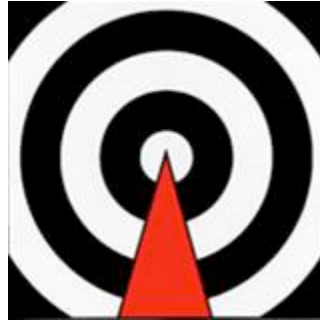


Gonzales Research & Marketing Strategies

www.garesearch.com



Maryland Poll

December 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 & Communications, Inc.

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.

Laslo V. Boyd is president of *Mellenbrook Policy Advisors*, a consulting firm specializing in policy, planning, and communications strategies, and an associate partner of Gonzales Research. Dr. Boyd received his Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania and has over 30 years of experience in higher education, government, and public policy.

This survey was conducted by *Gonzales Research & Marketing Strategies* from December 3rd through December 7th, 2003. A total of 806 registered voters in Maryland who vote regularly were interviewed by telephone. 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	399 (50%)	White	621 (77%)	Eastern Shore/S Md	102 (13%)
Female	407 (50%)	Black	173 (21%)	Baltimore City	82 (10%)
		Other/Ref	12	Baltimore Suburbs	275 (34%)
				Washington Suburbs	257 (32%)
				Western Maryland	90 (11%)
Party Registration					
Democrat	455 (56%)				
Republican	254 (32%)				
Independent	97 (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.				

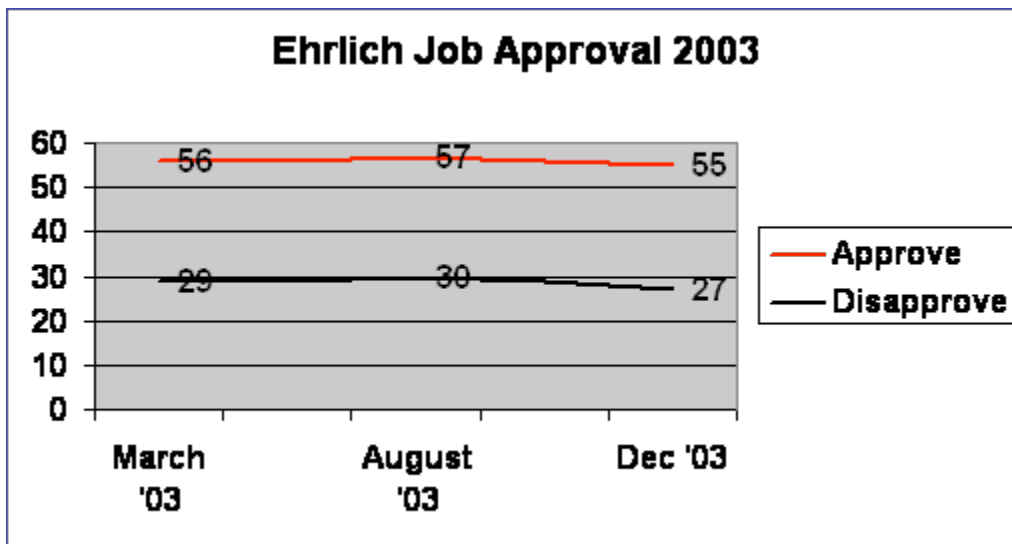
Summary

State Issues

Ehrlich Job Approval

Statewide, 55% of Maryland voters say they approve of the job Bob Ehrlich is doing as governor, while 27% disapprove, and 18% offered no opinion. GOP voters, at 84%, overwhelmingly support Ehrlich; Democrats are split (38% approve/39% disapprove). In the Free State a popular Republican incumbent needs to keep about a third of the Democratic vote content to remain in office.

Ehrlich's job approval numbers have remained very consistent since he took office a year ago.



Thornton Commission

We asked Maryland voters the following question in an effort to reconcile the mandated recommendations of the Thornton Commission and the State's continuing budget problems: *“Despite a projected budget deficit of \$780 million in the coming year, the State of Maryland has made a commitment to increase funding for public education by \$380 million this year as recommended by the Thornton Commission. Do you think it's more important to fully fund Thornton this year, or should the State spread out funding for Thornton over a longer period in order to deal with the deficit?”*

The option of spreading out increased education funding over a longer period was favored by 54% to 35%, with 11% offering no opinion. A plurality among all demographic sub-groups included, except for black voters, is in support of a longer time period.

