



September 14, 2015

Anti-Choice Positions Can Hurt Republican Presidential Candidates With Independent Voters in Battleground States

Key Survey Findings

To: Interested Parties

From: Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research

A new NARAL Pro-Choice America survey¹ shows that the positions and statements the leading Republicans candidates are taking on abortion is making independent voters in key battleground states less likely to support them.

The poll highlights a critical bloc of voters who strongly support abortion rights and reject the anti-choice positions of Republican presidential contenders. While abortion will not be the only issue these independent voters consider as they make their voting decision for President, it is certainly one that can have electoral consequences for anti-choice Republicans.

- **Independent voters reject the anti-choice position of every Republican candidate tested, regardless of their attempts to moderate. Moreover, they would reward a candidate who trusts women to make decisions that are best for themselves and their families.** The table on the following page highlights that any candidate who wants to ban abortion is much more likely to lose ground among these independents than gain votes.

Even a position allowing for exceptions fails to bring anti-choice candidates into alignment with independent voters on the issue of abortion; Donald Trump and Jeb Bush's anti-choice position of exceptions only in cases of rape, incest and life of the woman is more likely to incite blowback from these voters than to earn support, by a double-digit margin.

¹ On behalf of NARAL Pro-Choice America, Greenberg Quinlan Rosner conducted a survey among self-identified Independents likely to vote in the November 2016 general election. The poll reached 800 respondents via Interactive Voice Response technology and was conducted September 8th-13th, 2015. The sample is subject to a margin of error of +/-3.5 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence interval; margin of error is higher among subgroups.

By contrast, when given the position of other candidates who say “we should trust women to make the decision about their pregnancy options that is best for themselves and their families, without interference by the government,” 65 percent report it would make them more likely to support that candidate—double the positive response of any anti-choice candidate tested.

Figure 1: Potential Change in Support by Position on Abortion, Percent Responding

	More likely to Support	Less Likely To Support
(SPLIT C – ½ SAMPLE) Marco Rubio wants to ban abortions in all circumstances, including cases of rape, incest, and when the life or health of the woman is in danger	14%	69%
(SPLIT D – ½ SAMPLE) Scott Walker wants to ban abortions in all circumstances, including cases of rape, incest, and when the life or health of the woman is in danger	16%	60%
Ben Carson wants to ban abortion in all circumstances, with an exception for cases when the life of the woman is in danger.	28%	52%
(SPLIT B – ½ SAMPLE) Jeb Bush wants to ban abortion in all circumstances, with exceptions for cases of rape, incest, and when the life of the woman is in danger	29%	50%
(SPLIT A – ½ SAMPLE) Donald Trump wants to ban abortion in all circumstances, with exceptions for cases of rape, incest, and when the life of the woman is in danger.	33%	44%
Other candidates say we should trust women to make the decision about their pregnancy options that is best for themselves and their families, without interference by the government.	65%	18%

For each statement, press 1 if that candidate's position on abortion would make you more likely to support them for President; press 2 if that candidate's position on abortion would make you less likely to support them for President; press 9 if you are not sure.

- **More than Seven-in-Ten independent voters in these states believe abortion should be legal.** The table below shows that 74 percent of independent likely voters believe that abortion should be legal; this includes essentially equal numbers of men and women, as well as younger and older voters.

Figure 2: Position/Views on Abortion, Percentage Responding

	Total
Abortion is acceptable and should be legal	33%
Personally against abortion for myself and my family, but I don't believe government should prevent a woman from making that decision for herself.	41%
Abortion is wrong and should be illegal	19%

74%

If you believe having an abortion is acceptable and should be legal, press one. If you are personally against abortion for yourself and your family, but do not believe government should prevent a woman from making that decision for herself, press two. If you believe having an abortion is wrong and should be illegal, press three. If you are not sure, press nine.