



## Most want Gary Johnson, Jill Stein included in debates, poll finds

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September 1, 2016

More than half of American registered voters think Libertarian Party presidential candidate Gary Johnson should be included in this month's presidential debate and nearly half believe that Green Party candidate Jill Stein should be there, too, according to a new poll released Thursday.

In the Morning Consult poll, 52 percent said they believe that Johnson, the former two-term Republican governor of New Mexico, should be allowed to participate in the debate with Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton and Republican White House hopeful Donald Trump, while 22 percent said he shouldn't be included. Twenty-six percent of respondents to the poll were undecided.

As for Stein, registered voters by 47-26 percent said she should be included while 27 percent were undecided.

Among major party supporters, 49 percent of Democrats and 48 percent of Republicans favor including Johnson in the Sept. 26 debate at New York's Hofstra University. Both third-party candidates fared well among independent voters – 58 percent said Johnson should be part of the debates while 52 percent backed Stein's inclusion.

Johnson and Stein **need to reach 15 percent in an average** of polls to gain debate spots. In a four-way match-up Johnson was at 7.6 percent in Real Clear Politics' poll average and Stein was at 3.2 percent.

Purple PAC – a super political action committee that once supported Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul’s failed Republican presidential run – recently spent \$1 million on advertising for Johnson in hopes of boosting his poll numbers.

In an interview with McClatchy this week, Ed Crane, Purple PAC’s founder and co-founder of the libertarian-leaning Cato Institute, blasted the 15 percent threshold established by the bipartisan Commission on Presidential Debates as “arbitrary.”

“They have the ability to approve Gary’s participation in the debate,” Crane said. “And they should.”