

Election 2008: Colorado Presidential Election

Colorado's a Toss-Up: McCain Edges Ahead for First Time
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The race for Colorado's Electoral College votes is about as close as it can be on the eve of the Democratic National Convention in Denver.

The latest Rasmussen Reports telephone survey of Colorado voters shows John McCain attracting 47% of the vote while Barack Obama earns 45%. When “leaners” are included, it's McCain by a single percentage point, 49% to 48%.

While McCain's advantage is statistically insignificant, it is the first time he has been ahead in Colorado in seven monthly polls conducted by Rasmussen Reports this year. It's also the first time that McCain has reached the 47% level of support. Only once before this month had Obama's support fallen below 46%. (Demographic crosstabs are available for Premium Members.)

A month ago, Obama led by seven points overall but by just three points when leaners were included. Two months ago, the race was a toss-up.

The new findings are consistent with a nationwide trend showing statewide results becoming more consistent with recent electoral patterns. George W. Bush won Colorado by five points in Election 2004 and John McCain is running about four or five points behind Bush's 2004 numbers overall in the Rasmussen Reports daily Presidential Tracking Poll. As a result, you'd expect Colorado to be a toss-up and that's what the current numbers suggest.

If either candidate improves their position in the national polling, it is likely that the trend will carry to Colorado as well.

McCain currently attracts 90% of the vote from Republicans in Colorado while Obama is supported by 83% of Democrats. Obama has a modest lead among unaffiliated voters while McCain picks up more votes from Democrats than Obama does from Republicans.

McCain is viewed favorably by 56% of Colorado voters, Obama by 54%.

Like voters nationwide, Colorado voters say it's more important to find new sources of energy than it is to reduce the energy we consume. Sixty-five percent (65%) say finding new energy should be the top priority while 27% prefer reducing our energy consumption. Nationally, voters believe McCain is more interested in finding new energy sources while Obama wants to reduce consumption. A related survey found that most voters believe members of Congress should return to Washington immediately to vote on allowing offshore oil drilling.

In another finding that mirrors the national mood, 51% of Colorado voters say that media bias is a

bigger problem in politics today than large campaign donors. They hold this view even though 63% believe most politicians will break the rules to help their donors. Forty percent (40%) believe McCain is too influenced by lobbyists and donors; 38% say the same about Obama.

Frustration with the media has convinced 47% of voters nationally that the government should mandate balanced political coverage on radio and television. Thirty-one percent (31%) believe these requirements should be mandated for bloggers and web sites as well. Half the nation's voters believe that most reporters are trying to help Obama win this fall while hardly any believe reporters are trying to help McCain.

Fifty-five percent (55%) of Colorado voters currently favor the Colorado Civil Rights Initiative, which will be on the ballot in November as Amendment 46. Like similar efforts in Arizona and Nebraska, it proposes an amendment to the state constitution that would prohibit preferential treatment on the basis of race, sex or ethnicity in public hiring and contracting and in state school admissions. Nationally, voters have mixed feelings on affirmative action programs.

President Bush's job approval rating is down very slightly this month, with 33% now saying he is doing a good or excellent job. However, 49% say he is doing a poor job. Nationally, the President's ratings are hovering just above the lowest levels ever recorded during his time in office.