

Gonzales Research & Marketing Strategies

“Maryland’s leader in public opinion polling”



Maryland Poll

**President George Bush Job Approval
Gubernatorial Match-ups
U.S. Senate Match-ups
Utility Rate Hikes
Democratic Primary Results**

April 2006

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Methodology

Patrick E. Gonzales graduated from the University of Baltimore in 1981 with a degree in political science. He is the former president of Mason-Dixon Campaign Polling and Gonzales/Arscott Research & Communications, Inc.

Since the mid 1980's, Mr. Gonzales has polled and analyzed hundreds of elections in Maryland. Additionally, he and his associates have conducted numerous market research projects and crafted message development programs for businesses and organizations throughout the state.

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Together they have formed a firm called Gonzales/Boyd Political Consulting, specializing in offering research and strategy development for political candidates and those looking to shape public policy. Visit their web site at www.gonzalesboyd.com

This survey was conducted by ***Gonzales Research & Marketing Strategies*** from April 4th through April 13th, 2006. A total of 819 registered voters in Maryland who vote regularly were interviewed by telephone. A cross-section of interviews was conducted in each jurisdiction within the state to reflect general election voting patterns.

The margin for error, according to customary statistical standards, is no more than plus or minus 3.5 percentage points. There is a 95 percent probability that the "true" figures would fall within this range if the entire survey universe were sampled. The margin for error is higher for any demographic subgroup, such as gender or party affiliation.

This survey also includes a sample of 423 likely 2006 Democratic primary voters. The margin for error on this sample is plus or minus 5 percentage points.

Maryland Statewide Poll Sample Demographics

Gender		Race		Region	
Male	407 (50%)	White	618 (75%)	Eastern Shore/S Md	106 (13%)
Female	412 (50%)	Black	182 (22%)	Baltimore City	81 (10%)
		Other/Ref	19	Baltimore Suburbs	292 (36%)
				Washington Subs	239 (29%)
				Western Maryland	101 (12%)
Party Registration					
Democrat	458 (56%)				
Republican	263 (32%)				
Independent	98 (12%)				

Regional Groupings are as follows:

Eastern Shore/ Southern Md	Baltimore City	Baltimore Suburbs	Washington Suburbs	Western Maryland
Calvert Co.	Baltimore City	Anne Arundel Co.	Montgomery Co.	Allegany Co.
Caroline Co.		Baltimore Co.	Prince George's Co.	Carroll Co.
Cecil Co.		Harford Co.		Frederick Co.
Charles Co.		Howard Co.		Garrett Co.
Dorchester Co.				Washington Co.
Kent Co.				
Queen Anne's Co.				
Somerset Co.				
St. Mary's Co.				
Talbot Co.				
Wicomico Co.				
Worcester Co.				

Democratic Primary Sample Demographics

Gender	Race	Region
Male 177 (42%)	White 284 (67%)	Metro Baltimore 191 (45%)
Female 246 (58%)	Black 130 (31%)	Metro Washington 159 (38%)
	Other/Ref 9	Rest of State 73 (17%)

Metro Baltimore includes: Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, and Howard Counties, and Baltimore City.

Metro Washington includes: Montgomery, and Prince George's Counties.

Rest of State includes: Southern Maryland, Eastern Shore, and Western Maryland.

Summary

President Bush Job Approval

President George W. Bush's job approval in Maryland has plummeted to its lowest level since he took office over five years ago.

Statewide, 29% of voters say they approve of the job Bush is doing as president, while well over twice as many, 67%, say they disapprove of his performance in office.

Bush Job Rating	Approve	Disapprove	No answer
April 2006	29%	67%	4%
October 2005	33%	63%	4%
October 2004	44%	53%	3%
August 2004	43%	51%	6%
June 2004	39%	54%	7%
March 2004	45%	47%	8%
February 2004	41%	53%	6%
December 2003	47%	46%	7%
August 2003	43%	48%	9%
April 2003	62%	31%	7%
September 2002	63%	28%	9%
January 2002	74%	16%	10%
May 2001	48%	34%	18%
February 2001	47%	34%	19%

Ninety-one percent of Democrats, 71% of women and 92% of black voters in Maryland disapprove of the job Bush is doing as president.

