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Marquette Law School: New national survey finds Trump holding steady among Republicans, DeSantis remaining clear second choice in party, and a tie in Biden/Trump head-to-head

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MILWAUKEE — A new Marquette Law School Poll national survey finds that former President Donald Trump has increased his support for the Republican nomination since March. In July, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis is the choice of 22%, down from 25% in May and 35% in March, among all Republicans and independents who lean Republicans and are registered to vote (hereafter "Republican voters"). No other Republican candidate is close to either Trump or DeSantis. Trump's support for the nomination in July is 46%, unchanged from May, but up from 40% in March. The support for each candidate, and the trends since March, are shown in Table 1.

Other headlines

- In a potential rematch of the 2020 presidential election between President Joe Biden and Trump, registered voters were evenly split, with each candidate receiving 50% support.
- When asked about a hypothetical Biden/DeSantis race, registered voters favored DeSantis, 51-48. There is little change since the May survey, but Biden's support among independents saw a modest

increase, from 44% to 51%.
- Approval of how Biden is handling his job as president inched up slightly to 42%, in July, from 39% in May. Disapproval in July was 57%, down from 61% in May.

The latest Marquette Law School Poll's national survey was conducted July 7-12, 2023. The survey interviewed 1,005 adults nationwide and has a margin of error of +/-4 percentage points. The margin of error is +/-4.2 percentage points for registered voters, and +/-5.8 and +/-6.7 percentage points for registered Republican and registered Democratic voters, respectively. Results related to the U.S. Supreme Court from the same survey were released on July 26.

Table 1: Support for Republican 2024 presidential nomination

Among registered Republicans and independents who lean Republican

Candidate	**Poll dates**		
	7/7-12/23	5/8-18/23	3/13-22/23
Donald Trump	46	46	40
Ron DeSantis	22	25	35
Mike Pence	7	2	5
Nikki Haley	6	4	5
Tim Scott	4	1	*
Chris Christie	1	1	*
Vivek Ramaswamy	1	3	–
Asa Hutchinson	1	*	*
Doug Burgum	1	–	–
Larry Elder	*	1	–
Will Hurd	*	–	–
Francis Suarez	0	–	–
Undecided	12	16	12

Marquette Law School Poll, national survey, July 7-12, 2023*less than .5%, – Not included in poll

Candidate	Poll dates		
	7/7-12/23	5/8-18/23	3/13-22/23

Question: Here are some potential candidates for the Republican presidential nomination. If the primary were today, whom would you vote for?

When asked if the choice were only between Trump and DeSantis, 54% of Republican voters say they would vote for Trump and 46% would support DeSantis. DeSantis held an advantage over Trump on this question in late 2022, but Trump overtook DeSantis in May, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: If choice only between Trump or DeSantis

Among registered Republicans and independents who lean Republican

Poll dates	Choice of candidate	
	Donald Trump	Ron DeSantis
7/7-12/23	54	46
5/8-18/23	53	47
3/13-22/23	46	54
1/9-20/23	36	64
11/15-22/22	40	60

Marquette Law School Poll, national survey, July 7-12, 2023

Question: If it were a choice between just the two of them, whom would you prefer as the Republican nominee for president in 2024: Donald Trump or Florida Governor Ron DeSantis? (order of names randomized in survey)

While Trump holds just under 50% of first-choice support, and just over 50% when matched against only DeSantis, he gains little support as a second choice among initial supporters of other candidates. Table 3 shows how votes change from first to second choice among Republican voters. Those who initially prefer a candidate other than Trump or DeSantis are overwhelmingly likely to choose DeSantis rather than Trump as their second choice. Those initially undecided are more evenly split on second choices, with a slight advantage to DeSantis.

Table 3: GOP 2024 2nd choice, by 1st choice

Among registered Republicans and independents who lean Republican

1st choice candidate	2nd choice candidate	
	Trump	DeSantis
Trump	95	5
DeSantis	6	94
Other candidate	18	80
Undecided	45	55

Marquette Law School Poll, national survey, July 7-12, 2023

Question: Here are some potential candidates for the Republican presidential nomination. If the primary were today, whom would you vote for?

