

# THE FIELD POLL

THE INDEPENDENT AND NON-PARTISAN SURVEY  
OF PUBLIC OPINION ESTABLISHED IN 1947 AS  
THE CALIFORNIA POLL BY MERVIN FIELD

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**MORE CALIFORNIA DEMOCRATIC PARTY VOTERS NOW PREFER OBAMA AS THEIR PARTY'S NOMINEE. MCCAIN TRAILS BOTH OBAMA AND CLINTON BY LARGE MARGINS IN GENERAL ELECTION MATCH-UPS.**

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By Mark DiCamillo and Mervin Field

The results of the latest statewide *Field Poll* survey completed this week finds the following about the 2008 presidential election:

- Barack Obama is now preferred 51% to 38% over Hillary Clinton among Democratic Party voters in California to be the party's standard-bearer in the fall presidential election.
- Relatively large segments of both Clinton and Obama supporters (22% and 17%, respectively) say they would not be likely to vote for their Democratic rival in the general election if their own preferred candidates does not get the nomination.
- Despite this, both Obama and Clinton hold large seventeen-point leads over Republican John McCain among a cross-section of Californians likely to vote for president in the November general election.
- A majority of Democratic Party voters say that either an Obama-Clinton ticket or a Clinton-Obama ticket would increase their likelihood of supporting the Democratic ticket in the fall and few say this would dissuade them. However, there is less appeal among Obama supporters for a Clinton-Obama ticket than there is for an Obama-Clinton ticket among Clinton voters.

- Four out of five Democratic party voters (82%) are satisfied and just 15% are dissatisfied with the way Obama has run his campaign. With Clinton 60% are satisfied and 38% are dissatisfied with the way she has run her campaign. Obama supporters are more critical of the way Clinton has run her campaign than vice-versa.
- Of the three presidential candidates, Obama has a much more favorable image profile among likely general election voters in this state than either Clinton or McCain.

### **Obama now preferred over Clinton among Democratic Party voters**

Even though Obama lost to Clinton in last February's California Democratic primary election by eight percentage points, he now is preferred over Clinton among Democratic Party voters 51% to 38% to be their party's standard-bearer in the fall.

Party voters living in Southern California are closely divided about whom they would prefer as their party's nominee (Obama 46% vs. Clinton 42%). By contrast, Obama is the overwhelming choice over Clinton among Democratic Party voters living in Northern California (59% vs. 35%).

Men affiliated with the Democratic Party strongly prefer Obama to Clinton (55% to 34%). And despite their strong support for Clinton in the February primary, women affiliated with the party are now more likely to favor Obama over Clinton as their party's standard-bearer, 49% to 41%.

Majorities of Democratic Party-affiliated white non-Hispanics, blacks, Asians/others now prefer Obama being the party nominee. However, Latino party members remain strongly committed to Clinton, 63% to 29%.

**Table 1**  
**Who Democratic Party voters in California would now like**  
**to see as the party's nominee for President**  
**(among registered Democrats and Democratic Party-affiliated**  
**non-partisans likely to vote in November)**

	Obama	Clinton	Other/ No opinion
Total statewide	51%	38	11
<u>Region</u>			
(.56) Southern California	46%	42	12
(.44) Northern California	59%	35	6
<u>Gender</u>			
(.41) Male	55%	34	12
(.59) Female	49%	41	10
<u>Age</u>			
(.30) 18-39	54%	35	11
(.21) 40-49*	51%	42	7
(.31) 50-64	55%	35	10
(.18) 65 or older	42%	45	13
<u>Race/ethnicity</u>			
(.58) White non-Hispanic	56%	34	10
(.23) Latino	29%	63	8
(.07) Black*	76%	13	11
(.12) Asian/other*	56%	33	11
<u>Education</u>			
(.21) High school grad or less	37%	48	15
(.27) Some college/trade school	54%	37	9
(.25) College graduate	51%	39	10
(.27) Post-graduate work	59%	34	7
<u>Household income</u>			
(.28) Less than \$40,000	43%	48	9
(.30) \$40,000 - \$80,000	50%	39	11
(.42) More than \$80,000	58%	33	9

\* Small sample base.

**Some lingering resentment seen among Democratic Party supporters of Obama and Clinton toward their rivals**

The campaign between Obama and Clinton has been long and hard fought, raising the question as to whether how much unity there will be among Democrats to vote for the successful nominee in November.

