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**The Battleground: The Presidential Race in New York**

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This Marist Poll reports:

**Presidential Race in New York:**

- **Obama Leads McCain by 36 Percentage Points Among Likely Voters in New York...Outdistances McCain Two to One Among Registered Voters:** Both registered voters and likely voters in New York State overwhelmingly support Senator Barack Obama for president. Among registered voters, Obama is ahead of McCain by 30 percentage points, 60% to 30%. Looking at likely voters, including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate, the Democrat widens the gap. Obama distances himself from McCain by 36 percentage points, 65% to 29%. While most members of Barack Obama's own party -- 88% -- say they back their party's nominee, a much smaller percentage of Republicans report being behind John McCain. 65% of Republicans say they support McCain while more than a quarter are crossing party lines. Many New York voters not enrolled in a party are behind Barack Obama. Nearly two-thirds of these likely voters say they support Obama for president.

**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
<b>Registered Voters</b>				
October 2008	30%	60%	2%	8%

	John McCain/ Sarah Palin the Republicans	Barack Obama/ Joe Biden the Democrats	Other	Undecided
<b>Likely Voters w/ Leaners</b>				
October 2008	29%	65%	2%	4%
Democrats	11%	88%	<1%	1%
Republicans	65%	28%	2%	5%
Non-enrolled	24%	65%	3%	8%

- New York Voters Strongly Committed to Choice of Candidate:** Most registered New York voters, regardless of which candidate they support, say they are firmly committed to their choice. 79% report they won't sway in their support. Both candidates enjoy the firm backing of voters in their camp. 73% of McCain's supporters say they are strongly committed to him while Obama enjoys the firm support of 83% of his backers.

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

<b>Registered voters</b>	Strongly Support	Somewhat Support	Might Vote Differently	Unsure
October 2008	79%	17%	4%	<1%
McCain/Palin supporters	73%	21%	6%	<1%
Obama/Biden supporters	83%	15%	2%	<1%

- Voters Prefer Candidate with Shared Views on Issues:** 47% of New York's registered voters say they would choose a candidate with shared positions on the issues rather than one with the same values. 41% have the opposite affinity. Supporters of McCain and Obama differ here. A majority of voters supporting McCain -- 56% -- would choose a candidate with shared values. A similar proportion of Obama's backers -- 55% -- would like a candidate with a similar stance on the issues.

**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?

<b>Registered voters</b>	Shared Issues	Shared Values	Unsure
October 2008	47%	41%	12%
McCain/Palin supporters	33%	56%	11%
Obama/Biden supporters	55%	35%	10%

- **Majority Views McCain Unfavorably...More Than Two-Thirds Have Positive**

**Impression of Obama:** 52% of registered voters in New York State say they have an unfavorable impression of John McCain, and even a notable number of voters in McCain’s own party -- 21% -- have a negative impression of the candidate. A majority of voters not enrolled in a party also view McCain unfavorably. It’s another story for Barack Obama. More than two-thirds of registered voters have a positive perception of Obama, and he scores points among 87% of his own party. Registered voters who are not enrolled in a party also give Obama high marks. 71% have a favorable opinion of him.

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

<b>Registered voters</b>	Favorable	Unfavorable	Unsure
October 2008			
<b>John McCain</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>6%</b>
Democrat	26%	69%	5%
Republican	72%	21%	7%
Non-enrolled	38%	54%	8%
<b>Barack Obama</b>	<b>68%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>4%</b>
Democrat	87%	10%	3%
Republican	36%	59%	5%
Non-enrolled	71%	24%	5%

- **Majority of New York Voters Think Poorly of Palin...More Than Six in Ten View**

**Biden Favorably:** When it comes to the number two spot on the tickets, Senator Joe Biden is seen favorably by more voters than his Republican counterpart, Governor Sarah Palin. 62% of registered voters like Biden compared with just 38% who view Palin positively. Many in Palin’s party -- 68%-- have a good impression of the GOP candidate. But, the Democrat draws more praise from his base. 80% of Democrats think well of Biden. He also garners a majority of voters, not enrolled in a party, who see him positively while just 35% of these voters think well of Palin.

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

<b>Registered voters</b>	Favorable	Unfavorable	Unsure
October 2008			
<b>Sarah Palin</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>7%</b>
Democrat	20%	75%	5%
Republican	68%	27%	5%
Non-enrolled	35%	53%	12%
<b>Joe Biden</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>12%</b>
Democrat	80%	11%	9%
Republican	39%	46%	15%
Non-enrolled	60%	27%	13%

- Popular Vote Prevails for New York Voters:** A majority of New York’s registered voters -- 67% -- want to amend the United States Constitution so that the popular vote decides the presidential election and not the Electoral College. Majorities in both major parties agree. However, more New York Democratic voters -- 70% -- favor this position compared with 59% of Republican voters in the state. Close to three-quarters of voters not enrolled in a party concur.

**Question Wording:** Currently, presidents are elected by the Electoral College, in which each state gets as many votes as it has members of Congress and then most cast their votes for whoever wins the state. For future presidential elections, do you think we should:

<b>Registered voters</b>	Keep the Current Electoral College System	Amend the Constitution to Have Direct Popular Vote	Unsure
October 2008	29%	67%	4%
Democrat	26%	70%	4%
Republican	37%	59%	4%
Non-enrolled	21%	74%	5%

**Nature of the Sample: 660 New York Registered Voters**

This survey of 660 registered voters in New York was conducted on October 21st and October 22nd, 2008. Registered voters were interviewed by telephone in proportion to the voter registration in each county in New York and adjusted for turnout in statewide elections. Results are statistically significant at ±4%. There are 527 likely voters. The results for this sub-sample are statistically significant at ±4.5%. The error margin increases for cross-tabulations.