

# **Gonzales Research & Marketing Strategies**

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## **Maryland Poll - Part 1**

**Ehrlich Job Approval  
Mikulski "Re-elect"  
Slots**

**August 2003**

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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.

Over the past two decades, 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.

This survey was conducted by *Gonzales Research & Marketing Strategies* from August 13<sup>th</sup> through August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2003. A total of 829 registered voters in Maryland were interviewed. A cross-section of interviews were 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.

### Maryland Statewide Poll Sample Demographics

Gender		Race		Region	
Male	410 (49%)	White	631 (76%)	Eastern Shore/S Md	94 (11%)
Female	419 (51%)	Black	182 (22%)	Baltimore City	80 (10%)
		Other/Ref	16	Baltimore Suburbs	298 (36%)
				Washington Suburbs	257 (31%)
				Western Maryland	100 (12%)
<b>Party Registration</b>					
Democrat	469 (57%)				
Republican	265 (32%)				
Independent	95 (11%)				

### 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.	Charles Co.	Frederick Co.
Dorchester Co.		Howard Co.		Garrett Co.
Kent Co.				Washington Co.
Queen Anne's Co.				
Somerset Co.				
St. Mary's Co.				
Talbot Co.				
Wicomico Co.				
Worcester Co.				

### Summary

### Most Important Issue

Maryland's budget deficit persists as the number one issue for voters, cited by 29%, with education second at 23%, and the economy third at 10%; followed by crime, health care, transportation issues, gambling, taxes, growth, the environment, and gun control.

### Bob Ehrlich

Governor Bob Ehrlich remains popular with Maryland voters as 57% say they approve of the job he's doing as governor, while 30% say they disapprove.

Ehrlich's job approval among Republicans is extremely high at 85%, and 60% of independents also approve. Sixty-four percent of men and 50% of women approve of the job he's doing. Among Democrats, 41% approve of his job performance and 47% disapprove.

The Governor's job rating has held steady over the past six months:

<b>Ehrlich Job Rating</b>	<b>Approve</b>	<b>Disapprove</b>	<b>No answer</b>
<b>August 2003</b>	57%	30%	13%
<b>March 2003</b>	56%	29%	15%

### Barbara Mikulski

Even more popular than our Governor is our diminutive junior U.S. Senator: Barbara Mikulski's performance in office is approved by 64% of Maryland voters, while only 24% disapprove and 12% offered no opinion.

Three-term incumbent Mikulski receives estimable approval among Democrats (82%), women (75%) and independents (63%). Her only soft spot is with the Governor's most avid supporters: 48% of GOP voters disapprove of the job Mikulski is doing in Washington.

Adding to the state GOP party's election dilemma next year (the party's been aggressively searching for a viable candidate to challenge her) is Mikulski's "re-elect" number. Fifty-three percent of Maryland voters say they'll vote to re-elect Mikulski in November 2004, while a mere 13% say they will definitely vote to replace her

Even among Republicans, less than a third (31%) say at this point they'll definitely vote against her. The reality is most probably will eventually, but she does not arouse the partisan passion among regular GOP voters that might aid the state Republican party's recruitment effort. And since she's been in the Senate for nearly 20 years, and represented Baltimore in the House of Representatives for ten years before that,

it's safe to assume Marylanders feel they know Mikulski pretty well.

### Slots and Gambling

The budget deficit in Maryland – and fallout from it – has produced a dramatic shift in voter attitudes toward slot machines: 57% of voters now say they favor allowing slots at Maryland racetracks. This is the first time in the years we've been polling on the issue that a majority has indicated support for slots in Maryland.

