



# MIKE DOWNS CENTER FOR INDIANA POLITICS

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Red State Nail-biter: McCain and Obama in 47% - 47 % Dead Heat Among Hoosier Voters**

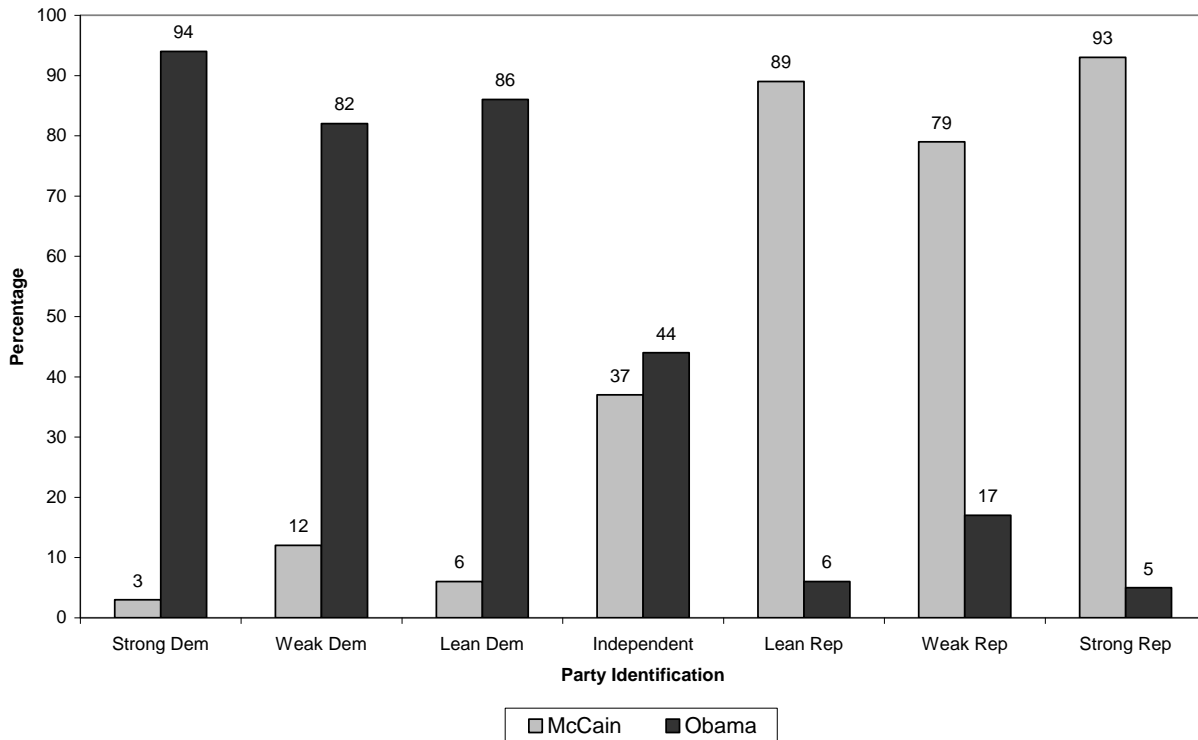
<b>Presidential Vote Intention in Indiana October 27-30, 2008</b>	
<b>John McCain</b>	<b>47 %</b>
<b>Barack Obama</b>	<b>47 %</b>
<b>Bob Barr</b>	<b>2 %</b>
<b>Other</b>	<b>1 %</b>
<b>Undecided</b>	<b>3 %</b>

Indiana's presidential race is extremely close according to a poll of 900 registered and likely voters done by SurveyUSA for the Mike Downs Center for Indiana Politics. For the first time in four decades, a Democrat has a chance of winning Indiana's Electoral College votes. Forty-seven percent of Hoosiers support each candidates when asked whom they would vote for "if the election were held today" between October 27 and October 30. Two percent intend to support Libertarian Bob Barr, 3% remain undecided, and less than 1% support any other candidate.

<b>Region of State and Vote Intention</b>			
	<b>Northern</b>	<b>Central</b>	<b>Southern</b>
<b>McCain</b>	<b>46 %</b>	<b>48 %</b>	<b>47 %</b>
<b>Obama</b>	<b>48 %</b>	<b>47 %</b>	<b>45 %</b>
<b>% of sample</b>	<b>32 %</b>	<b>33 %</b>	<b>34 %</b>

The presidential race is tight (within the margin of error) everywhere in Indiana. Obama does slightly better in the northern portion of the state and McCain in southern Indiana.

### Presidential Support by Partisan Group



Both McCain and Obama have mobilized their partisan bases. Both have double-digit defections by their own weak partisans, but receive overwhelming support from strong partisans and independents leaning toward their party. To McCain's benefit, there are slightly more Republicans in our sample (44%) than Democrats (42%). However, Obama holds a greater than the margin-of-error lead among Hoosier self-described independents 44% to 37%.

