

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### AMERICA DISUNITED: PRESIDENTIAL REPTRAK REVEALS OBAMA'S REPUTATION IS WEAK, TRUMP'S IS POOR, AND BOTH POLITICAL PARTIES ARE POLARIZING

*Ahead of the inauguration America is divided: the reputation of the President and President-elect is compromised, the Democratic and Republican Party are reputationally challenged, Trump has a hill to climb.*

**BOSTON, MASS. — (19 January, 2017)** – Building on its ongoing US Presidential Election RepTrak® study, Reputation Institute (RI) today released its latest findings on the perception of the incoming and outgoing Presidents, as well as the two major political parties. Using RI's proprietary stakeholder measurement framework, the study explores not only how the US general public views "Brand Obama" and "Brand Trump," but also why they feel that way and where the President-elect and Parties should focus to improve their standing in the eyes of their constituents.

#### Key Findings

On the eve of the Presidential inauguration, President Obama will leave the White House with rising approval but still a weak overall reputation and an uncertain legacy. By contrast, President-elect Trump will enter the White House with a poor reputation, while conjuring-up mixed feelings of either euphoria or trepidation. It all suggests that in the wake of a highly vitriolic Presidential Campaign and dramatic election outcome, America's is completely divided across the political landscape – with the reputation of both the Republican and Democratic Party languishing in the weak poor to weak range. While Republicans and Democrats hold their own parties in high repute, their general sentiment about the opposing party translates into dislike if not outright disdain.

"We're seeing a Divided State of America when it comes to how polarized the US general public is relative to their view of the old vs. new President -- and their respective political parties," said Stephen Hahn-Griffiths, Vice President and Managing Director of Reputation Institute, US and Canada.

Since March of 2016, Reputation Institute has measured the reputation of the Presidential candidates and political parties through RepTrak®. Based on a new study wave fielded between January 3-9, the latest data also indicates that the Democratic Party has struggled to recover from a tough election loss. The reputation of the Democratic party is weakened by a lack of identity, unclear position on policies, and lack of universal appeal beyond its core supporters. The Republican Party is also challenged by a poor reputation.

#### The Opportunity for Trump

President-elect Trump's reputation has marginally improved following the election, as he has increased the levels of acceptance and support within his own party. Trump's reputation is somewhat defined by his association with promises of Economic Growth and National Security. However, it would seem that a stronger link to policies associated with Education and Innovation can provide him with an untapped opportunity to significantly improve his perceptions. But his "twitterholic" tendencies have detracted from a positive view of his expressiveness and sincerity in communication. Furthermore, the overall view of his persona and perceptions of Brand Trump are viewed as overly aggressive, arrogant, ambitious, and daring

— which according to the beholder is either hurting him or ingratiating him with different segments of the general public. In particular, women attribute Trump with an especially poor reputation, although men view him slightly more favorably.

Says Hahn-Griffiths, “Trump is at risk of becoming a Presidential paradox, given that his actions and demeanor are both an amplifier and detractor of his reputation.”

Key to Trump’s success is the potential to unite all Americans behind a common belief about a better future for everyone. But according to the recent RepTrak® study, the data shows that to earn a stronger reputation Trump can’t just claim he’s a “uniter” through incessant communications. Rather, Trump needs to take steps to earn a better reputation through his compassion, effective policies, authentic action, and consistent delivery on his promises.

“As our next President, Trump’s future actions will speak louder than his words in defining his reputation,” sums up Hahn-Griffiths.

### **The Presidential RepTrak® Study**

The 2016 Presidential Election RepTrak® study evaluates the reputation of candidates and political parties among the US general public, as defined by their perceptions and deep sense of emotional connection. The measure of reputation is underscored by seven dimensions incorporating perceptions of: economic growth, national security, education and innovation, global relations, health and wellness, social investment and executive leadership. These combined scores are used to develop the candidates’ and political party RepTrak® Pulse score, which demonstrates the normative measure of reputation among those surveyed.

The Presidential Election RepTrak® study is based on a proprietary methodology that is at the foundation of how Reputation Institute globally measures the perceptions of companies, categories, countries, and cities among the general public. Other Reputation Institute studies include the Global RepTrak® 100, Country RepTrak® and City RepTrak® studies.

To watch a video summary of the study findings and download the report, please visit: <https://www.reputationinstitute.com/presidential-research>

### **About Reputation Institute**

Founded in 1997, Reputation Institute (RI) is the world’s leading provider of stakeholder measurement, membership and management services, working with 400 of the top Global 1000 companies. Serving corporate communications and marketing executives and their teams, RI delivers our data, insights and best practices through hands-on consulting, subscription services and RLN events and executive training. RI’s most prominent management tool is the RepTrak® model for analyzing the reputations of companies and institutions — best known via the Global RepTrak® 100, the world’s largest and most comprehensive study of corporate reputations, as well as Country RepTrak® and City RepTrak® studies that look at reputation across organizations within a given geography.

Learn more at: <http://www.reputationinstitute.com/>

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