



NBC News/WSJ/Marist Poll: Obama and Romney Tied in Colorado

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

This NBC News/WSJ/Marist Poll Reports:

In the presidential contest in Colorado, President Barack Obama and Vice President Joe Biden receive the support of 48% of likely voters, including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate and those who voted early or by absentee, compared with the same proportion -- 48% -- for Mitt Romney and Paul Ryan. Two percent are behind another candidate, and 2% are undecided.

"Until Barack Obama in 2008, the only Democrat to carry Colorado since 1964 was Bill Clinton," says Dr. Lee M. Miringoff, Director of The Marist College Institute for Public Opinion. "But, Colorado is much different terrain for Obama this time than when he carried it by nine points four years ago."

When NBC News/WSJ/Marist last reported this question in September, Obama and Biden had the support of 50% of likely voters in Colorado, including those who were undecided yet leaning toward a candidate, compared with 45% for Romney and Ryan. One percent backed another candidate, and 4% were undecided.

Key points:

- **Party ID.** A partisan divide exists. 96% of Democrats who are likely to vote support Obama, and 96% of Republicans likely to cast a ballot are for Romney. Among likely independent voters, 46% support Romney compared with 45% for Obama. Romney has gained ground among independent voters. Last month, 50% of these voters supported Obama while 39% were for Romney.
- **Enthusiasm.** 65% of likely voters are very enthusiastic about voting next month. Looking at each candidate's supporters, 68% of likely voters who support Romney express a high degree of enthusiasm compared with 66% of likely voters behind Obama. Voter enthusiasm has increased in Colorado. 59% of likely voters said they were very enthusiastic to cast their ballot in NBC News/WSJ/Marist's September

survey. At that time, 64% of Romney's backers expressed a high level of enthusiasm while 59% of those behind Obama said the same.

- **Intensity of support.** 87% of Colorado likely voters strongly support their choice of candidate. 12% are somewhat behind their pick, and 1% might vote differently. Less than 1% is unsure. Among likely voters who back the president, 90% are firmly committed to him. 85% of those who are behind Romney say their support will not waver.
- **Gender.** A gender gap exists. 52% of women who are likely to vote support Obama while 45% favor Romney. Among men who are likely to go to the polls, 51% are behind Romney compared with 43% who support Obama.
- **Age.** Obama -- 59% -- has the advantage over Romney -- 36% -- among likely voters under 30 years old. Looking at those 30 to 44, 48% support Romney compared with 45% for Obama. Among Colorado likely voters 45 to 59, Romney receives 51% of likely voters' support while Obama has 44%. Among Colorado likely voters 60 and older, Romney has 50% compared with 48% for Obama.
- **Early voters.** 78% of the likely voters in Colorado have already voted or plan to do so before Election Day a similar proportion to those who voted early in 2008. Romney -- 49% -- is neck and neck with Obama -- 48% among likely voters who have cast their ballot or plan to do so early. Romney -- 56% -- leads Obama -- 39% -- among likely voters who plan to go to the polls on Election Day. Obama -- 62% -- outdistances Romney -- 26% -- among voters who have yet to decide whether or not to vote early.

Among registered voters in Colorado, including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate and those who voted early, Obama and Biden receive the support of 48% to 47% for Romney and Ryan. Two percent support another candidate, and 3% are undecided.

Obama Debate Victor, Says Plurality, but Did It Matter?

Which candidate won Monday night's foreign policy debate? 46% of likely voters in Colorado say Obama outperformed Romney. This compares with 25% who think Romney was the winner. 18% of likely voters say neither candidate had the upper hand, and 12% are unsure.

Regardless of the winner, Monday's foreign policy debate did not change many minds. 95% of Colorado likely voters selected their candidate before the debate while just 5% did so following it. One percent is unsure.

63% of registered voters in the state watched the debate live while 20% followed the news coverage about it afterwards. 17% neither watched the matchup nor the news reports about it.

Obama Viewed Favorably by Majority...Romney Receives Mixed Reviews

Among Colorado likely voters, 51% have a favorable view of President Barack Obama. 46% perceive him unfavorably, and 2% are unsure.

When NBC News/WSJ/Marist last reported this question in September, 51% of Colorado likely voters thought well of the president while 45% had an unfavorable view of him. Four percent, at the time, were unsure.

When it comes to Romney, 48% have a favorable opinion of the candidate while 47% do not. Five percent are unsure.

Romney's image has improved slightly in Colorado. In NBC News/WSJ/Marist's September survey, 43% had a positive view of Romney while 50% had an *unfavorable* one. Six percent, then, were unsure.

Obama and Romney Vie for Top Spot on Economy... Obama Bests Romney on Foreign Policy

48% of registered voters in Colorado think Romney is the stronger candidate on the economy. 47% disagree and believe Obama is. Six percent are unsure. Last month, 48% of Colorado registered voters thought Obama was the stronger candidate on the economy while 45% believed Romney was better prepared to handle the issue. Seven percent, at that time, were unsure.

Among likely voters, 49% now say Romney is more capable to transform the nation's economy while 46% have this opinion of Obama. Five percent are unsure. In September, 48% of likely voters thought Obama was better for the economy compared with 46% who had this view of Romney. Six percent were unsure.

When it comes to foreign policy, it's a different ball game. Among registered voters in Colorado, 52% think Obama can better address these issues compared with 43% who have this view of Romney. Five percent are unsure. Looking at likely voters statewide, 51% say Obama will do a better job handling this policy area compared with 44% who think Romney will excel. Five percent are unsure.

In NBC News/WSJ/Marist's previous poll, 51% of registered voters perceived Obama to be better versed in foreign policy while 40% said Romney had the advantage. One in ten -- 10% -- was unsure. Likely voters agreed. 51% of likely voters saw Obama as more capable on foreign policy compared with 41% who had this view of Romney. Eight percent, at that time, were unsure.

Voters Divide about Obama's Job Performance

49% of registered voters in Colorado approve of how the president is doing in office. This compares with 47% who disapprove. Four percent are unsure.

In September, 47% gave Obama high marks while the same proportion -- 47% -- said he fell short. Six percent, then, were unsure.

A Nation Off the Rails, Says Majority

51% of Colorado registered voters believe the nation is moving in the wrong direction while 46% believe it is on course. Three percent are unsure.

When NBC News/WSJ/Marist last reported this question, 53% thought the country needed a new trajectory while 41% believed it should stay the course. Six percent were unsure.