

Gonzales Research & Marketing Strategies

“Maryland’s leader in public opinion polling”



Maryland Poll

Most Important Issue
Governor O’Malley Job Approval
Death Penalty
President-Elect Barack Obama

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Methodology

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

Mr. Gonzales has polled and analyzed hundreds of elections in Maryland since the mid 1980's. 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 a partner of *Gonzales Research & Marketing Strategies*. 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.

Hilary Duff Gonzales is Director of Sales and Marketing for *Gonzales Research & Marketing Strategies*. Mrs. Gonzales has over 20 years experience promoting the state of Maryland, particularly in the tour and travel industry.

This survey was conducted by ***Gonzales Research & Marketing Strategies*** from January 5th through January 9th, 2009. A total of 842 registered voters in Maryland 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 of error (MOE), 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 race.

Maryland Statewide Poll Sample Demographics

Gender		Race		Region	
Male	419 (50%)	White	625 (74%)	Eastern Shore/S Md	105 (12%)
Female	423 (50%)	Black	193 (23%)	Baltimore City	83 (10%)
		Other/Ref	24	Baltimore Suburbs	294 (35%)
				Washington Subs	258 (31%)
				Western Maryland	102 (12%)
Party Registration					
Democrat	471 (56%)				
Republican	270 (32%)				
Independent	101 (12%)				

Regional Groupings are as follows:

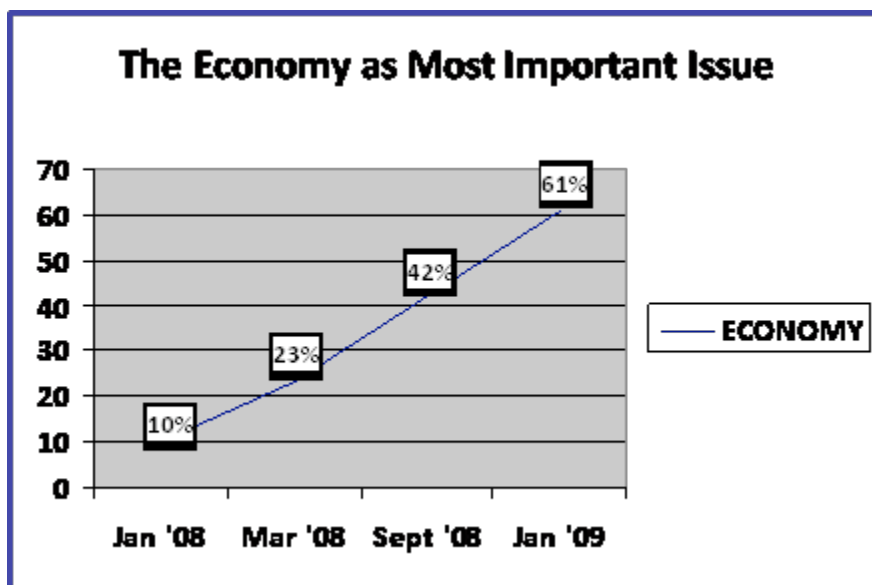
Eastern Shore/ Southern Md	Baltimore City	Baltimore Suburbs	Washington Suburbs	Western Maryland
Calvert Co.	Baltimore City	Anne Arundel Co.	Montgomery Co.	Allegany Co.
Caroline Co.		Baltimore Co.	Prince George's Co.	Carroll Co.
Cecil Co.		Harford Co.		Frederick Co.
Charles Co.		Howard Co.		Garrett Co.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

Summary

Most Important Issue facing State

In Maryland today, 61% of voters say that the economy is the most important issue facing the state, nearly 20 points higher than September.

Concern about the economy has exploded over the past year:



Governor O'Malley Job Approval

Since September, Governor Martin O'Malley's job approval rating has increased four points, while his disapproval number has risen two points.

Statewide, 49% of Maryland voters overall say they approve of the job O'Malley is doing as governor, while 37% disapprove of the job he is doing, with 14% offering no opinion on the job he's doing.

By party, 65% of Democrats say they approve of the job O'Malley is doing as governor and 20% say they disapprove; 59% of independents approve of the job O'Malley is doing

and 24% say they disapprove; but among Republicans in the state, only 17% approve of the job O'Malley is doing, while 71% disapprove of O'Malley's performance as governor.

