

**Gonzales/Arscott  
Research & Communications, Inc.**

**Maryland Poll  
Part 2 - National Issues**

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## **Methodology**

Patrick E. Gonzales and Carol A. Arscott formed Gonzales Research & Marketing Strategies, Inc. at the beginning of 1999.

Gonzales is a 1981 graduate of the University of Baltimore with deep roots in Anne Arundel County politics. Arscott is a 1977 graduate of the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service and a former chairman of the Howard County Republican Party.

This survey was conducted by Gonzales Research & Marketing Strategies, Inc. from January 9<sup>th</sup> through January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2002. A total of 833 registered voters in Maryland who indicated they were likely to vote in this year's general election were interviewed by telephone. A cross-section of calls was made into 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. This means that 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, party registration or race.

**Maryland Statewide Poll Sample Demographics**

<b>Gender</b>		<b>Race</b>		<b>Region</b>	
Male	415 (50%)	White	630 (76%)	Eastern Shore	92 (11%)
Female	418 (50%)	Black	196 (24%)	Baltimore City	87 (10%)
		Other	7	Baltimore Suburbs	288 (35%)
<b>Party Registration</b>				Washington Suburbs	275 (33%)
Democrat	474 (57%)			Western Maryland	91 (11%)
Republican	265 (32%)				
Independent	94 (11%)				

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**Regional Groupings****Eastern Shore**

- includes voters in these counties: Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, Somerset, Talbot, Wicomico, and Worcester.

**Baltimore City**

- includes voters in the City of Baltimore.

**Baltimore Suburbs**

Baltimore, Harford, and Howard.

- includes voters in these counties: Anne Arundel,

**Washington Suburbs**

- includes voters in these counties: Montgomery, Prince George's, Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's.

**Western Maryland**

Garrett, and Washington.

- includes voters in these counties: Allegany, Carroll, Frederick,

## **George W. Bush**

W is for wow! President George W. Bush, who lost in the Free State by 17 points in November of 2000, is riding an enormous wave of goodwill among Maryland voters at the beginning of his second year in office. Sixty-six percent of those surveyed said they held a favorable opinion of the President, with 16% holding an unfavorable view. The remaining 19% were neutral on Bush. The last time we tested George W. Bush's name ID with Maryland voters, in October 2000, Maryland voters were nearly evenly divided on the man who was then the GOP nominee – 41% viewed Bush positively, and 40% negatively.

Equally impressive are Bush's job approval rating among Maryland voters. Nearly three-quarters (74%) said they approve of the job Bush is doing as President, 16% disapprove, and another 10% had no opinion. This is a 25-point improvement since the last time we measured his job performance, in February of 2001, when just 47% of Marylanders said they approved of his performance in office, and 34% disapproved.

Bush wins nearly universal acclaim from his fellow Republicans (96%), and earns the esteem of 75% of independents and 61% of Democrats. Seventy-seven percent of men approve of the job Bush is doing in office, compared to 71% of women. The disparity between the races is the greatest among the demographic subgroups, with 81% of whites saying they approve of Bush's performance as President compared to 53% of African-Americans. Under normal circumstances, we'd say "just" 53%, but considering that Bush's November 2000 vote among African-Americans in Maryland was in the single digits, his standing among black voters here is pretty amazing.

## **2004 General Election**

A re-match between Bush and former Vice President Al Gore produces far different results than the contest of November 2000. Then, Gore pounded Bush here, 57% to 40%, with 3% divided among the minor candidates. Today, Bush beats Gore 53% to 40%, with 7% undecided – a 30-point turnaround.

Bush loses to Gore among African-Americans (71% to 18%) and among Democrats (64% to 31%), but wins all other demographic subgroups. Bush leads among whites (64% to 30%), men (54% to 38%), women (52% to 42%), Republicans (90% to 3%), and independents (61% to 26%).

Pitted against Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle, Bush widens his lead to 55% to 34%, with 11% undecided, a 21-point margin. Bush's numbers inched up in all categories, but most of the six-point difference between Daschle's numbers and Gore's can be found in the undecided column, particularly among African-Americans (28%). Daschle, clearly not as well known as Gore in Maryland, gets just 53% of the black vote, where Gore got 71%. But Bush picked up just a single point more with African-Americans against the Senator from South Dakota. Independents give Bush his biggest gain, from 61% against Gore to 69% against Daschle.

There is both good news and bad news for Maryland Republicans in these numbers. The good news

is that it appears that it's still possible for a quality Republican candidate to win in Maryland under ideal circumstances. The bad news is that this is likely to be as good as it gets – 91% of Republicans, 32% of Democrats, 69% of independents, and 19% of African-Americans. Getting to 50.1% won't require numbers quite that good, but it's still a tough row to hoe in traditionally Democratic Maryland.

### **Most Important Issue**

When asked to name the most important issue facing the President and Congress today in an open-ended question, just over a quarter (26%) of Marylanders surveyed named the war in Afghanistan as the chief national concern. Jobs and the economy run a close second (25%), commanding the attention of another quarter of the electorate. Homeland security issues and defense against future terrorism was named by 18%. Concerns in the second tier were the declining budget surplus (6%), saving Social Security (4%), bipartisanship (3%), taxes (3%), character and values (2%), and leadership (1%). The remaining 7% offered no answer. Taken together, the war and homeland security were named by 44% of survey respondents.

