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Trump's Record, GOP Tax Bill May Suppress Republican Votes in Illinois

President Donald Trump's record in office may prove a drag on Republican candidates for state offices and for the US House of Representatives in Illinois. That is one of the findings of the latest Simon Poll® from the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

The results are based on live telephone interviews with 715 likely voters, a subset of 1,001 registered voters polled statewide. The margin of error for the likely voter sample is plus or minus 3.7 percentage points.

In addition to Trump's effect on votes for Illinois offices, the tax reform bill passed last December by the Republican-controlled Congress is unpopular among Illinois voters, and may prove to further hinder the success of GOP Congressional candidates.

More than half (54 percent) of likely voters surveyed said "President Donald Trump's record in office" made them less likely to vote for Republican candidates for state office in Illinois. Most of those (47 percent) said the president's record made them much less likely to vote for Republican candidates. By contrast, just under a third (30 percent) said the president's record made them more likely to vote for GOP candidates for state offices; about a quarter (24 percent) said his record made them much more likely to vote for Republicans.

Large majorities in Chicago (69 percent) and the collar county suburbs (59 percent) said the president's record would make them less likely to vote for Republicans for state office, compared with about four in ten (39 percent) downstate.

Most Republican voters said the president's record would make them more likely to support GOP candidates (76 percent), while most Democrats said his record would make them less likely (83 percent). Among Independents, about twice as many said Trump's record would make them less likely to support GOP candidates for state offices (50 percent) than said it would make them more likely (23 percent).

“We’re not surprised that President Trump’s record is unpopular among Democrats and in urban areas,” said Charlie Leonard, a Simon Institute visiting professor and one of the supervisors of the poll. “What has to concern Republican candidates is his negative impact on votes among Independents and in the suburbs—voters the GOP needs for success statewide.”

The results were similar when interviewers asked about Trump’s record and its effect on their votes for Republican candidates for Congress: 54 percent said it would make them less likely to vote for GOP Congressional candidates, while 32 percent said the president’s record would make them more likely to do so.

Impacts were the same as those for state offices by partisan group and geography. Eight in ten (80 percent) Republicans said the president’s record would make them more likely to vote for GOP Congressional candidates, while eight in ten Democrats (84 percent) said it would make them less likely. As before, his record was twice as likely to have a negative impact than a positive impact on GOP votes for Congress among Independents (50 percent negative vs. 25 percent positive).

Most Chicago and collar county voters (69 percent and 59 percent) said Trump’s record would make them less likely to vote for Republicans in Congress. About four in ten downstate voters (39 percent) said its impact would be negative while 47% said its impact would be positive.

The tax reform bill passed last December by the Republican-controlled Congress and signed by President Trump is unpopular among Illinois voters, according to the Simon Poll. Half (54 percent) oppose it, and about a third (32 percent) support it.

Among those with an opinion on the tax bill, most (56 percent), as before, say it will make them less likely to support Republican candidates for Congress, while about a third (33 percent) say it will make them more so.

Negative electoral impacts from the tax bill were larger in Chicago (70 percent) and its suburbs (63 percent). Downstate, half (51 percent) said the tax bill would make them more likely to support Republican Congressional candidates, while about four in ten (38 percent) said it would make them less likely.

Partisan differences were predictable, with eight in ten Republicans reporting a positive electoral impact from the tax bill (83 percent), and nearly nine in ten Democrats (86 percent) reporting a negative one. Independents were more likely by 20 percentage points to report that the tax bill would make them less likely to vote for a Republican for Congress than to say it would make them more likely to do so (48 percent vs. 28 percent).

“President Trump’s record in office and the GOP tax cuts are only a net asset for Republican candidates downstate, and only the tax cuts garner a narrow majority for the Republicans there. In Illinois a least, both are unlikely to give a significant boost to Republican candidates”, said John S. Jackson, one of the co-directors of the poll.

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The margin of error for the entire sample of 1,001 voters is plus or minus 3.1 percentage points. The margin of error for likely voters (n=715) is plus or minus 3.7 percentage points. This means that if we conducted the survey 100 times, in 95 of those instances, the population proportion would be within plus or minus the reported margin of error for each subsample. For subsamples, the margin of error increases as the sample size goes down. The margin of error was not adjusted for design effects.

Live telephone interviews were conducted by Customer Research International of San Marcos, Texas using the random digit dialing method. The telephone sample was provided to Customer Research International by Scientific Telephone Samples. Potential interviewees were screened based on whether they were registered voters and quotas based on area code and sex (<60 percent female). The sample obtained 52 percent male and 48 percent female respondents. Interviewers asked to speak to the youngest registered voter at home at the time of the call. Cell phone interviews accounted for 60 percent of the sample. A Spanish language version of the questionnaire and a Spanish-speaking interviewer were made available.

Field work was conducted from September 24 through September 29. No auto-dial or “robo” polling is included. Customer Research International reports no Illinois political clients. The survey was paid for with non-tax dollars from the Institute’s endowment fund. The data were not weighted in any way. Crosstabs for the referenced questions will be on the Institute’s polling web site, simonpoll.org.