Question: If it were a choice between just the two of them, whom would you prefer as the Republican nominee for president in 2024: Donald Trump or Florida Governor Ron DeSantis? (order of names randomized)

GOP candidate favorability

Trump is viewed favorably by 69% of Republican voters and unfavorably by 30%. His favorability rating has consistently held near 70% among Republican voters in recent months, with around 30% unfavorable. There have been a decrease in favorable and an increase in unfavorable ratings, comparing January through July 2022 with the same months in 2023. The full trend is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Favorability rating of Donald Trump

Among registered Republicans and independents who lean Republican

Poll dates	Favorability		
	Favorable	Unfavorable	Haven't heard enough
7/7-12/23	69	30	1
5/8-18/23	72	26	2
3/13-22/23	66	31	2
1/9-20/23	70	28	2

Poll dates	Favorability		
	Favorable	Unfavorable	Haven't heard enough
11/15-22/22	67	32	1
9/7-14/22	74	25	1
7/5-12/22	76	22	2
5/9-19/22	75	22	2
3/14-24/22	75	23	1
1/10-21/22	71	28	1
11/1-10/21	70	29	1

Marquette Law School Poll, national survey, July 7-12, 2023

Question: Do you have a favorable or an unfavorable opinion of the following people or haven't you heard enough yet to have an opinion? . . . Donald Trump

Trump's favorability outpaces his voter-preference figures because of defections by some of those favorable to him and majority opposition among those unfavorable to him. This is shown for the first choice among primary candidates in Table 5. Among those favorable to Trump, Trump receives 64% support, but 21% support DeSantis and 8% another candidate, with 7% undecided. Among those Republican voters unfavorable to him, Trump receives only 4% of the vote, with 22% for DeSantis and 49% for one of the other named candidates, while 26% say they are undecided.

Table 5: GOP 2024 1st choice, by Trump favorability

Among registered Republicans and independents who lean Republican

Trump favorability	1st choice of candidate			
	Trump	DeSantis	Other candidate	Undecided
Favorable	64	21	8	7
Unfavorable	4	21	50	25

Marquette Law School Poll, national survey, July 7-12, 2023

Trump favorability	1st choice of candidate			
	Trump	DeSantis	Other candidate	Undecided

Question: Here are some potential candidates for the Republican presidential nomination. If the primary were today, whom would you vote for?

Republican favorability to DeSantis rose during 2022 and peaked in January 2023. It has been declining slightly since then. His unfavorable ratings have increased over time, reaching 21% in July. Meanwhile, Republican voters have become much more familiar with DeSantis, with those saying they haven't heard enough about him now at 12%. The full trend is shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Favorability rating of Ron DeSantis

Among registered Republicans and independents who lean Republican

Poll dates	Favorability		
	Favorable	Unfavorable	Haven't heard enough
7/7-12/23	67	21	12
5/8-18/23	58	16	26
3/13-22/23	69	15	15
1/9-20/23	71	10	19
11/15-22/22	68	10	22
9/7-14/22	65	10	25
7/5-12/22	62	9	29
5/9-19/22	58	15	27
3/14-24/22	57	7	35
1/10-21/22	57	9	34

Marquette Law School Poll, national survey, July 7-12, 2023

Question: Do you have a favorable or an unfavorable opinion of the following people or haven't you heard enough yet to have an opinion? . . . Ron DeSantis

The July favorability ratings among Republican voters for all 12

Republican candidates included in the survey are shown in Table 7. Many of the candidates remain little known to Republican voters. DeSantis' net favorability is higher than Trump's, thanks to nearly equal favorable ratings and lower unfavorable ratings for DeSantis. More respondents lack an opinion of DeSantis than of Trump.

Table 7: GOP 2024 candidate favorability

Among registered Republicans and independents who lean Republican

Candidate	**Favorability**			
	Net favorable	Favorable	Unfavorable	Haven't heard enough
DeSantis	46	67	21	12
Trump	39	69	30	1
Scott	36	44	8	48
Haley	30	48	18	34
Elder	24	32	8	60
Ramaswamy	20	28	8	64
Pence	-1	44	45	10
Hurd	-2	4	6	90
Hutchinson	-5	11	16	73
Suarez	-6	4	10	86
Burgum	-7	1	8	91
Christie	-35	19	54	27

Marquette Law School Poll, national survey, July 7-12, 2023

Question: Do you have a favorable or an unfavorable opinion of the following people or haven't you heard enough yet to have an opinion?

