Only 2% Say They Will Support the Romney/Ryan Ticket

Data Say GOP Leaders “Seem Hostile to Minorities”

African-American Registered Voters Are Poised for High Level of Turnout and Optimistic About Economic Recovery Under President Obama

Chief Economic Concern is Cost of Living, Not Jobs

New York, NY – In the most comprehensive election- year study of registered African-American voters in the battleground states, BET News’ original poll conducted by nationally-recognized pollster Cornell Belcher, reveals overwhelming support for President Barack Obama for a second term re-election and severe disapproval of Republican Presidential nominee Governor Mitt Romney (R-Massachusetts). *“Black, Red, White & Blue,”* is a study of 800 registered Black voters in swing states that explores divisions within the Black electorate on key issues. The poll takes the pulse of African-American political opinion in the remaining months of President Obama’s first term in office.

"We've been inundated by polls that have remained surprisingly static but none can answer the critical question of whether the heady days of hope and change have come and gone,” says Cornell Belcher, President of brilliant corners Research and Strategies. “Now we have a poll that shines a light on whether in the era of super PACs, voter ID laws & shrinking early voting core Obama supporters will turn out like they did in 2008. President Obama won in 2008 by expanding the electorate and the battleground map and this poll gives a glimpse into whether a core constituency is poised to do it again."

“Hope is still alive. President Obama’s base is frustrated but still optimistic and determined.” Belcher added. “The President still has a lot of work to do to achieve his historic 2008 performance, but Republicans are increasingly poorly positioned to compete for Black voters.”

The study is the deepest exploration to date of the views of Black voters in the states on which the 2012 Election will probably turn. It brings into focus their increasing alienation from the GOP despite philosophical alignment on issues of social conservatism, challenges the conventional wisdom about their level of enthusiasm and optimism in the current election cycle, and suggests a clear distinction between personal beliefs and “voting issues” in how they cast their ballots.

Below are some of the additional topline highlights from *“Black, Red, White & Blue,”* the 2012 BET News Poll of African American voters in the battleground states:

- On the GOP: Gov. Mitt Romney is currently positioned to garner an historic low rate of support among African-American voters. Only two percent of African-American voters in our poll currently support the Romney/Ryan ticket. The data indicate the traits that are pushing African-Americans away from the GOP, including the perception that too many Republican leaders seem “hostile to minorities.” Even where significant percentages of Black voters are philosophically in line with traditional Republican Party positions on issues such as same-sex marriage (40% favor/38% oppose), a decline in moral values as biggest obstacle to Black advancement (46%), and abortion (51% pro-choice/44% pro-life), these views overwhelmingly do not translate into GOP votes.

- Enthusiasm vs. Apathy: Despite conventional wisdom, Black voters are on track to vote in numbers equivalent to 2008. Only 4% say they are less interested in voting in the upcoming election than they were in 2008. 85% say they are following the election closely.

- Hope Amidst Despair: African-American voters are surprisingly optimistic, despite an unemployment rate double that of whites, 69% are optimistic about the economy rebounding in the next 12 months. 77% say the US economy is stabilizing or improving.

- “It's the Cost of Living, Stupid:” The top concern about the economy for Black voters is not jobs (21%), but rather salary and wages not keeping pace with the cost of living (38%) and affordable health care (24%).

- A President for All Americans: Though a number of prominent African-Americans have called on the President to more explicitly target programs to address Black unemployment, the overwhelming majority of Black voters accept that he must focus on repairing the national economy and in that way help Black Americans (76% vs 14%).

Findings from a survey conducted by brilliant corners Research & Strategies on behalf of BET News. The survey was conducted by telephone using professional interviewers between August 12th and August 19th 2012. The survey reached 800 African American likely voters in 11 battleground states, which included CO, FL, GA, MI, MO, NV, NC, OH, PA, VA & WI. The

margin of error on this survey is +/- 3.5%. BET News will use the findings and analysis from the poll as the basis for their LIVE on-air coverage of the RNC and Democratic National Conventions. Titled *Black, Red, White and Blue,* the poll findings will be given a human face with exclusive video interviews from focus groups representing four cross-sections of Black voters in North Carolina and Florida, two key swing states. The 2012 election will be decided in a handful of states, some of which have significant Black electorates.

BET News is collaborating with Google to present results of BET News' poll *Black, Red, White and Blue* via the Google.com/elections page. In addition they will jointly co-sponsor a forum in Charlotte to promote the results and explore the impact of the African American electorate in North Carolina. Throughout the election cycle BET News content will be posted on the Google.com/elections site.

Join the BET News Poll conversation on social media by logging onto BET's multiple social media platforms:

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- On Facebook by liking the fan page at facebook.com/BETVote

- On Google plus at http://bet.us/gplusVOTE