

To: J Street
From: GBA Strategies
Date: November 9, 2016

2016 Post-Election Jewish Surveys Summary Findings *National and Florida Surveys of Jewish Voters*

The 2016 election results underscore the deep cultural division in the United States, and election night surveys of Jewish voters – nationally and in Florida – show that American Jews identify clearly with the progressive side of this national divide.¹ On a variety of measures, Jewish voters express liberal values, support for assertive American leadership on Middle East peace efforts, opposition to Donald Trump and his views, and continued backing of the Democratic Party and its leadership.

Hillary Clinton’s 70 to 25 percent margin among Jewish voters nationally is consistent with the historical performance among Democratic presidential candidates. Her support spanned the entire Jewish electorate, winning majorities of Jewish voters across age, education, denomination, and region. Jewish voters also express a deep opposition to Trump personally (18 percent favorable/72 percent unfavorable), yet say their vote for Clinton was a vote *for* her, and not a vote against Trump.

The economy, ISIS and terrorism, and health care were the top issues driving the national Jewish vote, and Israel and Iran were not important factors in their vote (9 percent cited Israel and 2 percent cited Iran as one of their top two issues determining their vote). Jewish voters overwhelmingly supported Clinton over Trump on all these issues, and a large majority (63 percent) support the nuclear agreement reached by the U.S., Iran, and other countries last year. Even though Israel is not a top issue driving their vote, Jews do care deeply about Israel and they strongly support a two-state solution (77 percent), a detailed final status agreement (70 percent), and the prospect of a major speech by President Obama outlining his vision for a peace agreement before he leaves office (69 percent).

Our election night study paid particular attention to Florida Jewish voters, who chose Clinton by a 40-point margin (68 to 28 percent), which is highly comparable to President Obama’s 68 to 31 percent margin. The Florida results find that Jews in Florida largely reflect the same political beliefs and values as Jews across the United States. They hold positive feelings toward Clinton and negative feelings toward Trump, they support the Iran agreement and oppose Trump’s proposed ban on Muslims, and Israel is low on their list of voting priorities. America’s

¹ GBA Strategies conducted 2 surveys on November 8, 2016: 1) national survey of 731 Jewish voters; 2) Florida statewide survey of 500 Jewish voters. The methodology for these surveys is detailed at the end of this memo. The full survey results can be accessed at jstreet.org.

culture war is certainly alive in Florida, and the state's Jewish voters are firmly in the progressive camp.

Key Findings – Political Landscape

- **President Obama finishes his time in office with very high approval and favorability ratings.** Obama's 70 percent job approval among Jews is 17 points higher than his national exit poll job approval rating among the general U.S. population, and exceeds the 13-15 point gap that has existed throughout his presidency. He is also personally well-liked by Jewish voters (58 percent favorable/31 percent unfavorable), making him the most popular public figure tested in our survey, including Prime Minister Netanyahu who has a 41 percent favorable/28 percent unfavorable rating.
- **Jewish voters maintain a consistent level of support for Democratic presidential candidates.** Hillary Clinton's 70 to 25 percent margin among American Jews matches the 70 percent average vote share that Democratic candidates have received since exit polling began in 1972. Clinton's 40-point victory among Florida Jews (68 to 28 percent) is strikingly similar to Obama's 68 to 31 percent performance in 2012, and reflects the fundamental structure of the Jewish vote in both America and in Florida.
- **The Jewish connection to the Democratic Party and their opposition to the Republican Party run deep.** A majority of Jews (62 percent) voted in the Democratic presidential primary, they voted 70 to 29 percent Democratic for Congress, and they hold a 50 percent favorable/34 percent unfavorable view of the Democratic Party. Only 18 percent voted in the Republican presidential primary, and they hold very negative views toward the Republican Party (17 percent favorable/65 percent unfavorable) and Donald Trump (18 percent favorable/72 percent unfavorable).