However, with Democrats and women the plurality is very narrow. This promises to be a major issue

for the upcoming General Assembly session.

National Issues

Bush Job Approval

A little less than a year before the next election, President George Bush's job rating in Maryland stands at 47% approve and 46% disapprove. Republicans overwhelmingly approve of the job he's doing and Democrats overwhelmingly disapprove. His overall numbers are actually a slight bump up from our August survey.

Bush Job Rating	Approve	Disapprove	No answer
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%

Presidential Match-up

Former Vermont Governor Howard Dean, the Democratic front-runner at this point, has opened up a seven-point lead over Bush in Maryland, 48% to 41%. In our August survey, Dean and Bush were nearly dead even. Dean's lead over Bush reflects his surging campaign and Maryland's Democratic hegemony in national elections.

Economic Situation

We asked voters whether they felt their own personal economic situation had improved, stayed the same, or gotten worse over the past year. Statewide, 31% say it's improved, 28% say it's gotten worse, and 41% indicated it's stayed the same. An examination by part is illuminating: only 19% of Democrats say their personal finances have improved over the past year, while 42% claim they're worse; Republicans are flipped, 53% say their economic situation has improved and only 5% say it's gotten worse.

Iraq

By a margin of 48 % to 40%, Marylanders disapprove of George Bush's handling of the situation in Iraq. Independents mirror the overall split, while Democrats strongly oppose the President and Republicans strongly support him.

When asked whether they think it was worth going to war with Iraq, or not, 36% say it was worth it and 51% say it wasn't. Again, there's a huge chasm between Democrats and Republicans.

Maryland voters are divided on whether they think the war in Iraq has made the United States safer from terrorism. Thirty-two percent think the war has made the country safer, 26% think it's made us less safe, and 42% think the war has had no real effect on our safety with respect to terrorism.

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

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Approve	55%
Disapprove	27%
No Answer	18%

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

Party	Approve	Disapprove	No Answer
Democrat	38%	39%	23%
Republican	84%	7%	9%
Independent	58%	25%	17%

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

Gender	Approve	Disapprove	No Answer
Male	65%	21%	14%
Female	45%	33%	22%

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

Race	Approve	Disapprove	No Answer
White	61%	24%	15%
African-American	34%	38%	28%

QUESTION: *Despite a projected budget deficit of \$780 million in the coming year, the State of Maryland has made a commitment to increase funding for public education by \$380 million this year as recommended by the Thornton Commission. Do you think it's more important to fully fund Thornton this year, or should the State spread out funding for Thornton over a longer period in order to deal with the deficit?*

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Fully fund this year	35%
Spread out over longer period	54%
No Answer	11%

Party – Fully fund Thornton this year or spread out?

Party	Fully fund	Spread out	No Answer
Democrat	41%	48%	11%
Republican	29%	62%	9%
Independent	23%	63%	14%

Gender - Fully fund Thornton this year or spread out?

Gender	Fully fund	Spread out	No Answer
Male	28%	62%	10%
Female	42%	46%	12%

Race - Fully fund Thornton this year or spread out?

Race	Fully fund	Spread out	No Answer
White	28%	61%	11%
African-American	59%	30%	11%

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

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Approve	47%
Disapprove	46%
No Answer	7%

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

Party	Approve	Disapprove	No Answer
Democrat	22%	71%	7%
Republican	90%	6%	4%
Independent	46%	39%	15%

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

Gender	Approve	Disapprove	No Answer
Male	54%	39%	7%
Female	40%	53%	7%

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

Race	Approve	Disapprove	No Answer
White	56%	38%	6%
African-American	15%	74%	11%

QUESTION: *If the November 2004 election for president were held today, for whom would you vote if the candidates were George Bush, the Republican, and Howard Dean, the Democrat?*

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Dean	48%
Bush	41%
Undecided	11%

Party - *George Bush, the Republican, and Howard Dean, the Democrat?*

Party	Dean	Bush	Undecided
Democrat	76%	14%	10%
Republican	6%	89%	5%
Independent	30%	36%	34%

QUESTION: *If the November 2004 election for president were held today, for whom would you vote if the candidates were George Bush, the Republican, and Richard Gephardt, the Democrat?*

