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Anzalone Liszt Research

National Polling Summary

Friends,

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

This week, we're taking a look at the current state of the Republican primary. We're talking about a highly unpredictable election in which the first votes won't be cast for half a year, but that hasn't stopped public pollsters from providing us with a wealth of data to dive into.

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

John Anzalone and Jeff Liszt

STORY THIS WEEK: Bachmannalia - The GOP Primary

Let's take a run through the field, at the 30,000-foot national level and in early primary states that have been polled:

National dynamics

Mitt Romney is the frontrunner, if only for lack of better options for most Republican primary voters. Among declared candidates, the Washington Post [finds Romney](#) with 30% of the vote, almost double Michele Bachmann at 17% (in this case and in general, we favored reporting on polls where Sarah Palin wasn't included where possible). [NBC and the WSJ](#) found exactly the same numbers over the same time period, July 14-17.

These additional numbers from the Washington Post should give Romney comfort:

- Romney, who right now polls strongest in a general election against Obama, is seen as the most electable candidate (32% Romney / 12% Palin / 8% Bachmann).
- Voters pick him as the most experienced candidate (27% Romney / 16% Gingrich / 11% Palin).
- They also believe he is the strongest leader of the potential candidates (27% Romney / 16% Palin / 11% Gingrich).

The same poll has some bad news for Romney, though:

- When asked who "best understands the problems of people like you", only 18% say Mitt Romney, behind Sarah Palin (21%) and barely ahead of Michele Bachmann (12%).
- Romney is similarly tied with Sarah Palin on the candidate that "is closest to you on the issues" (20% Romney / 17% Palin / 12% Bachmann) and who "best reflects the core values of the Republican Party"

(19% Palin / 18% Romney / 13% Bachmann).

These comparative traits are worse for Romney than they look, because the most important traits for voters are the ones they rate Romney worst on. The two traits Marist finds [most important](#) for Republican primary voters: 38% say a candidate sharing their values is most important to them and 24% say being closest to them on the issues. Experience (20%) and electability (15%) are far behind.

If Romney falters, will it be Bachmann that overtakes him? It's not clear at this point, but one measure that looks good for Bachmann: [Gallup found](#) from June 13-26 that she was tied among Republicans with Herman Cain for the strongest "positive intensity" score, or voters that are very favorable towards her minus voters who are very unfavorable towards her. Her score, a measure of how intensely Republicans feel about her, was 9 points better at the time than Mitt Romney's (24% Bachmann / 15% Romney) even though voters know him much better (89% name ID vs. 69% for Bachmann). This was before her recent vote surge and increased media scrutiny, though, so those numbers may have changed.

Rick Perry could also be a factor, should he decide to get in the race. While the Washington Post shows him well back in a race without Sarah Palin (30% Romney / 17% Bachmann / 10% Paul / 8% Perry), both [CNN](#) and [Fox News](#) find him competitive with Romney and Bachmann in a multi-candidate field. With the caveat that both polls include Giuliani ~~and~~ Palin, making them a who's who of ditherers, both show Perry in a virtual tie for first with 14% of the vote. Fox News (Romney 16% / Perry 14% / Bachmann 10% / Giuliani 9% / Palin 9% / Paul 9%) and CNN show him similarly neck and neck with Romney (Romney 16% / Perry 14% / Giuliani 13% / Palin 13% / Bachmann 12% / Paul 8%).

This much is clear, however: the national dynamic is very fluid-just ask Donald Trump, Herman Cain, or Michele Bachmann, whose campaign we called "probably quixotic" in our March 30 newsletter. In the Washington Post, only 34% of voters say they strongly support the candidate they are choosing, so there's no reason to count out even Tim Pawlenty (2%) yet, solely because of his national numbers.

Iowa-Feb. 6, 2012 (expected)

Bachmann is surging and Romney is treading water in Iowa, where he finished a distant second in 2008 (35% Huckabee / 25% Romney / 13% McCain). After the reputable [Iowa Poll](#) found him tied with Bachmann in mid-June (23% Romney / 22% Bachmann), three straight polls put Bachmann in front in the last week: [The Iowa Republican](#) (25% Bachmann / 21% Romney), [ARG](#) (21% Bachmann / 18% Romney), and [Mason-Dixon](#) (32% Bachmann / 29% Romney). The [Iowa Poll also](#) found Bachmann's personal favorability to be quite strong (65% favorable / 21% unfavorable), including 31% who view her very favorably-both these numbers are better than anyone else's in the race.

