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**FAU Poll Finds Florida Gov. DeSantis Off to a Good Start
with Floridians, Especially on Algae and Education**
Trump and Pelosi Both Score Low with Floridians

BOCA RATON, Fla. (Feb. 12, 2019) – Newly elected Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis is enjoying widespread popularity from Florida voters who support his proposals to reduce the impacts of harmful algae blooms and eliminate Common Core standards, according to the statewide survey by the [Florida Atlantic University Business and Economics Polling Initiative](#) (FAU BEPI).

The newly sworn-in governor’s approval rating stands at 48 percent, while his disapproval is only at 18 percent, with 34 percent unsure. His plan to establish a task force to reduce the impacts of harmful algae blooms won support from 59 percent of respondents, while 10 percent oppose, and 31 percent are undecided. A majority of voters (52 percent) support eliminating the Common Core standards from exams in Florida, while 21 percent oppose their elimination and 27 percent are undecided.

“Even though DeSantis had a tightly contested race for governor, it seems that Floridians are giving him a fresh start,” said [Monica Escaleras](#), Ph.D., director of the BEPI. “DeSantis has started his role as governor tackling issues that are important for Floridians, such as environmental issues and education.”

[Kevin Wagner](#), Ph.D., professor of political science at FAU and a research fellow of the Initiative, said that while Florida continues to be a sharply divided state, there is a path forward with policies on education and the environment that appeal to members of both parties.

“Gov. DeSantis appears to be benefiting from following through on some of his campaign promises, especially his focus on the algae concerns,” Wagner said.

Meanwhile, U.S. President Donald Trump and Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi have something in common in Florida – their approval ratings are underwater. While 41 percent of voters approve of the job Trump is doing as president, 46 percent

disapprove, and 13 percent are unsure. Pelosi scored 40 percent approval and 44 percent disapproval, with 16 percent unsure of the job she is doing as speaker.

A majority (55 percent) support the construction of an additional border wall along the border between the United States and Mexico, while 37 percent oppose, and 9 percent are undecided. With debate over this issue raging in Washington, D.C., 51 percent of Florida voters said they support Congressional funding for a border wall in exchange for avoiding another partial government shutdown, while 36 percent oppose and 13 percent are undecided.

Nearly one year after a mass shooting took the lives of 17 students and teachers at a South Florida high school, 45 percent of Floridians said they are extremely concerned about the physical safety of students at schools, while 41 percent said they are somewhat concerned, and 14 percent said they are not at all concerned.

Nearly two-thirds of Floridians (65 percent) said they think gun control laws should be made stricter, while 12 percent favor less strict gun laws and 23 percent said the laws should be left alone. A majority (51 percent) oppose giving teachers authority to carry firearms on school property, while 37 percent support the idea and 12 percent are undecided.

The survey was conducted Feb. 7-9 and polled 500 Florida registered voters. The survey was conducted using an online sample supplied by Survey Sampling International using online questionnaires and via an automated telephone platform (IVR) using registered voter lists supplied by Aristotle, Inc. The survey has a margin of error of +/- 4.3 percentage points. Responses for the entire sample were weighted to reflect the statewide distribution of the Florida population. The polling results and full cross-tabulations are available at www.business.fau.edu/bepi.

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About FAU BEPI:

The Florida Atlantic University Business and Economic Polling Initiative conducts surveys on business, economic, political and social issues with a focus on Hispanic attitudes and opinions at regional, state and national levels via planned monthly national surveys. The initiative subscribes to the American Association of Public Opinion Research and is a resource for public and private organizations, academic research and media outlets. In addition, the initiative is designed to contribute to the educational mission of the University by providing students with valuable opportunities to enhance their educational experience by designing and carrying out public opinion research.

About Florida Atlantic University

Florida Atlantic University, established in 1961, officially opened its doors in 1964 as the fifth public

university in Florida. Today, the University, with an annual economic impact of \$6.3 billion, serves more than 30,000 undergraduate and graduate students at sites throughout its six-county service region in southeast Florida. FAU's world-class teaching and research faculty serves students through 10 colleges: the Dorothy F. Schmidt College of Arts and Letters, the College of Business, the College for Design and Social Inquiry, the College of Education, the College of Engineering and Computer Science, the Graduate College, the Harriet L. Wilkes Honors College, the Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine, the Christine E. Lynn College of Nursing and the Charles E. Schmidt College of Science. FAU is ranked as a High Research Activity institution by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. The University is placing special focus on the rapid development of critical areas that form the basis of its strategic plan: Healthy aging, biotech, coastal and marine issues, neuroscience, regenerative medicine, informatics, lifespan and the environment. These areas provide opportunities for faculty and students to build upon FAU's existing strengths in research and scholarship. For more information, visit www.fau.edu.