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New Marquette Law School Poll national survey finds split opinion on whether Republicans in Congress can unite behind new Speaker McCarthy; Trump and DeSantis improving in hypothetical 2024 matchups against Biden; and DeSantis preferred by Republicans as a candidate over Trump

Please note: Complete Poll results and methodology information can be found online at law.marquette.edu/poll

MILWAUKEE – A new Marquette Law School Poll national survey finds 53% of those polled say they heard or read a lot about the election of a new Speaker of the House of Representatives, while 29% say they heard a little and 18% heard nothing at all.

Republicans and Democrats were about equally likely to say they had heard a lot about the election of the new speaker, Rep. Kevin McCarthy, while independents were about half as likely to have heard a lot, as shown in [Table 1](#). (All results in the tables are stated as percentages; the precise wording of the questions can be found in the online link noted above.)

Table 1: The election of a new Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives (Here are some recent topics in the news. How much have you heard or read about each of these?)

Party ID	A lot	A little	Nothing at all
Total	53	29	18
Republican	56	29	15
Independent	28	35	37
Democrat	60	26	14

This Marquette Law School Poll was conducted Jan. 9-20, 2023. The survey interviewed 1,000 adults nationwide and has a margin of error of +/-3.8 percentage points.

Among all respondents, 41% say they think the Republicans in the House can unite to govern effectively after the prolonged voting for speaker, while 58% believe Republicans cannot unite. Republicans are much more positive about the prospect for party unity than are independents and Democrats, as shown in [Table 2](#).

Table 2: Do you think the Republicans in the House of Representatives can unite to govern effectively, or were the divisions over the election of a Speaker of the House an indication that they cannot unite to govern effectively?

Party ID	Can unite	Cannot unite	Skipped/Ref
Total	41	58	0
Republican	67	33	0
Independent	32	66	2
Democrat	20	80	0

McCarthy is not yet well known to many Americans, with 39% saying they don't know enough to have an opinion of him. He is viewed favorably by 19% and unfavorably by 42%. Republicans are much more favorable to McCarthy than are independents or Democrats, but it is notable that fewer Democrats lack an opinion of McCarthy than do Republicans, as shown in [Table 3](#).

Table 3: Kevin McCarthy: Do you have a favorable or an unfavorable opinion of the following people or haven't you heard enough yet to have an opinion?

Party ID	Favorable opinion	Unfavorable opinion	Haven't heard enough
Total	19	42	39
Republican	38	20	43
Independent	5	31	61
Democrat	6	67	27

Former Speaker Nancy Pelosi is better known than McCarthy, with only 12% saying they don't know enough to have an opinion of Pelosi. She is seen favorably by 31% and unfavorably by 57%. There are sharp partisan differences in views of Pelosi, as shown in [Table 4](#). While the difference is small, Republicans are slightly more likely to have an opinion of Pelosi than are Democrats.

Table 4: Nancy Pelosi: Do you have a favorable or an unfavorable opinion of the following people or haven't you heard enough yet to have an opinion?

Party ID	Favorable opinion	Unfavorable opinion	Haven't heard enough
Total	31	57	12
Republican	3	92	5
Independent	21	44	33
Democrat	61	30	9

With a divided Congress, we find that approval of the Republican House majority and Democratic Senate majority is virtually identical, but partisan differences are quite large. Forty-two percent approve of how the House Republican majority is handling its job, while 43% approve of how the Senate Democratic majority is doing its. [Table 5](#) shows approval of the House and Senate majorities by party identification.

Table 5: Approval of House and Senate majority party performance

(a) Overall, how much do you approve or disapprove of the way the Republican majority in the House of Representatives is handling its job?

Party ID	Approve	Disapprove
Total	42	57
Republican	71	28
Independent	30	64
Democrat	19	81

(b) Overall, how much do you approve or disapprove of the way the Democratic majority in the U.S. Senate is handling its job?

Party ID	Approve	Disapprove
Total	43	56
Republican	8	92
Independent	31	64
Democrat	80	20

Ukraine

Thirty-two percent say they have heard or read a lot about Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's speech to a joint session of the U.S. Congress on Dec. 21, while 43% have heard a little and 25% have heard nothing at all. Democrats were slightly more likely to have heard a lot than Republicans, while independents were much less likely to have heard much, as shown in [Table 6](#).