War in Iraq

Marylanders' attitude toward the war in Iraq continues to plunge as well. Statewide, only 24% approve of the way Bush is handling the war in Iraq, while an overwhelming 71%

disapprove of what's happening there.

War in Iraq	Approve	Disapprove

April 2006	24%	71%
October 2005	25%	67%
June 2004	36%	58%
December 2003	40%	48%

Governor Ehrlich Job Approval

With six months to go before the fall elections, Governor Bob Ehrlich's job approval among Maryland voters remains relatively stable. Statewide, 50% approve of the job he's doing as governor, while 38% disapprove of the job he is doing, and 12% offered no opinion.

Ehrlich Job Rating	Approve	Disapprove	No answer
April 2006	50%	38%	12%
January 2006	53%	36%	11%
October 2005	49%	42%	9%
January 2005	55%	37%	8%
June 2004	52%	33%	15%
December 2003	55%	27%	18%
August 2003	57%	30%	13%
March 2003	56%	29%	15%

He maintains very high numbers with his Republican base (83% approval), but his numbers among Democrats, who constitute well over fifty percent of the electorate, are somewhat problematic – 32% of Democrats approve of Ehrlich, but 55% disapprove.

General Assembly Job Approval

When Maryland voters were asked whether they approve or disapprove of the job the Maryland General Assembly is doing, 40% said they approve, 39% said they disapprove and 21% gave no answer.

By party, 46% of Democrats approve of the job the Maryland General Assembly is doing, while 31% disapprove; 35% of Republicans approve, 48% disapprove; and among independents, only 27% approve, while 52% disapprove.

General Election Gubernatorial Match-ups

Ehrlich's softness among Democrats is once more evident in general election match-ups with the two candidates campaigning for the opportunity to challenge him. In a contest between Ehrlich and Martin O'Malley, the Baltimore Mayor leads 46% to 41%, with 13% undecided. Ehrlich snares 85% of Republican voters, but O'Malley leads overwhelmingly among Democrats in the state, 71% to 16%.

In a match-up with Montgomery County Executive Doug Duncan, Ehrlich trails 44% to 42%. Again, the current attitude among Maryland Democrats to support the candidate of their own party (Duncan is up 67%-17%) puts the Governor at a disadvantage.

Between now and November, Ehrlich will need to see a change in this dynamic to capture a second term.

Voting in Maryland

In an effort to gauge voter opinion on how best to conduct the fall elections we asked this question: *“Which of the following voting systems do you think Maryland should use for this year’s elections: Electronic touch screen voting machines, which don’t provide a paper record, OR Paper ballots that are scanned after you vote, which do provide a paper record?”*

Statewide, 56% said Maryland should use paper ballots, which provide a paper record, while 41% said the State should use electronic touch screen voting machines. Majority support for paper ballots was found among all demographic sub-groups.

Utility Rate Increase

Maryland voters are extremely nervous over the upcoming rate hikes for BGE customers.

Statewide, 75% are “very concerned” about the utility rate increase for BGE customers, 14% are “somewhat concerned,” 7% are “not that concerned” and only 3% are “not at all concerned.” High anxiety over this issue is found across the board.

We next asked Marylanders several questions in order to assess where they believe responsibility lies for this crisis:

- 67% agree (48% “strongly”/19% “moderately”) that the General Assembly is responsible for the utility rate increase, “because it passed deregulation in 1999;”
- 66% agree (43% “strongly”/23% “moderately”) that Constellation Energy, “which owns BGE,” is responsible;
- 45% agree (25% “strongly”/20% “moderately”) that the Governor is responsible, “because he appoints members of the Public Service Commission, the state agency that regulates utility rates.

