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FOR RELEASE: MAY 3, 2012

**ROMNEY BOUNCES BACK IN TWO OF THREE KEY STATES,  
QUINNIPIAC UNIVERSITY SWING STATE POLL FINDS;  
OBAMA WIDENS LEAD IN PENNSYLVANIA; OHIO, FLORIDA TIED**

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**FLORIDA: Romney 44 – Obama 43**

**OHIO: Obama 44 – Romney 42**

**PENNSYLVANIA: Obama 47 – Romney 39**

Riding the voter perception that he is as good as or better than President Barack Obama at fixing the economy, Republican challenger Mitt Romney catches up with the president in Florida and Ohio, two critical swing states, while the president opens an 8-point lead in Pennsylvania, according to a Quinnipiac University Swing State Poll released today.

This compares to the results of a March 28 Swing State Poll by the independent Quinnipiac (KWIN-uh-pe-ack) University showing President Obama ahead of Gov. Romney 49 – 42 percent in Florida, 47 – 41 percent in Ohio and 45 – 42 percent in Pennsylvania.

Voters in all three states approve of the president’s handling of Afghanistan, but by margins averaging 2-1, voters say the U.S. should not be involved there.

Matching Obama against Romney in each of these key states – no one has won the White House since 1960 without carrying at least two of them – shows:

- **Florida:** Romney with 44 percent to Obama’s 43 percent, too close to call;
- **Ohio:** Obama with 44 percent to Romney’s 42 percent, too close to call;
- **Pennsylvania:** Obama tops Romney 47 – 39 percent.

“Gov. Mitt Romney has closed President Barack Obama’s leads in Ohio and Florida to the point that those two states are now essentially tied, a turnaround from the end of March when the president enjoyed leads in those key states,” said Peter A. Brown, assistant director of the Quinnipiac University Polling Institute.

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“The good news for the president is that he has an 8-point lead in Pennsylvania, approaching the 11-point margin he had in carrying the Keystone State in 2008,” Brown added.

“Overall, Obama is doing slightly better than Romney in these critical swing states today.”

New Jersey Gov. Christopher Christie, Florida U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio and Ohio U.S. Sen. Rob Portman top the Republican vice presidential guess list, because two are native sons and one is a near-native son.

At least 67 percent of voters in each state say the economy is in a recession, but at least 51 percent of voters in each state say the recovery has begun. Voters in Florida and Ohio say Romney would do a better job on the economy. Pennsylvania voters are divided.

“Romney’s ability to cut into the president’s leads in Ohio and Florida reflects two changes in the political environment: First, since he is now the de facto nominee, Romney is no longer being attacked by his fellow Republicans, who are closing ranks behind him. Second, voter optimism about the economy has leveled off, reflecting economic statistics over the past month and the public reaction to them.

“A very small gender gap in Florida grows significantly in Ohio and Pennsylvania as women flock to Obama. Romney offsets Obama’s edge in Ohio with a big lead among men, something he doesn’t achieve in Pennsylvania. What appears to be keeping Romney in the ball game, at least in Florida and Ohio, is the perception he can better fix the economy.

“By margins of about 2-1, voters in Florida, Ohio and Pennsylvania say the U.S. should not be in Afghanistan, but they approve of what the president is doing there and pluralities say the pace of withdrawal of U.S. troops is about right.

“When it comes to picking a Republican running mate, geography is the coin of the realm. In Ohio a quarter of voters say home state Sen. Rob Portman would be the best choice, while four in 10 Floridians say that about their Senator, Marco Rubio. In Pennsylvania, almost a third favors neighboring Gov. Chris Christie of New Jersey. Christie and Rubio do best outside their own neighborhoods, but there is far from any kind of consensus about who would be Romney’s best choice.”

### **Florida**

There is a small gender gap in the Florida presidential race as men back Romney 46 – 42 percent while women back Obama 44 – 42 percent, too close to call on both counts.

Florida voters disapprove 50 – 46 percent of the job Obama is doing and say 50 – 45 percent he does not deserve to be reelected.

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The economy is in a recession, voters say 70 – 26 percent and 51 percent say the recovery has begun. Romney would do a better job on the economy, voters say 49 – 40 percent.

By a 51 – 38 percent margin, Florida voters want the U.S. Supreme Court to overturn the 2010 health care reform legislation.

