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CLINTON'S LEAD IN CALIFORNIA SLIPS AS HER IMAGE AMONG VOTERS DECLINES.

Release Date: **Tuesday, September 20, 2016**

By Mark DiCamillo, Director, *The Field Poll*

Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's lead over businessman Donald Trump has slipped in California. While Clinton continues to hold a sizable seventeen-point statewide advantage (50% to 33%) over Trump in this year's presidential election, that margin is down from twenty-four points in July, prior to the Democratic and Republican national conventions. These results come from a new statewide *Field/IGS Poll*, conducted jointly by *The Field Poll* and UC Berkeley's Institute of Governmental Studies, and administered through YouGov's online panel.

The proportion of likely voters holding an unfavorable view of the former First Lady has also increased ten points over the same period. More Californians now view her unfavorably (53%) than favorably (47%), a reversal from July. In addition, a very large proportion of the state's electorate (41%) now reports having a "very unfavorable" opinion of Clinton.

By contrast, Trump is showing some improvement in his still very negative standing with California voters. Whereas fewer than one in four voters reported having a favorable opinion of Trump in each of three previous *Field Polls*, the current survey finds 31% of likely voters now viewing him positively. Still, nearly seven in ten (69%) hold a negative view of the GOP presidential nominee, 56% of whom view him very unfavorably.

With President Barack Obama taking an increasingly active role in support of Clinton's candidacy, the poll also documents the very strong relationship between appraisals of Obama and whom voters are supporting as his successor. Currently, 58% of Californians approve of the job Obama is doing as President (30% strongly and 28% somewhat), while 42% disapprove (30% strongly and 12% somewhat). Of those who strongly approve of Obama's performance, Clinton receives 94% of their preferences versus less than ½ of 1% support for Trump. Conversely, of voters who strongly disapprove of Obama, 85% are backing Trump and just 2% support Clinton.

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Clinton's lead over Trump in California declines

When likely voters in California are asked which party's ticket they would support if the presidential election were held today, 50% choose the Democratic ticket of Clinton and Tim Kaine, while 33% favor the Republican ticket of Trump and Mike Pence. Another 6% back the Green Party ticket of Jill Stein and Ajamu Baraka, 5% support the Libertarian Party ticket of Gary Johnson and William Weld, and 6% are undecided.

Clinton's current seventeen-point advantage over Trump is down from a twenty-four-point lead in July, prior to the Democratic and Republican national conventions.

Table 1 Trend of California voter preferences in the 2016 Presidential election (among likely voters)				
	September 2016	July 2016	Late May 2016	April 2016
Clinton-Kaine (D)	50%	50%	53%	59%
Trump-Pence (R)	33	26	34	31
Stein-Baraka (G)	6	N/A	N/A	N/A
Johnson-Weld (L)	5	10	N/A	N/A
Undecided	6	14	13	10

(D) Democratic Party, (R) Republican Party, (G) Green Party, (L) Libertarian Party. N/A: Not asked.

Huge differences in preferences across major subgroups of the likely voter population

While both Clinton and Trump have the strong backing of voters in their own respective parties, each receives an unusually small proportion of crossover votes from opposite party members. Clinton is also preferred over Trump among the growing proportion of Californians not aligned with either of the two major parties. However, her fourteen-point lead among this often Democratic-leaning segment is down from twenty points in July. An increasing proportion of non-partisans (26%) are now supporting either Stein or Johnson, the Green and Libertarian Party candidates.

There are also pronounced regional differences in preferences. Coastal voters, living in counties touching the Pacific Ocean or San Francisco Bay, favor Clinton nearly two to one (55% to 29%), while voters living in the state's interior narrowly prefer Trump over Clinton, 41% to 39%. Clinton's strongest base of support comes from voters in Los Angeles County and the San Francisco Bay Area.

There are sizeable differences in preference by education, age and religion. Clinton is favored by a wide margin among college graduates, and especially those with a post-graduate degree. On the other hand, Trump leads among voters with no more than a high school education. Clinton is heavily favored among voters under age 40, but Trump is narrowly preferred among voters age 65 or older. Californians who identify as born-again Christians favor Trump 51% to 39%, but those who do not back Clinton two-to-one.

Clinton holds a three-to-one advantage among the state's Latino voters, is favored six-to-one among African Americans and has a greater than two-to-one lead among Asian Americans. However, among white non-Hispanics Clinton's lead over Trump is just six points.