O'Malley Job Approval	Approve	Disapprove	No opinion
January 2009	49%	37%	14%
September 2008	45%	35%	20%
March 2008	37%	48%	15%
January 2008	39%	49%	12%
October 2007	46%	31%	23%
March 2007	52%	21%	27%

Death Penalty

Among respondents, 53% say they favor the death penalty in Maryland, while 41% say they oppose it, with 6% giving no response.

Support for the death penalty in Maryland has dropped four points in the past two years.

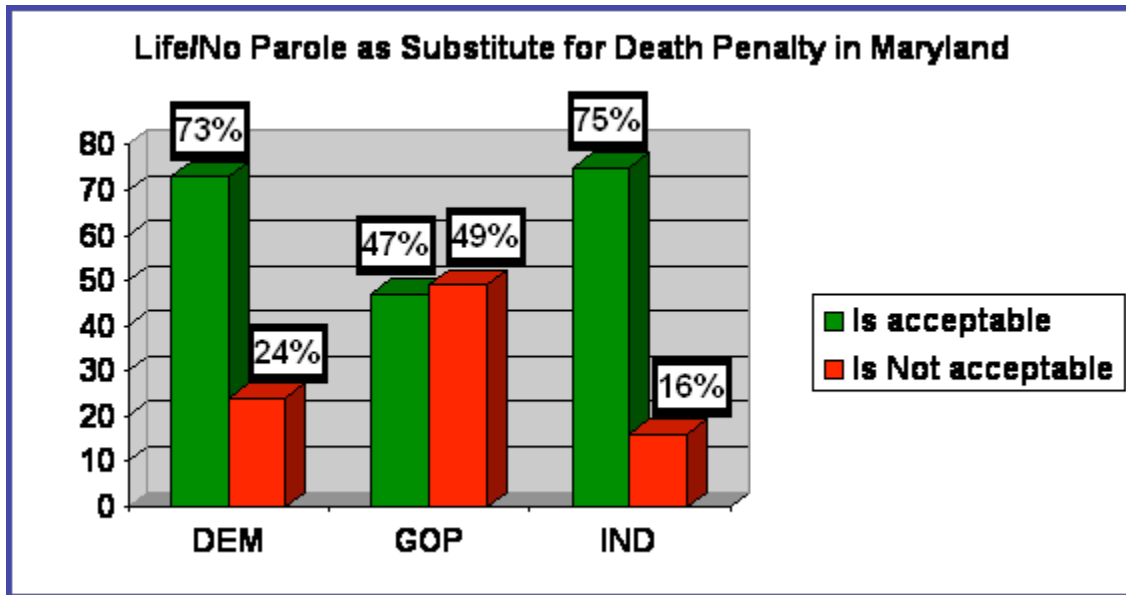
Death Penalty	Favor	Oppose	No answer
January 2009	53%	41%	6%
March 2007	57%	37%	6%
May 2001	62%	33%	5%

Views toward the death penalty diverge significantly among demographic groups in Maryland. Eighty-one percent of Republicans favor it, compared to only 39% of Democrats and 44% of independents; 60% of white voters favor the death penalty, while 56% of African-American voters oppose it; and 57% of men say they favor the death penalty in the state, compared to 49% of women. However, when given an alternative to the death penalty, there is a great deal of ambivalence among Marylanders. Statewide, 65% say that life in prison without the possibility of parole is an acceptable alternative to the death penalty as punishment for murder, while 31% say that life without parole is not an acceptable substitute.

Even among Republicans, 47% say that life in prison without the possibility of parole is an acceptable

alternative to the death penalty as punishment for murder.

The results by party:



Budget Issues

Elected leaders in Annapolis do not need to spend much time convincing voters of the budget difficulties they face. Statewide, 74% of voters think the budget issues facing Maryland are a “very big problem” and 20% think they are “somewhat of a problem,” while only 2% think they’re “not much of a problem” and 1% think they are “not a problem at all.”

Across the board, huge majorities of voters think the budget issues facing the State of Maryland are a “very big problem.”

Maryland’s Economy

Among voters, only 9% are “very confident” that Maryland’s economy, within the next two years, will return to the level it was prior to the current recession, 47% are “somewhat confident,” 29% are “not that confident,” and 13% are “not at all confident.”

