



behavior research center's
Rocky Mountain Poll

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**McCAIN WIDENS HIS PRIMARY LEAD AMONG GOP VOTERS -
DEMOCRAT ANN KIRKPATRICK TIED WITH McCAIN**

Phoenix, Arizona, February 1, 2016. Incumbent U.S. Senator John McCain remains comfortably ahead of would-be challengers in the GOP primary election. Although he leads his closest challenger by four to one, half of Republican voters remain uncommitted or are leaning toward other GOP contestants such as Kelli Ward, Clair Steenwyk, Alex McLuskey and David Pizer. The continuing lack of GOP voter certainty as to whether they will re-nominate the well-known and storied incumbent McCain to be the party's banner carrier is most noticeable among younger Republicans and those in Pima County, where Kelli Ward shows above average strength.

Of the four GOP candidates we tested against McCain, only Kelli Ward stands out as potentially a significant primary challenger, attracting 11 percent of the GOP test vote, compared to the 12 percent she garnered in November. John McCain has 50 percent which basically means that half of GOP voters remain unsure whether they think he deserves re-nomination or are already leaning toward other GOP candidates. Among Independent voters with an interest in voting in the GOP primary election, McCain is noticeable less popular, but still ahead, with 32 percent of the test vote. His lower appeal among Independents does not trace to greater appeal of his GOP competitors, but to the fact that 54 percent of Independents remain undecided.

The findings outlined in this report are based on a statewide survey of 590 registered voters. It was conducted between January 6 and January 17, 2016 by the Behavior Research Center of Arizona and is part of the Center's Independent and non-nonpartisan Rocky Mountain Poll Series. All interviewing was conducted via telephone by professional interviewers. The public is welcome to visit www.BRCpolls.com for this and other polls.

When we turned our attention to the potential vote in the general election next November, assuming John McCain and Ann Kirkpatrick win their respective primaries, we found that the six point advantage McCain enjoyed in November has now shrunk to only one percentage point ... which means it is statistically a dead heat. McCain now has 38 percent (compared to 37 percent in November 2015) while Kirkpatrick has 37 percent (up from 31 percent in November). The improvement in Kirkpatrick's vote

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appears to trace significantly to her growing popularity with Hispanics, rural and younger voters. Currently, McCain is losing a fifth of the GOP vote to Kirkpatrick and 40 percent of the Independent vote.

The lack of surety about how they may vote in a general election remains surprisingly wide spread, affecting 26 percent of Democrats, 19 percent of Republicans and fully 30 percent of Independents.

Ann Kirkpatrick is as yet not as well-known to Arizona voters as is John McCain, but as voters become more aware of her, she seems to be gaining some ground. This momentum may continue for her if she continues to take early opportunities to elevate awareness among voters of her platform and background, rather than waiting until after the primary or after the powerful and well-funded campaigns of McCain and GOP-leaning super pacts start to run commercials to define her in negative ways. There can be little doubt that McCain will be well-funded and he has proven many times that he is a skilled and articulate candidate.

Kirkpatrick has gained a leg up among Hispanic voters: Kirkpatrick is currently attracting 49 percent of that vote while McCain has 32 percent. This is a significant improvement for her from November when she appealed to only 33 percent of Hispanics.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: This Rocky Mountain Poll - Arizona (2016-I-01), is based on 590 interviews with Arizona registered voters, (221 Republican, 192 Democrats and 177 Independents) conducted between January 7 and January 17, 2015. Interviewing was conducted in both English and Spanish by professional interviewers of the Behavior Research Center on both land lines and cell phones. Where necessary, figures for age, sex, and race were weighted to bring them into line with their actual proportion in the population. In a sample of this size, one can say with a 95 percent certainty that the results have a statistical precision of plus or minus 4.1 percent of what they would have been had the entire adult voter population been surveyed and plus or minus 6.7 percent among Republican voters. The Rocky Mountain Poll is conducted by the Behavior Research Center of Arizona and is an independent and non-partisan research program sponsored by the Center.

This statement conforms to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

ENCLOSED: Statistical Tables

STATISTICAL DATA

Behavior Research Center
Rocky Mountain Poll - Arizona

For this and other polls, see www.brcpolls.com/results.

RMP 2016-I-01

“If the Republican primary election for U.S. Senate were being held today, which of the following candidates would you vote for?” (LIST OF CANDIDATES RANDOMLY ROTATED)

	TOTAL	Republicans	Independents
John McCain	47%	50%	32%
Kelli Ward	11	11	10
Clair Van Steenwyk	1	*	2
Alex McLuskey	1	1	0
David Pizer	1	1	2
Uncommitted	<u>39</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>54</u>
	100%	100%	100%

“If the 2016 general election for U.S. Senator from Arizona were being held today, which of the following candidates would you vote for?” (LIST OF CANDIDATES RANDOMLY ROTATED)

	Republican John McCain	Democrat Ann Kirkpatrick	Uncommitted
Statewide January 2016	38%	37%	25%
Statewide Nov. 2015	37	31	32
<u>Jan 2016 Detail</u>			
Maricopa	41	36	23
Pima	44	30	26
Rural	30	42	28
Democrats	25	49	26
Republicans	59	22	19
Independents	30	40	30
Hispanics	32	49	19
Non-Hispanic minorities	37	35	28
Under 35	33	40	27
35 to 54	41	32	27
55+	40	38	22