**HEARTLAND MONITOR POLL**

# Americans' Optimism Rises Post-Election, Tempered by Concern over Racial, Class and Partisan Divides, According to Allstate/Atlantic Media Poll

*Americans' outlook on economy, personal finances and the country's direction are most positive in years, but new Heartland Monitor Poll finds stark contrasts across party lines, demographics*

*Two-thirds of Americans are confident country will overcome challenges, and majority call on elected officials to prioritize compromise over staunchly sticking to core values*

WASHINGTON, D.C., Dec. 7, 2016 – Following the most contentious election in recent history, a new poll released today by Allstate and Atlantic Media revealed a surprising level of positivity among Americans. But that optimism is tempered by fear that the election will further divide the nation along lines of class, race and party.

The 27th Heartland Monitor Poll also found that – despite notable divides between demographic groups – Americans almost unanimously (87 percent) agree on one thing: improving the economy through job creation is priority No. 1.

Typical of a post-election high, however, there is optimism that the economy will improve. Sixty percent believe the economy will become more competitive over the next four years, and 36 percent think the nation is headed in the right direction – the highest level since the last presidential election in November 2012, and a jump of 14 points since June.

"This latest Heartland poll underscores the American spirit of resilience and optimism," said Bill Vainisi, Allstate's senior vice president and deputy general counsel, Law and Regulation. "Our country has come together in the face of serious challenges throughout history, from world wars to economic depressions. Profound challenges remain ahead, and we will need to address them. Americans have a genuine desire for government, business leaders and community members to work together to drive positive, lasting change."

Despite this economic optimism, the survey found deep divisions over what the election will mean for the nation's social fabric. The majority of respondents anticipate relations deteriorating between Americans of different social classes (51 percent), as well as races and ethnic groups (52 percent).

"From all of these different angles, the poll converges on the same message. While many Americans, particularly Trump's supporters, believe his victory will move the economy forward, roughly half the nation fears that his ascent will set the country back by deepening the divisions that his march to the White House so starkly revealed," said Ron Brownstein, senior editor of *The Atlantic*.

**Details on these results follow.** To see in-depth poll data for the 27th Allstate/Atlantic Media Heartland Monitor Poll, please visit HeartlandMonitor.com. *The Atlantic*'s series of reports on the poll results and their implications, along with full topline findings, are available at TheAtlantic.com.

**Americans' post-election optimism is pronounced when it comes to finances and the economy:**

- Four in 10 (39 percent) are hopeful about the economy improving over the next 12 months, which marks the highest total since November 2012.

- Nearly three in 10 (29 percent) said the state of the economy is currently excellent or good – the most favorable figure since the question was first asked in 2013. Similarly, the percentage of people who think the economy is fair or poor (69 percent) dropped 8 percentage points since June.

- Half (51 percent) ranked their own personal financial situations as excellent or good – the highest since the financial crisis.

- Most Americans think their personal financial situations will either improve (43 percent) or stay the same (44 percent) over the next 12 months.

**Further analysis shows the country's overall hopeful economic outlook is buoyed by more positive sentiments in some groups than others:**

- Nearly three-fourths of men over 50 (72 percent) believe the economy will become more competitive over the next four years, versus just 54 percent of women who are 50-plus.

- Seventy percent of rural residents versus 54 percent of urban residents have a positive economic outlook.

- Ninety-two percent of Republicans versus 35 percent of Democrats expressed a positive outlook.

**However, Americans largely agree on a number of other topics regardless of age, race, education level or income, including:**

- Two-thirds (67 percent) emphasize enforcing equal pay for women.

- Two-thirds (67 percent) believe the federal government should increase education funding to ensure all children have access to an affordable, quality education from preschool through college, even though additional spending could add to existing bureaucracy and minimize state and local control.

**Despite these and other challenges facing the country, 66 percent believe the nation will find solutions, as it has in the past. But that optimism is mixed with an urgent call for bipartisan compromise:**

- Fifty-seven percent of Americans say it's more important for politicians to compromise in the name of progress than stick to their core values, even if it means conceding on certain policies.

- A majority of Americans (56 percent) hope a GOP-controlled White House and Congress means the two entities will work together more than they have over the last four years.

**Underneath Americans' consensus on the need for compromise lies a nation deeply divided:**

- Half (52 percent) of Americans think the country is improving because of its growing diversity and increased equality for all people. On the other hand, 42 percent feel the nation is changing too fast and losing its values. These results see a stark division between those who voted for Hillary Clinton (72 percent say the country is improving) and those who voted for Donald Trump (62 percent say the country is changing too quickly).

- Fifty-two percent think relations between different racial and ethnic groups will worsen as a result of the election, and nearly the same amount (51 percent) think the rift between social classes will also deteriorate.

    - Americans feel the most serious social divisions include conflicts between African-Americans and police (52 percent), rich and poor (44 percent) and business/political elites and average Americans (41 percent).

- Americans divide almost exactly in half on whether the new administration will succeed in uniting the country to move toward progress (49 percent) or continue the divisiveness highlighted during the campaign and hinder progress (46 percent).

- Americans are also split on whether President-Elect Trump will govern in a way that reflects bias against certain groups (45 percent) or lead as "the president of all Americans" (51 percent).

**Survey Methodology**
The 27th installment of the Allstate/Atlantic Media Heartland Monitor Poll, conducted November 16-21, 2016, comprises questions about the 2016 presidential election, as Americans have cast their votes and look towards the next four years under new leadership. How did the divisive campaign shape Americans' perspectives? Was the election a mandate for new policies? How do Americans want the government to function? The survey was conducted among a national sample of 1,000 American adults age 18+, with 500 reached via cell phone and 500 reached via landline. The margin of error for a sample of 1,000 is +/- 3.1 in 95 out of 100 cases.

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**Media Contacts:**
Dan Margolis
FTI Consulting for Allstate
Dan.Margolis@fticonsulting.com
(213) 452-6472

Dan Waters
Allstate
Dan.Waters@allstate.com
(847) 402-5600

Anna Bross
abross@atlantic.com
Atlantic Media
(202) 266-7714

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