Voters approve 49 – 39 percent of the way Obama is handling the situation in Afghanistan, but they say 64 – 27 percent that the U.S. should not be involved. Obama’s pace withdrawing troops from Afghanistan is about right, 44 percent of voters say.

Looking at possible vice presidential candidates, 40 percent of Florida voters pick Sen. Rubio, followed by 14 percent for Christie, with no other candidate above 7 percent.

“The dead heat in Florida appears to be a result of Obama’s decline as much as anything else. In March the president had a 51 – 44 favorability rating compared to 46 – 47 percent today,” Brown said. “Romney barely moved, from 41 – 36 favorable in March to 40 – 34 percent favorable now.”

### **Ohio**

The gender gap widens in the Ohio presidential race as women back Obama 50 – 37 percent while men back Romney 48 – 38 percent.

Ohio voters split 48 – 47 percent in their approval of Obama and split 47 – 48 percent on whether he deserves to be reelected.

The economy is in a recession, voters say 67 – 31 percent, but recovery has begun, 55 percent say. Romney would do a better job on the economy, voters say 47 – 43 percent.

The U.S. Supreme Court should overturn the health care law, voters say 51 – 37 percent.

Voters approve 51 – 39 percent of Obama’s handling of Afghanistan, but say 59 – 33 percent that the U.S. should not be involved. The pace of U.S. troop withdrawal is about right, 43 percent of voters say.

Sen. Portman is the vice presidential preference for 26 percent of Ohio voters, with 14 percent each for Christie and Rubio. No other candidate tops 8 percent.

“The president gets 44 percent in Ohio to Romney’s 42 percent because of his strength among Democrats, 84 – 7 percent, and that party’s relative strength in the Buckeye State. The president is ahead even though he trails among independent voters 43 – 38 percent.”

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“One explanation for this Democratic edge over Republicans in identification may be spillover from the unpopularity of Republican Gov. John Kasich during his first 16 months in office,” Brown added.

### **Pennsylvania**

Pennsylvania women are wild about Obama, giving him a 52 – 35 percent general election lead. Men tip to Romney 44 – 41 percent.

Voters approve 50 – 46 percent of the job Obama is doing and say 50 – 46 percent he deserves four more years.

The economy is in a recession, voters say 69 – 28 percent, but 56 percent say recovery has begun. Obama would do a better job on the economy, 44 percent of voters say, while 43 percent point to Romney.

The Supreme Court should overturn the health care law, 46 percent of voters say, while 43 percent say the court should uphold the law.

Pennsylvania voters approve 56 – 34 percent of the way Obama is handling Afghanistan, but say 61 – 30 percent the U.S. should not be involved. The pace of troop withdrawal is about right, 48 percent say.

Christie is the top choice for running mate, with 28 percent, followed by Rubio with 15 percent and no other candidate above 8 percent.

“The president’s lead in Pennsylvania is across the board. He carries independent voters 45 – 36 percent,” Brown said. “A slight majority says he deserves a second term and gives him a thumbs up for his job performance. He has a huge lead among women, while men go to Romney by a nose. Of the three states, Pennsylvania is the one in which the largest number of voters say the economy is beginning to recover.”

From April 25 – May 1, Quinnipiac University surveyed:

- 1,169 Florida voters with a margin of error of +/- 2.9 percent;
- 1,130 Ohio voters with a margin of error of +/- 2.9 percent;
- 1,168 Pennsylvania voters with a margin of error of +/- 2.9 percent.

Live interviewers call land lines and cell phones.

The Quinnipiac University Poll, directed by Douglas Schwartz, Ph.D., conducts public opinion surveys in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, Florida, Ohio, Virginia and nationwide as a public service and for research.

**For individual statewide crosstabs and trends visit –**

**<http://www.quinnipiac.edu/x2881.xml> or call (203) 582-5201.**

1. Turning to this year's general election for president, if the election for President were being held today, and the candidates were Barack Obama the Democrat and Mitt Romney the Republican, for whom would you vote?