The Paul Simon Public Policy Institute is a member of the American Association for Public Opinion Research’s (AAPOR) Transparency Initiative. AAPOR works to encourage objective survey standards for practice and disclosure. Membership in the Transparency Initiative reflects a pledge to practice transparency in reporting survey-based findings.

The Institute’s polling data are also archived by four academic institutions for use by scholars and the public. The four open source data repositories are: The Roper Center for Public Opinion Research (<http://ropercenter.cornell.edu/polls/>), The University of Michigan’s Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (<http://openicpsr.org>), the University of North Carolina’s Odum Institute Dataverse Network (<http://arc.irss.unc.edu/dvn/dv/PSPPPI>), and the Simon Institute Collection at OpenSIUC (<http://opensiuc.lib.siu.edu/ppi/>).

Note: The “Simon Poll” and the “Southern Illinois Poll” are the copyrighted trademarks of the Board of Trustees of Southern Illinois University. Use and publication of these polls is encouraged- but only with credit to the Paul Simon Public Policy Institute at SIU Carbondale.

Frequency Tables¹
TRUMPS RECORD IN OFFICE

Impact on State Offices

Has President Donald Trump's record in office made you more or less likely to vote for Republican candidates for state offices in Illinois? [If more or less] Is that much or somewhat more/less likely?

Response	Percent (n=715)
More	30%
<i>Much more</i>	24%
<i>Somewhat more</i>	5%
No effect	12%
Less	54%
<i>Somewhat less</i>	7%
<i>Much less</i>	47%
Other/don't know (not read)	4%

Impact on Congress

Has President Donald Trump's record in office made you more or less likely to vote for a Republican for United States Congress from Illinois this year? [If more or less] Is that much or somewhat more/less likely?

Response	Percent (n=715)
More	32%
<i>Much more</i>	25%
<i>Somewhat more</i>	6%
No effect	10%
Less	54%
<i>Somewhat less</i>	5%
<i>Much less</i>	49%
Other/don't know (not read)	4%

¹ Values are rounded and may not sum to 100 percent.

TAXES

Federal Tax Bill

Do you support or oppose the federal tax reform plan passed by the Republican Congressional majorities last December? [If oppose or support] do you strongly or somewhat oppose/support?

Response	Percent (n=715)
Support	32%
<i>Strongly support</i>	21%
<i>Somewhat support</i>	11%
Neither	3%
Oppose	54%
<i>Somewhat oppose</i>	11%
<i>Strongly oppose</i>	43%
Other/don't know (not read)	10%

Impact of Federal Tax Bill on Voting

Does your view on this issue make you more or less likely to vote for Republican Congressional candidates in November? [If more or less] Is that much or somewhat more/less likely?

Response	Percent (n=619²)
More likely	33%
<i>Much more</i>	25%
<i>Somewhat more</i>	9%
Neither	7%
Less likely	56%
<i>Somewhat less</i>	10%
<i>Much less</i>	47%
Other/don't know (not read)	3%

² Likely voters who support or oppose the tax bill. Margin of error for this sample is 3.9 percentage points.

Demographic Crosstabs

TRUMPS RECORD IN OFFICE

(n=715)

Impact on State Offices

By AREA

	Chicago City	Chicago Suburbs	Downstate
More	18%	25%	44%
No effect	7%	13%	12%
Less	69%	59%	39%
Other/don't know	7%	3%	5%

By PARTY

	Democrat	Independent	Republican
More	7%	23%	76%
No effect	7%	19%	12%
Less	83%	50%	9%
Other/don't know	3%	9%	3%

Impact on Congress

By AREA

	Chicago City	Chicago Suburbs	Downstate
More	21%	26%	47%
No effect	7%	11%	9%
Less	69%	59%	39%
Other/don't know	3%	4%	5%

By PARTY

	Democrat	Independent	Republican
More	7%	25%	80%
No effect	5%	19%	11%
Less	84%	50%	7%
Other/don't know	3%	6%	3%

TAXES

Federal Tax Bill

(n=715)

By AREA

	Chicago City	Chicago Suburbs	Downstate
Support	23%	27%	45%
Neither	2%	4%	4%
Oppose	67%	60%	39%
Other/don't know	7%	9%	13%

By PARTY

	Democrat	Independent	Republican
Support	9%	28%	75%
Neither	3%	4%	5%
Oppose	81%	57%	10%
Other/don't know	7%	12%	10%

Impact of Federal Tax Bill on Voting

(n=619)

By AREA

	Chicago City	Chicago Suburbs	Downstate
More likely	20%	27%	51%
Neither	6%	8%	7%
Less likely	70%	63%	38%
Other/don't know	3%	2%	4%

By PARTY

	Democrat	Independent	Republican
More likely	8%	28%	83%
Neither	4%	17%	5%
Less likely	86%	48%	10%
Other/don't know	1%	7%	1%