

November 28, 2011

Anzalone Liszt Research

National Polling Summary

Friends,

Below you will find the weekly Anzalone Liszt Research National Polling Summary, which provides a pollster's take on data and trends that affect political campaigns.

Be it for allegations of sexual harassment or general boredom (or ALR's success at dooming Republican frontrunners by featuring them in our newsletter), Republican primary voters appear to have tossed Herman Cain aside and have jumped on the Newt bandwagon. Over the last few weeks, former House Speaker Newt Gingrich has surged into the lead in several Republican primary polls, presumably forcing Mitt Romney to order yet another voodoo doll. Below, we explore the recent polling on Gingrich's rise and public perceptions of him.

Following our analysis are additional news items and data we thought you'd enjoy.

John Anzalone and Jeff Liszt

STORY THIS WEEK: NEWTletter

In just three weeks, Republican primary voters have shifted their affections from Herman Cain to former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, making him the seventh GOP frontrunner since the campaign began. Five polls out in the last two weeks confirm that Gingrich and Romney are now vying for frontrunner status. A [CNN/ORC poll](#) out on November 20 shows Gingrich leading the field with 24% of the vote, with Romney at 20% and Cain slipping behind to 17%. Just one month ago, Romney and Cain were running even, 26% - 25%, with Gingrich in a distant 5th at 8%. A recent [Public Policy Polling survey](#) confirms this, giving Gingrich 28%, followed by Cain at 25% and Romney at just 18%. This is a 13-point bump for Gingrich in just a month, while Cain and Romney have fallen 5 and 4 points respectively. Among Tea Party voters, Cain narrowly leads Gingrich 33% - 31%, with Romney a distant 11%.

[Fox News's](#) and Gallup's polling shows the race narrower, putting the former Speaker and former Massachusetts Governor in a virtual tie at 23% - 22% according to [Fox](#), with Gingrich's vote share nearly doubled from just three weeks ago (when he was at 12%). [Gallup's poll](#) among Republicans finds 20% for Gingrich and 19% for Romney.

In a two-way race, Gingrich consolidates many of Cain and others' voters: A [Quinnipiac poll](#) conducted Nov 14-20 finds Gingrich's lead Romney 49% - 39%.

Gingrich's recent surge has extended beyond national polling into the early primary states. An [American Research Group poll](#) among Iowa caucus-goers finds that Gingrich leads with 27% to Romney's 20%, followed by Ron Paul at 16%. In [South Carolina](#), Gingrich now earns 31% of the vote, followed by Cain and Romney tied for second with 17% and 16%. Romney holds onto his lead in New Hampshire according to [Suffolk University polling](#), with 41% of the vote, however Gingrich is now tied with Paul for second with 14% each.

The race also remains fluid, as Republican voters are still not locked in on their choice. In the [CNN/ORC poll](#), 67% say that they still may change their mind before the primary, an increase from 61% a few weeks ago. [Fox News](#) finds a similar trend with 61% saying they still may change their mind. Beyond this, no prospective Republican candidate has yet captured the enthusiasm of their base. According to [CNN](#), only 29% of GOP voters say they would feel enthusiastic if Newt Gingrich won the nomination. In fact, Rick Perry is the only candidate thus far to peak over 30% of voters who would be enthusiastic if he won the nomination (with 35% back in September).

Improvement in Personal Standing

Along with his rise in the polls, Newt Gingrich's personal standing has improved over the last few weeks. [Gallup](#) finds that Gingrich now leads the Republican field in his positive intensity score (a calculation based on name identification and intensity of a candidate's favorability), and GOP voters give [him](#) a 44% favorable – 20% unfavorable rating. [PPP](#) finds his standing at stronger among primary voters, at 68% fav – 23% unfav, including an 81% favorable rating among Tea Party members (Gallup explicitly offers a "neutral" option which gives candidates higher scores across the board). For comparison, Romney still has a higher total favorable rating with Gallup (51% favorable – 20% unfavorable with GOP voters) than Gingrich does, though very few voters are intensely favorable towards him (just 16%).

