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## **The Battleground: The Presidential Race in New Hampshire**

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This Marist Poll reports:

### **Presidential Race in New Hampshire:**

- **Candidates Locked in Tight Race...Obama Edges McCain Among Likely Voters:**

With just eight days until Election Day, Senator Barack Obama and Senator John McCain are in a close contest for New Hampshire's four electoral votes. Among registered voters in New Hampshire, Obama has 47% to 43% for McCain. Neither candidate has made significant inroads in the Granite State in the past month. In a Marist Poll conducted in September, Obama had 48% among registered voters to McCain's 45%. Currently, Senator Barack Obama has a narrow lead over McCain among likely voters including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate. Obama receives 50% to McCain's 45% among these voters. Once again, however, neither candidate has statistically gained nor lost ground in the state. In last month's Marist Poll, the results were similar. 51% of likely voters said they supported Obama while McCain had the backing of 45%. Looking at party support, each candidate's base remains solid. 93% of Democrats are behind Obama while 90% of Republicans are backing John McCain. Among Independent likely voters, 51% support Barack Obama compared with 39% for McCain. Last month, 54% of Independents likely to vote on Election Day supported Obama and 38% backed McCain.

**Question Wording:** If November’s presidential election were held today, whom would you support if the candidates are:

	John McCain/ Sarah Palin the Republicans	Barack Obama/ Joe Biden the Democrats	Other	Undecided
Registered Voters				
<b>October 2008</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>7%</b>
September 2008	45%	48%	1%	6%
Likely voters w/ leaners				
<b>October 2008</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>3%</b>
Democrats	4%	93%	3%	<1%
Republicans	90%	9%	1%	<1%
Independents	39%	51%	4%	6%
<b>September 2008</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>3%</b>
Democrats	2%	96%	1%	1%
Republicans	87%	11%	1%	1%
Independents	38%	54%	2%	6%

- **High Level of Commitment in New Hampshire:** More than eight in ten registered voters in New Hampshire -- 81% -- say their commitment is unshakeable when it comes to their pick for president. That’s regardless of whom they are planning to support. 80% of John McCain’s backers report they are strongly committed to the GOP candidate while 81% of Barack Obama’s supporters are firmly committed to him.

**Question Wording:** Would you say that you strongly support [ticket], somewhat support them, or do you think you might vote differently on Election Day?

Registered voters	Strongly Support	Somewhat Support	Might Vote Differently	Unsure
<b>October 2008</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>&lt;1%</b>
McCain/Palin supporters	80%	17%	3%	<1%
Obama/Biden supporters	81%	14%	4%	1%
<b>September 2008</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>4%</b>	<b>&lt;1%</b>

- **It’s About the Issues:** A plurality of New Hampshire voters -- 48% -- say, if they had to choose, they prefer a candidate who shares their positions on the issues compared with 41% who would like a president with similar values. A majority of Barack Obama’s supporters -- 58% -- say issues are their priority. Nearly half of McCain’s backers feel a candidate’s values matter more.

**Question Wording:** If you had to choose, would you prefer a candidate who shares your positions on the issues but does not share your values, or a candidate who shares your values but not your positions on the issues?

Registered voters	Shared Issues	Shared Values	Unsure
<b>October 2008</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>11%</b>
McCain/Palin supporters	40%	49%	11%
Obama/Biden supporters	58%	32%	10%

- When It Comes to Favorability, It's a Draw...Both Candidates' Unfavorable Ratings Rise:** While a majority of New Hampshire voters say they have a positive impression of John McCain and Barack Obama, the unfavorable ratings of both presidential candidates have gone up. 56% of the electorate thinks well of McCain, and a similar proportion -- 57% -- has the same feeling about Barack Obama. On the other hand, 40% of the electorate has an unfavorable impression of McCain while 38% has a similar opinion of Obama. When compared with the proportion of voters who felt this way last month -- 34% for McCain and 31% for Obama -- it's clear the candidates have turned off some voters.

**Question Wording:** Overall, do you have a favorable or an unfavorable impression of:

Registered voters	Favorable	Unfavorable	Unsure
<b>October 2008</b>			
John McCain	56%	40%	4%
Barack Obama	57%	38%	5%
<b>September 2008</b>			
John McCain	61%	34%	5%
Barack Obama	63%	31%	6%

- Not So Positive for Palin...Majority Still Boasts About Biden:** When it comes to voters' views of the vice presidential candidates, registered New Hampshire voters divide over Sarah Palin. 48% have a positive perception of the GOP candidate while 46% view her unfavorably. Palin's image has lost some of its luster among Independent voters in New Hampshire. 52% of Independents currently have a negative impression of the Republican compared with 40% who felt that way last month. Her Democratic

counterpart, Joe Biden, has maintained a favorable rating with a majority of New Hampshire's electorate. 52% view him positively. More Independent voters, however, see Biden unfavorably. Last month, 28% of these voters had a negative view of Biden compared with 36% today.

**Question Wording:** Overall, do you have a favorable or an unfavorable impression of:

	Favorable	Unfavorable	Unsure
<b>Registered voters</b>			
<b>Sarah Palin</b>			
<b>October 2008</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>6%</b>
Democrats	17%	77%	6%
Republicans	84%	11%	5%
Independents	40%	52%	8%
<b>September 2008</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>10%</b>
Democrats	12%	82%	6%
Republicans	85%	8%	7%
Independents	48%	40%	12%
<b>Joe Biden</b>			
<b>October 2008</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>10%</b>
Democrats	87%	8%	5%
Republicans	20%	69%	11%
Independents	53%	36%	11%
<b>September 2008</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>16%</b>
Democrats	84%	6%	10%
Republicans	23%	60%	17%
Independents	57%	28%	15%

**Nature of the Sample: 757 New Hampshire Registered Voters**

This survey of registered voters in New Hampshire was conducted on October 22<sup>nd</sup> and October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2008. Registered voters were interviewed by telephone in proportion to the voter registration in each county in New Hampshire and adjusted for turnout in statewide elections. Results are statistically significant at  $\pm 3.5\%$ . There are 655 likely voters. The results for this sub-sample are statistically significant at  $\pm 4\%$ . The error margin increases for cross-tabulations.