With regard to whom voters are holding most responsible, Governor Ehrlich, at this point, is winning the PR battle. Overall, 40% say Constellation Energy is most responsible, 34% say the General Assembly is most responsible and only 12% hold the Governor most responsible.

By party, 45% of Democrats say Constellation Energy is most responsible for the increase in utility rates, while 41% of Republicans and 39% of independents say the General Assembly is most responsible.

General Election U.S. Senate Match-ups

In general election match-ups to succeed retiring Senator Paul Sarbanes, Democrats are in a good position heading into the fall elections. Third District Congressman Ben Cardin leads Lieutenant Governor Michael Steele 49% to 35%, with 16% undecided.

Steele is capturing 77% of the GOP vote, but Cardin is up 76%-12% among Democrats, and leads 39% to 31% with independents.

Against Cardin, The Lieutenant Governor is doing slightly better among black voters (capturing 21%) than is traditional for Republicans in Maryland. But, ultimately, Steele will need to accomplish what any statewide Republican candidate in Maryland must do to be successful on Election Day – persuade about 1-in-3 Democrats to vote for him.

In a match-up with former Congressman and NAACP president Kweisi Mfume, Steele trails 44% to 39%, with 17% undecided.

In this contest, Mfume garners 69% of Democrats and 78% of the black vote.

Democratic Primary Match-ups

Gubernatorial Primary

In the race to determine who will challenge Bob Ehrlich in November, Martin O'Malley leads Doug Duncan by nine points, 44% to 35%, with 21% undecided.

In the metro Baltimore region, O'Malley has a commanding 57% to 26% lead over Duncan, while in the metro Washington region, Duncan has a commanding 52% to 25% lead over O'Malley.

In the remainder of the state (Southern Maryland, the Eastern Shore and Western Maryland), which comprises less than 20% of the vote in a Democratic Primary, O'Malley is up 52%-21%, with 27% undecided.

Given the shifting demographics of Democratic Primary elections in Maryland, turnout in September will be one of the key factors in this election.

U.S. Senate Primary

In the United States Senate Primary, Ben Cardin leads Kweisi Mfume, 39% to 31%, with 4% for Lise Van Susteren, 2% for Allan Lichtman, 1% each for Josh Rales and Dennis Rasmussen and 22% undecided. Cardin is up among white voters, 49% to 13%, while Mfume has a strong advantage among black voters, 69% to 17%. Again, turnout could be very important in determining the winner.

Comptroller Primary

It appears William Donald Schaefer's recent behavior has had a deleterious effect on his re-election bid. Statewide, 40% say they'll vote for Schaefer, 33% say they'll vote for Peter Franchot and 27% are undecided. At this point, Schaefer leads in the metro Baltimore region, 48%-30%, while Franchot, a

Montgomery County Delegate, is up 39% to 28% in metro Washington.

Schaefer's never lost a statewide race in Maryland and won the 2002 Democratic Primary better than 2-to-1. For a relatively unknown challenger to be this close is an ominous sign for the incumbent.

QUESTION: *Do you approve or disapprove of the job George Bush is doing as president?*

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Approve	29%
Disapprove	67%
No Answer	4%

Party - *Approve or disapprove of the job George Bush is doing as president?*

Party	Approve	Disapprove	No Answer
Democrat	7%	91%	2%
Republican	70%	23%	7%
Independent	21%	73%	6%

Gender – *Approve or disapprove of the job George Bush is doing as president?*

Gender	Approve	Disapprove	No Answer
Men	33%	63%	4%
Women	25%	71%	4%

Race – *Approve or disapprove of the job George Bush is doing as president?*

Race	Approve	Disapprove	No Answer
White	36%	60%	4%
African-American	5%	92%	3%

QUESTION: *Do you approve or disapprove of President George Bush's handling of the war in Iraq?*

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Approve	24%
Disapprove	71%
No answer	5%

Party – *Approve or disapprove President George Bush's handling of the war in Iraq?*