Table 6: Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's speech to a joint session of the U.S. Congress: Here are some recent topics in the news. How much have you heard or read about each of these?

Party ID	A lot	A little	Nothing at all
Total	32	43	25
Republican	31	46	24
Independent	18	40	42
Democrat	38	43	20

Awareness of news about the Russian invasion of Ukraine is much higher, with 69% having heard a lot about this, 26% a little, and 4% nothing at all. There is little difference in awareness of the Russian invasion between Democrats and Republicans, although independents are considerably less attentive to this topic, as shown in [Table 7](#).

Table 7: The Russian invasion of Ukraine: Here are some recent topics in the news. How much have you heard or read about each of these?

Party ID	A lot	A little	Nothing at all
Total	69	26	4
Republican	73	24	2
Independent	49	37	14
Democrat	74	24	2

U.S. military aid to Ukraine has emerged as an issue with a partisan divide in recent months. In January, 29% say the U.S. is providing too much support to Ukraine, 24% say the U.S. is not giving enough support, and 46% say the U.S. is giving the right amount of aid. These opinions are only slightly changed from November, as shown in [Table 8](#).

Table 8: When it comes to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, do you think the United States is providing too much support to Ukraine, not enough support to Ukraine, or about the right amount of support to Ukraine?

Poll dates	Too much support	Not enough support	About the right amount of support
11/15-22/22	32	23	45
1/9-20/23	29	24	46

[Table 9](#) shows partisan differences on aid to Ukraine in the January poll. Just under half of Republicans, 47%, say the U.S. is providing too much aid, while 25% of independents and 14% of Democrats agree.

Table 9: When it comes to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, do you think the United States is providing too much support to Ukraine, not enough support to Ukraine, or about the right amount of support to Ukraine?

Party ID	Too much support	Not enough support	About the right amount of support
Total	29	24	46
Republican	47	15	38
Independent	25	33	39
Democrat	14	29	57

A majority of respondents say that what happens in the Ukraine conflict matters a great deal or some to life in the U.S., while about a quarter say it matters not much or not at all, as shown in [Table 10](#). There are modest partisan differences on this question, but large majorities of all partisan camps say that it matters either a great deal or some to the U.S.

Table 10: How much do you think what happens in the Russia-Ukraine conflict matters to life in the United States?

Party ID	A great deal	Some	Not much	Not at all
Total	31	47	16	7
Republican	24	49	18	9
Independent	29	46	17	8
Democrat	37	46	13	4

On the more general question of U.S. involvement in world affairs, 59% say it is better for the country to take an active part, while 41% say the U.S. should stay out of world affairs. Independents are especially skeptical of U.S. involvement in the world, with 54% saying we should stay out and a minority, 42%, saying we should take an active part. Republicans are evenly split on this nation’s international involvement, and Democrats are substantially in favor of a U.S. role in the world, as shown in [Table 11](#).

Table 11: Do you think it will be better for the future of the country if we take an active part in world affairs, or if we stay out of world affairs?

Party ID	Take an active part in world affairs	Stay out of world affairs
Total	59	41
Republican	50	50
Independent	42	54
Democrat	73	27

Favorability to political figures

While the 2024 presidential primaries remain a year away, public perception of possible candidates helps to understand the dynamics of the coming election. [Table 12](#) shows the favorability ratings of five Republicans, including two prominent governors. This table is based on answers from registered voters who are Republicans or independents who say they lean to the Republican party. The margin of error for Republican registered voters is +/-6.1 percentage points.

Former President Donald Trump is by far the best known, with former Vice President Mike Pence and Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis the next best known. Despite his higher rate of “haven’t heard enough,” DeSantis has a favorability rating one point higher than Trump. The two governors, including Georgia Gov. Brian Kemp, despite impressive wins in the November midterms, are far less well known, though with positive net favorability among those with an opinion.

