

Gonzales Research & Marketing Strategies

“Maryland’s leader in public opinion polling”



Maryland Poll

**President Bush Job Approval
Presidential Contest
Governor O’Malley Job Approval
Slots Constitutional Amendment**

September 2008

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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 August 29th through September 5th, 2008. A total of 833 registered voters in Maryland who indicated that they are likely to vote in November's general election 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	409 (49%)	White	609 (73%)	Eastern Shore/S Md	103 (12%)
Female	424 (51%)	Black	201 (24%)	Baltimore City	85 (10%)
		Other/Ref	23	Baltimore Suburbs	289 (35%)
				Washington Subs	256 (31%)
				Western Maryland	100 (12%)
Party Registration					
Democrat	474 (57%)				
Republican	264 (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.		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

President Bush Job Approval

President George Bush's job approval rating has hit an all-time low in Maryland. Statewide, only 23% approve of the President's performance in office, while 69% disapprove of the job he is doing.

By party, 58% of Republicans approve of the job Bush is doing and 28% disapprove; 5% of Democrats approve of the job Bush is doing and 90% disapprove; and among registered independents, only 11% approve of the job the Presidents is doing and 79% disapprove.

Bush Job Rating	Approve	Disapprove	No answer
September 2008	23%	69%	8%
March 2008	27%	64%	9%
January 2008	28%	64%	8%
January 2007	25%	68%	7%
August 2006	36%	59%	5%
April 2006	29%	67%	4%
October 2005	33%	63%	4%
October 2004	44%	53%	3%
August 2004	43%	51%	6%
June 2004	39%	54%	7%
March 2004	45%	47%	8%
February 2004	41%	53%	6%
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%

It is little wonder both parties' campaigns are trying aggressively to capture the mantel of "change" for the November election.

Presidential Contest

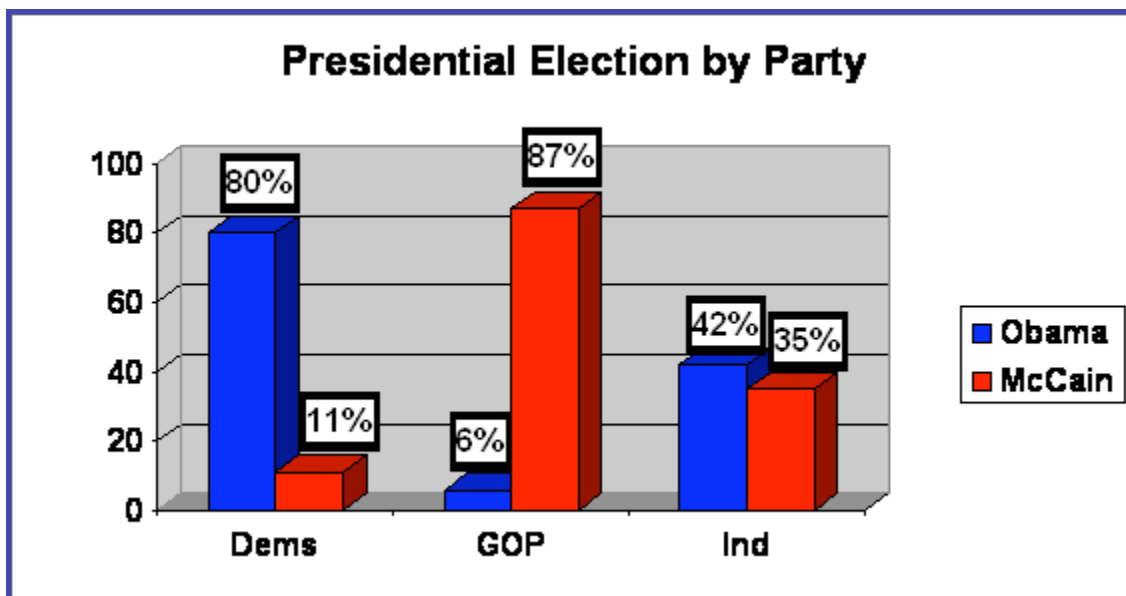
Among Maryland voters, 57% have a favorable opinion of Democratic nominee Barack Obama and

28% have an unfavorable opinion, while 41% have a favorable opinion of Republican nominee John McCain and 33% have an unfavorable opinion of him.

