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Suffolk University/USA TODAY/The Boston Globe Poll: While Trump Still Dominates New Hampshire GOP Primary Field, Haley Emerges as Top Challenger

BOSTON – Former president Donald Trump continues to dominate the 2024 New Hampshire Republican primary field, but former UN ambassador Nikki Haley—coming off strong debate performances—is emerging as his top challenger for the GOP presidential nomination there, according to a new poll from the Suffolk University Political Research Center, *The Boston Globe*, and *USA TODAY*.

Nearly half, or 49%, of Granite State voters said Trump is their top first choice, followed by 19% who named Haley as their top pick, the highest numbers she has garnered in New Hampshire so far.

Once seen as Trump’s main rival, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis has dropped to a distant third in the race, with just 10% choosing him. None of the other candidates reached double digits in the poll: Former New Jersey governor Chris Christie was at 6%, tech entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy and South Carolina Sen. Tim Scott both polled at 4%, and former vice president Mike Pence and North Dakota Gov. Doug Burgum finished with 1% each. Only 4% of voters are still undecided.

Voters polled also said they were reluctant to consider switching favored candidates. Nearly 60% stated their minds are made up, and more than 85% percent said neither the results of the Iowa caucuses, nor an endorsement of one of the candidates by New Hampshire Gov. Chris Sununu, was likely to impact their vote.

New Hampshire Trump supporters surveyed remained especially loyal to their candidate, according to the poll, with 84% saying their minds were made up, and only 15% saying they might consider switching to someone else. The former president’s lead seems to be unaffected by his multiple indictments and ongoing legal issues, with 46% of all New Hampshire Republicans

polled—and 76% of Trump voters polled—saying that they believe investigations into his activities are “politically motivated” and that he has done nothing wrong.

The first-ever polling partnership between the three organizations, with full coverage in both *The Boston Globe* and *USA TODAY*, comes shortly after seven Republican presidential candidates (but not Trump) faced off in California in the second primary debate.

The survey was designed to provide key insights on voter sentiment leading up to the historically first-in-the-nation New Hampshire primary, which will likely take place in January 2024, though a date has not yet been set.

“Nikki Haley is surging in politically unpredictable New Hampshire, and this likely means more money, credibility, and interviews will find their way to her,” said David Paleologos, director of the Suffolk University Political Research Center in Boston. “More importantly, a case will be made for others to drop out now and back Haley’s challenge to former president Trump.”

But Paleologos cautioned that even that unlikely development would not necessarily enable Haley to defeat Trump, because some of the other candidates’ supporters would go to him. “Add in second-choice votes from all the other major candidates—even if they all endorsed Haley—and Trump sits above 55%,” he said.

New Hampshire GOP voters also identified two major political issues as top concerns. More than a third (37%) said immigration and border security most affected their vote. Another large group, 32%, identified the economy and jobs as their top vote-driver.

They also expressed ongoing unhappiness with the US economy. Nearly half of those surveyed (49%) said their personal financial situation was worse than before the COVID-19 pandemic. One-in-four respondents (27%) called inflation “the worst I’ve ever seen” and another 9% said they couldn’t pay their bills.

Methodology

This survey of 500 likely New Hampshire Republican primary voters was conducted between September 28-October 2, and is based on live telephone interviews of adults who indicated they were planning to vote in the New Hampshire Republican presidential primary in January 2024. Each area’s quota and demographic information—including race and age—were determined from 2020 Census data and exit polling from like elections. The margin of sampling error is +/- 4.4 percentage points. Marginals and full cross-tabulation data are posted on the [Suffolk University Political Research Center](#) website. For more information, contact David Paleologos at 781-290-9310, dpaleologos@suffolk.edu.

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