

**Gonzales RM&S
Research & Communications, Inc.**

**Maryland Poll
Part 1 – Governor's Race**

July 2002

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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 July 2nd through July 7th, 2002. A total of 829 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

Gender		Race		Region	
Male	412 (50%)	White	625 (75%)	Eastern Shore	84 (10%)
Female	417 (50%)	Black	195 (24%)	Baltimore City	83 (10%)
		Other	9	Baltimore Suburbs	272 (33%)
Party Registration				Washington Suburbs	298 (36%)
Democrat	470 (57%)			Western Maryland	92 (11%)
Republican	264 (32%)				
Independent	95 (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 - includes voters in these counties: Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Harford, and Howard.

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

Western Maryland - includes voters in these counties: Allegany, Carroll, Frederick, Garrett, and Washington.

Analysis

Gubernatorial Election

It's a horse race! Since our last survey in January, Republican gubernatorial candidate Bob Ehrlich has narrowed the gap between himself and Lieutenant Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend to seven points, down from 15 points at the beginning of the year. Townsend and her running mate, retired Admiral Charles Larson lead with 48%, with Ehrlich and his pick for Number Two, Republican Party Chairman Michael Steele, at 41%. The remaining 11% are undecided. This marks the first time that Townsend has slipped below 50% and the first time that Ehrlich has cracked 40%.

In January, Ehrlich trailed Townsend by 15 points, 50% to 35% and she beat him in every demographic subgroup except Republicans and whites. In June, Ehrlich has widened his lead with white voters from 44%-41% to 50%-39%, and gone a long way to strengthen his position with his Republican base, up ten points to 79%, this despite the addition of a former Republican to the Democratic ticket. In addition, Ehrlich now leads Townsend with Independent voters and among men. The turnaround among Independents is the most dramatic: He now leads Townsend 49% to 30%, where he trailed 40% to 38% in January. Among men, Ehrlich turned a ten-point deficit (47% to 37%) into a five-point lead (46% to 41%). Black voters still give Townsend a huge advantage, but even there she slipped two points (from 79% to 77%) as Ehrlich, now paired with an African-American running mate, increased his share of the black vote, from 8% to 13%.

Bright spots were few for Townsend. She marginally improved her performance with women (from 53% to 55%) and Democrats (from 73% to 74%), and holds commanding leads in Baltimore City (77% to 16%) and in the populous Washington suburbs (54% to 32%). Ehrlich leads in the other three regions – on the Eastern Shore (44% to 41%), in the Baltimore suburbs (55% to 37%) and in Western Maryland (52% to 38%).

The D.C. suburbs hold one of November's keys. In 1994, when she came within 6,000 votes of being governor, Ellen Sauerbrey barely managed 40% of the vote there. Flipping one percent of the vote in this region would have sent her to Annapolis.

For Townsend, the tale is told in her name recognition figures. She is, if anything, even better known than before, with a stunning 97% of general election voters saying they recognize her name (up from 95% in January). But her favorable name ID figures continue to slide, from 53% in September 2001, to 46% in January, to 41% today. Twenty-nine percent of voters have an unfavorable opinion of the Lieutenant Governor, while 27% have a neutral opinion of her. The remaining 3% didn't recognize her name. Her running mate, Charles Larson, is unknown to 59% of Maryland voters.

Ehrlich's overall name ID has improved from 69% to 75%. Thirty-four percent of those surveyed have a favorable opinion of Ehrlich, 10% have an unfavorable view, and 31% are neutral on the Congressman. The remaining 25% didn't recognize his name. Running mate Michael Steele (43% recognize) is slightly better known than his Democratic counterpart.

It is apparent that doubts continue to mount about Lieutenant Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend. All her trend lines are pointing in the wrong direction. Her favorable name ID numbers have dropped precipitously and her unfavorables have nearly doubled since we first included her

name in a survey in August 2000. She is now running 45 points below her overall name ID.

On the other hand, Ehrlich's unfavorable rating has remained relatively steady for nearly a year, just a third what hers is. With 31% of the electorate holding a neutral opinion of Ehrlich, and 25% who don't recognize his name, the GOP candidate still has an opportunity to make a first impression on more than half the state's voters.

Townsend's choice of Charles Larson as her running mate seems to have had no immediate effect on the contest. Ehrlich has improved his position among every demographic subgroup where Larson was supposed to have special appeal – men, whites, and Republicans.

Meanwhile, whether Ehrlich's slight improvement with blacks is a result of his selection of Michael Steele or his own long-term efforts is debatable, but Steele presence on the ticket certainly hasn't hurt.

Townsend, though, still has strengths. Her party holds a 2-to-1 voter registration advantage, and almost unlimited ability to raise money, and the best help that money can buy. She also holds bigger leads in her core constituencies than Ehrlich holds in his -- 55% to 36% with women, 77% to 13% with African-Americans, and 54% to 32% in the vote-rich DC suburbs.

Republicans know, from painful experience, that it is possible to lose a statewide election in Maryland while capturing 21 counties. Ehrlich needs to run up the score in the areas where he is strong in order to pull even, and then hit that magic low-40's threshold in the Washington suburbs to pull it off.

Most Important Issue

Asked to name the most important issue facing the next Governor, more than one-fifth of Maryland voters named education (22%). The state's budget shortfall, and crime and drugs tied for second place with 13% each. Traffic and transportation (11%) edged the economy (10%) for third place. Next were health care and prescription drugs (9%), taxes (8%), growth and development (6%), and the environment (2%).