It should very much concern Romney that the Iowa Poll finds a substantial number of Republicans dislike him personally (52% favorable / 38% unfavorable). These numbers are worse than Ron Paul (53% favorable / 32% favorable), Herman Cain (47% favorable / 17% unfavorable), and Rick Perry (43% favorable / 8% unfavorable). It should also concern Romney that the [2008 entrance poll](#) (caucuses have these instead of exit polls) had the electorate at 60% born-again/evangelical. These voters broke 46%-19% for Huckabee in 2008, portending Romney's national problem with evangelicals in 2008 that still exists today. [Pew finds](#) that 31% of white evangelical Republicans say they are less likely to vote for a Mormon presidential candidate, a number which doesn't include those who feel that way but are uncomfortable admitting so to a stranger. By contrast, only 15% of non-evangelical Republicans say the same thing.

One candidate in a better place than many suppose is Tim Pawlenty, who is in 6th with 6% of the vote but has the second-best favorability rating (58% favorable / 13% unfavorable). He is also the second choice of 12% of voters, tied for second behind only Bachmann (18%). He could sneak to a strong finish as an outlet for votes if Bachmann and Romney run scorched-earth campaigns against each other.

What are the minefields for Republican candidates in the next six months in Iowa? 58% say that it's a deal-killer for a candidate to support gay civil unions (adios, Hunstman and maybe Romney), and 51% say the same about raising taxes to reduce the deficit. A further 49% say the same about voting to raise the debt ceiling, making it worse for caucusgoers than having supported an individual mandate for health insurance (44%). Not a big problem for Iowa Republicans? Ending ethanol subsidies (14%).

New Hampshire - Feb. 14, 2012 (expected)

New Hampshire, an open Northeastern primary instead of a Midwestern caucus, is of course a very different electorate than Iowa. Only 23% of Republicans in 2008 [considered themselves](#) evangelical or born-again Christians, and Republican primary voters narrowly believed abortion should be legal (52% legal / 44% illegal). In 2008, Mitt Romney walked out of the primary with a fairly strong favorability rating (64% favorable / 36% unfavorable) but lost by 5 points due to McCain's strength with moderates.

In 2012, Romney looks strong so far (though McCain surged late in 2008 and the same could certainly happen again). According to the [University of New Hampshire](#), Romney leads with 35% of the vote in a state that is almost a must-win for him. Bachmann trails badly with 12%, though she is on the rise (she grew her vote from 4% in June to 12% now). No one else breaks double digits. These numbers are backed up by [Suffolk University](#) (36% Romney / 11% Bachmann) and [Magellan Strategies](#) (42% Romney / 10% Bachmann).

Romney's favorability is also much stronger than in Iowa (68% favorable / 24% unfavorable). Bachmann's 52% favorable / 23% unfavorable personal rating here is less impressive than in Iowa, as are Pawlenty's (39% favorable / 20% unfavorable) and Perry's (34% favorable / 15% unfavorable).

South Carolina - no date set

There has been less polling in South Carolina, in part because the primary schedule and format is up in the air. All we have are a [stale PPP poll](#) from early June (30% Romney / 15% Cain / 15% Gingrich / 13% Bachmann / 10% Paul) and a July [ARG poll](#) that includes Palin (25% Romney / 16% Palin / 13% Bachmann / 10% Cain). In a state where Romney finished fourth in 2008 (33% McCain / 30% Huckabee / 16% Thompson / 15% Romney) when evangelical Christians [made up](#) 60% of the electorate, whether these

OTHER NEWS FROM THE POLLING AND POLITICAL WORLD

Voters dissatisfied with Congress across the political spectrum: While no one's expecting a ringing endorsement from Congress from any corner of the electorate, the [Washington Post reports](#) that people of all stripes are looking for a change in their member of Congress. Thirty-two percent of voters say they plan to re-elect their current incumbent, while 63% say they will look around for someone else, the highest since the Post started asking the question in 1989. This includes 57% of Democrats, 67% of Independents, and 66% of Republicans (most of whom are represented in Congress by a Republican).

Democrats running competitive in elections for the House: PPP's [latest national poll](#) finds Democrats running two points ahead of Republicans (46% Democrat / 44% Republican), 9 points better than our 7-point loss in 2010. This poll has Democrats losing Independents by 8 points, much better than our [19-point loss](#) in 2010 (though those Independents were much older, whiter, and more conservative than the Independents projected to show up in 2012).

