

TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Global Strategy Group and North Star Opinion Research
DATE: September 7, 2016
RE: The National Debt in the Presidential Debates and Election

Voters across the political spectrum want to see the Presidential candidates focus more on the national debt – including in the upcoming Presidential debates. According to a recent national poll of 1,018 registered voters conducted by Democratic polling firm Global Strategy Group and Republican polling firm North Star Opinion Research, voters broadly view the debt as a critical problem with real-life consequences. Accordingly, voters of all political stripes want the issue to be covered in the debates and will weigh candidates' plans when making their choices in November.

KEY SURVEY FINDINGS:

- **Voters want more attention paid to the national debt in the Presidential election.** Roughly four-fifths (81%) of voters believe Presidential candidates should be paying more attention to the national debt, including clear majorities of Democrats (77%), Independents (81%), and Republicans (87%).
- **Americans want to hear the candidates' plans for addressing the debt in the upcoming Presidential debates.** Roughly nine in ten voters agree the national debt should be a topic in the debates (91%), with clear consensus among Democrats (89%), Independents (91%), and Republicans (95%).
- **The national debt is an issue with real-life impact for voters across generations.** A clear majority (81%) agree the debt is one of the top issues their generation should care about in this year's Presidential election, and most voters (57%) agree strongly. Younger voters 18-44 (79% agree, including 80% of millennials aged 18-34), middle aged voters 45-64 (83%), and seniors 65+ (81%) all widely agree that the debt is one of the top issues affecting voters like them.
- **Down-ballot candidates will improve their electoral chances by supporting bipartisan plans to address the debt.** Over four in five voters (84%) would be more likely to vote for a candidate for Congress who supports a bipartisan plan to address the debt, including a majority (57%) who feel strongly. Democrats (84%), Independents (82%), and Republicans (88%) are all overwhelmingly more likely to support Congressional candidates who get behind bipartisan solutions to the issue.
- **Networks airing the debates can benefit by including the debt as a topic.** Over four-fifths (84%) agree that debate moderators can show that they want to focus on serious issues by covering the debt, including overwhelming majorities of Democrats (82%), Independents (82%), and Republicans (88%).

ABOUT THIS POLL: Global Strategy Group and North Star Opinion Research conducted a national survey between August 22nd and August 25th, 2016 among 1,018 registered voters nationwide. The results have a margin of error of +/- 3.1 percentage points and care has been taken to ensure the geographic and demographic divisions of the registered voter population are properly represented.
