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## **The Battleground: The Presidential Race in Pennsylvania**

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This Marist Poll reports:

### **Presidential Race in Pennsylvania**

- **Barack Obama Maintains Wide Lead in Pennsylvania...Outpaces McCain by 13**

**Percentage Points:** Senator Barack Obama has a strong lead in the contest for Pennsylvania's 21 electoral votes. Among registered voters in the state, Obama is ahead with 52% to McCain's 39%. Obama has gained ground since a Marist Poll conducted earlier this month when he was ahead by 9 percentage points. The gap among registered voters now stands at 13 percentage points. Among likely voters, including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate, Obama has a comparable 14 percentage point advantage. Here, Obama sprints past McCain -- 55% to 41% -- with just 4% of voters reporting they have yet to make up their minds. In Marist's earlier poll, Obama led McCain by 12 percentage points among likely voters. Currently, Obama has more support among Democrats than McCain has among Republicans. 91% of Democrats say they support their party's candidate while 83% of Republicans say they are backing McCain. Independents likely to vote on Election Day favor Obama by more than 2-to-1.

**Question Wording:** If next week's presidential election were held today, whom would you support if the candidates are:

	John McCain/ Sarah Palin the Republicans	Barack Obama/ Joe Biden the Democrats	Other	Undecided
<b>Registered voters</b>				
<b>October 29, 2008</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>&lt;1%</b>	<b>9%</b>
October 13, 2008	40%	49%	1%	10%
September 2008	42%	45%	2%	11%
<b>Likely voters w/ leaners</b>				
<b>October 29, 2008</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>&lt;1%</b>	<b>4%</b>
Democrats	6%	91%	<1%	3%
Republicans	83%	13%	<1%	4%
Independents	30%	64%	1%	5%
October 13, 2008	41%	53%	<1%	6%
Democrats	8%	88%	<1%	4%
Republicans	83%	12%	1%	4%
Independents	34%	53%	1%	12%
September 2008	44%	49%	<1%	7%
Democrats	6%	87%	<1%	7%
Republicans	92%	5%	<1%	3%
Independents	40%	49%	<1%	11%

- Pumped Up in Pennsylvania...Most Voters Strongly Committed to Choice of Candidate:** 85% of Pennsylvania voters say they are firmly behind their pick for president while just 2% say they might change their minds between now and Tuesday. That's regardless of whom they are planning to support. Most of Obama's and McCain's backers have put down roots in their candidate's camp. 86% of Obama's supporters are strongly committed to the Democrat compared with 81% a couple of weeks ago. McCain's level of support has intensified even more. 84% of his backers say they are firmly behind the Republican compared with 70% just two weeks ago.

**Question Wording:** Would you say that you strongly support [ticket], somewhat support them, or do you think you might vote differently on Election Day?

	Strongly Support	Somewhat Support	Might Vote Differently	Unsure
<b>Registered voters</b>				
<b>October 29, 2008</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>&lt;1%</b>
McCain/Palin supporters	84%	14%	2%	<1%
Obama/Biden supporters	86%	12%	2%	<1%

Registered voters	Strongly Support	Somewhat Support	Might Vote Differently	Unsure
October 13, 2008	76%	17%	6%	1%
McCain/Palin supporters	70%	24%	5%	1%
Obama/Biden supporters	81%	12%	6%	1%
September 2008	81%	14%	5%	<1%

- The Great Divide...Issues vs. Values:** Pennsylvania's registered voters divide on the question of whether they prefer a candidate who shares their values or one who maintains similar positions on the issues. 44% say they'd prefer a leader who sees eye-to-eye with them on the issues while 40% of the electorate would like a president with their values. There are fundamental differences between McCain's and Obama's supporters. 51% of McCain's backers believe values matter more, and 34% think issues take precedence. Obama's supporters break in the same proportion but in the opposite direction. 51% of these voters think a candidate who stands with them on the issues should win the White House, and 34% want a candidate who shares their values.

**Question Wording:** If you had to choose, would you prefer a candidate who shares your positions on the issues but does not share your values, or a candidate who shares your values but not your positions on the issues?

Registered voters	Shared Issues	Shared Values	Unsure
<b>October 29, 2008</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>16%</b>
McCain/Palin supporters	34%	51%	15%
Obama/Biden supporters	51%	34%	15%

- On the Fence...Half of Voters View McCain Favorably...Obama Holds Onto A Majority Who Perceive Him Positively:** There's good and bad news for Barack Obama and John McCain; neither candidate's *unfavorable* rating has statistically risen. However, both candidates have experienced a dip in their favorability. Half of registered voters in Pennsylvania see John McCain positively compared with 55% who viewed him favorably just two weeks ago. As for Barack Obama, his favorability has dropped 6 percentage points. Unlike John McCain, though, Obama maintains a positive rating from a majority of the Pennsylvania electorate with 59%.

**Question Wording:** Overall, do you have a favorable or an unfavorable impression of:

<b>Registered voters</b>	Favorable	Unfavorable	Unsure
John McCain			
<b>October 29, 2008</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>6%</b>
October 13, 2008	55%	43%	2%
September 2008	53%	37%	10%
Barack Obama			
<b>October 29, 2008</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>7%</b>
October 13, 2008	65%	34%	1%
September 2008	60%	32%	8%

- **The Pennsylvania Plunge...Perceptions of Palin and Biden Lose Luster:**

Pennsylvania voters have not warmed up to Governor Sarah Palin. The GOP vice presidential candidate has failed to win over a majority of the state’s registered voters. Today, just 43% say they have a favorable opinion of Palin while 48% see her negatively. In a Marist Poll conducted earlier this month, 50% said they thought well of her. Like Palin, Senator Joe Biden’s favorability rating has dropped in the past two weeks. However, he still has a majority of the electorate who thinks well of him. Currently, 52% of voters view Biden positively compared with 63% in Marist’s previous poll.

**Question Wording:** Overall, do you have a favorable or an unfavorable impression of:

<b>Registered voters</b>	Favorable	Unfavorable	Unsure
Sarah Palin			
<b>October 29, 2008</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>9%</b>
October 13, 2008	50%	45%	5%
September 2008	49%	34%	17%
Joe Biden			
<b>October 29, 2008</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>17%</b>
October 13, 2008	63%	28%	9%
September 2008	52%	29%	19%

**Nature of the Sample: 809 Pennsylvania Registered Voters**

This survey of 809 registered voters in Pennsylvania was conducted on October 26<sup>th</sup> and October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2008. Registered voters were interviewed by telephone in proportion to the voter registration in each county in Pennsylvania and adjusted for turnout in statewide elections. Results are statistically significant at  $\pm 3.5\%$ . There are 713 likely voters. The results for this sub-sample are statistically significant at  $\pm 4\%$ . The error margin increases for cross-tabulations.