

HOW THE POLL WAS CONDUCTED

The Mason-Dixon Virginia Poll was conducted by Mason-Dixon Polling & Research, Inc. of Washington, D.C. from October 29 through October 30, 2008. A total of 625 registered voters were interviewed statewide by telephone. All indicated that they were likely to vote in the November general election.

Those interviewed were selected by the random variation of the last four digits of telephone numbers. A cross-section of exchanges was utilized in order to ensure an accurate reflection of the state. Quotas were assigned to reflect voter turn-out by county.

The margin for error, according to standards customarily used by statisticians, is no more than plus or minus 4 percentage points. This means that there is a 95 percent probability that the "true" figure would fall within that range if the entire population were sampled. The margin for error is higher for any subgroup, such as a regional or racial grouping.

SAMPLE FIGURES:

Men 305 (49%)

Women 320 (51%)

Whites 486 (78%)

Blacks 118 (19%)

Other 21 (3%)

REGION

Northern Virginia	170 interviews
Shenandoah/Piedmont	95 interviews
Richmond Metro	80 interviews
Hampton Roads	140 interviews
Lynchburg/Southside	70 interviews
Roanoke/Southwestern Virginia	70 interviews

Copyright 2008, Mason-Dixon Polling & Research, Inc. All rights reserved. Subscribing news organizations are prohibited from providing copies of this report to any third party, including political candidates, their campaigns, other media organizations, and public or private groups. Any individual or organization involved in unauthorized publication or redistribution of this report is subject to a \$5,000 publishing fee payable to Mason-Dixon as consideration for the work and expense incurred to produce this research.

ANALYSIS

**By: J. Bradford Coker, Managing Director
Mason-Dixon Polling & Research, Inc.**

Subscribers may quote freely from this analysis.
Please attribute all quotes to Mr. Coker and Mason-Dixon.
Mr. Coker is available to answer questions at (904) 261-2444.

**OBAMA MAINTAINS NARROW LEAD IN VIRGINIA,
BUT "UNDECIDED" REMAINS HIGHER THAN NORMAL**

Democrat Barack Obama continues to hold a small lead over Republican John McCain in Virginia. Statewide, 47% of likely voters currently support Obama, while 44% back McCain and 9% remain undecided. Obama held a similar 47%-45% advantage last week.

<u>PRESIDENTIAL VOTE</u>	<u>OBAMA</u>	<u>MCCAIN</u>	<u>OTHER</u>	<u>UNDECIDED</u>
September 2008	44%	47%	1%	8%
Early October 2008	45%	48%	-	7%
Mid October 2008	47%	45%	-	8%
November 2008	47%	44%	-	9%

Of particular note is the fact that 9% remain undecided. That is considerably higher than in previous presidential races in Virginia and even higher than in some state level races in recent years. In 2004, only 5% were undecided in our final poll between George W. Bush and John Kerry and in 2000 only 6% were undecided between Bush and Al Gore. In the 2006 U.S. Senate and 2005 Virginia gubernatorial races only 7% were undecided in the final Mason-Dixon polls. The closest level of "undecided" voters in any major Virginia election is 8% in the 1989 Doug Wilder-Marshall Coleman governor's race, which notably involved the first African-American candidate to seriously contest for that office.

Obama is maintaining his wide lead in Northern Virginia (61%-31%), but McCain still runs stronger in Virginia's rural regions and the Richmond Metro area. Obama gets his margin from his advantage in the Hampton Roads/Tidewater region, where he is ahead by 50%-40%.

Obama continues to hold the support of black voters, voters under 50, women, and those who identify as Democrats or independents. McCain leads among men, voters over the age of 50, whites, those who identify as Republicans and those who have served in the military

McCain and Obama have identical favorable ratings (49%), but Obama has slightly higher negatives (41%-37%).