Table 2 — Likely voter preferences in the 2016 Presidential election by subgroup					
	Clinton	**Trump**	**Stein**	**Johnson**	**Undecided**
Total likely voters	50%	33	6	5	6
Party registration					
Democrat	85%	4	6	1	4
Republican	6%	84	**	4	6
No party preference/other	38%	24	13	13	12
Area					
Coastal counties	55%	29	6	4	6
Inland counties	39%	41	5	7	8
Region					
Los Angeles County	58%	27	7	3	5
South Coast	47%	40	4	4	5
Other Southern CA	42%	42	2	6	8
Central Valley	40%	37	7	5	11
San Francisco Bay Area	60%	23	5	6	6
Other Northern CA*	24%	39	17	13	7
Gender					
Male	46%	37	7	5	5
Female	54%	29	5	5	7
Age					
18-29	62%	16	9	6	7
30-39	57%	14	10	11	8
40-49	55%	28	7	4	6
50-64	44%	38	6	4	8
65 or older	44%	47	2	2	5
Race/ethnicity					
White non-Hispanic	44%	38	6	6	6
Latino	61%	21	7	3	8
African American*	77%	13	5	**	5
Asian American	60%	25	4	5	6
Education					
High school graduate or less	41%	49	4	2	4
Some college/trade school	40%	37	7	6	10
College graduate	57%	25	5	8	5
Post-graduate work	61%	24	7	4	4
Marital status					
Married/domestic partner	50%	36	4	4	6
Single/never married	55%	18	13	8	6
Widowed/separated/divorced	43%	43	4	3	7
Born-again Christian					
Yes	39%	51	1	2	7
No	53%	27	7	6	7

* *Small sample base.* ** *Less than ½ of 1%.*

Clinton's overall standing with California voters has declined over the past two months

The survey finds that some Californians have been reappraising their views of the two presidential candidates over the past two months. More now hold an unfavorable (53%) than favorable (47%) opinion of Clinton, a reversal since July when 53% viewed her favorably and 43% unfavorably. In addition, the survey finds that 41% of voters say their opinion of Clinton is very unfavorable.

By contrast, Trump is showing some improvement in his still very negative standing with Californians. At present, 31% hold a favorable opinion of Trump, while 69% view him negatively. In each prior *Field Poll* completed since April, fewer than one in four Californians held a positive impression of Trump, while about three in four viewed him negatively. Still, 56% of Californians likely to vote say they have a very unfavorable opinion of Trump.

Table 3 Trend of California voter preferences in the 2016 Presidential election (among likely voters)					
		September 2016	July 2016	Late May 2016	April 2016
Clinton					
Very favorable	27%	} 47%	53%	47%	50%
Somewhat favorable	20				
Somewhat unfavorable	12	} 53%	43	48	44
Very unfavorable	41				
No opinion	*		4	5	6
Trump					
Very favorable	14%	} 31%	24%	22%	22%
Somewhat favorable	17				
Somewhat unfavorable	13	} 69%	73	74	73
Very unfavorable	56				
No opinion	*		3	4	5

* *Less than ½ of 1%.*

Note: Previous measures asked voters if they had a favorable or unfavorable opinion of each of the candidates.

Presidential preferences closely tied to voter appraisals of Obama

As President Obama takes an increasingly visible role in support of Clinton's candidacy, the poll documents the very strong relationship between views of the incumbent and whom voters are supporting as his successor. For example, of voters who strongly approve of the job Obama is doing, Clinton's support stands at 94%, while less than ½ of 1% favor Trump. Conversely, among voters who strongly disapprove of Obama, 85% are backing Trump, while 2% support Clinton.

Table 4 The relationship between likely voter preferences for President and their views of the job Obama is doing as President				
	Clinton	**Trump**	**Others**	**Undecided**
Total likely voters	**50%**	**33**	**11**	**6**
Job rating given President Obama				
Approve strongly	94%	**	3	3
Approve somewhat	68%	3	19	10
Disapprove somewhat*	26%	40	30	4
Disapprove strongly	2%	85	7	6

*   *Small sample base*   **   *Less than ½ of 1%.*

Trend in California voter assessments of the job performance of President Obama

Table 5 updates *The Field Poll's* time series tracking California voter opinions of Obama's job performance during his tenure as President. This shows that in each of the last seven polls dating back to February 2015, including this one, majorities ranging from 53% to 60% have approved of the job Obama was doing. The latest survey finds 58% of voters giving him a positive appraisal, while 42% offer a negative assessment.