Closing the Budget Gap

Respondents were asked to select the best way to reduce the projected one billion dollar budget deficit among five rotated choices. Not surprisingly, a majority of Marylanders aren't enthusiastic about taxing themselves. Thirty-one percent said that spending should be cut in state programs, and 29% opted for legalizing slot machines at racetracks. Sixteen percent favored increasing the income tax rate for households earning more than \$100,000. Nine percent chose increasing the sales tax rate, and a slim 6% favored expanding the sales tax to include services.

Independents (52%), Republicans (44%), whites (38%) and men (41%) were most likely to believe

that spending cuts are the best solution. A plurality of Democrats (29%) and women (30%) opt for slots at racetracks. Increasing the income tax for those earning \$100,000 or more was most popular with blacks (52%) and ran a strong second with Democrats (26%). Expanding the sales tax to include services was the least popular option with every demographic subgroup.

Death Penalty

Support for the death penalty in Maryland remains fairly constant at 60%, with 34% opposing it. The remaining 6% gave no answer. Maryland voters gave nearly identical answers in May of 2000, when 62% said they favored the death penalty and 33% opposed it.

However, a majority also supports the death penalty moratorium, which was favored by 51% and opposed by 39%. The remaining 10% gave no answer. Thirty-six percent of those who said they favor the death penalty also favor the moratorium.

Judicial Contacts

Sixty-one percent of Maryland voters said they believed that the contacts initiated by a number of legislators to several members of the Court of Appeals effected the judges' decision to throw out the legislatively ratified redistricting map, while 14% said the contacts had no affect. The remaining 25% gave no answer.

Sentiment was remarkably similar across each demographic subgroup. The widest range was between men (58%) and women (64%). Whites (61%) and blacks (62%) were in agreement, as were Democrats (61%), Republicans (60%), and independents (63%).

QUESTION: If the November 2002 election for Governor and Lieutenant Governor were held today, for whom would you vote: the Democratic ticket of Kathleen Kennedy Townsend and Charles Larson, or the Republican ticket of Bob Ehrlich and Michael Steele?

	Townsend/ Larson	Ehrlich/ Steele	Undecided
Statewide	48%	41%	11%
Eastern Shore	41%	44%	15%
Baltimore City	77%	16%	7%
Baltimore Suburbs	37%	55%	8%
Washington Suburbs	54%	32%	14%
Western Maryland	38%	52%	10%
Men	41%	46%	13%
Women	55%	36%	9%
White	39%	50%	11%
African-American	77%	13%	10%
Democrat	74%	18%	8%
Republican	9%	79%	12%
Independent	30%	49%	21%

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.

	Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral	Don't Recognize
Kathleen Kennedy Townsend	41%	29%	27%	3%
Bob Ehrlich	34%	10%	31%	25%
Michael Steele	11%	3%	29%	57%
Charles Larson	7%	2%	32%	59%

QUESTION: What is the most important issue facing our next Governor?

Education	22%
Budget deficit/budget shortfall	13%
Crime/drugs	13%
Traffic/transportation	11%
Economy	10%
Health care/prescription drugs	9%
Taxes	8%
Growth/development	6%
Environment	2%
No answer	6%

QUESTION: Most analysts believe that the State of Maryland will face a budget shortfall of about one billion dollars in the next fiscal year. Which of the following do you believe is the best way to reduce the projected deficit: (ORDER ROTATED)

- Cut spending in state programs,
- Increase the sales tax rate, currently at 5%,
- Legalize slot machines at racetracks,
- Expand the sales tax to include services, like car repairs and dry cleaning,
- Increase the income tax rate for households earning more than \$100,000?

	Cut Spend- ing	Legalize Slots	Increase IncomeTax	Increase Sales Tax	Expand Sales Tax	None/ No Answer
Statewide	31%	29%	16%	9%	6%	9%
Men	41%	28%	9%	9%	5%	8%
Women	21%	30%	23%	9%	7%	10%
White	38%	30%	5%	11%	7%	9%
African-American	9%	27%	52%	3%	1%	8%
Democrat	19%	29%	26%	10%	7%	9%
Republican	44%	30%	3%	8%	6%	9%
Independent	52%	26%	5%	5%	2%	10%

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

	Favor	Oppose	No answer
Statewide	60%	34%	6%
Men	67%	29%	4%
Women	53%	39%	8%
White	66%	27%	7%
African-American	41%	55%	4%
Democrat	53%	41%	6%
Republican	75%	21%	4%
Independent	53%	37%	10%

QUESTION: As you may know, Governor Glendening recently imposed a moratorium on implementation of the death penalty in Maryland until results of a University of Maryland study are completed this fall. Do you favor or oppose the imposition of a moratorium on the death penalty?

	Favor Moratorium	Oppose Moratorium	No answer
Statewide	51%	39%	10%
Favor Death Penalty	36%	58%	
Oppose Death Penalty	80%	4%	

QUESTION: As you may know, the Maryland Court of Appeals recently threw out the legislative redistricting map submitted by a commission appointed by Governor Glendening. Prior to its ruling, the Court revealed that several members of the legislature had contacted a number of the judges about the case. Do you believe that the contacts made by those legislators effected the Court's decision in the redistricting case, or not?

	Yes, Affected	No, Didn't Affect	Not sure
Statewide	61%	14%	25%
Men	58%	17%	25%
Women	64%	11%	25%
White	61%	16%	23%
African-American	62%	7%	31%
Democrat	61%	14%	25%
Republican	60%	16%	24%
Independent	63%	11%	26%