Key Findings – Issues Environment

- **Jewish voters went to the polls in 2016 focused on the economy, ISIS and terrorism, and health care.** The economy stands out as the top voting priority (cited by 35 percent), followed by ISIS and terrorism (27 percent), and health care (27 percent). The second tier of issue priorities includes the Supreme Court (18 percent), Social Security and Medicare (18 percent), and immigration (15 percent). As we have seen in previous election night surveys of Jewish voters, Israel (9 percent) and Iran (2 percent) are at the bottom tier of issue priorities.

Florida Jewish voters express the same issue priorities as Jews nationally, except for the Supreme Court, which is the top issue (34 percent) in this evenly divided state. The economy (33 percent), ISIS and terrorism (22 percent), and health care

(22 percent) were the other top issues in Florida, while Israel (8 percent) and Iran (2 percent) were lower tier issues.

- **There is a progressive consensus on numerous issues related to the Middle East and the 2016 campaign.** Even though Jewish voters do not prioritize issues like Iran and Israel, they hold firm positions on these high profile issues.
 - ✓ **Iran.** The Iran agreement receives 63 percent support/37 percent opposition among American Jews, which is significantly greater than support among the general U.S. population (45 percent support/44 percent oppose in the most recent Washington Post asking of the question in October 2015). When provided more detailed language about the agreement, Jewish support grows to 66 percent and opposition drops to 34 percent.
 - ✓ **Peace Agreement.** When presented with a final status agreement that includes a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza, a return to the 1967 borders with land swaps, Jewish neighborhoods and the Western Wall in Jerusalem remaining under Israeli control while Arab neighborhoods in Jerusalem become part of the new Palestinian state, and financial compensation for Palestinian refugees and some return of refugees to Israel, 70 percent of Jewish voters support the agreement. This level of support is essentially unchanged from the 72 percent support in our 2012 election night survey. Additionally, if the UN Security Council proposes a resolution calling on Israelis and Palestinians to make compromises to reach a peace agreement, 57 percent of Jewish voters think the U.S. should support this resolution, 21 percent think the U.S. should abstain, and 12 percent think the U.S. should veto it.
 - ✓ **U.S. Role in Peacemaking.** There is broad support for the U.S. to play an active role in bringing the parties together to resolve the conflict even if it means publicly stating disagreements (65 percent support) or exerting pressure on both Israelis and Arabs (69 percent support). These results have been fairly stable since we began asking these questions 8 years ago. Jewish voters also express strong support (69 percent) for the idea of President Obama delivering a major speech before leaving office to outline his vision for what Israelis and Palestinians must do to reach a peace agreement.
 - ✓ **Israeli Settlements in the West Bank.** Only 22 percent of Jewish voters believe that Israel should build Israeli settlements in any area of the West Bank that it wants, whereas 28 percent want Israel to suspend all construction of Israeli settlements in the West Bank and 50 percent think Israel should suspend construction outside existing settlement blocs while continuing construction in areas that are already developed. When asked

whether the U.S. should support a UN Security Council resolution calling on Israel to stop building settlements in the West Bank, 31 percent say the U.S. should support the resolution, 31 percent want the U.S. to abstain, and 27 percent want the U.S. to veto it.

- ✓ **Syrian Refugees and Muslim Ban.** A large majority (63 percent) of American Jewish voters support allowing Syrian refugees to seek asylum in the United States. In Florida, 76 percent of Jewish voters oppose temporarily banning Muslims from other countries entering the United States.

GBA Strategies designed the questionnaire for these two surveys conducted November 8, 2016. The national survey of 731 self-identified Jewish voters in the 2016 election has a margin of error of +/- 3.6 percent. GBA Strategies contracted the research company Mountain West Research Center to administer the national survey by email invitation to its web-based panel, which is regularly updated and consists of over 3 million Americans.

The Florida survey of 500 self-identified Jewish voters each has a margin of error of +/- 4.4 percent and was conducted by landlines and cell phones, calling a random sample of registered voters with distinctive Jewish names.

In both the national and statewide surveys, respondents were asked at the beginning of the survey whether they consider themselves Jewish.

The full survey results, including full question wording and crosstabs are available at jstreet.org.