Table 12: Favorability to Republican political figures, among registered voters who are Republicans or independents who lean Republican

Person	Favorable	Unfavorable	Haven’t heard enough
Donald Trump	70	28	2
Mike Pence	53	33	14
Ron DeSantis	71	10	19
Greg Abbott	46	7	46
Brian Kemp	23	10	67

On the Democratic side, President Joe Biden is nearly universally known, followed by Vice President Kamala Harris and Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, with other Democrats less well known, as shown in [Table 13](#). Here, the table is based on registered voters who are Democrats or are independents who say they lean Democratic. The margin of error for Democratic registered voters is +/-6.1 percentage points.

Table 13: Favorability to Democratic political figures, among registered voters who are Democrats or independents who lean Democrat

Person	Favorable	Unfavorable	Haven't heard enough
Joe Biden	83	16	1
Kamala Harris	67	23	10
Bernie Sanders	75	14	11
Pete Buttigieg	53	13	34
Gretchen Whitmer	35	10	54

Biden has a very high favorable rating among Democrats, some 13 points higher than Trump's favorability with Republicans. Harris and Sanders are equally well known, with a slightly higher favorability for Sanders. U.S. Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg is less well known, and Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer much less well known. All these Democrats have strong net favorability among these partisan voters.

Outlook for 2024

DeSantis has pulled ahead of Biden in a hypothetical 2024 matchup, with 45% support for DeSantis and 38% support for Biden. DeSantis has increased his support in polling since January 2022, while Biden's support has declined in this poll. Some 17% say they would prefer someone else or would not vote. The trend in support is shown in [Table 14](#). The margin of error for all registered voters is +/- 4 percentage points.

Table 14: 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]? (among registered voters)

Poll dates	Ron DeSantis	Joe Biden	Someone else	Wouldn't vote
1/10-21/22	34	43	17	5
3/14-24/22	35	39	19	5
9/7-14/22	38	43	15	5
11/15-22/22	42	42	11	4
1/9-20/23	45	38	13	4

In this poll, Trump has improved his standing against Biden; that matchup is tied with 40% for each of them. About 20% say they prefer someone else or would not vote. The trend in preference between Biden and Trump is shown in [Table 15](#).

Table 15: 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]? (among registered voters)

Poll dates	Donald Trump	Joe Biden	Someone else	Wouldn't vote
11/1-10/21	35	43	18	4
1/10-21/22	33	45	18	4
3/14-24/22	38	43	16	4
9/7-14/22	36	42	19	3
11/15-22/22	34	44	19	4
1/9-20/23	40	40	17	3

Both Republicans and Democrats are divided over Trump and Biden as their party's nominees in 2024. Among Republicans and independents who lean Republican (hereafter "Republicans"), 52% would like to see Trump run in 2024, while 48% said they would not like him to run. (Trump announced his candidacy for the 2024 Republican nomination on Nov. 15.) In the November Marquette poll, 55% wanted Trump to run and 45% did not. The full trend since Nov. 2021 is shown in [Table 16](#).

Table 16: Would you like to see Donald Trump run for president in 2024, or not? (among registered voters who are Republicans or independents who lean Republican)

Poll dates	Yes	No
11/1-10/21	60	40
1/10-21/22	56	44
3/14-24/22	61	39
5/9-19/22	61	38
7/5-12/22	64	35
9/7-14/22	60	40
11/15-22/22	55	45
1/9-20/23	52	48

Among registered Republican voters, 64% say they would like Ron DeSantis to run for president in 2024, while 34% would not like him to run. This gives DeSantis higher support than Trump for a presidential bid among Republican voters. This is the first time this question has been asked about DeSantis.

While it is likely there will be a number of Republican candidates for the 2024 nomination, when asked about a choice between only Trump and DeSantis, 64% prefer DeSantis and 36% prefer Trump.

There are small differences in support for Trump and DeSantis among Republican registered voters, with the subgroup of those who identify as "Republican" a bit more supportive of Trump and less of DeSantis *relative* to other groups of Republicans. Those who identify as "independent" but say they lean to the Republican party are a few points more supportive of DeSantis relative to other subgroups. Yet all subgroups give majority support to DeSantis, as shown in Table 17.