Fifty-one percent have a favorable opinion of Democratic VP nominee Joe Biden and 20% have an unfavorable opinion; 35% have a favorable opinion of Republican VP nominee Sarah Palin and 24% have an unfavorable opinion of her.

Statewide, 52% said they would vote for Obama “if the election were held today,” while 38% said they would vote for McCain, and 10% were undecided.

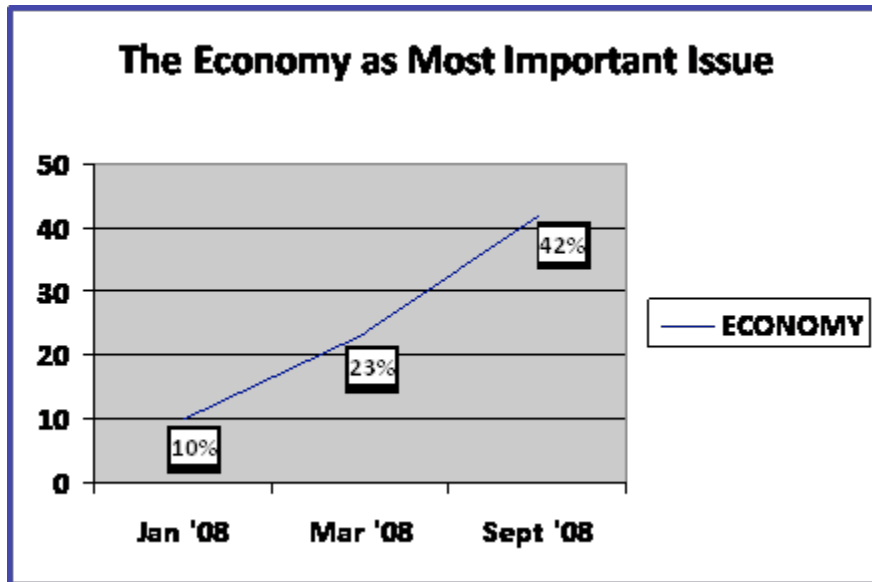
Eighty percent of Democrats support Obama and 87% of Republicans back McCain. Among independents, 42% support Obama, 35% support McCain and 23% are undecided



Most Important Issue facing State

The economy is far and away the number one concern for Marylanders. Statewide, 42% said the economy is the most important issue facing the state, followed by 12% who said it was taxes, 10% who said it was education, and 8% who said health care.

A look at the growth of the economy as the most important issue since the beginning of the year:



Governor O'Malley Job Approval

Governor Martin O'Malley's overall job approval rating among Maryland voters has rebounded since earlier in the year.

Statewide, 45% say they approve of the job O'Malley is doing as governor (up 8 points from March), while 35% disapprove (down 13 points from March), and 20% gave no response.

O'Malley's improvement is attributable to better numbers among Democrats and independents in the state. Among Republicans, two-thirds still disapprove of the job he's doing as governor.

A comparison by party between March and now:

	September 2008		March 2008	
	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>
Democrats	59%	19%	48%	35%
Republicans	19%	65%	17%	69%
Independents	46%	33%	39%	51%

Although O'Malley's disapproval level is higher than an incumbent might want, he has started to recover from the "negative bounce" in public support that followed the November 2007 Special Session.