Party	Approve	Disapprove	No answer
Democrat	5%	92%	3%
Republican	57%	34%	9%
Independent	23%	71%	6%

Gender – *Approve or disapprove President George Bush's handling of the war in Iraq?*

Gender	Approve	Disapprove	No answer
Men	28%	66%	6%
Women	20%	76%	4%

QUESTION: *Do you approve or disapprove of the job Bob Ehrlich is doing as governor?*

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Approve	50%
Disapprove	38%
No Answer	12%

Party - *Approve or disapprove of the job Bob Ehrlich is doing as governor?*

Party	Approve	Disapprove	No Answer
Democrat	32%	55%	13%
Republican	83%	8%	9%
Independent	45%	39%	16%

Gender - *Approve or disapprove of the job Bob Ehrlich is doing as governor?*

Gender	Approve	Disapprove	No Answer
Male	55%	34%	11%
Female	45%	42%	13%

Race - *Approve or disapprove of the job Bob Ehrlich is doing as governor?*

Race	Approve	Disapprove	No Answer
White	56%	34%	10%
African-American	30%	51%	19%

QUESTION: *Do you approve or disapprove of the job the Maryland General Assembly is doing?*

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Approve	40%
Disapprove	39%
No Answer	21%

Party - *Approve or disapprove of the job the Maryland General Assembly is doing?*

Party	Approve	Disapprove	No Answer
Democrat	46%	31%	23%
Republican	35%	48%	17%
Independent	27%	52%	21%

Gender - *Approve or disapprove of the job the Maryland General Assembly is doing?*

Gender	Approve	Disapprove	No Answer
Male	38%	45%	17%
Female	42%	33%	25%

Race - *Approve or disapprove of the job the Maryland General Assembly is doing?*

Race	Approve	Disapprove	No Answer
White	38%	43%	19%
African-American	47%	25%	28%

QUESTION: *If the 2006 general election for governor were held today, for whom would you vote if the candidates were: Bob Ehrlich, the Republican and Martin O'Malley, the Democrat?*

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
O'Malley	46%
Ehrlich	41%
Undecided	13%

Party – 2006 Gubernatorial Match-up: Ehrlich vs. O'Malley?

Party	O'Malley	Ehrlich	Undecided
Democrat	71%	16%	13%
Republican	5%	85%	10%
Independent	38%	40%	22%

Gender - 2006 Gubernatorial Match-up: Ehrlich vs. O'Malley?

Gender	O'Malley	Ehrlich	Undecided
Male	41%	45%	14%
Female	51%	37%	12%

Race - 2006 Gubernatorial Match-up: Ehrlich vs. O'Malley?

Race	O'Malley	Ehrlich	Undecided
White	39%	50%	11%
African-American	69%	12%	19%

QUESTION: *If the 2006 general election for governor were held today, for whom would you vote if the candidates were: Bob Ehrlich, the Republican and Doug Duncan, the Democrat?*

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
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Duncan	44%
Ehrlich	42%
Undecided	14%

Party – 2006 Gubernatorial Match-up: Ehrlich vs. Duncan?

Party	Duncan	Ehrlich	Undecided
Democrat	69%	17%	14%
Republican	4%	86%	10%
Independent	33%	41%	26%

Gender - 2006 Gubernatorial Match-up: Ehrlich vs. Duncan?

Gender	Duncan	Ehrlich	Undecided
Male	39%	46%	15%
Female	49%	38%	13%

Race - 2006 Gubernatorial Match-up: Ehrlich vs. Duncan?