A sizeable segment of Clinton Democratic Party supporters (22%) and 17% of Obama supporters say they would not be likely to vote for the rival Democrat in the general election if their choice does not win the nomination.

**Table 2**  
**Stated likelihood of Democratic Party voters who now favor Obama or Clinton to vote for their Democratic rival in the general election if their preferred candidate doesn't win the nomination (among registered Democrats and Democratic Party-affiliated non-partisans likely to vote in November)**

	Very likely	Somewhat likely	Not likely
Clinton supporters' stated likelihood of voting for Obama	59%	19	22
Obama supporters' stated likelihood of voting for Clinton	69%	13	17

**Large leads for Obama or Clinton over McCain in California general election**

In virtually all of the *Field Poll* surveys taken among a cross-section of all likely general election voters in California, both Obama and Clinton have held sizeable double-digit leads over McCain. However, as the California primary neared in January the preference gap between McCain and either Obama and Clinton in general election match-ups narrowed somewhat. Now, McCain's position has weakened considerably and he trails both Obama and Clinton by seventeen points.

**Table 3**  
**Trend of general election preferences between the leading Democratic contenders and Republican John McCain in California (among all likely voters in November)**

	May '08	Jan. '08	Dec. '07	Oct. '07	Aug. '07	Mar. '07
<b><u>Obama vs. McCain</u></b>						
Obama	52%	47%	50%	50%	49%	51%
McCain	35	40	36	33	36	39
Other	5	--	--	--	--	--
Undecided	8	13	14	17	15	10
<b><u>Clinton vs. McCain</u></b>						
Clinton	53%	45%	54%	54%	52%	48%
McCain	36	43	37	35	35	43
Other	7	--	--	--	--	--
Undecided	4	12	9	11	13	9

**Reaction to the possibility of Obama and Clinton being on the same ticket**

There has been much discussion in the media about the possibility of Obama and Clinton being on the Democratic Party ticket together in the fall general election.

When Democratic Party voters are asked about the possibility of either an Obama-Clinton or Clinton-Obama ticket, majorities say each would increase their likelihood of supporting the ticket in the fall, and very few say this would make them less likely to support the ticket. However, there is less appeal for a Clinton-Obama line-up among Obama supporters than there is for an Obama-Clinton ticket among Clinton supporters.

**Table 4**  
**Impact of Clinton or Obama choosing their Democratic rival as their vice-presidential nominee on California Democratic Party voter preferences in the general election (among registered Democrats and Democratic Party-affiliated non-partisans likely to vote in November)**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Obama supporters</b>	<b>Clinton supporters</b>
<u>If Obama wins and chooses Clinton as his VP nominees</u>			
More likely to support	56%	46%	74%
Less likely to support	13	13	12
No effect/no opinion	31	41	14
<u>If Clinton wins and chooses Obama as her VP nominee</u>			
More likely to support	61%	60%	70%
Less likely to support	8	7	8
No effect/no opinion	31	33	22

**How Democratic Party voters appraise the Obama and Clinton campaigns**

Four out of five Democratic party voters (82%) are satisfied and just 15% are dissatisfied with the way Obama has run his campaign. With Clinton 60% are satisfied and 38% are dissatisfied with the way she has run her campaign. Obama supporters are more critical of the way Clinton has run her campaign than vice-versa.

**Table 5**  
**How satisfied California Democratic Party voters are with the way Obama and Clinton have run their campaigns (among registered Democrats and Democratic Party-affiliated non-partisans likely to vote in November)**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Obama supporters</b>	<b>Clinton supporters</b>
<u>Obama's campaign</u>			
Satisfied	82%	96%	70%
Dissatisfied	15	3	28
No opinion	3	1	2
<u>Clinton's campaign</u>			
Satisfied	60%	42%	88%
Dissatisfied	38	57	11
No opinion	2	1	1

**Obama’s image much more favorable than either Clinton’s or McCain’s**

Likely voters in the California general election have a more favorable impression of Obama than they do of either Clinton or McCain. More than six in ten (62%) of this state’s likely voters currently hold a favorable impression of Obama, while just 29% view him unfavorably.

By contrast, the image ratings that voters have of Clinton and McCain are mixed. Almost as many likely voters have an unfavorable (44%) as a favorable opinion (49%) of Clinton. Similarly, McCain’s image among likely general election voters is about evenly divided, with 46% holding a favorable opinion and 45% having an unfavorable view.

