

ABC News/Washington Post poll – for release 7 a.m. Monday, Nov. 23, 2015

No Clear Advantage in Trust on Terrorism

By Chad Kiewiet de Jonge

Hillary Clinton leads Donald Trump in trust to handle terrorism – but the table turns among those who care about it most.

Terrorism has surged as an election issue since the Nov. 13 Paris attacks, and this ABC News/Washington Post poll finds Clinton with an 8-point lead over Trump in trust to handle it. Among those who call it the top issue in their vote, though, Trump leads – by 25 points.

That's because concern about terrorism is especially high among Republicans and conservatives, and their trust in Clinton, on this and other issues, is very low. Those most concerned with the economy, by contrast, tend to be Democrats, and far prefer Clinton, including on terrorism.

Notably, Clinton maintains a slight lead on terrorism against Trump among registered voters, a 7-point advantage in this poll, produced for ABC by [Langer Research Associates](#). That's not so with other top GOP contenders; Clinton leads most of them among all adults – though Bush and Rubio are within the margin of error – but not among those who are registered. This reflects the customary GOP edge in registration – clearly damaging to the Democrats if left unaddressed.

	Trust to handle terrorism, Clinton vs.				
	Bush	Rubio	Cruz	Trump	Carson
All	46-43%	47-43	48-40	50-42	49-40
Reg. voters	45-46	46-45	46-44	50-43	47-43
Terror most imp.	33-61	32-61	33-60	35-60	32-62
Economy most imp.	51-36	55-34	56-31	59-33	59-29
Attack very likely	34-53	36-54	35-53	36-57	38-51
Somewhat/less likely	54-37	53-37	56-33	59-34	56-34

There's a contrast in Trump's position on terrorism moving from the GOP contest to a general election. Among Republicans and Republican-leaning independents, he leads the top primary candidates by a wide margin as most trusted to deal with the issue. When Trump is tested against Clinton, though, 21 percent of leaned Republicans prefer her, contributing to her advantage over Trump on terrorism among all Americans.

That said, 42 percent of leaned Republicans and 40 percent of conservatives cite terrorism as the most important issue in the election, compared, for example, with 18 percent of leaned Democrats and 15 percent of liberals. Leaned Republicans and conservatives also are much more likely to see an attack as likely and to doubt the government's capacity to prevent it.

As a result, among Americans who view the threat of terrorism as the most important issue in the 2016 election (28 percent of adults), Trump leads Clinton by 65-35 percent in trust to handle it, with almost identical results for the other top GOP candidates. Similar patterns hold true for those who think that an imminent terrorist attack is very likely or who lack confidence the government can prevent one.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by landline and cellular telephone Nov. 16-19, 2015, in English and Spanish, among a random national sample of 1,004 adults. Results have a margin of [sampling error](#) of 3.5 points, including the design effect. Partisan divisions are 33-23-36 percent, Democrats-Republicans-independents.

The survey was produced for ABC News by [Langer Research Associates](#) of New York, N.Y., with sampling, data collection and tabulation by Abt-SRBI of New York, N.Y. See details on the survey's methodology [here](#).

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com at <http://abcnews.com/pollingunit>.

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Full results follow.

2b-15, 17-24, 28 previously released. 1, 2a, 25-27 held for release.

*= less than 0.5 percent

16. Who would you trust more to handle the threat of terrorism - Hillary Clinton or [ITEM]?

11/19/15 - Summary Table

	Clinton	Republican candidate	Neither (vol.)	Both equally (vol.)	No opinion
a. Jeb Bush	46	43	7	*	3
b. Marco Rubio	47	43	5	*	5
c. Donald Trump	50	42	6	*	1
d. Ben Carson	49	40	6	*	4
e. Ted Cruz	48	40	6	*	6