Table 17: 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 [Ron DeSantis]? (among registered voters who are Republicans or independents who lean Republican)

Republican identification	Donald Trump	Ron DeSantis
All Republicans & Leaners	36	64
Republican	38	62
Lean Republican	31	68

Among registered voters who are Democrats or independents who lean Democratic, 49% would like to see Biden run in 2024 and 51% would not. There has been little change in support for a Biden candidacy, as shown in [Table 18](#). It is notable that Democrats are evenly split on this question, despite the more than 80% favorability rating they give Biden in Table 13 above.

Table 18: Would you like to see Joe Biden run for president in 2024, or not? (among registered voters who are Democrats or independents who lean Democratic)

Poll dates	Yes	No
9/7-14/22	44	56
11/15-22/22	49	51
1/9-20/23	49	51

Confidence in the 2022 and 2020 elections

Sixty-five percent say they are very or somewhat confident in the accuracy of the 2022 elections, while 34% are not too or not at all confident in the results. Republicans remain less confident in election outcomes than independents or Democrats, as shown in [Table 19](#).

Table 19: How confident are you that, across the country, the votes for state and national offices were accurately cast and counted in the elections this November 2022?

Party ID	Very confident	Somewhat confident	Not too confident	Not at all confident
Total	35	30	23	11
Republican	10	31	38	21
Independent	15	35	34	13
Democrat	67	28	3	1

Doubts about the 2020 election, especially among Republicans, are higher than for the 2022 vote, but majorities of all adults believe that both elections were accurately cast and counted. [Table 20](#) shows confidence in the 2020 election and by party.

Table 20: How confident are you that, across the country, the votes for president were accurately cast and counted in the 2020 election?

Party ID	Very confident	Somewhat confident	Not too confident	Not at all confident
Total	37	22	22	18
Republican	8	22	35	35
Independent	18	29	34	16
Democrat	71	21	5	2

Biden job approval

Biden’s job approval dipped by two points since November, with 43% approval and 56% disapproval. The trend in presidential approval since July 2021 is shown in [Table 21](#).

News that classified documents had been found in Biden’s University of Pennsylvania office broke on Jan. 9, as this poll began interviewing. On Jan. 12, the Justice Department appointed a special counsel to investigate “possible unauthorized removal and retention of classified documents or other records.” These developments came too late for inclusion in questions in this survey, although the news may have affected Biden’s approval rating during interviewing from Jan. 9-20.

Table 21: Overall, how much do you approve or disapprove of the way Joe Biden is handling his job as president?

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

House Select Committee on Jan. 6

The House Select Committee on Jan. 6 issued its final report on Dec. 22. In the January poll, 30% of respondents said they had heard a lot about the report, 45% said they heard a little, and 25% said they heard nothing at all.

Since July, there has been no change in perception whether the House committee has presented convincing evidence that Trump sought to delay certification of the election results, as shown in [Table 22](#).

Table 22: Has the House Select Committee on January 6th presented convincing evidence that Donald Trump sought to prevent or delay certification of the results of the 2020 presidential election, or has the evidence not been convincing?

Poll dates	Has been convincing	Has not been convincing
7/5-12/22	52	48
9/7-14/22	52	48
1/9-20/23	52	48

There has been only slightly more change in the belief that Trump bears responsibility for the violence of some of his supporters on Jan. 6, 2021, with a five-point decline in the percentage saying he bears a lot of responsibility.

Table 23: How much responsibility, if any, should Donald Trump bear for the violence of some of his supporters in the United States Capitol on January 6, 2021?

Poll dates	A lot	A little	None at all
7/5-12/22	52	18	30
9/7-14/22	50	19	30
1/9-20/23	47	22	31

About the Marquette Law School Poll

The survey was conducted Jan. 9-20, 2023, interviewing 1,000 adults nationwide, with a margin of error of +/- 3.8 percentage points, and 876 registered voters, with a margin of error of +/- 4 percentage points. The registered voter Republican subsample of 382 respondents has a margin of error of +/-6.1 percentage points, and the registered voter Democratic subsample of 392 respondents has a margin of error is +/-6.1 percentage points.

Certain other data from this survey (those about public views of the Supreme Court) were released yesterday, Jan. 25, and can be found on the Marquette Law School Poll website.

Interviews were conducted using the SSRS Opinion Panel, a national probability sample with interviews conducted online. The detailed methodology statement, survey instrument, topline results, and crosstabs for this release are [available online](#).

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