	Presidential Support by Timing of Vote Decision				
	Knew All Along	After Party Conventions	After Wall St. Bailout	After Debates	Past Few Days
<b>McCain</b>	<b>52 %</b>	<b>47 %</b>	--	<b>33 %</b>	<b>60 %</b>
<b>Obama</b>	<b>47 %</b>	<b>51 %</b>	--	<b>65 %</b>	<b>30 %</b>
<b>% of sample</b>	<b>56 %</b>	<b>21 %</b>	<b>4 %</b>	<b>8 %</b>	<b>7 %</b>

Most Hoosiers long-ago decided who they would support for president. However, some distinctive patterns of vote decision timing appear for each candidate. McCain's support is greater among those who knew all along how they would vote. Relative to McCain, Obama received more support from those who decided after the party conventions but before the bailout and debates. He also received two-thirds of those deciding after the debates but before the past few days. Twice as many of those deciding in the past few days support McCain over Obama, though there are only fifteen percent of Hoosiers who decided after the debates and in the past few days.

<b>Presidential Support Among Early Voters &amp; People Yet to Vote</b>		
	<b>Already Voted</b>	<b>Yet to Vote</b>
<b>McCain</b>	<b>32 %</b>	<b>50 %</b>
<b>Obama</b>	<b>64 %</b>	<b>43 %</b>
<b>% of sample</b>	<b>17 %</b>	<b>83 %</b>

Barack Obama's early voting efforts have paid off in Indiana. Seventeen percent of Hoosiers have already voted according to our survey and Barack Obama is doubling up John McCain among these voters. Of those who have yet to vote, McCain leads 50% to 43%.

<b>Vote Preference by Issue Next President Should Focus On</b>			
	<b>Will Vote for McCain</b>	<b>Will Vote for Obama</b>	<b>% of Sample</b>
<b>Most Salient Issue</b>			
<b>Economy</b>	<b>43 %</b>	<b>51 %</b>	<b>58 %</b>
<b>Environment</b>	<b>22 %</b>	<b>71 %</b>	<b>3 %</b>
<b>Health Care</b>	<b>34 %</b>	<b>58 %</b>	<b>8 %</b>
<b>Iraq</b>	<b>26 %</b>	<b>67 %</b>	<b>5 %</b>
<b>Terrorism</b>	<b>86 %</b>	<b>9 %</b>	<b>10 %</b>
<b>Social Security</b>	<b>46 %</b>	<b>42 %</b>	<b>3 %</b>
<b>Education</b>	<b>33 %</b>	<b>61 %</b>	<b>4 %</b>
<b>Immigration</b>	<b>76 %</b>	<b>13 %</b>	<b>5 %</b>

By an overwhelming margin, the most important issue to Indiana voters is the state of the economy. Fifty-six percent of Hoosiers rank the economy as the issue on which the next president should focus most. Of these voters, Barack Obama is receiving 51% support compared to 43% support for John McCain. John McCain dominates among those who see terrorism (86% to 9%) or immigration (76% to 13%) as the most important issues. Barack Obama does well on those issues normally owned by Democrats: the environment (71% to 22%), health care (58% to 34%), and education (61% to 33%). Interestingly, Indiana voters do not follow conventional wisdom on two issues. John McCain receives more support (46% to 42%) among those who see Social Security as the most important issue, while Barack Obama has more supporters (67% to 26%) of those who view Iraq as the most salient issue. However no issue rivals the salience of the economy.

<b>Presidential Support by Gender</b>		
	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
<b>McCain</b>	<b>49 %</b>	<b>45 %</b>
<b>Obama</b>	<b>45 %</b>	<b>49 %</b>

A slight gender gap exists among Hoosiers concerning whom they will support for president. 49% of Indiana men support McCain compared to 45% who would vote for Obama. These numbers are reversed for women. Women made up 53% of the sample.

<b>Presidential Support by Age</b>				
	<b>18-34</b>	<b>35-49</b>	<b>50-64</b>	<b>65 +</b>
<b>McCain</b>	<b>41 %</b>	<b>52 %</b>	<b>45 %</b>	<b>48 %</b>
<b>Obama</b>	<b>53 %</b>	<b>43 %</b>	<b>50 %</b>	<b>43 %</b>
<b>% of sample</b>	<b>24 %</b>	<b>31 %</b>	<b>27 %</b>	<b>18 %</b>

Interestingly, presidential support by age is not simply a story of younger Hoosiers preferring Obama and older Hoosiers preferring McCain. As has been the case throughout his presidential run, Barack Obama enjoys strong support from the youngest voting group. Fifty-three percent of 18 to 35 year old Hoosiers intend to vote for Obama, but Obama also receives a majority of the support among those from age fifty to sixty-four. McCain receives nearly the same advantage (52% to 43%) of 35 to 49 year olds that Obama receives from 18 to 34 year olds. The 35 to 49 year old cohort makes up nearly a third of the sample. McCain leads by five percent among respondents 65 years old and older.