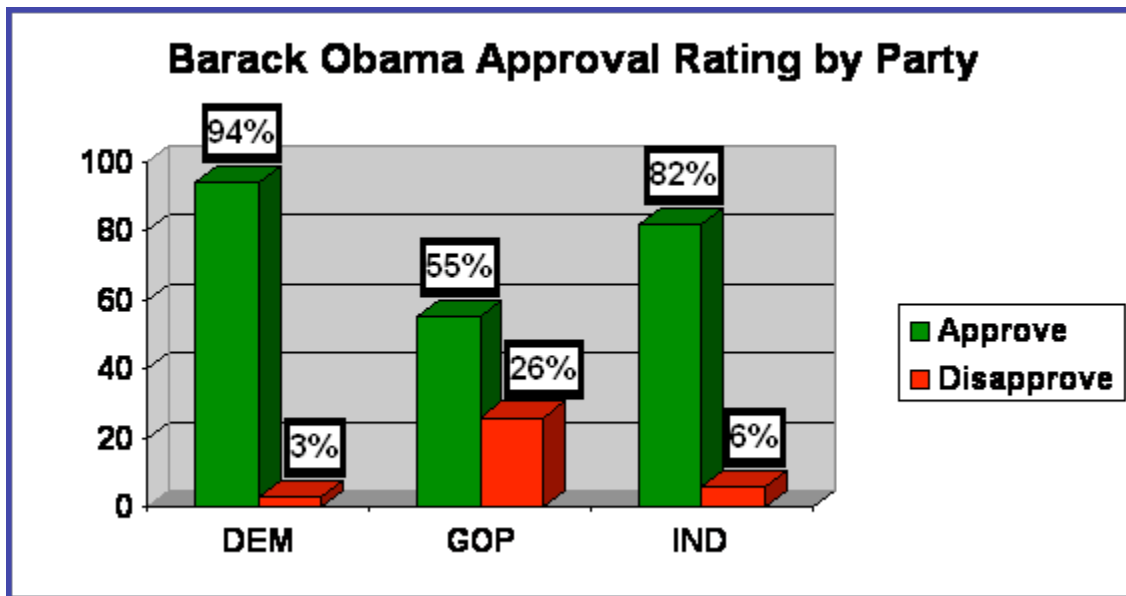
Sixty-five percent of Democrats are to some extent confident that Maryland’s economy will return to its prior level (11% “very confident” and 54% “somewhat confident”), while 58% of Republicans are pessimistic it will rebound (36% “not that confident” and 22% “not at all confident”).

On the question of impact, 61% say that the current economic problems have affected them

significantly (23% “a great deal” and 38% “a fair amount”), while 29% say the economic conditions have affected them “a little,” and only 10% say “not at all.”

President-Elect Barack Obama

Statewide, an impressive 80% of Maryland voters say they approve of the way President-elect Barack Obama is handling his transition, while only 11% disapprove, and 9% offered no opinion. The approval number is considerably higher even than the percentage that voted for Obama here in the state in November.



Marylanders are more tentative about the president-elect’s economic stimulus plan. Statewide, 55% favor Obama’s proposal to spend hundreds of billions of dollars in an effort to stimulate the American economy, while 31% oppose it, with 14% giving no opinion on it.

By party, 69% of Democrats and 60% of independents favor it, while 65% of Republicans oppose it.

African-American voters (85%) overwhelmingly support Obama’s economic stimulus proposal, while white voters are divided, with 45% favoring it and 40% opposing it.

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

Economy	61%
Taxes	10%
Education	8%
Health care	4%
Crime	4%
Environment and pollution	3%
Budget	2%
Transportation/Roads	1%
Corruption	1%
Terrorism/security	1%
Abortion/moral issues	1%
Slot machines/gambling	1%
Affordable Housing	1%
Illegal immigration	1%
No answer	1%

QUESTION: *Do you approve or disapprove of the job Martin O'Malley is doing as governor?*

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Approve	49%
Disapprove	37%
No answer	14%

Party - Martin O'Malley job performance - approve or disapprove?

Party	Approve	Disapprove	No Answer
Democrat	65%	20%	15%
Republican	17%	71%	12%
Independent	59%	24%	17%

Race – Martin O'Malley job performance - approve or disapprove?

Race	Approve	Disapprove	No Answer
White	45%	45%	10%
African-American	61%	13%	26%

Gender – Martin O'Malley job performance - approve or disapprove?