Gingrich also leads the field on traits like leadership (29%), understanding complex issues (43%), and qualification to be Commander-in-Chief (36%); however, he is in single digits on likeability.

Just 9% of GOP voters believe Gingrich is the most likeable candidate, placing him fourth to Romney (26%), Cain (25%), and Perry (14%). In fact, 9% of GOP voters believe Gingrich is the least likeable candidate, putting him just 6 points behind Ron Paul (first at 15%).

Among all adults, Gingrich's standing has also improved. According to [CNN](#), he now earns a 36% favorable – 39% unfavorable rating among adults nationally (up from 30% favorable – 44% favorable in June and up from his recent low of 25% fav – 43% unfav in 2007). An October [AP-GfK poll](#) of adults shows an improvement in his standing (31% favorable – 51% unfavorable) which is still net-negative, but better than his 27% favorable - 57% unfavorable rating over the summer. By comparison, Mitt Romney's standing in the CNN poll was 39% favorable – 35% unfavorable and President Obama's is 47% favorable – 46% unfavorable according to Quinnipiac.

General Election Outlook

GOP voters believe that Mitt Romney is the Republican candidate with the best chance of defeating President Obama in the general election, and according to most public polling, they are correct. According to [CNN/ORC](#), 41% of primary voters believe that Romney has the best shot at beating Obama, while only 21% believe Gingrich does. PPP confirms this, with Republicans saying Romney is the candidate more likely to beat Obama 38% to 23% over Gingrich. By a 52% - 19% margin they also believe that he will be the candidate over Gingrich.

Newt Gingrich may be the current leader of the Republican primary field whose numbers are improving against Obama, but Romney remains the general election frontrunner. [Fox News's poll](#) finds that Romney leads President Obama 44% - 42% after trailing him 45% - 42% in September. Meanwhile the President leads Gingrich 46% - 41%, though this has narrowed from a 53% - 34% lead over Gingrich in June. [Quinnipiac's poll](#) finds similar trends, with Romney running even with the President, 45% - 44% and Obama leading Gingrich 49% - 40% (though just three weeks ago Obama was leading Gingrich 52% - 37%).

With all that said, we hope Newt gave thanks last week for his surge in the polls, because we wouldn't be surprised if GOP primary voters choose yet another candidate to fete over the next 3-5 weeks judging by past results. Will Newt's recent comments on immigration be what sink him, much as they hurt Rick Perry? We think probably not, for a couple reasons. First, while Rick Perry's stance on tuition for undocumented immigrants is a fringe position in a GOP primary, Newt falls within the mainstream of Republican thought that not all illegal immigrants should be deported. Fox News for example finds that Republicans are split (46% yes / 46% no) on

whether children who immigrated illegally should be eligible for citizenship as adults (Tea Party members say no by a 51% / 40% margin). By contrast, [Investor's Business Daily](#) finds Republicans opposed 74% - 20% to allowing undocumented children to pay in-state college tuition rates. And second, Rick Perry rubbed salt in his own wounds by calling that 74% of Republicans "heartless" (and then, of course, further amplifying his problems with a poor debate performance).

OTHER NEWS FROM THE POLLING AND POLITICAL WORLD

Americans like Thanksgiving. Yes, there are polls on [this](#). The Washington Post finds that 93% of Americans are favorable towards Thanksgiving dinner, including 77% who are strongly favorable. And in case you were [wondering](#), Americans in the South and Midwest are more favorable than those in the West and Northeast.

Historic Lows for Congress. Congress's popularity is at its lowest levels in more than 25 years. The Washington [Post](#) finds that just 23% of Americans give Congress a favorable rating while 69% are unfavorable. This is perhaps due to disgust over the recent budget negotiations – check out the word [cloud](#) on what one word Americans used to describe the talks.

