

To: *VoteVets & Concerned Veterans for America*

From: Celinda Lake, Daniel Gotoff, and Corey Teter, *Lake Research Partners*
Kyle McKenzie, *Stand Together*

Re: Survey Findings on Swing State Voter Support for Repeal of 2001 AUMF

Date: June 24, 2019

Following are the key takeaways from a recently completed survey of 2,951 likely voters across Iowa, New Hampshire, South Carolina, Nevada, Florida, and Virginia's 2nd Congressional District, including oversamples of likely Democratic primary and caucus voters in the first four states. The survey offers a clear picture of an electorate that, despite its Republican/ conservative skew, expresses no appetite for seeing the U.S. expand its military engagement in conflicts around the world, is particularly opposed to war in Iran, and supports repeal of the 2001 Authorization of Use of Military Force (AUMF), favoring instead a fresh, bipartisan Congressional review and vote on any specific troop deployments.

- **These voters have no appetite for increased military engagement.** The data shows overwhelming numbers of likely voters across these key battleground states and in Virginia's 2nd Congressional District extremely leery of the United States becoming engaged in additional military conflicts around the world. Just 11% believe the U.S. should be more militarily engaged in conflicts around the world. Fully 83% prefer either no change (46%) or a decline (37%) in the level of U.S. engagement in military conflicts across the globe. Another 7% are unsure. In none of states, nor in VA-02, does the appetite for increased military engagement exceed the low double-digits.
- **Voters are decidedly opposed to war with Iran.** Even amid the administration's concerted case for war with Iran, solid majorities of voters across these states and in VA-02 oppose the U.S. conducting an attack on Iran, regardless of whether it is referred to as a first-strike attack or not. A 54% majority of likely voters opposes the U.S. conducting an attack on Iran before the end of 2019, compared to just 29% of voters who support such action. Opposition remains largely unchanged at 55% when voters are asked a version of that question with the U.S.-led military action described as a "first-strike" attack," with support, too, almost identical at 28%. Roughly one-in-six voters (17%-18%) are unsure, depending on how the question is posed.
 - Opposition outpaces support by substantial margins of 20 points or more in each of the states as well as in VA-02. Opposition is greatest in Nevada (22% support vs. 63% oppose), New Hampshire (24% support vs. 62% oppose), and Iowa (23% support vs. 62% oppose). Even in South Carolina, the most Republican-leaning of the states included in this study (R+16 in self-identified partisanship), nearly half

of voters (49%) oppose the U.S. conducting an attack on Iran, compared to just 29% of voters who are supportive.

- **Voters do not want to rely on the 2001 AUMF; fully half want this Congress to review and vote on specific troop deployments.** After hearing that “U.S. troops are currently at war in seven countries under a Congressional authorization passed in response to 9/11 in 2001” and that “members of Congress from both the Republican and Democratic parties say we should repeal the old authorization and have a new evaluation on how and when our troops are deployed,” fully half of voters (50%) support repeal and having Congress evaluate and vote on specific troop deployments anew. Just 30% of voters believe “it is better to leave the 2001 authorization in place, so military force can be authorized quickly and without deliberation.”
 - Even without the statement characterizing bi-partisan Congressional support for repeal of the 2001 AUMF, voters still support repeal and a fresh evaluation and vote by a commanding 17-point margin: 49% to 32%.
- **These number are all the more stunning, given the GOP skew of this sample.** Where most nationwide surveys show a Democratic advantage in self-identified partisanship of anywhere from 3-5 points (and in some instances even higher), the 5 states included in this survey, along with VA-02, show an electorate (weighted proportionately for each state’s and the congressional district’s relative size) with a 3-point Republican advantage in self-identified partisanship: 43% identify as Republicans, 40% identify as Democrats, with the remaining number identifying as independents or another Party.
- **Despite their opposition, these voters fully expect that the U.S. will go to war with Iran.** In a somewhat unsettling finding, the data points to a fundamental gap in voters’ expressed opposition to war with Iran and their expectation that the prospect of war with Iran is all but assured. Overall, 58% of voters in the study believe this scenario is likely (including 43% who see it as somewhat likely and 15% who see it as very likely). Just 27% see war with Iran as an unlikely outcome (including 22% who see it as not very likely and just 5% who see it as very unlikely) and another 16% are unsure.
- **Last, Democratic primary and caucus voters are even more vigorous in their opposition to war with Iran; their disapproval of expanded military engagement more broadly; and their support for repeal of the 2001 AUMF.**
 - Over 7-in-10 Democratic primary and caucus voters oppose the U.S. going to war with Iran (71%) compared to just 16%-17% who support it, depending on whether military action is characterized as “an attack” or “a first strike attack.”
 - In fact, a 46% plurality of these voters indicates they want the U.S. less engaged in military conflicts around the world, compared to 40% who believe the level of engagement should stay about the same, and just 8% who want to see the U.S.’s level of military engagement expanded.

- A 58% majority favors repeal of the 2001 AUMF and a fresh Congressional review and vote compared to just 25% who support leaving the 2001 authorization in place. When informed of bi-partisan Congressional support for repeal, Democratic voters' support rises to 62%, with just 20% in favor of leaving the 2001 authorization in place.
- As is the case with general election voters, fully 60% expect that the U.S. will go to war with Iran within the next few years, 24% believe it is unlikely, and 16% are unsure.

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Methodology: on behalf of VoteVets and Concerned Veterans for America, *Lake Research Partners*, in consultation with the *Stand Together*, designed and administered this survey, which was conducted online and reached a total of 2,951 likely voters across Iowa, New Hampshire, South Carolina, Nevada, Florida (n=500 per state), and Virginia's 2nd Congressional District (n=450). In addition, the survey included oversamples of likely Democratic primary and caucus voters in the first four states (n=200 per state in Iowa, New Hampshire, South Carolina, and Nevada). The survey was conducted June 14-20, 2019. The margin of error for the General Election voter sample is +/- 1.8% overall, +/- 4.4% for individual states, and +/- 4.7% for VA-02. The margin of error for the sample of Democratic primary and caucus voters is +/- 1.8% overall, and between +/- 5.6% and +/- 5.9% for the individual states.