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HILLARY CLINTON RETAINS LEAD OVER DONALD TRUMP WITH HISPANIC VOTERS

By Laura Meckler
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Democrat Hillary Clinton is maintaining her lopsided lead among Hispanics, and Donald Trump remains widely disliked among this fast-growing slice of the electorate, a new Wall Street Journal/NBC News/Telemundo survey finds.

The survey of Hispanic voters shows that Mrs. Clinton has strong backing from an important part of the Democratic coalition at a time when she is struggling to retain support from young voters and questions are arising about her ability to duplicate President Barack Obama's overwhelming margins among African-American voters.

In a race that includes two third-party candidates, Mrs. Clinton wins 65% support among Hispanic likely voters, compared with Mr. Trump's 17% – a 48-point advantage. The survey included a larger sample of Hispanic voters than in most Journal/NBC News polls – some 300 respondents – to better understand the group's opinions.

That means she has a bigger lead with this group than President Barack Obama enjoyed in 2012, when he beat Republican Mitt Romney by 44 points among Hispanic voters. It was that drubbing that persuaded some Republican leaders that their party needed to do more to reach out to Hispanic voters. Some counseled embracing "comprehensive immigration reform," an important issue to many Hispanics.

The party wound up heading in the opposite direction, nominating a candidate who built his campaign on promises to end illegal immigration and limit some legal immigration.

Nearly eight in 10 Hispanics surveyed said they had negative feelings about Mr. Trump, including nearly seven in 10 who had "very negative" feelings. Just 15% had very or somewhat positive views of the Republican nominee.

That is considerably worse than Mr. Romney's situation four years ago, when only 35% of Hispanics had "very negative" feelings about him.

Views of Mrs. Clinton weren't as rosy as they were for Mr. Obama at this point in 2012. Some 57% of Hispanics in the new survey had a positive image of her, compared with 74% for Mr. Obama four years ago.

Among Hispanic registered voters, Mrs. Clinton had 63% support, down from 72% in a July survey. Mr. Trump's support among Hispanic registered voters rose to 16% from 12% in July. There is no similar comparison among likely voters, as this is the first time the Journal/NBC News/Telemundo survey is zeroing in on the preferences of those most likely to cast ballots.

One outstanding question is how many Hispanics will turn out to vote. The new survey found that 60% rated themselves as having high interest in the election, a smaller share than the

68% in the overall electorate. In 2012, there was a similar gap at this point, though Hispanic interest then spiked in October of that year.

On a range of issues, the Democratic nominee has the advantage over Mr. Trump.

The survey found 68% of Hispanic voters saying Mrs. Clinton would be better than Mr. Trump on dealing with immigration; some 18% said Mr. Trump would be better. Mrs. Clinton posted similar advantages when asked who would be the better commander in chief, handle nuclear weapons and change the country for the better.

Mr. Trump had his best results on the question of dealing with the economy. On that question, some 55% picked Mrs. Clinton as the better candidate, and 29% picked Mr. Trump.

About four in 10 Hispanic voters said they preferred a candidate who would bring major changes over one offering a steady approach, which would seem to lay the groundwork for Mr. Trump. But that is not the case, said Jeff Horwitt, a Democratic pollster who helped conduct the poll. "There are people who want change, but he ain't the change that they want."

The Journal/NBC News/Telemundo survey was conducted Sept. 15-20 and included 300 Hispanic registered voters. The margin of error for that group was plus or minus 5.66 percentage points.