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McCrorry potentially vulnerable to Tea Party challenge

Raleigh, N.C. – Despite his generally moderate image as Charlotte’s seven-term mayor, few North Carolina Republicans (14%) see Pat McCrorry as being too liberal for their taste, while a 53% majority see his views as “about right.” Indeed, a solid 47% of his party’s usual primary voters have a favorable opinion of him, to only 12% with a negative view. But almost as many (41%) have no opinion about him as have a positive one, even after he ran statewide just over two years ago, and 26% are also not sure what they consider his ideology to be.

So while McCrorry’s base is seemingly satisfied with his worldview, his return to relative anonymity certainly leaves room for a redefinition of his issue positions if someone to his right were to challenge him for the 2012 gubernatorial nod. No establishment Republican like McCrorry, no matter how conservative, can feel secure in locking up the GOP’s nomination in this Tea-Party climate. When asked how they would vote in a hypothetical gubernatorial primary next spring between McCrorry and a more conservative challenger, 43% choose the latter and only 29% opt for their 2008 nominee. Nearly as many, 28%, are not sure how they would vote.

“Pat McCrorry winning the Republican nomination for Governor is being treated as inevitable right now,” said Dean Debnam, President of Public Policy Polling. “But the same could have been said of Mike Castle, Lisa Murkowski, Sue Lowden, and Trey Grayson, all establishment Republicans who ended up losing to Tea Party challengers last year. There is some appetite among Republicans for a nominee further right than McCrorry, the question is just whether someone serious will challenge him to give voters that option.”

In the presidential contest, Mitt Romney has jumped into a second-place tie with Newt Gingrich, at 18%, but both still trail last month’s returning leader, Mike Huckabee, who has declined from 27% to 24%. Sarah Palin remains at 16%, now in fourth instead of third place. In January, Romney had only 11% of the vote. Way back, with no more than a third of the frontrunners’ support, are Ron Paul (6%), Tim Pawlenty (5%), Mitch Daniels (2%), and John Thune (1%), who has since declared he will not run for president. 11% are undecided or favor an unnamed option.

PPP surveyed 400 usual North Carolina Republican primary voters from February 16th to 21st. The survey’s margin of error is +/-4.9%. Other factors, such as refusal to be interviewed and weighting, may introduce additional error that is more difficult to quantify.

[Complete results are attached, and can be found at www.publicpolicypolling.com.](http://www.publicpolicypolling.com)



North Carolina Survey Results

Q1 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Newt Gingrich?

Favorable..... 55%
Unfavorable 25%
Not sure 20%

Q2 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Mike Huckabee?

Favorable..... 68%
Unfavorable 19%
Not sure 14%

Q3 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Sarah Palin?

Favorable..... 69%
Unfavorable 24%
Not sure 7%

Q4 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Mitt Romney?

Favorable..... 56%
Unfavorable 24%
Not sure 20%

Q5 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Pat McCrory?

Favorable..... 47%
Unfavorable 12%
Not sure 41%

Q6 If the Republican candidates for President next year were Mitch Daniels, Newt Gingrich, Mike Huckabee, Sarah Palin, Ron Paul, Tim Pawlenty, Mitt Romney, and John Thune who would you vote for?

Mitch Daniels 2%
Newt Gingrich 18%
Mike Huckabee 24%
Sarah Palin 16%
Ron Paul..... 6%
Tim Pawlenty 5%
Mitt Romney..... 18%
John Thune..... 1%
Someone else/Undecided..... 11%

Q7 Do you think Pat McCrory is too liberal, too conservative, or about right?

Too liberal 14%
Too conservative..... 7%
About right 53%
Not sure 26%

Q8 If the Republican primary for governor next year were between Pat McCrory and a more conservative challenger, who would you vote for?

Pat McCrory..... 29%
More conservative challenger 43%
Not sure 28%

Q9 If you are a woman, press 1. If a man, press 2.

Woman 48%
Man..... 52%



Q10 If you are 18 to 29 years old, press 1. If 30 to 45, press 2. If 46 to 65, press 3. If you are older than 65, press 4.

18 to 29.....	6%
30 to 45.....	30%
46 to 65.....	40%
Older than 65.....	24%



Crosstabs

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Gingrich Favorability			
Favorable	55%	49%	61%
Unfavorable	25%	23%	27%
Not sure	20%	28%	12%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Huckabee Favorability			
Favorable	68%	73%	63%
Unfavorable	19%	12%	25%
Not sure	14%	15%	12%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Palin Favorability			
Favorable	69%	66%	71%
Unfavorable	24%	25%	24%
Not sure	7%	8%	6%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Romney Favorability			
Favorable	56%	51%	61%
Unfavorable	24%	22%	26%
Not sure	20%	28%	13%





Crosstabs

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
McCrorry Favorability			
Favorable	47%	48%	45%
Unfavorable	12%	4%	19%
Not sure	41%	48%	36%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
2012 GOP Pres Primary			
Mitch Daniels	2%	1%	2%
Newt Gingrich	18%	16%	20%
Mike Huckabee	24%	31%	17%
Sarah Palin	16%	14%	18%
Ron Paul	6%	4%	7%
Tim Pawlenty	5%	4%	5%
Mitt Romney	18%	15%	21%
John Thune	1%	1%	1%
Someone else/Undecided	11%	12%	9%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
McCrorry Ideology			
Too liberal	14%	9%	19%
Too conservative	7%	2%	11%
About right	53%	58%	49%
Not sure	26%	30%	22%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
McCrorry vs. Con Challenger			
Pat McCrorry	29%	29%	29%
More conservative challenger	43%	39%	46%
Not sure	28%	32%	24%





Crosstabs

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Gingrich Favorability					
Favorable	55%	55%	50%	55%	62%
Unfavorable	25%	36%	26%	26%	20%
Not sure	20%	9%	24%	19%	18%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Huckabee Favorability					
Favorable	68%	45%	63%	70%	77%
Unfavorable	19%	45%	21%	16%	12%
Not sure	14%	9%	16%	14%	11%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Palin Favorability					
Favorable	69%	73%	70%	67%	69%
Unfavorable	24%	27%	24%	26%	21%
Not sure	7%	-	5%	7%	11%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Romney Favorability					
Favorable	56%	45%	53%	55%	64%
Unfavorable	24%	45%	24%	24%	17%
Not sure	20%	9%	22%	21%	19%





Crosstabs

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
McCrorry Favorability					
Favorable	47%	27%	46%	52%	44%
Unfavorable	12%	27%	15%	9%	9%
Not sure	41%	45%	39%	39%	47%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
2012 GOP Pres Primary					
Mitch Daniels	2%	-	2%	1%	2%
Newt Gingrich	18%	36%	17%	19%	15%
Mike Huckabee	24%	18%	22%	25%	24%
Sarah Palin	16%	18%	21%	13%	15%
Ron Paul	6%	-	11%	3%	4%
Tim Pawlenty	5%	-	5%	5%	4%
Mitt Romney	18%	18%	16%	19%	19%
John Thune	1%	-	1%	2%	-
Someone else/Undecided	11%	9%	4%	12%	17%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
McCrorry Ideology					
Too liberal	14%	27%	17%	14%	8%
Too conservative	7%	36%	7%	4%	3%
About right	53%	27%	46%	58%	61%
Not sure	26%	9%	30%	24%	28%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
McCrorry vs. Con Challenger					
Pat McCrorry	29%	9%	30%	33%	27%
More conservative challenger	43%	73%	43%	40%	42%
Not sure	28%	18%	28%	27%	31%

