



September 2, 2024

TO: Interested Parties
FROM: Ben Greenfield, Change Research
RE: Veterans & Family Members Survey Results

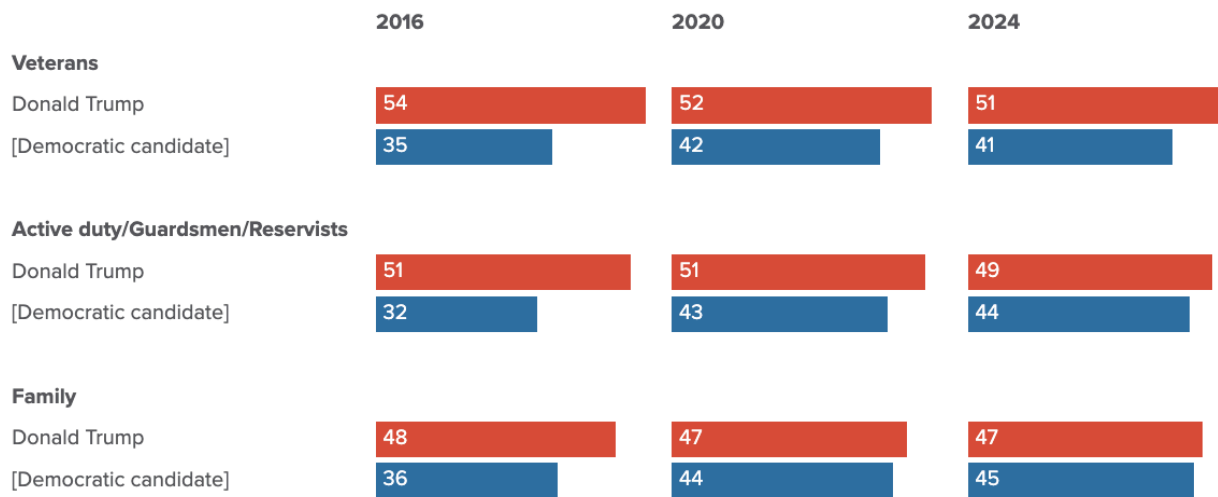
A new nationwide survey of 1,703 likely voters who are either veterans, active duty service members, or their family members finds a significant and continuing erosion in support for Donald Trump among all three of these groups.

Trump's margin among each of these groups has shrunk by at least 9 points since 2016.

Among veterans, whom Trump won by 19 percentage points in 2016, he leads by only 10 now. His lead among active duty members has fallen from 19 points to just 5, while among family members, his lead is down to 2, from 12 in 2016.

Presidential Vote Choice, 2016-2024

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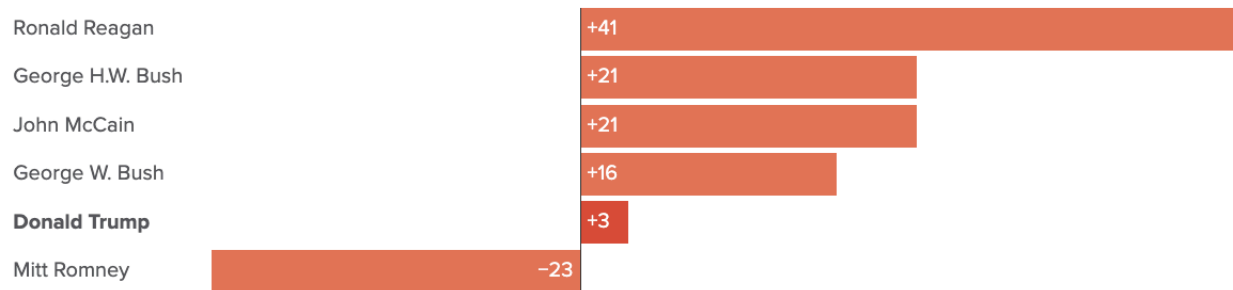


Polling was conducted online from August 23-29. Using Dynamic Online Sampling to attain a representative sample, Change Research polled 1,703 veterans, active duty service members, and family/household members of veterans and service members nationwide. Post-stratification was performed on age, gender, race/ethnicity, region, education, and 2020 presidential vote.

Donald Trump is viewed much less positively by these groups than other Republican Presidents and candidates. While these communities view each of the previous three Republican Presidents quite positively, they are almost equally divided on Trump. Overall, he is viewed more positively only than Mitt Romney.

