



**Battle for the White House:  
Obama Edges McCain Nationally**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Thursday, September 25, 2008**

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This Marist Poll reports:

- **Obama Carves Out Narrow Lead Among Registered and Likely Voters Nationwide:**

Democrat Barack Obama has the support of 47% of voters nationally while 43% say they are behind McCain. Looking at likely voters including those who are undecided yet leaning toward a candidate, Obama leads McCain 49% to 44%. The partisan divide is wide. 87% of Republicans favor McCain while 84% of Democrats are on-board with Obama. By a margin of 12 percentage points, Independent voters likely to vote on Election Day favor Obama 50% to 38% for 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	43%	47%	2%	8%
Likely voters w/ leaners	44%	49%	<1%	7%
Democrats	10%	84%	<1%	6%
Republicans	87%	8%	<1%	5%
Independents	38%	50%	2%	10%

- **Voters Stand Strong Behind Their Choice:** Most registered voters nationally say they strongly support their pick for president. Regardless of whom they are backing, 81% vow not to waiver in their commitment while just 6% report they might change their

minds before Election Day. 83% of Obama’s supporters and 79% of McCain’s backers are firmly committed to their choice.

**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
September 2008	81%	13%	6%	<1%
McCain/Palin supporters	79%	14%	7%	<1%
Obama/Biden supporters	83%	12%	4%	1%

- Obama Sparks Excitement in Electorate:** A majority of voters nationwide -- 55% -- say they are excited about the choices they have for president. However, a large proportion of the electorate lacks that same enthusiasm. 42% say they are not excited about the presidential candidates. More of Barack Obama’s supporters are enthusiastic about the presidential matchup than are John McCain’s. 66% of Obama’s backers are excited about their choices for president while a slim majority of John McCain’s supporters are energized.

**Question Wording:** Are you excited or not excited about the choices you have for president?

Registered voters	Excited	Not Excited	Unsure
September 2008	55%	42%	3%
McCain/Palin supporters	51%	45%	4%
Obama/Biden supporters	66%	32%	2%

- Change’s Great Divide:** When it comes to the candidate of change, voters nationally judge the nominees very differently. 49% of the national electorate says Obama has a better *plan* for change while 41% say McCain does. When the focus shifts to the candidate with the better *record* for bringing about change, McCain has the advantage. 48% of registered voters believe McCain’s record is rock solid while 39% think Obama has the better foundation on which to build a better America.

**Question Wording:** Which presidential candidate do you think has a better *plan/record* to bring about change for the country?

<b>Registered voters</b>	McCain	Obama	Unsure
<b>Better plan</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>10%</b>
Democrats	11%	84%	5%
Republicans	84%	8%	8%
Independents	34%	50%	16%
<b>Better record</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>13%</b>
Democrats	19%	70%	11%
Republicans	86%	5%	9%
Independents	46%	35%	19%

- **Positions on Issues Take Backseat to Shared Values:** A majority of the country’s registered voters say they would prefer a president who shares their values rather than one whose views on the issues reflect their own. 52% of voters have this preference while 39% think it would be better to have a president who takes a similar stand on the issues.

**Question Wording:** If you had to choose, would you prefer:

	Candidate who shares your positions on issues but does not share your values	Candidate who shares your values but not your positions on the issues	Unsure
<b>Registered voters</b>			
September 2008	39%	52%	9%
McCain/Palin Supporters	26%	64%	10%
Obama/Biden Supporters	52%	42%	6%

**Nature of the Sample: 1,005 Americans**

This survey was conducted on September 22nd and 23rd, 2008. 1,005 adults 18 years of age or older within the continental United States were interviewed by telephone. Telephone numbers were selected based upon a list of telephone exchanges from throughout the nation. The exchanges were selected to ensure that each region was represented in proportion to its population. The results of the entire survey are statistically significant at  $\pm 3\%$ . There are 879 registered voters and 698 likely voters. The results for these sub-samples are statistically significant at  $\pm 3.5\%$  and  $\pm 4\%$ , respectively. The margin for error increases for cross-tabulations.