



Latino Policy Coalition

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SEN. CLINTON TAKES COMMANDING LEAD AMONG LATINO VOTERS IN HYPOTHETICAL PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY, NEW NON-PARTISAN SURVEY FINDS

Survey also Finds Latinos Steadily Becoming More Democratic

SACRAMENTO, CA – United States Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton has a commanding lead among Latino voters over her democratic rivals for the presidential nomination and bests her Republican rivals in hypothetical match-ups according to a new non-partisan survey of Latino voters conducted by Lake Research Partners for the Latino Policy Coalition, a national non-partisan consortium of leading Latino research organizations and scholars. The survey also found that Latinos are increasingly identifying themselves as Democrats, a change from previous surveys conducted for the LPC.

“While it is still very early in the presidential primary, the survey shows that Senator Clinton has very strong favorability ratings among Latinos which is translating for now into a commanding lead over her rivals for the democratic nomination,” said Celinda Lake, president of Lake Research Partners, who conducted the non-partisan survey for the Latino Policy Coalition. “And while Senator Obama has a strong favorability rating among Latino voters, he is still not very well known in the community.”

In a hypothetical match-up for the democratic nomination, Senator Clinton would receive sixty percent (60%) support among Latino voters surveyed, followed by Sen. Obama (12%), Governor Richardson (9%), former Senator Edwards (7%) and Sen. Biden (1%). While much of the support appears to be based on name identification, Senator Clinton’s support is wide and deep, leading in every demographic group and region of the country.

“These numbers speak to the Latino community’s familiarity with Senator Clinton and a lack of familiarity with the rest of the field,” said Jim Gonzalez, Chair of the Latino Policy Coalition. “The candidates still have time to introduce themselves to Latino voters, but the clock is ticking. With such a significant block of votes at stake, each of the candidates needs to step up their outreach efforts.”

In addition to besting her rivals, Sen. Clinton is viewed very favorably among Latino voters. According to the survey, Clinton's favorable ratings are strong with 68% of Latinos rating her favorably and only a quarter (25%) rating her unfavorably. Sen. Obama is also viewed favorably (48%) with only a small percent rating him as unfavorable (17%). However, more than a third of Latinos either cannot rate him (25%) or have never heard of him (10%). Surprisingly, New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson, the only Latino in the race thus far, is viewed favorably by Latinos (38%) but is relatively unknown (31% no opinion, 15% never heard). And while former Vice Presidential nominee John Edwards is more popular than Richardson (44% favorable, 25% unfavorable, 32% no opinion/never heard), he is less popular than Obama.

"Because presidential primaries will now be held on February 5, 2008, in states such as California and Nevada where Latino voters have recently demonstrated that they can be key contributors to winning statewide margins of victory," said Luis Ricardo Fraga, Associate Professor of Political Science at Stanford University, "it is in the interest of candidates currently in the lead AND those who are in second place to give high priority to maximizing their support from Latino voters."

In a hypothetical match-up between Senator Clinton and Republican frontrunners Senator John McCain and former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani, Clinton bests McCain among Latino voters by 37 points (62% to 25%) and Giuliani by the same margin (64% to 27%). Both Senator Obama and Governor Richardson best their Republican challengers, although by lesser margins. Obama bests McCain by 19 points (48% to 19%) and Giuliani by 21 points (51% to 30%) while Richardson beats McCain by 14 points (42% to 28%) and Giuliani by 19 points (45% to 36%).

The survey also found that over the past year there has been considerable movement on the part of Latino voters toward identifying themselves as a Democrat. Sixty-three percent (63%) of registered Latino voters self-identify as a Democrat, up from 55% from April of last year, an 8-point increase. Only eighteen percent (18%) of Latinos identify themselves as Republicans. The movement toward identifying as Democrat is strongest among voters under the age of 30 (+9), voters over 65 (+11), blue collar women (+8), single Latinos (+11) and Latinos with household incomes under \$40,000 (+8).

METHODOLOGY

Lake Research Partners designed and administered this survey which was conducted by phone using professional interviewers. The survey reached 1000 Latino registered and likely voters in the 23 states with the highest Latino population density. These states include: California, TX, FL, NY, IL, Arizona, NJ, New Mexico, Colorado, GA, NV, NC, WA, MA, VA, PA, CT, MI, OR, MD, IN, OH, and WI. The survey was conducted March 13 and 21, 2007. Telephone numbers for the survey were drawn from files of registered voters. The data were weighted slightly by age and national ancestry. The margin of error for the survey is +/- 3.1 percentage points.

About the Latino Policy Coalition

The Latino Policy Coalition is a national non-partisan non-profit consortium of the country's leading Latino research organizations and scholars. These organizations are dedicated to measuring through nationwide polls public policy issues affecting the Latino community. Chaired by former SF Supervisor Jim Gonzalez, the LPC's mission is to help define Latino community concerns on key contemporary issues in order to stimulate public policy debate among local, state and national elected officials. For more information please visit our website at www.latinopolicycoalition.org

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