Population)	February 2014 (Likely 2014 GOP Primary Voters)
Strongly Acceptable	19.6	6.8
Somewhat Acceptable	22.7	14.7
Somewhat Unacceptable	13.8	13.7
Strongly Unacceptable	40.8	60.0
Don't Know/ Not Sure	2.5	4.4
Refused	0.7	0.4

**T13** 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?

Right Track	3.2
Wrong Direction	95.0
Not sure/Refused	1.7

**T14** Thinking about the current path that the state of South Carolina is taking, do you think South Carolina is on the right track or headed in the wrong direction?

Right Track	67.4
Wrong Direction	19.9
Not sure/Refused	12.7

**T15** Do you feel that generations of slavery and discrimination do or do not make it difficult for Blacks to work their way out of the lower class?

Strongly DO make it difficult	7.0
Somewhat DO make it difficult	11.8
Somewhat do NOT make it difficult	12.9
Strongly do NOT make it difficult	61.6
Don't Know/ Not Sure	4.9
Refused	1.7

**T16** If Newt Gingrich had won the Republican Presidential Nomination in 2012, do you think he could have beaten Barack Obama in the 2012 presidential election?

Yes	20.2
No	62.6
Not Sure	16.4
Refused	0.7

**T17** Aside from weddings and funerals, how often do you attend religious services...

More than once a week	32.8
Once a week	35.3
Once or twice a month	11.5
A few times a year	11.3
Seldom	5.8
Never	2.6
Don't know/Refused	0.7

**T18** How important would you say religion is in your own life: Very important, Fairly important, or Not very important?

Very Important	83.7
Fairly Important	12.5
Not Very Important	3.4
Don't Know/ Refused	0.3

**T19** What is your present religion, if any?

Protestant	83.8
Roman Catholic	7.8
Jewish	0.5
Mormon	1.2
Jehovah's Witness	0.1
Agnostic	0.6
Something Else	3.8
Nothing in particular	1.6
Refused	0.5

**T20** Would you describe yourself as a "born again" or Evangelical Christian, or not?

[NOTE: This question is ONLY asked of those who report their religion as Protestant (or one of the Protestant denominations)]

	Percent of ALL GOP Likely Primary Voters	Among Protestants ONLY
Yes	59.2	71.3
No	--	25.7
Not Sure	--	2.5
Refused	--	0.5

**T21** People practice their religion in different ways. Outside of attending religious services, do you pray several times a day, once a day, a few times a week, once a week, a few times a month, seldom, or never?

Several times a day	59.7
Once a day	21.2
A few times a week	8.9



Once a week	2.1
Once a month	2.9
Seldom	2.1
Never	1.6
Refused	1.4

**T22** Lately there has been a lot of discussion about states passing photo ID laws as a requirement for voting. South Carolina now requires voters to show a photo ID prior to voting. What best describes your opinion of this type of law? [NOTE: options rotated]

It is mainly used to prevent fraud when people vote at the polls	94.3
It is mainly used to make it harder for some groups to vote	3.8
Don't Know/ Not Sure	1.7
Refused	0.2

**T23** Which comes closest to your view about illegal immigrants who are currently living in the United States? They should be allowed to stay in the United States and to eventually apply for U.S. citizenship. OR They should be allowed to remain in the United States, but not be allowed to apply for U.S. citizenship. OR They should be required to leave the U.S. OR you don't know enough to say. (with crosstab by SC GOP Senate primary vote)

	All	Voting for Graham	Voting for Others	Undecided
Stay, apply for citizenship	45.0	53.2	30.8	42.5
Remain, not apply for citizenship	8.1	7.8	10.5	7.9
Be required to leave	32.3	25.4	47.7	34.0
Don't know enough to say	11.6	12.0	9.9	11.9
Refused	3.0	1.7	1.2	3.8

**T24** How much would you say Senator Tim Scott shares the values and interests of people like you?

A lot	48.8
Some	27.2
Not too much	3.7
Not at all	2.3
Not Sure/ Don't Know	16.8
Refused	1.1

**T25** How much would you say Senator Tim Scott shares the values and interests of black people in this state?

A lot	37.1
Some	28.5
Not too much	3.6
Not at all	1.0
Not Sure/ Don't Know	27.8

Refused	2.0
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**T26** Has Tim Scott's appointment as a U.S. Senator led to better race relations in South Carolina, worse race relations, or hasn't it made a difference?

Better	23.6
Worse	1.8
Not made a difference	45.7
Not Sure/ Don't Know	27.8
Refused	1.1