Among those issues fading in national importance: Prescription drugs was named by 16% of Marylander voters in our October 2000 survey, and improving public education was named by 12% in the same survey. Today, concern about prescription drugs is folded into the health care category, and education didn't register as a national issue. Just before the 2000 election, the top issue was saving Social Security, named by 27% of voters surveyed.

### **Economic Recession**

Voters surveyed were next asked what they believe is primarily responsible for worsening the economic recession – the economic policies of the Bush administration, or the September 11 terrorist attacks. By a margin of more than two-to-one, Marylanders felt that the terrorist attacks (47%) had done more to exacerbate the recession than the economic policies of the Bush administration (22%). Sixteen percent of voters surveyed opined that “neither” choice was the primary cause, and another 9% said “both,” though neither was offered as an option when the question was posed. The remaining 6% offered no answer. So far, at least, the efforts of congressional Democrats to tag Bush with the recession seem to be falling flat.

## **Freedom vs. Security**

When we first asked voters, “What do you value more: Freedom or security?” back in October of 2000, we were probing for the root cause of the gender gap –and we found it. In October 2000, Maryland voters chose freedom over security by a margin of 42% to 32%, but the gender differences were stark. Men valued freedom over security, 50% to 27%, but security held the edge among women, 37% to 34%.

In a reversal every bit as dramatic as the fortunes of George W. Bush, Maryland voters, post-9/11, say they value freedom over security, 61% to 17%. Another 20% volunteer that they value “both,” and the remaining 2% were undecided.

Men (66%) still value freedom more than women (56%), but this time, women favor freedom over security (23%) by a margin of two-to-one. The difference is even greater among African-Americans. Just before the Presidential election, black voters were almost evenly split (40% to 41%). Today, a whopping 68% of African-American voters say they value freedom over security (just 11%).

The question we asked may have been identical in both surveys, but its meaning is different today than it was in October. In our new world, we’ve been reminded that freedom is the core American value.

## Name Recognition

I am going to read you the names of several individuals. After I mention each name, I would like you to tell me if you recognize that person. If you do, I would then like you to tell me whether you have a favorable, unfavorable, or neutral opinion of that individual.

	<b>Favorable</b>	<b>Unfavorable</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Don't Recognize</b>
George Bush	66%	15%	19%	-

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

	<b>Approve</b>	<b>Disapprove</b>	<b>No Opinion</b>
<b>Statewide</b>	74%	16%	10%
White	81%	9%	10%
African-American	53%	38%	9%
Men	77%	14%	9%
Women	71%	18%	11%
Democrat	61%	24%	15%
Republican	96%	1%	3%
Independent	75%	17%	8%

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

	<b>Bush</b>	<b>Gore</b>	<b>Undecided</b>
<b>Statewide</b>	53%	40%	7%
White	64%	30%	6%
African-American	18%	71%	11%
Men	54%	38%	8%
Women	52%	42%	6%
Democrat	31%	64%	5%
Republican	90%	3%	7%
Independent	61%	26%	13%

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

	<b>Bush</b>	<b>Daschle</b>	<b>Undecided</b>
<b>Statewide</b>	55%	34%	11%
White	66%	28%	6%
African-American	19%	53%	28%
Men	57%	33%	10%
Women	53%	35%	12%
Democrat	32%	55%	13%
Republican	91%	1%	8%
Independent	69%	19%	12%

**QUESTION:** Which do you value more: Freedom or security?

	<b>Freedom</b>	<b>Security</b>	<b>Both</b>	<b>No Answer</b>
<b>Statewide</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>2%</b>
White	59%	19%	20%	2%
African-American	68%	11%	19%	2%
Men	66%	13%	20%	3%
Women	56%	23%	20%	1%
Democrat	56%	20%	22%	2%
Republican	72%	10%	16%	2%
Independent	54%	23%	20%	3%

**QUESTION:** In your opinion, what is the most important issue facing the President and Congress in Washington today?

<b>War in Afghanistan</b>	<b>26%</b>
<b>Economy/jobs</b>	<b>25%</b>
<b>Homeland security/defense against terrorism</b>	<b>18%</b>
<b>Declining budget surplus/emerging deficit</b>	<b>6%</b>
<b>Health care/Medicare</b>	<b>5%</b>
<b>Saving Social Security</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>Bipartisanship</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>Taxes</b>	<b>3%</b>
<b>Character/values/morals</b>	<b>2%</b>
<b>Leadership</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>No answer</b>	<b>7%</b>

**QUESTION:** Which do you believe is primarily responsible for worsening the economic recession: The economic policies of the Bush administration, or the September 11<sup>th</sup> terrorist attacks?

<b>Bush Administration Policies</b>	<b>22%</b>
<b>Terrorist Attacks</b>	<b>47%</b>
<b>Neither</b>	<b>16%</b>
<b>Both</b>	<b>9%</b>
<b>No answer</b>	<b>6%</b>