O'Malley Job Approval	Approve	Disapprove	No opinion
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%

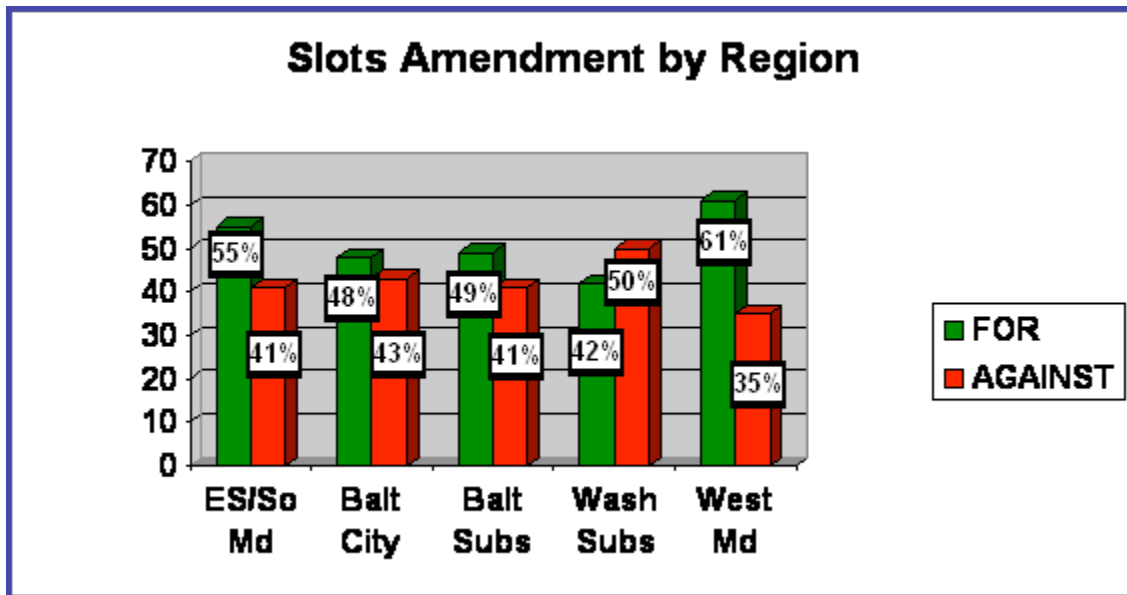
Slots Amendment

Statewide, 49% say they would vote for the constitutional amendment to authorize slot machines in the state “if the election were held today,” while 43% say they would vote against it, and 8% were undecided.

Men (53%) are more likely than women (45%) to support slots. Republicans are the only party bloc at this point in which a majority says they’ll vote for the amendment.

A majority of independents (52%) and voters from the Washington suburbs (50%) already say they will vote against the amendment

A look by region:



Support for a slots amendment has actually dropped 5 points since January (prior to the ballot wording), when 54% said they would vote to allow slot machines in the state.

Slots Amendment	FOR	AGAINST	Undecided
September 2008	49%	43%	8%
January 2008	54%	38%	8%

The public campaigns for and against slots have not yet been high-profile, but some of the shifts in support among particular groups suggests that grass roots efforts are already underway and having some impact.

Bay Bridge

In the aftermath of the fatal accident on the Chesapeake Bay Bridge and the subsequent safety inspections and repair work, we asked survey respondents how concerned they are.

Among Marylanders, 78% see the issues surrounding the Bay Bridge as a problem: 40% say they're a "big problem" and 38% say they're "somewhat of a problem." Only 15% say they're "not much of a problem" (12%) or "not at all a problem" (3%).

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

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Approve	22%
Disapprove	69%
No Answer	8%

Party – *George Bush job performance - approve or disapprove?*

Party	Approve	Disapprove	No Answer
Democrat	5%	90%	5%
Republican	59%	28%	13%
Independent	11%	79%	10%

Gender – *George Bush job performance - approve or disapprove?*

Gender	Approve	Disapprove	No Answer
Men	26%	66%	8%
Women	20%	72%	8%

Race – *George Bush job performance - approve or disapprove?*

Race	Approve	Disapprove	No Answer
White	30%	61%	9%
African-American	1%	93%	6%

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.

The first (next) name is _____. Do you recognize that name?

(IF YES) Do you have a favorable, unfavorable, or neutral opinion of that person?

