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Poll: Obama, Daniels, Carson have big leads

Tue. February 26 - 2008

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With Indiana's Democratic primary election looming May 6, Barack Obama leads rival Hillary Clinton by a margin of 40 percent to 25 percent, according to a poll released yesterday.

Obama holds commanding leads over Clinton among men, women, African-Americans, whites and young people who were registered to vote, according to the poll, which was conducted Feb. 16-17 by Gauge Market Research.

Gauge conducted the poll for Howey Politics Indiana, which publishes the Howey Political Report, a nonpartisan newsletter. The margin of error based on the 500 respondents is 4.5 percent.

Clinton holds a slim lead over Obama among white women.

In the Republican race, John McCain led Mike Huckabee 52-23 overall and in nearly all categories.

Gov. Mitch Daniels is far ahead of Democratic challengers Jim Schellinger and Jill Long Thompson, the poll showed. In matchups with either challenger, Daniels was favored by at least 54 percent of those surveyed. Neither Democrat was preferred by more than 33 percent of the respondents.

Schellinger and Thompson suffer from lack of name recognition, Gauge President Michael Davis said in a statement. The only area of the state where Schellinger, an Indianapolis architect, was recognized by more than 10 percent was in his home market.

Neither Schellinger nor Thompson has spoken out on hot-button topics, Davis said: "Gov. Daniels is finding traction on the top three issues: taxes, jobs and education."

Nearly four in 10 respondents who said they likely would vote for Daniels also planned to vote for Obama, the poll found. Howey Publisher Brian Howey said Daniels is considered a change agent much like Obama is billing himself.

Daniels' lead came despite 37 percent of respondents saying the state is on the right track and 40 percent saying the wrong track.

In the 7th Congressional District special election to replace Julia Carson, Carson's grandson Andre Carson was ahead of Republican State Rep. John Elrod 54-36.

Carson is benefiting from high name recognition and strong favorable ratings, Davis said.

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