	FL	OH	PA
Obama	43%	44%	47%
Romney	44	42	39
SMONE ELSE (VOL)	3	3	2
WLDN'T VOTE (VOL)	2	3	3
DK/NA	9	8	8

2. Is your opinion of Mitt Romney favorable, unfavorable or haven't you heard enough about him?

	FL	OH	PA
Favorable	40%	36%	35%
Unfavorable	34	36	39
Hvn't hrd enough	22	25	22
REFUSED	4	4	3

3. Is your opinion of Barack Obama favorable, unfavorable or haven't you heard enough about him?

	FL	OH	PA
Favorable	46%	46%	51%
Unfavorable	47	45	43
Hvn't hrd enough	4	5	2
REFUSED	3	5	4

4. Is your opinion of the Republican Party favorable, unfavorable or haven't you heard enough about it?

	FL	OH	PA
Favorable	42%	37%	35%
Unfavorable	45	47	51
Hvn't hrd enough	9	12	10
REFUSED	4	4	5

5. Is your opinion of the Democratic Party favorable, unfavorable or haven't you heard enough about it?

	FL	OH	PA
Favorable	43%	42%	45%
Unfavorable	45	45	41
Hvn't hrd enough	7	9	9
REFUSED	5	4	5

6. Compared to past presidential elections, how would you describe your level of enthusiasm about voting in this year's presidential election; are you more enthusiastic than usual, less enthusiastic, or about the same as usual?

	FL	OH	PA
More	35%	27%	28%
Less	26	27	25
About the same	38	45	45
DK/NA	1	-	1

7. Please tell me which one of the following you would most like to see Mitt Romney choose as a candidate for vice president: New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal, former Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty, Ohio Senator Rob Portman, New Hampshire Senator Kelly Ayotte, Wisconsin Congressman Paul Ryan, or Florida Senator Marco Rubio?

	FL	OH	PA
Christie	14%	14%	28%
Jindal	6	6	6
Pawlenty	4	3	4
Portman	4	26	4
Ayotte	2	2	3
Ryan	7	8	8
Rubio	40	14	15
SOMEONE ELSE (VOL)	3	2	4
DK/NA	21	26	27

8. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling his job as President?

	FL	OH	PA
Approve	46%	48%	50%
Disapprove	50	47	46
DK/NA	4	5	4

9. Do you feel that Barack Obama deserves to be reelected, or do you feel that he does not deserve to be reelected?

	FL	OH	PA
Yes/Deserves	45%	47%	50%
No/Does not	50	48	46
DK/NA	5	5	4

10. In general, how satisfied are you with the way things are going in the nation today; are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?

	FL	OH	PA
Very satisfied	5%	3%	2%
Smwht satisfied	24	29	30
Smwht dissatisfied	26	28	30
Very dissatisfied	45	39	36
DK/NA	-	1	2

11. Do you think the United States economy is in a recession now?

	FL	OH	PA
Yes	70%	67%	69%
No	26	31	28
DK/NA	4	3	4

12. Do you think the economy is beginning to recover or not?

	FL	OH	PA
Yes	51%	55%	56%
No	45	41	40
DK/NA	4	4	3

13. Regardless of how you intend to vote, who do you think would do a better job on the economy, Barack Obama or Mitt Romney?

	FL	OH	PA
Obama	40%	43%	44%
Romney	49	47	43
DK/NA	11	9	12

14. Do you think Congress should try to repeal the health care law, or should they let it stand?

	FL	OH	PA
Repeal it	53%	52%	46%
Let it stand	39	37	42
DK/NA	9	11	12

15. The Supreme Court has heard a challenge to the health care law. Do you want the Supreme Court to uphold the health care law or overturn it?

	FL	OH	PA
Uphold it	38%	37%	43%
Overturn it	51	51	46
DK/NA	11	12	11

16. Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barack Obama is handling the situation in Afghanistan?

	FL	OH	PA
Approve	49%	51%	56%
Disapprove	39	39	34
DK/NA	12	10	10

17. Do you think the U.S. is doing the right thing by fighting the war in Afghanistan now, or should the U.S. not be involved in Afghanistan now?

	FL	OH	PA
Right thing	27%	33%	30%
Shld not be involved	64	59	61
DK/NA	9	8	9

18. From what you've read and heard, do you think Barack Obama is removing U.S. troops from Afghanistan too quickly, not quickly enough, or is he handling this about right?

	FL	OH	PA
Too quickly	18%	17%	13%
Not quickly enough	31	32	32
About right	44	43	48
DK/NA	8	8	8