The 1%'s sons work for Dad. A [study](#) of Canadian males finds that 68% of the sons of the country's wealthiest 1% have taken a job at companies where their fathers work by age 33. Just 40% of sons at all income levels have followed in Dad's footsteps.

Americans Love Themselves, Jesus, and (in Wisconsin) Aaron Rodgers. A [PPP poll](#) of Wisconsin voters found that 89% had a favorable impression of the Green Bay Packers quarterback, with only 4% unfavorable, making him one of the most popular figures they have ever polled on. PPP finds that nationally, Americans are most favorable towards themselves (93% favorable – 1% unfavorable), President Lincoln (91% favorable – 2% unfavorable), and Jesus Christ (90% favorable – 3% unfavorable). Martin Luther King Jr (74% favorable – 10% unfavorable) and George Washington (86% favorable – 3% unfavorable) are viewed less favorably by Americans than Rodgers is viewed by Wisconsinites.

West Wing Week. An Asian Pacific tour, signing legislation to help veterans find jobs, and two turkey pardons. Check out what happened this week at the [White House](#).

Decline for support for alternative energy among GOP voters. Support for increasing federal funding for alternative energy research has fallen from 82 to 53 percent among Republicans since 2009 according to the Washington [Post](#).

PUBLIC POLLING

PRESIDENT OBAMA'S JOB RATING

Polling Firm	Date	Sample	Approve	Disapprove
CNN/ORC	Nov. 18-20	Adults	44%	54%
Quinnipiac	Nov. 14-20	Registered Voters	44%	50%
Fox	Nov. 13-15	Registered Voters	42%	48%
Pew	Nov. 9-14	Adults	46%	46%
CNN/ORC	Nov. 11-13	Adults	46%	52%
McClatchy-Marist	Nov. 8-10	Registered Voters	43%	50%

PARTY SELF ID

Polling Firm	Date	Sample	Dem	Rep	Ind / other
Pollster.com Trend	Nov. 28	Adults	31.4%	24.5%	39.5%

GOP NATIONWIDE PRIMARY

Polling Firm	Date	Sample
CNN/ORC	Nov. 18-20	Republicans and Republican-leaning independents
Gingrich	24%	
Romney	20%	
Cain	17%	
Perry	11%	
Paul	9%	
Bachmann	5%	
Santorum	4%	
Huntsman	3%	

GOP CAUCUSES AND PRIMARIES

	Iowa	New Hampshire	South Carolina
Polling Firm	<i>The Polling Company</i>	<i>The Polling Company</i>	<i>The Polling Company</i>
Date	<i>Nov. 11-13</i>	<i>Nov. 18-21</i>	<i>Nov. 18-21</i>
Sample	<i>Likely Voters</i>	<i>Likely Voters</i>	<i>Likely Voters</i>
Gingrich	19%	18%	31%
Romney	14%	35%	16%
Cain	20%	8%	17%
Paul	10%	11%	5%
Perry	5%	4%	6%
Bachmann	10%	4%	5%
Santorum	4%	2%	1%
Huntsman	2%	8%	3%

DIRECTION OF THE COUNTRY

Polling Firm	Date	Sample	Right Direction	Wrong Track
YouGov/Polimetrix	Nov. 12-15	Adults	17%	68%
McClatchy-Marist	Nov. 8-10	Adults	25%	70%
GWU/Politico	Nov. 6-9	Likely Voters	18%	75%
NBC News/Wall Street Journal	Nov. 2-5	Adults	19%	73%

GENERIC HOUSE BALLOT

Polling Firm	Date	Sample	Dem	Rep	Unsure
Quinnipiac	Nov. 14-20	Registered Voters	40%	36%	20%
GWU/Politico	Nov. 6-9	Likely Voters	44%	43%	13%

OBAMA POPULAR VOTE SHARE

Polling Firm	Date	Polly Vote	Polls	Iowa Electronic Markets	Econometric Models	Index Models
PollyVote	Nov. 28	51.1%	50.1%	50.3%	49.5%	54.4%