Gephardt 42%
Bush 42%
Undecided 16%

QUESTION: *If the November 2004 election for president were held today, for whom would you vote if the candidates were George Bush, the Republican, and Joe Lieberman, the Democrat?*

Lieberman 43%
Bush 41%
Undecided 16%

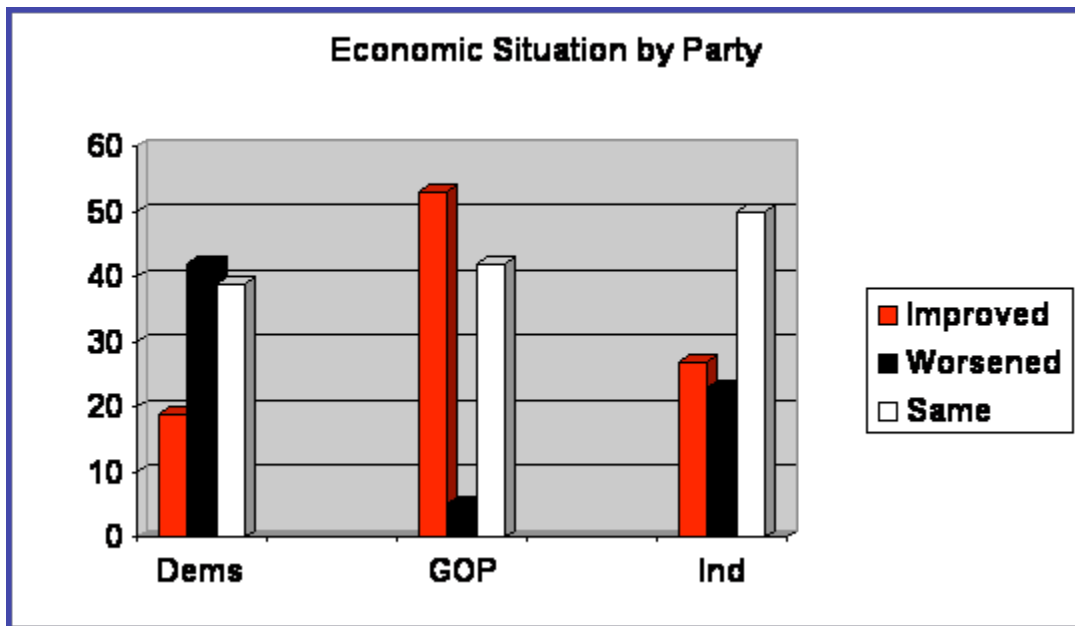
QUESTION: *Over the past year, would you say your own personal economic situation has improved, stayed the same, or gotten worse?*

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Improved	31%
Stayed Same	41%
Gotten Worse	28%

Party - Personal economic situation improved, stayed the same, or gotten worse?

Party	Improved	Stayed Same	Gotten Worse
Democrat	19%	39%	42%
Republican	53%	42%	5%
Independent	27%	50%	23%



QUESTION: *Generally, do you approve or disapprove of the way George Bush is handling the situation in Iraq?*

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Approve	40%
Disapprove	48%
No Answer	12%

Party - *Approve or disapprove of the way George Bush is handling the situation in Iraq?*

Party	Approve	Disapprove	No Answer
Democrat	17%	70%	13%
Republican	81%	10%	9%
Independent	40%	44%	16%

QUESTION: *Overall, do you think it was worth going to war with Iraq, or not?*

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Yes, worth it	36%
No, not worth it	51%
No Answer	13%

Party - *Worth going to war with Iraq, or not?*

Party	Yes	No	No Answer
Democrat	20%	71%	9%
Republican	63%	23%	14%
Independent	39%	33%	28%

QUESTION: *Do you think the war with Iraq has made the United States safer from terrorism, less*

safe from terrorism, or do you think it's had no real effect on U.S. safety with respect to terrorism?

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Safer	32%
Less safe	26%
No effect	42%

Party - *Do you think the war with Iraq has made the United States safer from terrorism, less safe from terrorism, or do you think it's had no real effect on U.S. safety with respect to terrorism?*

Party	Safer	Less safe	No effect
Democrat	12%	39%	49%
Republican	68%	4%	28%
Independent	29%	23%	48%