Democratic candidate favorability

Among registered voters who are Democrats or independents who lean Democratic (hereafter "Democratic voters"), President Joe Biden is the choice for the nomination of 54%, with 14% for Robert F. Kennedy Jr., 6% for Marianne Williamson, and 27% who are undecided. There has been

little change in preferences since May, as shown in Table 8.

Table 8: Support for Democratic 2024 presidential nomination

Among registered Democrats and independents who lean Democratic

Poll dates	**Candidate**			
	Joe Biden	Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.	Marianne Williamson	Undecided
7/7-12/23	54	14	6	27
5/8-18/23	51	13	6	30

Marquette Law School Poll, national survey, July 7-12, 2023

Question: Here are some potential candidates for the Democratic presidential nomination. If the primary were today, whom would you vote for?

Biden's favorability rating among Democratic voters has remained near 80% since 2021, and his unfavorable around 20%, as shown in Table 9. In July, 80% of Democratic voters had a favorable view of Biden and 19% an unfavorable opinion. Biden's favorability among Democrats is some 11 points higher than Trump's favorability among Republicans.

Table 9: Favorability rating of Joe Biden

Among registered Democrats and independents who lean Democratic

Poll dates	**Favorability**		
	Favorable	Unfavorable	Haven't heard enough
7/7-12/23	80	19	1
5/8-18/23	77	21	2
3/13-22/23	78	21	1
1/9-20/23	83	16	1
11/15-22/22	81	17	3
9/7-14/22	84	14	1
7/5-12/22	68	28	4
5/9-19/22	76	19	4

Poll dates	Favorability		
	Favorable	Unfavorable	Haven't heard enough
3/14-24/22	84	15	1
1/10-21/22	82	16	3
11/1-10/21	76	19	5

Marquette Law School Poll, national survey, July 7-12, 2023

Question: Do you have a favorable or an unfavorable opinion of the following people or haven't you heard enough yet to have an opinion?…Joe Biden

2024 general election matchups

When asked if they had to choose between Biden and Trump for president in 2024, 50% of registered voters say they would vote for Biden and 50% would vote for Trump. There is strong party-line voting, with little crossover voting. Among independents, Biden holds a small edge over Trump. Table 10 shows the vote by party identification in the May and July surveys. In May, Trump held a slight advantage in the overall preference. (In this and subsequent tables, partisans include independents who say they are closer to that party than to the other.)

Table 10: Biden vs. Trump vote, with party identification, May and July 2023

Among registered voters

Party ID	Candidate	
	Donald Trump	Joe Biden
July 2023		
Total	50	50
Republican	91	8
Independent	46	53
Democrat	10	90
May 2023		
Total	52	47

Party ID	Candidate	
	Donald Trump	Joe Biden
Republican	93	7
Independent	51	48
Democrat	10	90

Marquette Law School Poll, national survey, July 7-12, 2023

Question: If the 2024 election for president were held today between former President Donald Trump, the Republican, and President Joe Biden, the Democrat, would you vote for Donald Trump or for Joe Biden? (order of names randomized in survey)

In a matchup with DeSantis, DeSantis receives 51% and Biden gets 48%, which is a slight change from May. Biden's support among independents rose in July, as shown in Table 11.

Table 11: Biden vs. DeSantis vote, with party identification, May and July 2023

Among registered voters

Party ID	Candidate	
	Ron DeSantis	Joe Biden
July 2023		
Total	51	48
Republican	92	7
Independent	49	51
Democrat	11	89
May 2023		
Total	52	48
Republican	93	6
Independent	56	44
Democrat	7	93

Marquette Law School Poll, national survey, July 7-12, 2023

Party ID	Candidate	
	Ron DeSantis	Joe Biden

Question: If the 2024 election for president were held today between Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, the Republican, and President Joe Biden, the Democrat, would you vote for Ron DeSantis or for Joe Biden? (order of names randomized in survey)

Classified documents

Among all adults, 65% said they have heard or read a lot about Trump's indictment in Florida, relating to classified documents he is alleged to have kept after leaving office. Twenty-nine percent said they have heard a little and 6% said they have heard nothing at all about the indictment.

