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Newsmax/Zogby Poll: Deadlocked in Pennsylvania!

UTICA, New York—With just five days left before Democratic primary voters go to polls to decide who they want to be their presidential nominee, Hillary Clinton of New York and Barack Obama of Illinois are locked in a battle that is too close to call, the latest Newsmax/Zogby telephone poll shows.

The survey, which was conducted April 15-16, 2008 and came out of the field midway through Wednesday's contentious debate between the two candidates in Philadelphia, shows Clinton at 45% and Obama at 44%, with 12% either wanting someone else or left undecided.

The telephone survey, conducted using live operators working out of Zogby's on-site call center in Upstate New York, included 601 likely Democratic primary voters in Pennsylvania. It carries a margin of error of +/- 4.1 percentage points.

Clinton leads by a wide margin in western Pennsylvania, including Pittsburgh, while Obama leads by a large percentage in eastern Pennsylvania, including Philadelphia. In the central part of the state, including the state capital of Harrisburg, Clinton leads by eight points.

Pennsylvania	
Clinton	45%
Obama	44%
Someone else	3%
Not sure	9%

Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding

***Pollster John Zogby**—“This is not a year for negative campaigning and Clinton's pounding of Obama on his controversial description of small town voters in Pennsylvania does not seem to be working. Obama leads in the Philadelphia and eastern part of the Commonwealth, among*

African Americans, and Very Liberal Pennsylvanians. He also has a slight lead among voters in union households and has an 18 point margin over those who have lost a job. Clinton maintains her lead among whites, Catholics, Liberals, and Hispanics.

"The gender gap is huge with Obama leading among men by 15 and Clinton leading among women by 15. But Clinton holds a wide advantage on the question of understanding Pennsylvania (58%-27%) and handling the economy of the country (47%-38%). She also is ahead in understanding the personal financial situation of individuals (41%-35%).

"On the other hand, Pennsylvanians by a two to one margin (60% to 29%) are more likely to agree with supporters of Obama that voters in Pennsylvania are bitter about their economic situation than with Clinton and critics of Obama that he is an elitist who does not understand working people.

"On the key questions of who they would rather have a beer with: Clinton 38%, Obama 39%—with 15% undecided.

A key demographic group that has changed its mind in the last week is Democratic voters age 35 to 54, who just one week ago favored Clinton by a 45% to 40% margin. Now, Obama leads among those voters by a 47% to 41% edge. Clinton leads among voters older than age 54, while Obama leads among the younger set.

Among men, Obama holds what has come to be a predictable advantage, leading with 50% support, compared to 35% for Clinton. But Clinton makes up for it among women—also a predictable support group for her—leading by a 53% to 38% margin.

Among the very liberal Democratic Party voters, Obama leads, while Clinton leads among mainline liberals. Among moderates, the two are deadlocked, while Clinton has an edge among conservative Democratic voters.

Among whites and Hispanics, Clinton holds double-digit leads, while Obama holds a huge lead among African Americans, winning 82% support.

Two issues were dominant in the minds of these voters—with the economy far and away the most important to voters in deciding whom to support—54% said it was at the top of their list. The Iraq war was a distant second, with all other issues winning just a passing notice from the likely voters.

Asked which candidate was most likely to improve the respondent's personal financial situation, Clinton won 41%, compared to 35% who said Obama would be tops. Six percent identified someone else, while 19% said they were unsure.

Asked which candidate would be most likely to improve the U.S. economy, Clinton also held an advantage, winning 47% support to 38% who said Obama was most likely. Men favored Obama, while women favored Clinton.

Voters Believe Clinton Understands Pennsylvania Better

The Newsmax/Zogby survey asked likely Democratic primary voters which candidate they believed understands Pennsylvania better, and Clinton was seen to be far more understanding of the state. While 58% said she better understood the Keystone State, just 27% said Obama had a better grip on it. This comes nearly a week after Obama, speaking to an audience in San Francisco, said that Pennsylvanians cling to their religion and to guns out of bitterness over bad

economic times. The comment has drawn a significant backlash, and Obama has been explaining his comments ever since.

But the issue has apparently had little impact on the broader head-to-head contest, as Obama has closed the lead Clinton has enjoyed for some time.

The survey also asked specifically about the controversy, asking likely voters whether they agreed with the Obama critics who have said the comments show he is an elitist who does not understand working people and their problems—29% agreed. But 60% said they agreed with Obama supporters who have said he is simply telling the truth about these people who are suffering from the results of economic policies in Washington.