<b>Presidential Support by Race</b>		
	<b>White</b>	<b>Black</b>
<b>McCain</b>	<b>51 %</b>	<b>11 %</b>
<b>Obama</b>	<b>43 %</b>	<b>84 %</b>
<b>% of sample</b>	<b>88 %</b>	<b>8 %</b>

A majority of white Hoosiers support John McCain, while an enormous majority of African-American Hoosiers will vote for Barack Obama. McCain leads by eight percentage points among whites 51% to 43%. Obama is receiving 84% of African-American support compared to McCain's 11%. The percentage of African-Americans in this sample is smaller than the percentage of African-Americans in Indiana's population. Therefore, the sample may undercount the relative influence of African-Americans in the Indiana electorate.

<b>Presidential Support by Marital Status</b>				
	<b>Single</b>	<b>Married</b>	<b>Divorced</b>	<b>Widowed</b>
<b>McCain</b>	<b>38 %</b>	<b>54 %</b>	<b>33 %</b>	<b>37 %</b>
<b>Obama</b>	<b>59 %</b>	<b>40 %</b>	<b>58 %</b>	<b>59 %</b>
<b>% of sample</b>	<b>14 %</b>	<b>67 %</b>	<b>9 %</b>	<b>6 %</b>

Married Hoosiers are more likely to vote for John McCain than Barack Obama by 14 percentage points. Barack Obama has the majority of support among single and divorced Indiana voters. Widowed Hoosiers support Obama over McCain by 22 points.

<b>Education and Presidential Vote Intention</b>					
	<b>Graduate Professional</b>	<b>College Graduate</b>	<b>Some College</b>	<b>High School Graduate</b>	<b>Not High School Grad</b>
<b>McCain</b>	<b>51 %</b>	<b>51 %</b>	<b>47 %</b>	<b>43 %</b>	<b>--</b>
<b>Obama</b>	<b>43 %</b>	<b>44 %</b>	<b>47 %</b>	<b>51 %</b>	<b>--</b>
<b>% of sample</b>	<b>23 %</b>	<b>23 %</b>	<b>33 %</b>	<b>19 %</b>	<b>3 %</b>

John McCain will receive the votes of those with a college education and higher, whereas Hoosiers with a high school education will vote more often for Barack Obama. Obama had received much higher relative support among highly educated Hoosiers in the Indiana Primary Election.

<b>Presidential Vote Intention by Frequency of Church Attendance</b>					
	<b>Every Week</b>	<b>Almost Weekly</b>	<b>Once/ Twice per Month</b>	<b>A Few Times Yearly</b>	<b>Almost Never</b>
<b>McCain</b>	<b>59 %</b>	<b>48 %</b>	<b>39 %</b>	<b>43 %</b>	<b>34 %</b>
<b>Obama</b>	<b>34 %</b>	<b>48 %</b>	<b>55 %</b>	<b>52 %</b>	<b>62 %</b>
<b>% of sample</b>	<b>41 %</b>	<b>13 %</b>	<b>8 %</b>	<b>16 %</b>	<b>19 %</b>

A majority of Hoosiers tend to attend church weekly or almost weekly. Among the most religious Indiana voters, John McCain enjoys a yawning advantage over Barack Obama (59% to 34%). Obama and McCain are tied (48% apiece) among those who attend church almost weekly. Like recent patterns of religiosity and voting behavior for Republican and Democratic voting behavior, as voters become more secular, they are more likely to support Obama.

## **What is the Mike Downs Center for Indiana Politics?**

The Mike Downs Center for Indiana Politics is a non-partisan organization that helps the people of Indiana understand the role of politics and government in their daily lives. By doing this, The Mike Downs Center hopes to encourage participation in political and public processes the same way its namesake, Professor Michael C. Downs, did for more than 34 years. The Mike Downs Center is located on the campus of Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne (IPFW).

**Statement of Methodology:** This SurveyUSA poll was conducted by telephone in the voice of a professional announcer. Respondent households were selected at random, using a registration based sample (RBS) provided by Aristotle, of Washington DC. All respondents heard the questions asked identically. The calls were conducted on October 27, 28, and 29. The number of respondents who answered each question and the margin of sampling error for each question are provided in the crosstabs. The margin of error for all of the questions regarding the presidential races is 3.3%. Where necessary, responses were weighted according to the voter registration database. In theory, with the stated sample size, one can say with 95% certainty that the results would not vary by more than the stated margin of sampling error, in one direction or the other, had the entire universe of respondents been interviewed with complete accuracy. There are other possible sources of error in all surveys that may be more serious than theoretical calculations of sampling error. These include refusals to be interviewed, question wording and question order, weighting by demographic control data and the manner in which respondents are filtered (such as, determining who is a likely voter). It is difficult to quantify the errors that may result from these factors. Fieldwork for this survey was done by SurveyUSA of Verona, NJ

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