Table 5 Trend of Barack Obama's job performance as President (among California registered voters)			
	Approve	**Disapprove**	**No opinion**
September 2016	**58%**	**42**	*****
July 2016	57%	37	6
April 2016	59%	38	3
January 2016	56%	36	8
October 2015	60%	33	7
May 2015	53%	35	12
February 2015	57%	36	7
September 2014	45%	43	12
June 2014	50%	39	11
April 2014	53%	41	6
December 2013	51%	43	6
July 2013	52%	35	13
February 2013	62%	33	5
September 2012	58%	35	7
July 2012	55%	39	6
May 2012	53%	39	8
February 2012	53%	39	8
November 2011	48%	44	8
September 2011	46%	44	10
June 2011	54%	37	9
March 2011	54%	37	9
September 2010	53%	41	6
July 2010	54%	39	7
March 2010	52%	37	11
January 2010	56%	34	10
October 2009	60%	31	9
March 2009	65%	21	14

- *Less than ½ of 1%.*

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Information About the Survey

Methodological Details

The findings in this report come from a survey of California voters conducted jointly by *The Field Poll* and the Institute of Governmental Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. The survey was completed online by YouGov September 7-13, 2016 in English and Spanish among 1,800 registered voters in California, including 1,426 considered likely to vote in the November 2016 general election. In order to cover a broad range of issues and still minimize possible respondent fatigue, some of the questions included in this report are based on a random subsample of voters statewide.

YouGov administered the survey among a sample of the California registered voters who were included as part of its online panel of over 1.5 million U.S. residents. Eligible panel members were asked to participate in the poll through an invitation email containing a link to the survey. YouGov selected voters using a proprietary sampling technology frame that establishes interlocking targets, so that the characteristics of the voters selected approximate the demographic and regional profile of the overall California registered voter population. To help ensure diversity among poll respondents, YouGov recruits its panelists using a variety of methods, including web-based advertising and email campaigns, partner-sponsored solicitations, and telephone-to-web recruitment or mail-to-web recruitment. Difficult-to-reach populations are supplemented through more specialized recruitment efforts, including telephone and mail surveys.

The Field Poll and the Institute of Governmental Studies were jointly responsible for developing all questions included in the survey. After survey administration, YouGov forwarded its data file to *The Field Poll* for processing. *The Field Poll* then took the lead in developing and applying post-stratification weights to more precisely align the sample to *Field Poll* estimates of the demographic characteristics of the California registered voter population both overall and by region. The Field Poll was also responsible for determining which voters in the survey were considered most likely to vote in this year's election.

The Field Poll was established in 1947 as *The California Poll* by Mervin Field. The Poll has operated continuously since then as an independent, non-partisan survey of California public opinion. *The Field Poll* receives financial support from leading California newspapers and television stations, which purchase the rights of first release to *Field Poll* reports in their primary viewer or readership markets. The Poll also receives funding from the University of California and California State University systems, who receive the data files from each *Field Poll* survey shortly after its completion for teaching and secondary research purposes, as well as from foundations, non-profit organizations, and others as part of the Poll's policy research sponsor program.

Questions Asked

If the election for president were held today, for whom would you vote?
HILLARY CLINTON-TIM KAINE, DEMOCRATIC PARTY; DONALD TRUMP-MIKE PENCE, REPUBLICAN PARTY; GARY JOHNSON-WILLIAM WELD, LIBERTARIAN PARTY; JILL STEIN-AJAMU BARAKA, GREEN PARTY.
(ORDERING OF PARTY TICKETS RANDOMIZED TO AVOID POSSIBLE SEQUENCE BIAS)

What is your overall opinion of Hillary Clinton?
VERY FAVORABLE; SOMEWHAT FAVORABLE; SOMEWHAT UNFAVORABLE; VERY UNFAVORABLE.
(ASKED OF A RANDOM SUBSAMPLE OF 484 LIKELY VOTERS)

What is your overall opinion of Donald Trump?
VERY FAVORABLE; SOMEWHAT FAVORABLE; SOMEWHAT UNFAVORABLE; VERY UNFAVORABLE.
(ASKED OF A RANDOM SUBSAMPLE OF 484 LIKELY VOTERS)

Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President?
APPROVE STRONGLY; APPROVE SOMEWHAT; DISAPPROVE SOMEWHAT; DISAPPROVE STRONGLY.
(ASKED OF A RANDOM SUBSAMPLE OF 600 REGISTERED VOTERS, INCLUDING 484 LIKELY VOTERS)