



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 29, 2022

Approval Rating of Biden Plummet, New Saint Leo University Polling Shows

- *Vice President Kamala Harris, former first lady Michelle Obama top Democrats' picks for presidential candidates in 2024.*
- *Former President Donald Trump and Florida Governor Ron DeSantis top Republicans' choice for presidential nominee in 2024*

ST. LEO, FL – A new national survey by the Saint Leo University Polling Institute (polls.saintleo.edu) shows President Joe Biden's approval ratings dropped significantly from 2021 polling. A combined 44.8 of Americans polled say they approve of the job the president is doing, which is down from 52.1 percent in October 2021 and from 60.9 percent in February 2021.

The newer results, collected online between February 28 and March 12, have a margin of error of plus or minus 3.0 percentage points. The polling shows 22.5 percent of Americans surveyed say they somewhat approve of Biden's work, while 22.3 percent strongly approve. On the disapproving side, 15.5 percent somewhat disapprove of the job the president is doing while 37.5 percent say they strongly disapprove. Only 2.2 percent have no opinion.

In Florida where the Saint Leo University Polling Institute is based, the president's approval rating dropped more than 5 percentage points to 49 percent from 54.4 percent in the October 2021 survey, and 56 percent from February 2021. The polling institute surveyed 500 Floridians for this poll, which has a margin of error of plus or minus 4.5 percentage points.

Among Floridian respondents, 23.6 percent say they strongly approve of the job Biden is doing, and 25.4 percent somewhat approve, while 12.8 percent say they somewhat disapprove and 36.4 percent say they strong disapprove. Another 1.8 percent did not have an opinion or were unsure.

“When compared with the fall, President Biden’s approval has remained relatively steady among Democrats at 86 percent, but the decrease comes from an 11-point drop among Republicans and a seven-point drop among Independents,” said political scientist Frank Orlando, director of the Saint Leo University Polling Institute. “The other worrying drop for the Biden administration is a double digit drop in approval from 18- to 44-year-old respondents. It remains to be seen whether this will filter through to spell trouble in November for Democrats.”

Approval Ratings of Other Democrats

The approval rating for Vice President Kamala Harris dropped sharply, too, with Harris and Biden dropping by 7.3 percentage points in this polling period. Among national respondents, 16.8 percent say they strongly approve of the job being done by the vice president and 23.5 percent somewhat approve. Among those disapproving of Harris’ performance, 12.5 say they somewhat disapprove while 39.4 percent say they strongly disapprove. Another 7.8 percent say they are unsure.

As for legislative leaders: 35.9 percent approve, either strongly or somewhat, of U.S. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer is held in similar regard; 34.9 percent of those polled approved strongly or somewhat of his work performance. In the October 2021 poll, approval of how well Pelosi was doing her job was 39.3 percent and for Schumer, it was 38.7 percent.

“Unsurprisingly, when the president’s approval drops, so does the approval of the vice president,” Orlando said. “Vice President Harris has been mostly under the radar during Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, so there’s that, but the idea of her eventually replacing Biden on the ticket should he decide not to run in 2024 seems like a longshot.”

Looking Toward 2024 Elections

With a nod toward the future, the Saint Leo University Polling Institute asked all survey respondents whether they would like the 79-year-old Biden should run for re-election as president in 2024.

Among those surveyed, 31.1 percent of national respondents say they would like to see the president seek the office again, with 33.2 of those polled in Florida saying they would like to Biden run. Among the national respondents, 20.4 percent of those who self-identified as Republicans, 57.3 percent of Democrats, and 21.6 of unaffiliated or independents say they would like for Biden to seek re-election in 2024.

Among other “notable and possible candidates” for the Democratic presidential nomination in 2024, Democratic respondents to the Saint Leo poll chose Vice President Kamala Harris at 49.2

percent and former first lady Michelle Obama at 48.4 percent. Other possible candidates garnered support as well: former Georgia state legislator Stacey Abrams (33.1 percent); U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren (27.8 percent); U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders (27.3%); U.S. Senator Cory Booker (24.9%); U.S. Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg (18.1 percent); U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar (15.7 percent); and U.S. Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (13.5 percent), led the group of named Democrats.

