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Biden Leads Trump in Florida, But President Expected to Win Four More Years

Voters Split Down the Middle on Trump's Handling of Coronavirus

BOCA RATON, Fla. (May 15, 2020) – Presumptive Democratic nominee Joe Biden has pushed ahead of U.S. President Donald Trump in Florida, but Trump still is favored to win re-election, according to a statewide survey of registered Florida voters by the Florida Atlantic University Business and Economics Polling Initiative (FAU BEPI).

Biden polled at 53 percent to Trump's 47 percent, a reversal from the March survey, when Trump narrowly led Biden. Still, 53 percent of respondents say the president will beat Biden in November. Meanwhile, 78 percent of Trump supporters say they're excited for their candidate, while 64 percent of Biden supporters report excitement.

Independent voters, expected to be a key group in deciding the race for the White House, prefer Biden by a slight margin of 41 percent to 39 percent. However, 63 percent of independents voting for Trump are excited to support him, while 50 percent of independents for Biden are excited to support him.

"While Joe Biden does not seem to generate the enthusiasm that past candidates have garnered, it might not matter," said [Kevin Wagner](#), Ph.D., a professor of political science at FAU and a research fellow of the Initiative. "Many Democrats seem motivated by the desire to defeat President Trump."

Biden may generate more excitement after he chooses a vice presidential running mate, but a clear favorite among his Florida supporters has not yet emerged. U.S. Sen. Kamala Harris was the preference of 23 percent of respondents, while U.S. Sen. Elizabeth Warren earned 16 percent. Biden has said he plans to select a female running mate.

Respondents were evenly split at 45 percent on Trump's handling of the coronavirus crisis. His overall approval rating dropped to 43 percent, while his disapproval rose to 46 percent. In March, his approval was at 49 percent and his disapproval at 41 percent.

Biden, the former U.S. vice president, enjoys overwhelming support in the Democratic stronghold of South Florida, leading 61 percent to 30 percent, but Trump is winning the rest of the state, 48 percent to 42 percent.

The most important issue for voters is the economy (28 percent), followed by someone who can beat Trump (20 percent), health care (18 percent), re-electing Trump (13 percent) and immigration (12 percent). Democrats cited beating Trump as the most important issue, followed by health care, while Republicans say the economy is the most important issue, followed by re-electing Trump. Among independent voters, immigration was the most important topic.

“For independents in Florida, this election is not about beating or re-electing Donald Trump like it is for partisans,” said [Monica Escaleras](#), Ph.D., director of FAU BEPI in the [College of Business](#). “Instead, these voters are looking for solutions to immigration, the economy and health care.”

As for Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, 51 percent approve of the job he is doing, down 3 percentage points from March, while 32 percent disapprove. When it comes to how he is handling the coronavirus, 49 percent approve and 36 percent disapprove.

The survey of 928 registered Florida voters was conducted May 8-12. The survey has a margin of error of +/- 3.1 percentage points. It is important to remember that subsets carry with them higher margins of error, as the sample size is reduced. The data was weighted by ethnicity, age, education, party affiliation, region and gender, based on a 2016 voter model. Data was collected using both an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system of landlines provided by Aristotle Inc. and an online panel provided by Dynata. 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 fau.edu.