The level of attention to news about the indictment was quite similar for Republicans and Democrats, and substantially less among independents, as shown in Table 12.

Table 12: Attention to Trump federal indictment in Florida, related to classified documents, with party identification, July 2023

Among adults

Party ID	Amount heard or read		
	A lot	A little	Nothing at all
Total	65	29	6
Republican	69	28	3
Independent	43	40	16
Democrat	72	25	3

Marquette Law School Poll, national survey, July 7-12, 2023

Question: Here are some recent topics in the news. How much have you heard or read about each of these? . . . Donald Trump being indicted in federal court in Florida

While attention to the indictment was similar among Democrats and Republicans, there are sharp partisan differences in belief whether Trump had classified documents at Mar-a-Lago in Florida. Table 13 shows the

responses by party since September 2022. Republicans are now evenly divided, with 49% saying there were classified documents at Mar-a-Lago and 50% saying there were not. In September 2022, 40% of Republicans said there were such documents and 60% said there were not. Among independents, 78% now say classified documents were present, up from 66% in September 2022. Almost all Democrats, 95%, now say classified documents were present, compared to 91% saying so in September 2022.

Table 13: Did Trump keep classified documents, by poll dates and party ID

Among adults

Party ID	**Were there classified documents**	
	Yes	No
Republican		
7/7-12/23	49	50
1/9-20/23	48	52
11/15-22/22	34	66
9/7-14/22	40	60
Independent		
7/7-12/23	78	19
1/9-20/23	71	26
11/15-22/22	64	36
9/7-14/22	66	34
Democrat		
7/7-12/23	95	5
1/9-20/23	92	8
11/15-22/22	93	7
9/7-14/22	91	9

Marquette Law School Poll, national survey, July 7-12, 2023

Question: Do you believe Donald Trump had top secret and other classified material or national security documents at his home in Mar-a-Lago last year?

Following the search at Mar-a-Lago, classified documents were also found in the homes or offices of Biden and former Vice President Mike Pence.

Respondents were asked if they thought each of the instances represented an illegal action by the individual, something careless but not illegal, or if there was nothing wrong. The results for Trump, Biden, and Pence are shown in Table 14.

Table 14: Was possession of classified documents illegal?

Among adults

Individual	**Posession was…**		
	Illegal	Careless but not illegal	Didn't do anything wrong
Trump	59	28	12
Biden	36	48	16
Pence	21	57	21

Marquette Law School Poll, national survey, July 7-12, 2023

Question: Thinking about each of the following individuals and their handling of classified documents, do you think they did something illegal, they did something careless but not illegal, or they didn't do anything wrong regarding classified documents.

Abortion

Abortion policy remains a salient issue just over a year after the U.S. Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*. More than 60% of adults say they are opposed to the Court's decision, a small decline since November 2022, as shown in Table 15.

Table 15: Favor or oppose overturning *Roe v. Wade*

Among adults

Poll dates	**Overturning Roe v. Wade**	
	Favor	Oppose
7/7-12/23	38	62
5/8-18/23	35	65
3/13-22/23	33	67

Poll dates	Overturning Roe v. Wade	
	Favor	Oppose
1/9-20/23	35	64
11/15-22/22	33	66

Marquette Law School Poll, national survey, July 7-12, 2023

Question: In 2022, the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*, thus striking down the 1973 decision that made abortion legal in all 50 states. How much do you favor or oppose this decision?

There has been little change in opinion on when abortion should be legal or illegal since May 2022, as shown in Table 16. Sixty-five percent say it should be legal in all or most cases, while 34% say it should be illegal in all or most cases. In May 2022, 67% said legal in all or most cases and 32 % said illegal in all or most cases.

Table 16: When should abortion be legal or illegal

Among adults

Poll dates	When legal or illegal			
	Legal in all cases	Legal in most cases	Illegal in most cases	Illegal in all cases
7/7-12/23	29	36	28	6
5/8-18/23	32	36	25	7
3/13-22/23	28	39	27	6
1/9-20/23	26	38	28	8
11/15-22/22	29	36	26	9
9/7-14/22	31	37	26	6
7/5-12/22	28	36	27	8
5/9-19/22	29	38	24	8

Marquette Law School Poll, national survey, July 7-12, 2023

Question: Do you think abortion should be legal in all cases, legal in most cases, illegal in most cases, or illegal in all cases?

