



**NBC News/Marist Poll:
Obama and Romney Vie for Lead in Colorado**

*** Complete Tables for Poll Appended ***

For Immediate Release: Thursday, May 31, 2012

Contact: Lee M. Miringoff
Barbara L. Carvalho
Mary E. Azzoli
Marist College
845.575.5050

This NBC News/Marist Poll Reports:

President Barack Obama and Mitt Romney are neck and neck in Colorado, a state Obama won by nine points in 2008. Among registered voters statewide including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate, Obama receives 46% to 45% for Romney. One percent plans to vote for someone else, and 8% are undecided.

“This is a state George W. Bush carried in 2000 and 2004 and has trended Republican in party registration since 2008,” says Dr. Lee M. Miringoff, Director of The Marist College Institute for Public Opinion. “President Obama broke through four years ago and is countering the partisan difference this time by being plus ten among independents.”

Key points:

- Looking at **party**, most Democrats -- 88% -- back the president while most Republicans -- 86% -- are behind Romney.
- Obama -- 48% -- leads Romney -- 38% -- among independent voters.
- Romney -- 46% -- and Obama -- 45% -- are in a statistical dead heat among voters who have an **excellent or good chance of voting** in November.
- Romney -- 52% -- edges Obama -- 43% -- among voters who express a high **level of enthusiasm** about the presidential election. However, Obama -- 53% -- leads Romney -- 39% -- among those who are moderately enthusiastic. 41% of voters who have a low degree of enthusiasm back Obama compared with 39% for Romney.
- Among those in Colorado who have a high level of **interest** in the presidential contest, 47% are behind Obama while the same proportion -- 47% -- supports Romney. Among those with a moderate degree of interest, Romney garners 42% to Obama's 39%. Among voters who have a low interest in the election, 47% are for Obama while 40% back Romney.

- A majority of Colorado voters who **strongly support** their choice of candidate -- 53% --are behind Obama while 47% are for Romney.
- A **gender gap** exists. 49% of men support Romney compared with 41% for Obama. More than half of women -- 51% -- throw their support behind Obama while 40% back Romney.
- Among Colorado voters **under the age of 30**, nearly six in ten voters -- 59% -- support Obama while 28% are for Romney. Among voters 30 to 44 years old, 48% are behind Obama compared with 43% who back Romney. Among those 45 to 59, Romney receives the support of 49% while Obama garners 42%. Looking at those 60 and older, 49% rally for Romney while 45% back Obama.

More Than Seven in Ten Firmly in Candidate's Camp

Looking at intensity of support, 71% of registered voters in Colorado are firmly behind their choice of candidate while 23% are somewhat committed to their pick. Six percent might cast their ballot differently, and less than 1% is unsure.

Key points:

- 74% of Obama's supporters firmly back him. This compares with 67% of Romney's supporters who have a similar level of commitment.

44% Very Enthusiastic About Voting in November

A plurality of the Colorado electorate -- 44% -- is very enthusiastic about voting in November. 37% are somewhat enthusiastic while 14% are not too enthusiastic. Five percent are not enthusiastic at all.

Key points:

- A majority of Romney's supporters -- 52% -- are very enthusiastic about casting their ballot in the fall while 41% of Obama's supporters have a similar level of enthusiasm.

Nearly Half in Colorado Disapproves of Obama's Job Performance

When it comes to how President Obama is doing in office, 45% give him a thumbs-up. However, 49% *disapprove*, and 6% are unsure.

The Great Favorability Divide

47% of the Colorado electorate has a favorable impression of the president while the same proportion -- 47% -- perceives him unfavorably. Six percent are unsure.

This is not unlike the picture for Romney. 43% view him favorably while the same proportion -- 43% -- has an unfavorable opinion of him. 14% are unsure.

Same-Sex Marriage Issue Matters Little to 45%

While 28% of voters are more likely to support Obama because he *supports* same-sex marriage including 46% of Democrats, 27% are more likely to back Romney because he *opposes* same-sex marriage including 54% of Republicans. A plurality of the Colorado electorate -- 45% -- reports a candidate's stance on the issue matters little to their vote. Only 1% is undecided.

The Economy Key Factor for Almost Three in Four Voters

74% of registered voters believe the economy is more important in deciding their vote than are social issues. 20% report the opposite is true, and 6% are unsure.

Mitt Romney is perceived by 45% of the electorate to be the candidate who will do a better job handling the economy. 42%, though, say President Obama is better skilled to take on the matter. 13% are unsure.

When it comes to social issues, 48% say Obama comes closer to their views while 41% believe Romney does. 11% are unsure.

On other issues:

- 47% of the electorate reports Obama will do a better job **handling foreign policy**. 39% have this view of Romney. 14% are unsure.
- Almost half -- 49% -- think Obama is the candidate who best **understands voters' problems** while 40% believe Romney is the most relatable. 12% are unsure.
- 50% of voters say Romney will do a better job **reducing the national debt**. This compares with 37% who have this opinion of Obama. 14% are unsure.

Obama's Inheritance: The Economy

A majority of voters in Colorado -- 54% -- think the president mostly inherited the nation's economic conditions while 37% believe they are a result of his own policies. Nine percent are unsure.

A majority of voters are optimistic about the future of the U.S. economy. 54% report the worst of the country's economic woes are behind us. 39% say the worst is yet to come, and 7% are unsure.

What will the U.S. economy look like in the coming year? Nearly half of voters in Colorado -- 48% -- think the economy will stay about the same. About one in three -- 33% -- believes the economy will get better while 14% report it will get worse. Four percent are unsure.

Regarding their own financial picture, 61% of voters think their family finances will remain the same in the coming year. 29% believe their money matters will get better while 10% say they will get worse.

Country Needs Course Correction, Says Majority

56% of registered voters in Colorado believe things in the nation are off on the wrong track. 38%, however, think they are headed in the right direction. Six percent are unsure.