One of the biggest factors responsible for the disparity between Obama’s image and those relating to Clinton and McCain concerns how this state’s non-partisans view each of the candidates. Among these voters, Obama is viewed in an overwhelmingly positive light (72% to 19%). By contrast, Clinton is viewed positively by a narrow 48% to 43%, while McCain is seen in a more negative than positive light, 42% to 48% among these voters.

**Table 6**  
**Image ratings of the Presidential candidates – overall and by party**  
**(among all likely voters in November)**

	<b>Total</b>	<b>Democrats</b>	<b>Republicans</b>	<b>Non-partisan/ other</b>
<b><u>Obama (D)</u></b>				
Favorable	62%	78%	35%	72%
Unfavorable	29	15	55	19
No opinion	9	7	10	10
<b><u>Clinton (D)</u></b>				
Favorable	49%	68%	24%	48%
Unfavorable	44	25	71	43
No opinion	7	7	5	9
<b><u>McCain (R)</u></b>				
Favorable	46%	31%	68%	42%
Unfavorable	45	60	22	48
No opinion	9	9	10	10

## **Information About The Survey**

### **Sample Details**

The findings in this report are based on a random sample survey of 914 California voters considered likely to vote in the November general election, including 478 Democratic Party voters, defined as including voters who are either registered Democrats or non-partisans who consider themselves close to the Democratic Party. Interviewing was conducted by telephone in English and Spanish May 16-27, 2008. Up to six attempts were made to reach and interview each randomly selected voter on different days and times of day during the interviewing period.

The sample was developed from telephone listings of individual voters selected at random from a statewide list of registered voters in California. Once a voter's name and telephone number has been selected, interviews are attempted only with the specified voter. Interviews were conducted on either the voter's landline or cell phone, depending on the source of the telephone listing from the voter file. After the completion of interviewing, the results were weighted slightly to re-align the overall sample to characteristics of the state's registered voter population.

Sampling error estimates applicable to any probability-based survey depends on the sample size. The maximum sampling error for results based on the overall sample of 914 likely voters is +/- 3.4 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. The maximum sampling error for results based on Democratic Party voters is +/- 4.6 percentage points.

The maximum sampling error is based on percentages in the middle of the sampling distribution (percentages around 50%). Percentages at either end of the distribution (percentages around 10% or around 90%) have a smaller margin of error. The maximum sampling error will be larger for analyses based on subgroups of the overall sample. While there are other potential sources of error in surveys besides sampling error, the overall design and execution of the survey minimized the potential for these other sources of error.

### **Questions Asked**

#### **ASKED OF ALL LIKELY VOTERS (ASKED IN RANDOM ORDER)**

Suppose that in the November presidential election the candidates are Hillary Clinton, Democrat and John McCain, Republican. If the election were being held today, for whom would you vote for President – Hillary Clinton or John McCain?

Suppose that in the November presidential election the candidates are Barack Obama, Democrat and John McCain, Republican. If the election were being held today, for whom would you vote for President – Barack Obama or John McCain?

#### **ASKED OF DEMOCRATIC PARTY VOTERS**

Who would you most like to see nominated as the Democratic Party's presidential candidate this year – Hillary Clinton or Barack Obama?

(ASKED IN RANDOM ORDER)

Suppose Barack Obama becomes the Democratic nominee and not Hillary Clinton. If that happens, how likely would you be to vote for Obama as president – very likely, somewhat likely or not likely?

Suppose Hillary Clinton becomes the Democratic nominee and not Barack Obama. If that happens, how likely would you be to vote for Clinton as president – very likely, somewhat likely or not likely?

(ASKED IN RANDOM ORDER)

Next, suppose Hillary Clinton becomes the Democratic nominee for president. If Clinton were to select Barack Obama as her vice president, would this make you more likely or less likely to vote Democratic in the November presidential election?

Next, suppose Barack Obama becomes the Democratic nominee for president. If Obama were to select Hillary Clinton as his vice president, would this make you more likely or less likely to vote Democratic in the November presidential election?

How satisfied are you with the way (BARACK OBAMA/HILLARY CLINTON) has waged (his) (her) presidential campaign– very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied? (ASKED IN RANDOM ORDER)

#### **ASKED OF ALL LIKELY VOTERS**

Generally speaking, do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of (BARACK OBAMA/ HILLARY CLINTON/JOHN MCCAIN)? (ASKED IN RANDOM ORDER)