



behavior research center's

Rocky Mountain Poll

NEWS RELEASE [RMP 2007-II-02]

Contact: Earl de Berge
Research Director

DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY: OBAMA CLOSES GAP ON CLINTON
HOWEVER, MOST FAVOR GOP CANDIDATES IN GENERAL ELECTION TESTS

Phoenix, Arizona , March 27, 2007. In an odd twist, although Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton still seems most likely to carry the state in the Democratic primary election were it being held today, Senator Barack Obama's young candidacy is already showing that he is at least as strong as Clinton when it comes to facing Republican rivals in the presidential election. Neither, however, have yet found the key to attracting a majority of the vote in Arizona.

Clinton currently has a narrow seven point lead over Obama (27 to 20 percent), but her lead appears to be melting: in January she enjoyed a wider 14 point lead (32 to 18 percent). The early battle seems to be narrowing down to Clinton and Obama because as the gap between them closes, the base of voters for John Edwards, Al Gore, and John Kerry shows no signs of improving. The candidacy of Joe Biden is stalled at three percent. On the other hand, Bill Richardson of New Mexico, whose name has not been tested until this survey, already shows some signs of appeal to Democrats, pulling seven percent.

Whether the Democratic primary contest is won by Clinton or Obama, both will face an uphill battle to beat Republicans such as John McCain or Rudy Guiliani in Arizona. Obama is the stronger of the two against McCain and Guiliani and actually out-polls Mitt Romney. Obama trails McCain by 57 to 32 percent and Guiliani by 53 to 35 percent. Clinton is even further behind, trailing McCain by 60 to 32 percent and Guiliani by 57 to 34 percent.

An interesting aspect of the Clinton-Obama battle for Democratic primary voters pertains to how Democrats' age correlates to candidate preference. Younger Democrats (under 35) give a plurality of their vote to Obama and reveal an above average interest in Al Gore. Older Democrats are more divided in their preferences yet lean toward Clinton. The survey also reveals that middle and upper income Democratic families are very interested in the candidacy of Barack Obama and give a plurality of their vote to him. Clinton out polls Obama among Hispanic Democrats but Obama is already very competitive among non-Hispanic Democrats and among Caucasian voters.

– MORE –

One of the appreciable risks in the early primaries for President is the early damage it can do to lead candidates while simultaneously opening the door for darkhorses to emerge later in the season. In both the GOP and Democratic primaries, the lead has narrowed appreciably in Arizona in just the past 45 days as Guiliani and Obama close in on McCain and Clinton. Additionally, the proportion of Democratic voters in Arizona who are taking a wait and see position has mushroomed in the same time frame from 12 to 23 percent. It has also risen among Republican voters, although not as dramatically. All of these shifts signal an election cycle that could yield results unanticipated today.

TEST ELECTIONS FOR THE GENERAL ELECTION

In our March test elections, we separate pitting Rudy Guiliani, John McCain or Mitt Romney against Hillary Clinton or Barack Obama. These tests leave little doubt that although President Bush may be unpopular in the state, voters here still lean strong toward GOP candidates. Thus, we find that McCain is currently the strongest GOP candidate for the general election in Arizona, especially when tested against Clinton. Obama, on the other hand, cuts much more deeply into the GOP vote than does Clinton. Mitt Romney does not have the same level of appeal and in fact loses against Obama and bests Clinton only modestly.

Clinton trails GOP candidates principally because of weak appeal among male voters – drawing only a quarter to 30 percent of their ranks. She has a similar weakness among voters over 55 years of age and within upper income families. Obama pulls more evenly from the ranks of both women and men, older voters and from likely voters. Obama also shows fairly strong appeal among African American voters, stronger than we had seen several months ago and a possible sign that he will be able to overcome what some thought would be resistance to an African-American candidate without so-called traditional Black roots.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This Rocky Mountain Poll Arizona (2007-II-02) is based on 600 telephone interviews with voters across Arizona, conducted from March 10th to March 21st, 2007. In the overall sample, one may say with 95 percent certainty that the results have a statistical precision of plus or minus **3.9** percent of what they would have been had the entire adult population been surveyed. The Republican sample includes **251** voters and the Democrat sample **214** voters. The margin of error for each of these sub-samples is plus or minus **6.3** percent. The Rocky Mountain Poll is conducted by the Behavior Research Center of Arizona and is an independent and non-partisan research program.

This statement conforms to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

ENCLOSED: Statistical data for reference.

STATISTICAL DATA

Behavior Research Center
 Rocky Mountain Poll – Arizona
 RMP 2007-II-02

For this and other polls, see www.brcpolls.com/results.

“Next I will read a list of people who may be running in the (Democrat) primary for president of the United States in the 2008 election. After I read all the names, please tell me which you favor today?” (NAMES ROTATED)

ASKED OF DEMOCRATS

	<u>JAN.</u>	<u>MARCH</u>
Hillary Rodham Clinton	32%	27%
Barack Obama	18	20
Al Gore	15	10
John Edwards	15	9
Bill Richards	NA	7
Joe Biden	3	3
John Kerry	5	*
Undecided	12	23
	100%	100%

~~~~~

TEST ELECTIONS: PRESIDENTIAL ARIZONA VOTERS

|                          | <u>Dec.</u> | <u>March</u> |                            | <u>Dec.</u> | <u>March</u> |
|--------------------------|-------------|--------------|----------------------------|-------------|--------------|
| John McCain (R)          | 56%         | 57%          | John McCain (R)            | 56%         | 60%          |
| Barack Obama (D)         | 33          | 32           | Hillary Clinton (D)        | 34          | 31           |
| Undecided                | 11          | 11           | Undecided                  | 10          | 9            |
| (Obama <u>Trails</u> By) | (23)        | (25)         | (Clinton <u>Trails</u> By) | (22)        | (29)         |
| <br>                     |             |              | <br>                       |             |              |
| Rudy Guiliani (R)        | NA          | 53           | Rudy Guiliani (R)          | NA          | 57           |
| Barack Obama (D)         | NA          | 35           | Hillary Clinton (D)        | NA          | 34           |
| Undecided                | NA          | 12           | Undecided                  | NA          | 9            |
| (Obama <u>Trails</u> By) | -           | (18)         | (Clinton <u>Trails</u> By) | -           | (23)         |
| <br>                     |             |              | <br>                       |             |              |
| Mitt Romney (R)          | 42          | 38           | Mitt Romney (R)            | 45          | 45           |
| Barack Obama             | 43          | 43           | Hillary Clinton (D)        | 42          | 39           |
| Undecided                | 15          | 19           | Undecided                  | 13          | 20           |
| (Obama <u>Leads</u> By)  | (1)         | (5)          | (Clinton <u>Trails</u> By) | (3)         | (6)          |

~~~~~