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Rocky Mountain Poll

NEWS RELEASE [RMP 2008-III-01]

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FAVORITE SON McCAIN STRENGTH IN ARIZONA SHRINKS. OBAMA GAINS AMONG MEN, DEMOCRATS AND LATINOS.

Phoenix, Arizona, August 1, 2008. In Arizona, the contest for President of the United States between Democrat Barack Obama and Republican John McCain could prove to be a dilly and is most likely to be decided by which candidate carries Maricopa county where nearly six out of ten Arizona voters reside and which is generally conceded to be the heartland of Republican strength in the state. Yet here in Senator McCain's back yard, his lead which was a comfortable 15 to 17 points for most of last and this year, has shrunk significantly.

In late July, a survey of 401 voters in Arizona's most populous county, McCain's lead over Obama has narrowed to within five points (43% for McCain to 38% for Obama). As recently as May of this year, McCain led by 53 to 38 percent. Additionally, among voters still on the fence, but who admit they are "leaning" toward one of the other, the division is similar.

McCain's narrowing lead traces not to any sudden up-swelling in support for Obama, whose support has hovered around 38 percent for the past year and remains at that level today. Rather, it traces to a decline in support of McCain, especially among men, registered Independents and Latinos. Simultaneously, the proportion of voters who are uncommitted rose to 16 percent from only nine this May and Ralph Nader drew a small but important three percent, mostly from McCain.

The most obvious explanation for the tightening up of the race is that for the first time in any McCain race we can recollect, the usual 20 to 30 percent of Democrats who defect to McCain are now staying home. Today, only nine percent of Democrats are crossing over to McCain while eleven percent of Republicans are crossing over to Obama.

And even if Ralph Nader plays only a small role in this election (he attracts only three percent of voters) it may be an important role because half of those voters are Republicans, 40 percent are Independents and only one in ten are Democrats.

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Obama is also in a slugfest with McCain for registered independents: 35 percent are splitting for McCain, 34 percent for Obama, four percent for Ralph Nader and the 27 percent balance, continue to hold their cards close.

It also appears that Obama is making some of his most important inroads within the ranks of male voters. For example, in May of 2007 in Arizona, Obama trailed McCain by a whopping 23 points among men. That gap actually rose to 26 percent by May of 2008 but today McCain's lead among men has collapsed to only four points. Obama's trip to Europe and the mid-east may have played a significant factor in giving male voters more comfort with Obama's candidacy and his capacity to relate to and deal with world leaders.

Both McCain and Obama have lost marginal ground with women voters as their undecided ranks have swollen modestly.

Finally, even though Latino voters have in the past displayed a tendency to favor Democratic candidates, John McCain has long been able to attract from a quarter to a third of their vote. This appears not to be the case today. Seventy- nine percent of Latinos in this survey say they will vote for Barack Obama while McCain's share registers at only nine percent.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: This Rocky Mountain Poll - Arizona (2008-III-01), is based on 401 interviews with Maricopa County voters, conducted between July 18 and 24, 2008. Where necessary, figures for age, sex, race and political party were weighted to bring them into line with their actual proportion in the population. In a sample of this size, one can say with a 95 percent certainty that the results have a statistical precision of plus or minus 5.0 percent of what they would have been had the entire population been surveyed. The Rocky Mountain Poll is conducted by the Behavior Research Center of Arizona and is an independent and non-partisan research program sponsored by the Center.

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

ENCLOSED: Statistical tables.

STATISTICAL DATA

Behavior Research Center
 Rocky Mountain Poll - Arizona
 RMP (2008-III-01)

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

"If the 2008 presidential election were being held today, and the candidates were (ROTATE) John McCain, the Republican, Barack Obama, the Democrat and Ralph Nader, the Green Party candidate which one would you vote for?"

MARICOPA COUNTY

	McCain	Obama	Nader	Uncommitted
July 25-30	43%	38%	3%	16%
May 2008	53	38	NA	9
May 2007	53	36	NA	11

DETAIL

	Democrat	Republican	Independent	Men	Latinos
JULY 18-24, 2008					
McCain	9%	75%	35%	42%	9%
Obama	76	11	34	38	79
Nader	1	4	4	3	2
Uncommitted	<u>14</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>10</u>
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
May 2008					
McCain	17%	83%	46%	58%	21%
Obama	70	11	44	32	59
Uncommitted	<u>13</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>20</u>
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
MAY 2007					
McCain	27%	82%	46%	56%	27%
Obama	62	12	34	33	62
Uncommitted	<u>11</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>11</u>
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%