Race	Duncan	Ehrlich	Undecided
White	37%	51%	12%
African-American	67%	11%	22%

QUESTION: Which of the following voting systems do you think Maryland should use for this year's elections: **(ORDER ROTATED)**

- *Electronic touch screen voting machines, which don't provide a paper record, or*
- *Paper ballots that are scanned after you vote, which do provide a paper record?*

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Touch screen	41%
Paper ballots	56%
No answer	3%

Party – *Electronic touch screen machines or paper ballots that are scanned?*

Party	Touch Screen	Paper Ballots	No Answer
Democrat	43%	55%	2%
Republican	39%	56%	5%
Independent	34%	63%	3%

Gender - *Electronic touch screen machines or paper ballots that are scanned?*

Gender	Touch Screen	Paper Ballots	No Answer
Male	41%	57%	2%
Female	41%	55%	4%

Race - *Electronic touch screen machines or paper ballots that are scanned?*

Race	Touch Screen	Paper Ballots	No Answer
White	39%	57%	4%
African-American	46%	53%	1%

QUESTION: BGE customers in Maryland are going to see increases in their utility bills starting this July. How concerned are you about this utility rate increase: very concerned, somewhat concerned, not that concerned, or not at all concerned?

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Very concerned	75%
Somewhat concerned	14%
Not that concerned	7%
Not at all concerned	3%
No answer	1%

Party – Level of concern over utility rate increase?

Party	Very Concerned	Somewhat Concerned	Not that Concerned	Not at all Concerned	No Answer
Democrat	77%	13%	7%	2%	1%
Republican	72%	12%	8%	6%	2%
Independent	74%	22%	3%	1%	-

Gender - Level of concern over utility rate increase?

Gender	Very Concerned	Somewhat Concerned	Not that Concerned	Not at all Concerned	No Answer
Male	71%	16%	8%	4%	1%
Female	79%	12%	6%	2%	1%

Race - Level of concern over utility rate increase?

Race	Very Concerned	Somewhat Concerned	Not that Concerned	Not at all Concerned	No Answer
White	74%	13%	9%	3%	1%
African-American	79%	17%	1%	3%	-

QUESTION: Please indicate whether you strongly agree, moderately agree, moderately disagree, or strongly disagree with the following statements:

“The Maryland General Assembly is responsible for the utility rate increases because it passed utility deregulation in 1999.”

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Strongly agree	48%
Moderately agree	19%
Moderately disagree	16%
Strongly disagree	4%
No answer	13%

Party – *The Maryland General Assembly is responsible for the utility rate increases because it passed utility deregulation in 1999.*

Party	Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Answer
Democrat	47%	16%	20%	5%	12%
Republican	50%	24%	8%	4%	14%
Independent	46%	19%	17%	1%	17%

QUESTION: *“The Governor of Maryland is responsible for the utility rate increases because he appoints members of the Public Service Commission, the state agency that regulates utility rates.”*

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Strongly agree	25%
Moderately agree	20%
Moderately disagree	22%
Strongly disagree	21%
No answer	12%

Party – *The Governor of Maryland is responsible for the utility rate increases because he appoints members of the Public Service Commission, the state agency that regulates utility rates.*

Party	Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Answer
Democrat	35%	25%	19%	11%	10%
Republican	7%	12%	29%	37%	15%
Independent	27%	16%	18%	24%	15%

QUESTION: “*Constellation Energy, which owns BGE, is responsible for the utility rate increases.*”

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Strongly agree	43%
Moderately agree	23%
Moderately disagree	9%
Strongly disagree	10%
No answer	15%

Party – *Constellation Energy, which owns BGE, is responsible for the utility rate increases.*

Party	Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Answer
Democrat	49%	24%	7%	9%	11%
Republican	32%	21%	13%	14%	20%
Independent	43%	23%	8%	4%	22%

QUESTION: *Who do you hold most responsible for the increase in utility rates?*

(ORDER ROTATED)

- *The Maryland General Assembly,*
- *The Governor of Maryland,*
- *Constellation Energy*

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Constellation Energy	40%
General Assembly	34%
Governor	12%
No answer	14%

Party – *Who do you hold most responsible for the increase in utility rates?*

Party	Constellation Energy	General Assembly	Governor	No Answer
Democrat	45%	29%	18%	8%
Republican	33%	41%	3%	23%
Independent	37%	39%	9%	15%

QUESTION: *If the 2006 general election for U.S. Senate were held today, for whom would you vote if the candidates were: Michael Steele, the Republican and Ben Cardin, the Democrat?*

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Cardin	49%
Steele	35%
Undecided	16%

Party - 2006 U.S. Senate Match-up: Steele vs. Cardin?