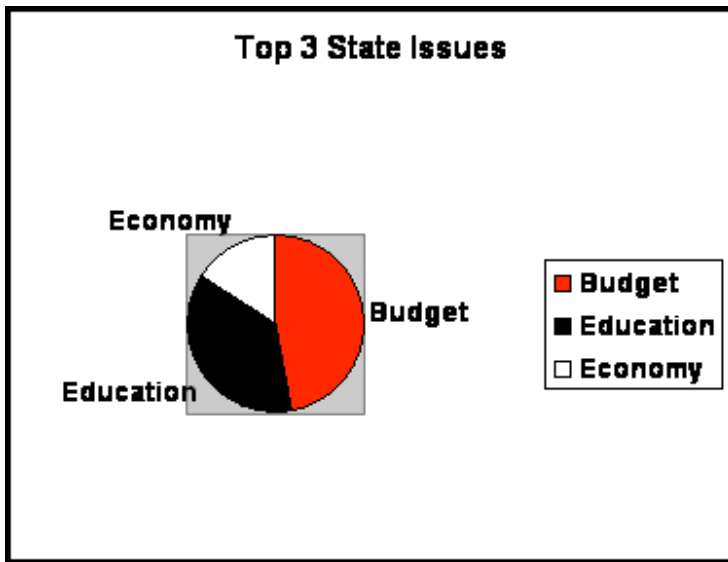
Slots	Favor	Oppose	No answer
<b>August 2003</b>	57%	31%	12%
<b>March 2003</b>	47%	45%	8%
<b>January 2003</b>	46%	40%	14%
<b>August 2002</b>	46%	37%	17%

Majority support for allowing slots in Maryland touches every demographic subgroup, party, gender, race, and region. Even in the Washington suburbs, where opposition to slots has always been strong, a majority now says that they favor allowing slot machines. How long support for slots remains is likely a function of the state government's handling of the deficit, and specifics attached to any new slots proposal. The proposal passed by the Maryland Senate this past session (subsequently squashed in the House) was not well received by Maryland voters, as the 45% opposition in our March poll attests.

Reaction to casinos in Maryland is mixed, with 46% in favor and 42% opposing. Forty percent of state voters favor banning gambling interests from contributing to political campaigns here and 49% would oppose a ban.

**QUESTION:** *What do you feel is the most important issue facing the state of Maryland today?*

Budget deficit	29%
Education	23%
Economy	10%
Crime/illegal drugs	8%
Health care/prescription drugs	6%
Traffic/transportation	5%
Slots at racetracks/gambling	5%
Taxes	3%
Growth/development	2%
Environment	2%
Gun control	1%
No answer	6%



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

**Statewide Results**

Response	Statewide

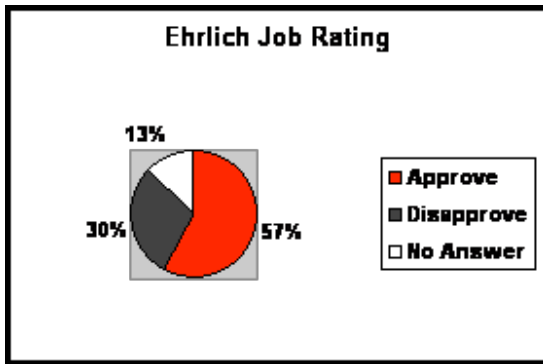
Approve	57%
Disapprove	30%
No Answer	13%

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

Party	Approve	Disapprove	No Answer
Democrat	41%	47%	12%
Republican	85%	4%	11%
Independent	60%	17%	23%

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

Gender	Approve	Disapprove	No Answer
Male	64%	24%	12%
Female	50%	36%	14%



**QUESTION:** *Do you approve or disapprove of the job Barbara Mikulski is doing as U.S. Senator?*

**Statewide Results**

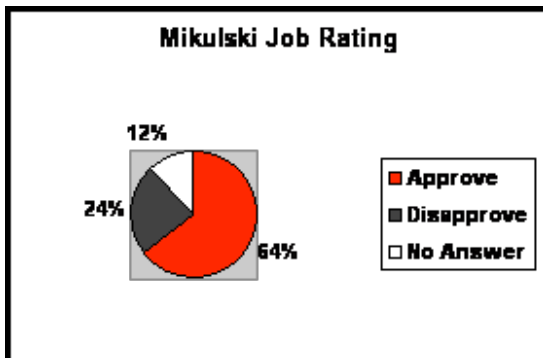
Response	Statewide
Approve	<b>64%</b>
Disapprove	<b>24%</b>
No Answer	<b>12%</b>

**Party - Approve or disapprove of the job Barbara Mikulski is doing as Senator?**

Party	Approve	Disapprove	No Answer
Democrat	82%	12%	6%
Republican	32%	48%	20%
Independent	63%	16%	21%

