Center for Public Opinion

Sanders, meanwhile, has also led since the first day of our tracking poll release. His lead was as large as 33 points, but has settled at 16 points. It remains to be seen if a strong victory in New Hampshire can propel Sanders forward to surges in subsequent primary states where Clinton presently enjoys an advantage.

Given that New Hampshire primary voters are known for delivering surprises, we want to discuss several potential surprise scenarios and consider the stability of our polling release.

Surprise Scenario 1 – Snow and Low Turnout

Snow is in the forecast for Monday into Tuesday across New England. The worst of the system, at press, is supposed to be south of New Hampshire, but in the event of a major weather system, we can imagine that turnout would be considerably lower. We considered a very tight likely voter screen where only those who are paying the closest attention, always vote when there's a primary and say they will definitely vote are included in the model (new voters are also included if they are following the primary very closely and say they will definitely vote/have already voted). Under the low turnout scenario, Sanders still leads Clinton 55-40. On the Republican side, a low turnout scenario increases Trump's support by +2 points, Rubio's by +1, Kasich's by +1, and it decreases Bush's margin by -2. In sum, a low turnout model has Sanders +15 and Trump +22, only a point different in each case from our final likely voter model.

Surprise Scenario 2 – Mobilization and High Turnout

An alternative scenario is that with so many candidates and so many undecided voters, we may see a turnout surge that would slightly exceed the Obama turnout of 2008. Under such a scenario, Sanders lead grows to 18, 57% to Clinton's 39%. Meanwhile, on the Republican side, a high turnout scenario increases Trump's vote share by one point (to 35%) and decreases Ted Cruz's vote share by one (to 12%). His lead stands at +22 points under such a scenario. We do not think that either turnout scenario is as likely as the model we present in the headline, but we have added these to show that our data project a level of stability in both races between high and low turnout outcomes.

Surprise Scenario 3 – Undecided Voters and Soft Support

A final "surprise" scenario is simply that our likely voter models are not capturing a late surge and/or surges by a candidates or candidates. On the Democratic side, this looks unlikely. Only 4% of Democratic likely primary voters are undecided. Furthermore, only 22% of voters say there is a chance they could change their mind before voting – the "could change mind" number is higher for Clinton (21%) than Sanders (18%).

Center for Public Opinion

On the Republican side, 9% of voters remain undecided, up two points from yesterday. If deplet decided depleted depleted