Americans say Obama looking out for regular people, Republicans for big guys: A recent [ABC News/Washington Post poll](#) shows Obama with an 18-point advantage over Republicans in Congress on who is protecting the economic interests of middle-class Americans (53% Obama / 35% Republicans), a 9-point advantage on small businesses, and a 10-point advantage on "you and your family". The Republicans do hold substantial advantages, however, on who is protecting Wall Street financial institutions more (20 points) and who is looking out for large business corporations more (43 points).

Springsteen ties Christie in New Jersey, (insert "Born to Run" pun here): PPP, who has a knack for getting press off polls, [finds](#) the shine wearing off Governor Christie in New Jersey. His job approval is underwater in their poll (43% approve / 53% disapprove), and he runs within the margin of error in a 2013 matchup against every Democrat they tested, including Bruce Springsteen (42% Springsteen / 42% Christie).

J Street poll finds Jews sticking with Obama: A new [J Street poll](#) finds that, contrary to predictions of some of the most hawkish pundits, American Jews continue to back President Obama. He holds wide leads over Mitt Romney (63% Obama / 24% Romney) and Michele Bachmann (67% Obama / 19% Bachmann), and his vote share expands to 70% and 73% when undecided voters are allocated by their partisan leanings. Other interesting findings: 67% of Jewish voters support the US playing an active role in the Arab-Israeli conflict, even if it means the US publicly states its disagreements with both sides; they are against the US voting to recognize a Palestinian state in the UN but not overwhelmingly so (34% for / 47% against), and 82% of Jewish voters who contributed to Obama in 2008 say they have either contributed to him again, will definitely do so again, or will probably do so again (only 80% of 2008 Jewish Republican contributors say the same about their involvement this year).

PUBLIC POLLING

PRESIDENT OBAMA'S JOB RATING				
Polling Firm	Date	Sample	Approve	Disapprove
Gallup	7/18-7/20	Adults	43%	49%
NBC/WSJ	7/14-7/17	Adults	47%	48%
Quinnipiac	7/5-7/11	Registered Voters	47%	46%
Gallup	6/28-30/11	Adults	44%	47%

PARTY SELF ID					
Polling Firm	Date	Sample	Dem	Rep	Ind / other
Pollster.com Trend	7/12/11	Adults	31.8%	26.9%	35.3%

GENERIC HOUSE BALLOT					
Polling Firm	Date	Sample	Dem	Rep	Unsure
Democracy Corps	6/18-6/21	Likely Voters	44%	47%	7%
GWU/Politico Battleground	5/8-5/12	Likely voters	42%	41%	16%
CNN/Opinion Research Corp.	4/29-5/1	Registered voters	50%	46%	1%
Quinnipiac	3/22-3/28	Registered voters	37%	40%	20%

DIRECTION OF THE COUNTRY				
Polling Firm	Date	Sample	Right Direction	Wrong Track
NBC/WSJ	7/14-7/17	Adults	25%	67%

OBAMA POPULAR VOTE-SHARE						
Polling Firm	Date	Polly Vote	Polls	Iowa Electronic Markets	Econometric Models	Index Models
PollyVote	7/22/11	51.0%	47.9%	52.2%	50.7%	53.3%

GOP NATIONWIDE PRIMARY		
Polling Firm	Date	Sample
<i>ABC/Washington Post</i>	<i>7/11-7/14</i>	<i>Registered voters that ID Republican</i>
Romney	30%	
Bachmann	16%	
Paul	11%	
Perry	8%	
Cain	7%	
Gingrich	6%	
Hunstman	3%	
Santorum	3%	
Pawlenty	3%	

STATE-LEVEL GOP PRIMARY / CAUCUS POLLING			
State	Iowa	New Hampshire	South Carolina
Polling Details	<i>Mason Dixon; 7/13/11; Likely GOP Caucus Voters</i>	<i>ARG; 7/12-17/11; Likely GOP Primary Voters</i>	<i>ARG; 7/19-13/11; Likely GOP Primary Voters</i>
Bachmann	32%	12%	13%
Romney	29%	29%	25%
Palin	n/a	8%	16%
Pawlenty	7%	5%	0%
Santorum	6%	2%	2%
Paul	3%	4%	2%
Gingrich	2%	7%	3%
Cain	1%	4%	10%
Huntsman	0%	0%	0%
Don't Know	18%	16%	15%

