

ROCK HILL, SOUTH CAROLINA — The latest [Winthrop Poll](#) results show that 47% of South Carolina residents disapprove of how President Donald Trump is handling the nation's top job, while 44% approve. His approval numbers in South Carolina are higher than his current national approval rating.

Within his own party, the **45th president** has support from 77% of residents who are Republican or lean towards the GOP. Donald Trump received nearly 55% of the November presidential votes cast in South Carolina.

Since his January inauguration, Trump has stirred up varying emotions across the country.

Winthrop Poll respondents were given a range of adjectives to describe Trump, the results of which reflect a wide spectrum. Among the findings were these observations:

- More than three-quarters of South Carolina Republicans said they are proud of the president, said he's confident, and stands up for people like them.
- More than four-fifths of African Americans in SC said the word "safe" inaccurately described how Trump made them feel. Nearly 80% of them disapprove of how Trump is handling his job.
- Only 39% of residents describe Trump as thoughtful.

SC GOVERNOR HENRY MCMASTER AND OTHERS

S.C. Governor Henry McMaster's approval rating in South Carolina is 44% but more than a 1/3 of residents said that they don't know whether they approve or disapprove of him. His approval rating is 28 points higher than his disapproval rating. Elected as the lieutenant governor, McMaster took over as governor on Jan. 24 after Trump tapped S.C. Governor Nikki Haley to be the United Nations ambassador.

Meanwhile, **Congress** received a stamp of approval from one-quarter of respondents and the **S.C. General Assembly** got a nod from 45% of those polled. **U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham** has a 46% disapproval rating. The state's junior senator, **U.S. Sen. Tim Scott**, who is more highly rated among the Republican base, has a 55% approval rating among the general population.

When asked on a scale from 0 ("cool") to 100 ("warm"), or 50 (neither warm nor cold), how they felt about people, movements or symbols, respondents' average "feeling thermometer" scores were:

Donald Trump, 48
Barack Obama, 61
Muslims, 59
Hispanics, 71
Refugees coming to America from other countries, 51
Whites or Caucasians, 75
Blacks or African Americans, 78
The Confederate flag, 41
The Police, 74
Black Lives Matter movement, 48

The average feeling thermometer score for each item could vary widely by subgroup of respondents.

ECONOMY

More than half of South Carolina residents (59%) said **our country's economy** is very good or fairly good, and a majority believes this country's conditions as a whole are getting better. Two out of three residents think **South Carolina** is moving in a positive direction, and 70% think the condition of the state's economy is either very or fairly good.

Nearly 60% described their own financial situation as good or excellent.

S.C. residents said **immigration** is the **most important problem facing the United States**, followed by the economy, racism, Donald Trump, and political division. Those surveyed said the most important issues facing the **Palmetto State** are **roads/bridges/infrastructure**, jobs or unemployment, education, economy, and racism.

RACIAL ISSUES

Half of **S.C. African American respondents** said their race contributes to their personal identity. About 40% of African Americans rated the country's race relations as poor, while 57% of whites rated it as either good or only fair. In the Palmetto State, African Americans said that things were a bit better, as 37% rated state race relations as poor, while three-fourths of whites rated it as excellent, good or only fair.

Fewer than half of African American residents (49%) said they were discriminated in the past year because of their race or ethnicity, while only 24% of white residents felt the same way. A majority of both groups, particularly blacks (92%) feel that it is important for people of their race to work together to change laws that are unfair to their race or ethnicity. Sixty percent of blacks said they felt ignored on certain issues because of their race.

MISCELLANEOUS ISSUES

The **Winthrop Poll** looked at a series of other issues that Palmetto State residents may be concerned about:

Four out of five residents favored making it a crime to post online or share **sexually explicit pictures** without the expressed consent of those in the pictures.

Eighty-one percent of respondents favored requiring employers to make **reasonable accommodations for pregnant employees** unless the employer could demonstrate that the accommodation imposed an undue hardship on the business.

Nearly 70% favored requiring schools to base their curriculum on reproductive health solely on **evidence-based research**, where "evidence-based" means "programs or interventions supported by credible scientific studies that find associated decreases in risk behaviors or adverse health outcomes." Sixty-three percent favored an amendment to the S.C. Constitution to create an **Independent**

Reapportionment Commission that would be in charge of redrawing voter district lines when the population changes.

More than 80% approved of the death penalty for **Dylann Roof**, the young man who entered the historically black Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston and shot ten members who were gathered for Bible study in June 2015. Nine of them died. Roof received the death penalty in January.

METHODOLOGY

For this **latest Winthrop Poll**, callers surveyed 703 South Carolina residents by landline and cell phones between Feb.12-21. Results which use all respondents have a margin of error margin of error of approximately +/- 3.7% at the 95% confidence level. Subgroups have higher margins of error. Margins of error are based on weighted sample size.

POLL FUNDING AND CONTACT INFORMATION

The **Winthrop Poll** is paid for by Winthrop University with additional support from [The West Forum on Politics and Policy](#) at Winthrop University. For additional information, or to set up an interview with [Poll Director Scott Huffmon](#), please contact **Judy Longshaw** at longshawj@winthrop.edu or 803/323-2404 (office) or 803/984-0586 (cell).