

Poll: Obama clings to small lead over Clinton

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RALEIGH (WTVD) -- On the eve of the North Carolina Democratic Primary, with 25% of votes already cast, Barack Obama has no breathing room in his hope to defeat Hillary Clinton in popular votes.

According to SurveyUSA's 8th and final tracking poll, conducted exclusively for ABC11 Eyewitness News, on the final day of the fiercely fought campaign, Senator Barack Obama holds on with 50% of the vote to Senator Hillary Clinton's 45% of those polled.

There is no foreseeable outcome in North Carolina, regardless of which candidate wins the popular vote, where one candidate collects significantly more convention delegates than the other.

Therefore, the exact final vote totals have much more symbolic importance than real importance.

The popular vote is remarkably stable: In 6 SurveyUSA polls released since Super Tuesday, Obama has polled at 50%, 49%, 49%, 50%, 49%, 50%. The contest is stable among men, where Obama leads by 11. The contest is stable among women, where the two remain tied.

In Charlotte and Western NC, there is the slightest momentum for Clinton. In the Research Triangle, in Southern NC and in Coastal NC, there is slight offsetting momentum to Obama. The net is a wash. If Obama wins, it will be entirely from the 19% of voters who describe themselves as liberal.

Clinton leads by 9 among conservatives and leads by 8 among moderates.

If Obama wins the popular vote, it will be because of his 16-point advantage among liberals. Clinton has increasing momentum among voters age 50 to 64, where she has gone from 30% in January to 51% today, her highest showing.

Among those age 65+, Clinton leads by 20 points; the more seniors who vote, the better Clinton does. But there is offsetting momentum among younger voters, some of whom may be first-time voters, and not all of whom may show-up at the precinct. 1 in 4 of SurveyUSA's likely voters say they have already voted. Among those who say they have already voted, Obama leads by 16 points. Among those who say they will vote on Primary Day, Obama and Clinton are effectively tied.

Perdue Poised to Win Democratic Primary for NC Governor

In a Democratic Primary for Governor with one day before votes are counted, Lieutenant Governor Beverly Perdue is well positioned to defeat state Treasurer Richard Moore.

Four weeks ago, Perdue and Moore were tied. Two weeks ago, Perdue led by four. Last week, Perdue led by 9. At the wire, it's Perdue 52%, Moore 33%. Perdue now leads Moore in all parts of the state and among most demographic sub-populations. Only among Conservative voters does Moore manage to tie Perdue.

Governor's Primary, McCrory Cannot Shake Smith in Tight Fight

In a Republican Primary for Governor of North Carolina with 24-hours until votes are counted, Pat McCrory

and Fred Smith run far ahead of other challengers, with McCrory ever-so-slightly likely to prevail when votes are counted.

Charlotte Mayor McCrory ends at 38%, State Senator Smith at 32%. 12% are undecided. Republican turnout will be low and difficult to forecast, since the presidential contest is non-contested. A surprising outcome is possible. If Charlotte area voters turn out in large numbers, that bodes well for McCrory, who leads by more than 2:1 in that part of the state.

If voters in southern and coastal NC turn out heavy, that bodes well for Smith, who leads by 14 points in that part of the state. The two candidates are effectively even in the Research Triangle. Among Conservatives, the two are tied. Among Moderates, McCrory finishes ahead by 19. Among the 13% who tell SurveyUSA they have already voted, the two are effectively tied. If McCrory is to win, he will have to do it on the backs of those who vote at the precinct.

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