**Gender - Approve or disapprove of the job Barbara Mikulski is doing as Senator?**

Gender	Approve	Disapprove	No Answer
Male	52%	31%	17%
Female	75%	17%	8%



**QUESTION:** *If the November 2004 election for U.S. Senate were held today, would you vote to re-elect Democrat Barbara Mikulski, would you want to consider another candidate, or would you vote to replace Mikulski with a Republican?*

### Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Re-elect	<b>53%</b>
Consider Another	<b>34%</b>
Replace	<b>13%</b>

**Party** - *vote to re-elect Democrat Barbara Mikulski, would you want to consider another candidate, or would you vote to replace Mikulski with a Republican?*

Party	Re-elect	Consider Another	Replace
Democrat	71%	25%	4%
Republican	20%	49%	31%
Independent	54%	38%	8%

**Gender** - *vote to re-elect Democrat Barbara Mikulski, would you want to consider another candidate, or would you vote to replace Mikulski with a Republican?*

Gender	Re-elect	Consider Another	Replace
Male	45%	38%	17%
Female	61%	30%	9%

**QUESTION:** *Do you favor or oppose allowing slot machines at Maryland racetracks?*

### Statewide Results

Response	Statewide

Favor	<b>57%</b>
Oppose	<b>31%</b>
Not Sure	<b>12%</b>

**Party** - *Favor or oppose slot machines*

Party	Favor	Oppose	Not Sure
Democrat	51%	35%	14%
Republican	70%	24%	6%
Independent	54%	31%	15%

**Gender** – *Favor or oppose slot machines*

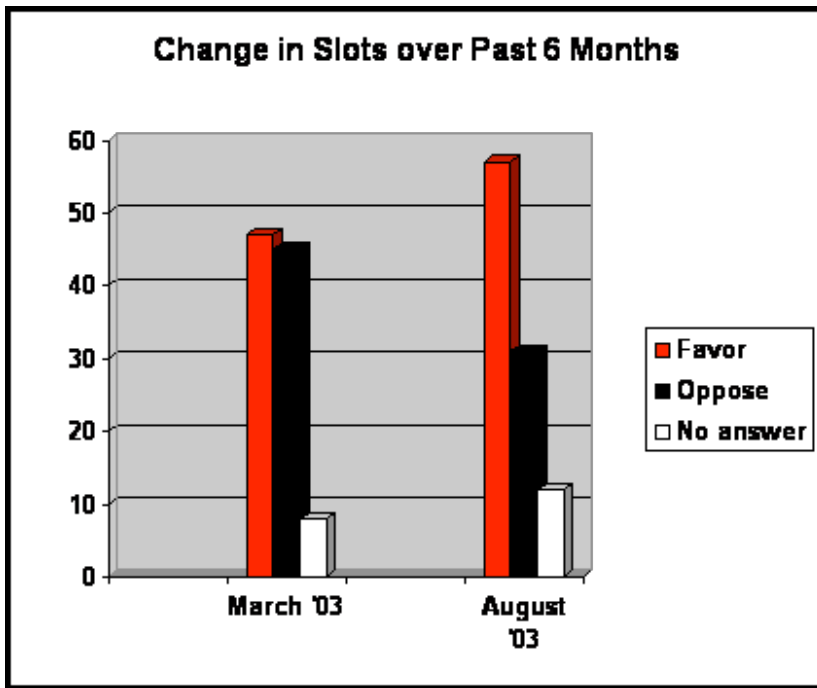
Gender	Favor	Oppose	Not Sure
Male	59%	27%	14%
Female	55%	35%	10%

**Race** – *Favor or oppose slot machines*

Gender	Favor	Oppose	Not Sure
White	56%	31%	13%
African-American	60%	32%	8%

**Region - Favor or oppose slot machines**

Region	Favor	Oppose	Not Sure
Eastern Shore/ Southern MD	55%	33%	12%
Baltimore City	53%	28%	19%
Baltimore Suburbs	66%	25%	9%
Washington Suburbs	51%	37%	12%
Western Maryland	54%	34%	12%



**QUESTION:** *Do you favor or oppose allowing casinos in Maryland?*

### Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Favor	<b>46%</b>
Oppose	<b>42%</b>
Not Sure	<b>12%</b>

**QUESTION:** *Would you favor or oppose banning gambling interests from contributing money to political campaigns in Maryland?*

### Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Favor	<b>40%</b>
Oppose	<b>49%</b>
Not Sure	<b>11%</b>