

To: Interested Parties

From: GBA Strategies

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**J Street National Survey of Jewish Voters**  
*Iran Agreement Summary Findings*

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A new national survey of 1,000 American Jews, conducted by GBA Strategies for J Street, finds that a large majority of Jews support the agreement recently reached between the United States, world powers, and Iran.<sup>1</sup> The 20-point margin (60 percent to 40 percent) in favor of the agreement is consistent with the 18-point margin found in the LA Jewish Journal's survey released last week, as well as the 18-point margin in J Street's survey conducted prior to the agreement. Multiple surveys have shown with resounding clarity that American Jews firmly back the agreement, and now want Congress to approve it.

The J Street survey uses the same question wording as the recent ABC News/Washington Post survey, and reveals that Jewish support (60 percent) is slightly greater than the support (56 percent) of the general U.S. population. This is not a major difference, but is worth noting because we saw a similar pattern prior to the signing of the agreement. While the media has been paying a great deal of attention to Jewish Members of Congress and Jewish voters, it is important to recognize that Jews themselves are actually a base constituency of support for the agreement. And given the massive campaigns against the agreement that has been launched by AIPAC and the Republican Jewish Coalition, it is very clear that these high profile campaigns do not reflect the views of the majority of American Jews.

In addition to the solid Jewish support for the agreement, a new dynamic has emerged in the six weeks between our pre-agreement survey and post-agreement survey. These six weeks witnessed several major events in the United States that gave Jews a positive feeling about the direction of the country and the performance of President Obama. Since the last survey, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of marriage equality and also affirmed the legal underpinnings of the Affordable Care Act (Obamacare). The U.S. also re-established diplomatic relations with Cuba, and President Obama delivered his historic speech at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in the aftermath of the Charleston shooting. All these events speak to strongly held political beliefs and values of American Jews, and there has been a modest improvement of 3-5 points across key Obama and national mood measures during this period. In fact, the Iran

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<sup>1</sup> GBA Strategies conducted a national survey of American Jews for J Street July 21-23, 2015. The survey consisted of 1,000 American Jewish adults, and the survey methodology is detailed at the end of this memo. Topline results and crosstabs can be accessed at [jstreet.org](http://jstreet.org).

agreement comes at a time when Jews see the President in his most positive light since his reelection.

## Key Findings

- **Jewish awareness of the Iran issue has notably risen since the signing of the agreement.** Jews are paying attention to the news of the agreement, and 79 percent now say that they have heard a great deal of (32 percent) or some (47 percent) information about the final agreement reached between the U.S., Britain, China, France, Germany, Russia, and Iran. This marks a 13-point increase in awareness since our survey conducted prior to the agreement.
- **Despite a high level of awareness, Jews indicate that Iran and Israel are low on their issue priorities.** Iran and Israel are tied for 9<sup>th</sup> place on a list of 11 issues when Jews are asked to identify the top two issues that they want Congress and the President to prioritize. Only 10 percent of Jews rank these issues as one of their top two priorities, though this marks a slight increase from before the agreement when 7 percent of Jews cited Israel as a priority and 6 percent cited Iran.
- **A large majority of Jews support the final agreement with Iran, exceeding the support of the U.S. population.** The 60 percent support for the agreement among American Jews in this survey, is slightly higher than the 56 percent support among the overall American population in the ABC News/Washington Post survey conducted July 16-19. In order to avoid question bias, and ensure as close a comparison as possible, we used the same exact description of the agreement as the description developed in the ABC News/Washington Post Survey:

*“As you may know, the U.S. and other countries have announced a deal to lift economic sanctions against Iran in exchange for Iran agreeing not to produce nuclear weapons. International inspectors would monitor Iran's facilities, and if Iran is caught breaking the agreement, economic sanctions would be imposed again. Do you support or oppose this agreement?”*

- **Support for the agreement cuts across different demographic groups, receiving majority support among most demographics.** There is broad support for the agreement, regardless of age, gender, region, Jewish organizational engagement, and awareness about the agreement.
  - Jews under 40 years-old are the most supportive age group (66 percent), while majorities of 40-64 year-olds (55 percent) and over 64 years-old (60 percent) still provide strong support.

- Women (63 percent) and men (57 percent) are both very supportive.
  - Among people who have a great deal or some information about the agreement, 59 percent support it.
  - All regions provide large majority support, including 68 percent in the midwest, 60 percent in the northeast, 58 percent in the west, and 58 percent in the south.
  - Liberal/progressive Democrats are the strongest supporters (80 percent), followed by moderate and conservative Democrats (69 percent). Liberal/progressive/moderate Republicans are less supportive (43 percent) and conservative Republicans (15 percent) do not support the agreement at all.
  - Support for the agreement is strong across all Jewish denominations, except for Orthodox Jews. Reform Jews (67 percent) are most supportive, followed by Jews of no particular denomination (63 percent) and Conservative Jews (55 percent). Only 33 percent of Orthodox Jews support the agreement.
  - Among Jews who participate in Jewish organizational events or activities, 58 percent support the agreement. Among Jews who do not participate, 62 percent support the agreement.
- **President Obama’s job approval and personal favorability have slightly increased since the agreement was reached, and there is also an improvement in the national mood.** Obama’s job approval among Jews now stands at 59 percent, which marks a 3-point bump since our June survey taken prior to the agreement. Also, his personal favorability has risen from +7 (48 favorable/41 unfavorable) to +15 (52 favorable/37 unfavorable), and there has been a 5-point bump to 44 percent who believe the country is headed in the right direction. Favorability for Benjamin Netanyahu (+18), John Boehner (-54), and the Republican Party (-51) remain largely unchanged.
  - **American Jews want their Member of Congress to approve the nuclear agreement reached between the U.S., world powers, and Iran.** As the Obama administration and supporters of the agreement work to earn Congressional support for the agreement, they have strong Jewish backing: 60 percent want their Member of Congress to vote to approve the agreement.
  - **Looking forward to the 2016 Congressional election, Jews overwhelmingly plan to vote for the Democratic candidate in their Congressional District.** The Democratic candidate currently leads the Republican candidate by a 61-26 margin in the generic Congressional vote, moving to a 67-29 lead when allocating undecided voters by party favorability and identification. These results are consistent with the previous landslide figures that Democrats have enjoyed among Jewish voters in recent Congressional elections.

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## **Methodological Note**

GBA Strategies designed the questionnaire for this national survey of American Jewish adults. The survey was conducted July 21-23, 2015 and includes 1,000 self-identified Jews. The survey is subject to a margin of error of +/- 3.1 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level. GBA Strategies contracted the research company Mountain West Research Center to administer the survey by email invitation to its web-based panel, which is regularly updated and consists of nearly 900,000 Americans.

Respondents were screened at the beginning of the survey when they were first asked for their religion and then, if they did not identify themselves as Jewish by religion, they were asked again if they considered themselves Jewish.

The survey results, including full question wording and crosstabs are available at [jstreet.org](http://jstreet.org).