"While Harris is the first in line behind Biden among Democrats, most of that probably has to do with name recognition," said Orlando, the polling institute director. "In fact, she is very close to being surpassed in that slot by Michelle Obama, someone who is extremely popular, but has shown no interest in running in 2024."

On the Republican side of the aisle, when self-identified Republican survey respondents were asked to think about their party's 2024 presidential nominee, they also were able to name multiple individuals—and they were asked to consider two possible scenarios. The first included former President Donald J. Trump among the choices, and the second scenario omitted him.

Republican respondents overwhelmingly say they would like to see former President Trump as the presidential candidate in 2024 at 61.4 percent. Next among the possible candidates for the Republican presidential nomination is Florida Governor Ron DeSantis (32.1 percent). Other top potential candidates identified in the poll include former Vice President Mike Pence (22.9 percent), U.S. Senator Ted Cruz (21.2 percent), Donald Trump Jr. (19.3 percent), former South Carolina Governor and diplomat Nikki Haley (11.1 percent); conservative author and talk show host Candace Owens (10.4 percent); Fox News host Tucker Carlson (10 percent); and former U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice (10 percent).

In the second scenario without including the former president, the Florida governor topped the list with DeSantis earning 33.2 percent. Other top potential candidates among the national poll respondents are Pence (25.7 percent); Donald Trump Jr. (24.3 percent); Cruz, 21.8 percent; Haley (14.6 percent); Ivanka Trump (13.9 percent); Owens (11.1 percent); and Carlson (10.4 percent).

Republicans in Florida strongly support their governor—if former President Trump is not included in the list of potential nominees— with 65.9 percent saying they support DeSantis for president in 2024. Pence follows DeSantis at 26.9 percent, and Donald Trump Jr. at 23.6 percent.

"Republicans are more open to President Trump than they were in our polling in 2021, and this could encourage President Trump to follow through on running in 2024," Orlando said. "Beyond him, it's interesting to note the strong rise by Ron DeSantis nationally and in Florida. He's

jumped over 20 points in his home state, but perhaps most importantly, he has leapfrogged Ted Cruz, Donald Trump Jr., Mike Pence, Nikki Haley, Marco Rubio, and Tom Cotton to become the second option, and the top option should Trump not run. He seems to have a great knack for inviting media attention and capitalizing off of it."

About the Poll

METHODOLOGY: This national survey was conducted February 28 – March 12, among a base of 1,000 respondents nationally, using an online instrument. The national sample has an associated margin of error of +/- 3.0 percentage points at a 95 percent confidence for questions asked of all 1,000 respondents.

A statewide survey was also conducted during the same time period, among a base of 500 Florida respondents, using an online instrument. The sample has an associated margin of error of +/- 4.5 percentage points at a 95 percent confidence for questions asked of all 500 respondents.

The Saint Leo University Polling Institute conducts its surveys using cutting-edge online methodology, which is rapidly transforming the field of survey research. The sample is drawn from large online panels, which allow for random selections that reflect accurate cross sections of all demographic groups. Online methodology has the additional advantage of allowing participants to respond to the survey at a time, place, and speed that is convenient to them, which may result in more thoughtful answers. The Saint Leo University Polling Institute develops the questionnaires, administers the surveys, and conducts analysis of the results. Panel participants typically receive a token incentive—usually \$1 deposited into an iTunes or Amazon account—for their participation.

The Saint Leo University Polling Institute survey results about national and Florida politics, public policy issues, Pope Francis' popularity, and other topics, can also be found here: <http://polls.saintleo.edu>. You can also follow the institute on Twitter @saintleopolls.

About Saint Leo University

Saint Leo University is one of the largest Catholic universities in the nation, offering 62 degree programs to more than 15,800 students each year. Founded in 1889 by Benedictine monks and sisters, the private, nonprofit university is known for providing a values-based education to learners of all backgrounds and ages in the liberal arts tradition. Saint Leo is regionally accredited and offers a residential campus in the Tampa Bay region of Florida, 16 education

centers in five states, and an online program for students anywhere. The university is home to more than 100,000 alumni. Learn more at saintleo.edu.

Media contact: Mary McCoy, Saint Leo University, University Writer & Media Relations, mary.mccoy02@saintleo.edu, (352) 588-7118 or cell (813) 610-8416.