Net Favorability of Republican Presidents & Nominees

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Trump's words and deeds towards veterans and the military have been key to his declining support. Those who voted for Trump at least once, but do not plan to in 2024, were asked why. Of this group, 53% indicated that his comments, attitudes, and policies towards veterans and service members were part of what drove them away.

Young voters and Latinos are especially eager to turn the page on Trump. Those under 35 favor Harris by a 49-36 margin, the most of any age group; at the end of the poll, after being asked various questions about Trump's and Harris's military leadership, they favor her by 53-33. Latinos favor Harris by a 58-38 margin, a considerable shift from 2020, when they report voting for Joe Biden by 52-41.

A majority, 56%, believe that as President, Kamala Harris would be respected by world leaders. This includes not only the vast majority of those who plan to vote for Harris, but also 22% of Trump voters. Majorities of active duty, veterans and family members believe she would be respected.

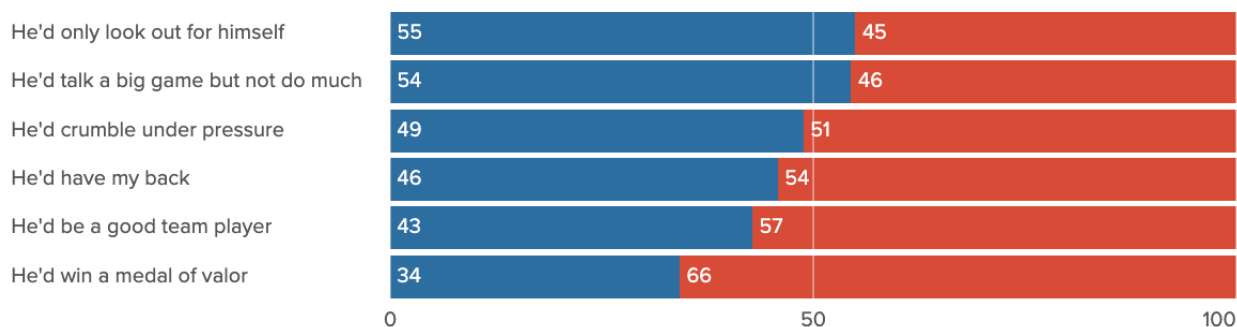
Over 3 in 4 voters in these communities have heard at least one of Trump's most well-covered comments about veterans. Overall, 69% have heard about Trump's comments mocking John McCain for being captured. Just slightly fewer, 67%, have heard about the comments recounted by General John Kelly, in which Trump called fallen service members "suckers" and "losers." And 55% have heard about Trump saying "no one wants to see that" about wounded veterans.

Majorities believe that Trump would falter in a combat situation. Most believe that Trump would only look out for himself; that he'd talk a big game but not do much; that he would not have their back; and that he would not be a good team player.

Trump in a Combat Situation

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● Agree ● Disagree



Q: Imagine being Donald Trump's team member in a real combat situation. Do you agree with the following descriptions of how he'd behave?

70% in these groups are concerned about post-election violence. When told that a coalition of military veterans has asked leaders to pledge to renounce violence and voter intimidation this election season, 95% are in favor of such a pledge.

Majorities describe Trump's military leadership as "dangerous" and "reckless." Asked if various phrases describe his military leadership, 55% say that "unpredictable and dangerous" describes him, and 54% say that "reckless" does.

A majority disapprove of Trump's behavior with authoritarian leaders. Just 41% approve, including 38% of active duty, 42% of veterans, and 39% of family members, while majorities of each group disapprove. And 95% of Democrats disapprove, along with 61% of pure independents and 16% of Republicans.

Only 31% approve of Trump's stance on NATO, while 58% disapprove. Among active duty members, 37% approve and 59% disapprove; among veterans, 33% approve and 59% disapprove; and among family members, 27% approve, while 58% disapprove. Even among those who plan to vote for Trump, only 59% approve.

As commentators including Harry Enten [have noted](#), Donald Trump would likely not have won the 2016 election without his large advantage among veterans. Similarly, the erosion in Trump's support among veterans over the course of his term in office is enough to account for Biden's victory in 2020. This poll suggests that Trump's continuing struggles with military veterans and their families could help deliver the 2024 election to Kamala Harris.