Gender	Approve	Disapprove	No Answer
Men	41%	44%	15%
Women	57%	30%	13%

QUESTION: *Do you favor or oppose the death penalty in Maryland?*

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Favor	53%
Oppose	41%
No answer	6%

Party - *Favor or oppose the death penalty in Maryland?*

Party	Favor	Oppose	No Answer
Democrat	39%	54%	7%
Republican	81%	14%	5%
Independent	44%	51%	5%

Race – *Favor or oppose the death penalty in Maryland?*

Race	Favor	Oppose	No Answer
White	60%	36%	4%
African-American	33%	56%	11%

Gender – *Favor or oppose the death penalty in Maryland?*

Gender	Favor	Oppose	No Answer
Men	57%	37%	6%
Women	49%	45%	6%

QUESTION: *As a penalty for murder, do you believe that the sentence of life without the possibility of parole is, or is not, an acceptable substitute for the death penalty?*

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Is acceptable	65%
Is not acceptable	31%
No answer	4%

Party - *Sentence of life without the possibility of parole is, or is not, an acceptable substitute for the death penalty?*

Party	Is Acceptable	Is Not Acceptable	No Answer
Democrat	73%	24%	3%
Republican	47%	49%	4%
Independent	75%	16%	9%

QUESTION: *How big a problem do you think the budget issues facing the State of Maryland are: a very big problem, somewhat of a problem, not much of a problem, or not a problem at all?*

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Very big problem	74%
Somewhat of a problem	20%
Not that much of a problem	2%
Not a problem at all	1%
No answer	3%

Party - Budget issues facing the State of Maryland?

Party	Very Big Problem	Somewhat Problem	Not much Problem	Not at all Problem	No Answer
Democrat	76%	19%	2%	-	3%
Republican	69%	26%	1%	2%	2%
Independent	77%	10%	4%	1%	8%

QUESTION: *Over the next 2 years, how confident are you that Maryland's economy will return to the level it was prior to the current recession?*

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Very confident	9%
Somewhat confident	47%
Not that confident	29%
Not at all confident	13%
No answer	2%

Party - *How confident Maryland's economy will return to prior level?*

Party	Very Confident	Somewhat Confident	Not that Confident	Not at all Confident	No Answer
Democrat	11%	54%	25%	8%	2%
Republican	7%	34%	36%	22%	1%
Independent	5%	48%	30%	13%	4%

Gender - *How confident Maryland's economy will return to prior level?*

Gender	Very Confident	Somewhat Confident	Not that Confident	Not at all Confident	No Answer
Men	4%	43%	34%	17%	2%
Women	14%	51%	24%	9%	2%

QUESTION: *How much have the current economic problems affected you and your family?*

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
A great deal	23%
A fair amount	38%
A little	29%
Not at all	10%

QUESTION: *Do you approve or disapprove of the way President-elect Barack Obama is handling his transition?*

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Approve	80%
Disapprove	11%
No answer	9%

Party - *Approve or disapprove of Barack Obama's transition?*

Party	Approve	Disapprove	No Answer
Democrat	94%	3%	3%
Republican	55%	26%	19%
Independent	82%	6%	12%

Race – *Approve or disapprove of Barack Obama's transition?*

Race	Approve	Disapprove	No Answer
White	74%	14%	12%
African-American	98%	1%	1%

Gender – *Approve or disapprove of Barack Obama's transition?*

Gender	Approve	Disapprove	No Answer
Men	73%	17%	10%
Women	87%	5%	8%

QUESTION: *Do you favor or oppose President-elect Barack Obama's proposal to spend hundreds of billions of dollars in an effort to stimulate the American economy?*

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Favor	55%
Oppose	31%
No answer	14%

Party - *Favor or oppose Barack Obama's economic stimulus proposal?*

Party	Favor	Oppose	No Answer
Democrat	69%	13%	18%
Republican	28%	65%	7%
Independent	60%	24%	16%

Race – *Favor or oppose Barack Obama's economic stimulus proposal?*

Race	Favor	Oppose	No Answer
White	45%	40%	15%
African-American	85%	4%	11%

Gender – *Favor or oppose Barack Obama's economic stimulus proposal?*

Gender	Favor	Oppose	No Answer
Men	49%	39%	12%
Women	61%	23%	16%