	<u>Favorable</u>	<u>Unfavorable</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Don't Recognize</u>
Barack Obama	57%	28%	15%	-
Joe Biden	51%	20%	23%	6%
John McCain	41%	33%	26%	-
Sarah Palin	35%	24%	19%	22%

QUESTION: *If the November general election for president were held today for whom would you vote: John McCain, the Republican or Barack Obama, the Democrat?*

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Obama	52%
McCain	38%
Undecided	10%

Party – Presidential election?

Party	Obama	McCain	Undecided
Democrat	80%	11%	9%
Republican	6%	87%	7%
Independent	42%	35%	23%

Gender – Presidential election?

Gender	Obama	McCain	Undecided
Men	47%	44%	9%
Women	57%	32%	11%

Race – Presidential election?

Race	Obama	McCain	Undecided
White	39%	50%	11%
African-American	91%	1%	8%

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

Economy	42%
Taxes	12%
Education	11%
Health care	8%
Cost of gasoline	6%
Transportation/Roads	3%
Crime	3%
Terrorism/security	3%
Environment and pollution	3%
Affordable housing	2%
Abortion/moral issues	2%
Slot machines	2%
Illegal immigration	1%
No answer	2%

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

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Approve	45%
Disapprove	35%
No answer	20%

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

Party	Approve	Disapprove	No Answer
Democrat	59%	19%	22%
Republican	19%	65%	16%
Independent	46%	33%	21%

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

Gender	Approve	Disapprove	No Answer
Men	41%	43%	16%
Women	49%	27%	24%

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

Race	Approve	Disapprove	No Answer
White	43%	40%	17%
African-American	51%	20%	29%

QUESTION: On this November's general election ballot there will be a Constitutional Amendment to legalize slot machines in Maryland. The Amendment is titled "Authorizing Video Lottery Terminals (Slot Machines) to Fund Education."

It authorizes the State to issue up to five video lottery licenses for the purpose of raising revenue for education of children in public schools, prekindergarten through grade 12, public school construction and improvements, and construction of capital projects at community colleges and higher education institutions. No more than a total number of 15,000 video lottery terminals may be authorized in the State, and only one license may be issued for each specified location in Anne Arundel, Cecil, Worcester, and Allegany Counties, and Baltimore City. Any additional forms or expansion of commercial gaming in Maryland is prohibited, unless approved by a voter referendum.

If the election were held today, would you vote For allowing slot machines in Maryland or Against allowing slot machines in Maryland?

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
For	49%
Against	43%
Undecided	8%

Party – Slots Amendment vote?

Party	For	Against	Undecided
Democrat	48%	44%	7%
Republican	53%	38%	9%
Independent	38%	52%	10%

Gender – Slots Amendment vote?

Gender	For	Against	Undecided
Men	53%	42%	5%
Women	45%	44%	11%

Race – Slots Amendment vote?

Race	For	Against	Undecided
White	51%	42%	7%
African-American	43%	46%	11%

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Region - Slots Amendment vote?

Region	For	Against	Undecided
Eastern SH/ Southern Md	55%	41%	4%
Baltimore City	48%	43%	9%
Baltimore Suburbs	49%	41%	10%
Washington Suburbs	42%	50%	8%
Western Maryland	61%	35%	4%

QUESTION: *Would you say the issues surrounding the Bay Bridge are a big problem, somewhat of a problem, not that much of a problem, or not a problem at all?*

Statewide Results

Response	Statewide
Big problem	40%
Somewhat of a problem	38%
Not that much of a problem	12%
Not a problem at all	3%
No answer	7%

Party - Issues surrounding the Bay Bridge?

Party	Big Problem	Somewhat Problem	Not much Problem	Not at all Problem	No Answer
Democrat	41%	39%	12%	2%	6%
Republican	39%	37%	11%	4%	9%
Independent	38%	36%	15%	6%	5%

Gender – Issues surrounding the Bay Bridge?

Gender	Big Problem	Somewhat Problem	Not much Problem	Not at all Problem	No Answer
Men	34%	38%	16%	5%	7%
Women	46%	38%	8%	1%	7%