The public is closely divided on a national ban on abortions after 15 weeks of pregnancy, with strong partisan differences, as shown in Table 17.

Overall, 47% favor a ban after 15 weeks, while 53% are opposed. Among Republicans, almost three-quarters favor such a ban while among Democrats three-quarters are opposed. Independents are somewhat more opposed to a ban, 56%, with 43% in favor.

Table 17: Favor or oppose a national 15-week ban on abortion, with party identification, July 2023

Among adults

Party ID	**15 week ban**	
	Favor	Oppose
Total	47	53
Republican	73	27
Independent	43	56
Democrat	25	75

Marquette Law School Poll, national survey, July 7-12, 2023

Question: Which of the following proposals would you favor and which would you oppose? . . . Pass a national law banning abortion after 15 weeks of pregnancy

Abortion is one of the most important issues for 38% of adults, and somewhat important for 40%, with 18% saying it is not very important and 4% saying it is not important at all. There has been some decline in the percent who say it is one of the most important issues, from 48% in September 2022 to the current 38%. The full trend is shown in Table 18.

Table 18: How important is the abortion issue to you

Among adults

Poll dates	**How important**			
	One of the most important issues	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not important at all
7/7-12/23	38	40	18	4
9/7-14/22	48	35	12	5

Poll dates	How important			
	One of the most important issues	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not important at all
7/5-12/22	42	39	12	5
5/9-19/22	40	39	15	6

Marquette Law School Poll, national survey, July 7-12, 2023

Question: How important is the abortion issue to you—would you say it is one of the most important, somewhat important, not very important, or not important at all?

The poll asked about how much people have read or heard about a plea agreement by Hunter Biden to misdemeanor charges of tax evasion and an agreement concerning a gun charge. Among adults, 36% said they have heard or read a lot about this, 40% have heard a little, and 23% have heard nothing at all. Attention to this news also varied by party identification, as shown in Table 19, with Republicans more likely to have heard a lot than Democrats, while independents were least likely to have heard a lot.

Table 19: Attention to Hunter Biden plea agreement, with party identification, July 2023

Among adults

Party ID	Amount heard or read		
	A lot	A little	Nothing at all
Total	36	40	23
Republican	44	39	18
Independent	26	31	42
Democrat	33	45	21

Marquette Law School Poll, national survey, July 7-12, 2023

Question: Here are some recent topics in the news. How much have you heard or read about each of these? . . . Hunter Biden's agreement to plead guilty to misdemeanor charges of tax evasion and a gun charge

Presidential job approval

Approval of how Joe Biden is handling his job as president inched up slightly to 42% in July, from 39% in May. Disapproval in July was 57%, down from 61% in May. The full trend for Biden job approval in the Marquette Law School poll is shown in Table 20.

Table 20: Approval of Biden's handling his job as president

Among adults

Poll dates	**Biden job approval**	
	Approve	Disapprove
7/7-12/23	42	57
5/8-18/23	39	61
3/13-22/23	39	61
1/9-20/23	43	56
11/15-22/22	45	55
9/7-14/22	45	55
7/5-12/22	36	64
5/9-19/22	42	57
3/14-24/22	44	55
1/10-21/22	46	53
11/1-10/21	49	51
9/7-16/21	48	52
7/16-26/21	58	42

Marquette Law School Poll, national survey, July 7-12, 2023

Question: Overall, how much do you approve or disapprove of the way Joe Biden is handling his job as president?

About the Marquette Law School Poll

The survey was conducted July 7-12, 2023, interviewing 1,005 adults nationwide, with a margin of error of +/-4 percentage points. For all registered voters, the margin of error is +/-4.2 percentage points. For registered voters who are Republican or independents who lean

Republican, the margin of error is +/-5.8 percentage points and for registered voters who are Democrats or independents who lean Democratic the margin of error is +/-6.7 percentage points. Interviews were conducted using the SSRS Opinion Panel, a national probability sample with interviews conducted online. Certain other data from this survey (focusing on those about public views of the Supreme Court) were released yesterday, on July 26. The detailed methodology statement, survey instrument, topline results, and crosstabs for this release are available at the Marquette Law School Poll website.