<u>OBAMA NAME REC</u>	<u>FAV</u>	<u>UNFAV</u>	<u>NEUT</u>	<u>DR</u>
September 2008	45%	34%	20%	1%
Early October 2008	44%	33%	23%	-
Mid October 2008	46%	39%	15%	-
November 2008	49%	41%	10%	-

<u>MCCAIN NAME REC</u>	<u>FAV</u>	<u>UNFAV</u>	<u>NEUT</u>	<u>DR</u>
September 2008	48%	22%	29%	1%
Early October 2008	47%	27%	26%	-
Mid October 2008	48%	35%	17%	-
November 2008	49%	37%	14%	-

Joe Biden and Sarah Palin have similar favorable and unfavorable ratings.

<u>BIDEN NAME REC</u>	<u>FAV</u>	<u>UNFAV</u>	<u>NEUT</u>	<u>DR</u>
September 2008	39%	26%	31%	4%
Early October 2008	39%	31%	29%	1%
Mid October 2008	44%	32%	23%	1%
November 2008	43%	37%	19%	1%

<u>PALIN NAME REC</u>	<u>FAV</u>	<u>UNFAV</u>	<u>NEUT</u>	<u>DR</u>
September 2008	46%	23%	29%	2%
Early October 2008	42%	29%	28%	1%
Mid October 2008	44%	39%	16%	1%
November 2008	44%	40%	16%	-

No Democrat has carried Virginia in a presidential race since 1964, so it is significant that Obama leads heading into the final weekend of the campaign. It will be interesting to see if he can close the deal with the larger than normal bloc of "undecided" voters - of whom 93% are white and 75% do not live in Northern Virginia.

STATEWIDE NAME RECOGNITION

Do you recognize the name _____?
(IF YES) Do you have a favorable, unfavorable or neutral opinion
of _____?

	<u>RECOGNIZE FAVORABLE</u>	<u>RECOGNIZE UNFAVORABLE</u>	<u>RECOGNIZE NEUTRAL</u>	<u>DON'T RECOGNIZE</u>
John McCain	49%	37%	14%	-
Barack Obama	49%	41%	10%	-
Sarah Palin	44%	40%	16%	-
Joe Biden	43%	37%	19%	1%

QUESTION: If the 2008 presidential election were held today, would you vote for the Democratic ticket of Barack Obama & Joe Biden, the Republican ticket of John McCain & Sarah Palin, or one of the other party tickets?

	<u>OBAMA</u>	<u>MCCAIN</u>	<u>OTHER</u>	<u>UNDECIDED</u>
STATE	47%	44%	-	9%

<u>REGION</u>	<u>OBAMA</u>	<u>MCCAIN</u>	<u>OTHER</u>	<u>UNDECIDED</u>
Northern Virginia	61%	31%	-	8%
Shenandoah/Piedmont	35%	55%	-	10%
Richmond Metro	40%	50%	-	10%
Hampton Roads	50%	40%	-	10%
Lynchburg/Southside	40%	52%	-	8%
Roanoke/Southwest	37%	55%	-	8%

<u>SEX</u>	<u>OBAMA</u>	<u>MCCAIN</u>	<u>OTHER</u>	<u>UNDECIDED</u>
Men	45%	47%	-	8%
Women	49%	41%	-	10%

<u>AGE</u>	<u>OBAMA</u>	<u>MCCAIN</u>	<u>OTHER</u>	<u>UNDECIDED</u>
18-34	59%	36%	-	5%
35-49	48%	42%	-	10%
50-64	43%	48%	-	9%
65+	40%	49%	-	11%

<u>RACE</u>	<u>OBAMA</u>	<u>MCCAIN</u>	<u>OTHER</u>	<u>UNDECIDED</u>
Whites	36%	53%	-	11%
Blacks	92%	5%	-	3%

<u>PARTY ID</u>	<u>OBAMA</u>	<u>MCCAIN</u>	<u>OTHER</u>	<u>UNDECIDED</u>
Democrats	86%	8%	-	6%
Republicans	10%	80%	-	10%
Independents	50%	39%	-	11%

<u>SERVED IN MILITARY?</u>	<u>OBAMA</u>	<u>MCCAIN</u>	<u>OTHER</u>	<u>UNDECIDED</u>
Yes	36%	59%	-	5%
No	50%	40%	-	10%