



**Marketing Research Institute**

**MEMORANDUM**

TO: John Giles  
Christian Coalition Of Alabama

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FROM: Verne Kennedy, Ph.D.  
*Marketing Research Institute*

DATE: November 18, 2002

SUBJECT: 2002 Christian Coalition Election Impact

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The purpose of this memorandum is to provide an initial report of the survey we completed for the Christian Coalition of Alabama on November 3 and 4, immediately preceding the November 5<sup>th</sup> Election. MRI completed a survey of 900 voters with a sample error factor of 3% at a .95 level of confidence. In addition to questions examining voter election intentions and voter demographic characteristics, the survey asked voters the following questions for the Christian Coalition:

- Before Election Day, the Christian Coalition distributes voter guides showing the position of candidates on some important issues. Have you seen a Christian Coalition voter guide in the past few days?

SEEN CHRISTIAN COALITION VOTER GUIDE IN PAST FEW DAYS	
Yes	32%
No	67
Uncertain	1

- If a candidate for public office supports Christian issues, are you more likely to vote for or against that candidate? (CONTINUE WITH...) Do you feel strongly about that?

CANDIDATE WHO SUPPORTS CHRISTIAN COALITION ISSUES	
Strongly Vote For	44%
Vote For	14
Makes No Difference	34
Vote Against	2
Strongly Vote Against	6
Total Vote For	58%
Total Vote Against	8

- Do you consider yourself a member or supporter of the Christian Coalition?

CHRISTIAN COALITION MEMBER OR SUPPORTER			
	All Voters	White Voters	African-American Voters
Yes	32%	32%	32%
No	57	57	55
Uncertain	11	11	13

- (IF SAW CHRISTIAN COALITION VOTER GUIDE, ASK...) Did the Christian Coalition voter guide assist you in making a better-informed decision about your choice of candidates?

CHRISTIAN COALITION VOTER GUIDE ASSISTED IN VOTING DECISION			
	All Voters	White Voters	African-American Voters
Yes	42%	42%	39%
No	53	53	55
Uncertain	5	5	5

Survey results are very encouraging concerning the Christian Coalition's impact on the Alabama election. Among all Alabama voters, 32% recall seeing a Christian Coalition Voter Guide. Among those who saw a Voter Guide, 42% say that it helped them make a better-informed decision about their choice of candidates on November 5<sup>th</sup>. Among voters who were impacted by the Christian Coalition Voter Guide, White voters, who are more bipartisan in candidate choice, were more influenced in their voting decisions than African-American voters. More importantly, white women, a group that is typically more Democrat than white men, showed a strong shift from Democrat to Republicans because of the Voter Guide. Given the closeness of the Election for Governor and MRI's analysis of voting decisions among those impacted by the Christian Coalition Voter Guide, I am certain that Bob Riley would not have received majority vote if it were not for the impact of the Christian Coalition and its Voter Guide. Obviously, the Christian Coalition does not support any particular candidate. However, voters looking at the record of the Gubernatorial candidates in the Christian Coalition were far more influenced to vote for Riley than Siegelman.

It is also very important to recognize that a strong majority of voters, 58%, say they are more likely to vote for a candidate for public office who supports Christian issues. As you know, MRI has conducted considerable national research for the Christian Coalition. Typically in nationwide surveys, less than 10% of voters say they consider themselves to be a member or supporter of the Christian Coalition. In Alabama, 32% of voters consider themselves members or supporters.

Under separate cover I am including a copy of MRI's election forecast based upon African-American voter turnout. Although precinct-by-precinct election results for the entire state are not yet available to determine African-American participation on Election Day, a quick examination of results from Birmingham and Montgomery show that African-American vote was very high, much higher than any of us expected. Paul Hubbard with the Alabama Education Association has concluded that 28% of all those going to the polls were African-American. Once precinct-by-precinct results are available, MRI will make its own study of African-American voting. Most surveys, including those taken and published by *The Birmingham News* and the Alabama Education Association, showed a very competitive race at 25% or higher African-American participation. If African-American voter makeup was higher than 25%, which I now think is probable, our survey results provided a very accurate forecast for November 5<sup>th</sup>.

The most important conclusion drawn from the Christian Coalition of Alabama Survey is that the Gubernatorial Election would have definitely gone to Don Siegelman had it not been for the Christian Coalition Voter Guide and other efforts. Although the Voter Guide assisted a number of voters in choosing a candidate for Governor as well as candidates for other statewide and local office, it had its most important impact on white women. The shift in white women was definitely apparent during the last few days of the campaigns.