Party	Cardin	Steele	Undecided
Democrat	76%	12%	12%
Republican	6%	77%	17%
Independent	39%	31%	30%

Race - 2006 U.S. Senate Match-up: Steele vs. Cardin?

Race	Cardin	Steele	Undecided
White	42%	39%	19%
African-American	72%	21%	7%

QUESTION: *If the 2006 general election for U.S. Senate were held today, for whom would you vote if the candidates were: Michael Steele, the Republican and Kweisi Mfume, the Democrat?*

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Mfume	44%
Steele	39%
Undecided	17%

Party - 2006 U.S. Senate Match-up: Steele vs. Mfume?

Party	Mfume	Steele	Undecided
Democrat	69%	16%	15%
Republican	4%	79%	17%
Independent	33%	38%	29%

Race - 2006 U.S. Senate Match-up: Steele vs. Mfume?

Race	Mfume	Steele	Undecided
White	34%	46%	20%
African-American	78%	16%	6%

***** 423 Likely 2006 Democratic Primary Voters *****

QUESTION: *If the September 2006 Democratic Primary election for governor were held today, for whom would you vote if the candidates were Doug Duncan and Martin O'Malley?*

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
O'Malley	44%
Duncan	35%
Undecided	21%

Gender - 2006 Democratic Primary election for Governor?

Gender	O'Malley	Duncan	Undecided
Male	39%	38%	23%
Female	48%	33%	19%

Race - 2006 Democratic Primary election for Governor?

Race	O'Malley	Duncan	Undecided
White	45%	36%	19%
African-American	42%	33%	25%

Region - 2006 Democratic Primary election for Governor?

Region	O'Malley	Duncan	Undecided
Metro Baltimore	57%	26%	17%
Metro Washington	25%	52%	23%
Rest of State	52%	21%	27%

QUESTION: *If the September 2006 Democratic Primary election for U.S Senate were held today, for whom would you vote if the candidates were Ben Cardin, Allan Lichtman, Kweisi Mfume, Josh Rales, Dennis Rasmussen, and Lise Van Susteren?*

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Cardin	39%
Mfume	31%
Van Susteren	4%
Lichtman	2%
Rales	1%
Rasmussen	1%
Undecided	22%

Gender - 2006 Democratic Primary election for U.S Senate?

Gender	Cardin	Mfume	Undecided
Male	37%	27%	29%
Female	41%	34%	17%

Race - 2006 Democratic Primary election for U.S Senate?

Race	Cardin	Mfume	Undecided
White	49%	13%	27%
African-American	17%	69%	12%

Region - 2006 Democratic Primary election for U.S Senate?

Region	Cardin	Mfume	Undecided
Metro Baltimore	54%	32%	8%
Metro Washington	23%	36%	29%
Rest of State	34%	16%	44%

QUESTION: *If the September 2006 Democratic Primary election for comptroller were held today, for whom would you vote if the candidates were Peter Franchot and William Donald Schaefer?*

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Schaefer	40%
Franchot	33%
Undecided	27%

Gender - 2006 Democratic Primary election for Comptroller?

Gender	Schaefer	Franchot	Undecided
Male	45%	29%	26%
Female	36%	36%	28%

Race - 2006 Democratic Primary election for Comptroller?

Race	Schaefer	Franchot	Undecided
White	38%	34%	28%
African-American	44%	31%	25%

Region - 2006 Democratic Primary election for Comptroller?

Region	Schaefer	Franchot	Undecided
Metro Baltimore	48%	30%	22%
Metro Washington	28%	39%	33%
Rest of State	45%	29%	26%