

THE STATE HOUSE NEWS POLL
 JANUARY, 2008
 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following are key findings from The State House News Poll, a telephone poll conducted among 400 adults living in Massachusetts by KRC/Communications Research for The State House News Service. The poll was conducted January 9-12, 2008, using standard random-digit-dialing techniques, and carries an overall margin of error of +/-4.8%, with a margin of error of +/-6.2% for the subset of 244 likely Democratic primary voters.

The lead findings:

1. PRESIDENTIAL POLITICS: DEMOCRATS

Hillary Clinton's edge over Barak Obama has narrowed but she still maintains a statistically significant advantage in the first post-NH Massachusetts Democratic presidential primary trial heat. Clinton leads on the strength of her strong support among women, registered Democrats, older, and lesser-educated voters:

NOW	TOTAL	MEN	WOMEN	18-39	40-64	65+	HS	COL	PG	DEM	IND
Hillary Clinton	37%	26%	44%	29%	36%	45%	44%	37%	27%	47%	27%
Barak Obama	25%	34%	20%	36%	24%	21%	19%	23%	40%	20%	31%
John Edwards	14%	20%	11%	18%	16%	8%	9%	16%	15%	13%	16%
Undecided	11%	7%	14%	7%	11%	15%	16%	10%	10%	12%	11%

PREVIOUS 9/07 4/07

Hillary Clinton	34%	28%
Barak Obama	16%	12%
John Edwards	9%	17%

2. PRESIDENTIAL POLITICS: REPUBLICANS

When respondents are asked to name the Republican candidate they would prefer to see in the White House if they knew the Republican would win, John McCain is the overwhelming candidate of choice among Democrats and Independents, while state Republicans maintain loyalty to Mitt Romney:

Now	Total	Dem	Ind	GOP
John McCain	45%	55%	47%	20%
Mitt Romney	18%	10%	20%	38%
Rudy Giuliani	8%	6%	7%	10%
Mike Huckabee	8%	7%	7%	13%
Ron Paul	4%	4%	4%	8%
Fred Thompson	2%	2%	2%	2%
Undecided	10%	9%	9%	10%

3. GOV. PATRICK AFTER ONE YEAR IN OFFICE

After one year in office, the good news for Governor Deval Patrick is that a majority of voters continue to view him favorably, while for the first time in our polling, more people approve of the job he is doing than disapprove. Yet as noted in September, even though his job performance numbers continue to improve, they still lag behind his personal popularity, implying that while respondents, especially women, like him personally, they are not so keen on the job he has done in office thus far. In fact, the large gender gap in his job rating remains, with women far more supportive toward the Patrick administration than men.

Statewide personal popularity:	FAVORABLE	UNFAVORABLE
Patrick: Now	50%	30%
September, 2007	57%	28%
April, 2007	49%	31%
November, 2006	56%	28%
September, 2006	47%	12%
July, 2006	35%	11%
May, 2006	20%	12%
March, 2006	14%	5%
January, 2006	14%	4%
July, 2005	11%	3%
May, 2005	7%	3%

Job rating:	EXC/ABOVE AVE	AVERAGE	BELOW AVE/POOR
Patrick: Now (All)	45%	10%	40%
(Men)	43%	10%	42%
(Women)	46%	11%	38%
9/07(All)	40%	16%	40%
4/07(All)	31%	14%	45%

How would you rate the job Deval Patrick did during his just-completed first year as governor:

1 st year job rating:	EXC/ABOVE AVE	AVERAGE	BELOW AVE/POOR
Patrick: Now (All)	45%	10%	40%

How would you rate the job Deval Patrick is doing at keeping his campaign promise to provide property tax relief to homeowners?

Prop tax job rating:	EXC/ABOVE AVE	AVERAGE	BELOW AVE/POOR
Patrick: Now (All)	17%	4%	67%

In his first year as governor, did Deval Patrick accomplish (ROTATE):

more than you expected	5%
about what you expected	48%
less than you expected	41%

4. CASINO GAMBLING

When asked whether they "support or oppose Governor Patrick's plan to legalize casino gambling in Massachusetts" fewer than half the state, 49%, supports the proposal, while 44% is opposed. That's down from the 50% support/39% oppose margin that we found in our September poll:

CASINO GAMBLING	NOW	9/07
Support	49%	50%
Oppose	44%	39%

Yet even though support appears to be waning somewhat for Governor Patrick's casino gambling proposal, voters appear to believe that Patrick will be hard-pressed to make good on his campaign promise to provide property tax relief without it:

PROVIDE PROP TAX RELIEF WITHOUT CASINO GAMBLING

Will be unable to provide	52%
Will find another way	39%

5. INCOME TAX REPEAL BALLOT QUESTION TRIAL HEAT RUNS EVEN

If there were a question on the ballot in the general election in November that, if approved, would repeal the state income tax in Massachusetts, would you vote (ROTATE): "yes" to repeal the state income tax, or "no" to retain the state income tax?

	TOTAL	MEN	WOMEN	HS	COL	PG	DEM	IND	REP
NO	46%	43%	49%	31%	48%	59%	59%	44%	33%
YES	45%	49%	41%	56%	44%	36%	36%	45%	58%
Undecided	8%	8%	9%	13%	8%	4%	4%	10%	10%

6. FOR THE FIRST TIME IN YEARS, MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE: THE ECONOMY

The issues of "taxes" and "education" have been surpassed by "the economy" for the first time in our polling:

SELF-IDENTIFIED MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE

The economy	20%
Taxes	15%
Education	13%
Health care	12%
Unemployment	12%

7. ON FINES FOR FAILING TO SIGN UP FOR HEALTH INSURANCE

Do you support or oppose the provision of the state's health insurance law that imposes a fine on people who can afford to buy health insurance for themselves, but don't do so?

Support	50%
Oppose	46%

8. RIGHT DIRECTION/WRONG TRACK

	RIGHT DIRECTION	WRONG TRACK
Now	41%	46%
September, 2007	41%	41%
April, 2007	39%	49%
November, 2006	33%	58%
September, 2006	35%	48%
May, 2006	34%	49%
January, 2006	41%	49%
November, 2005	48%	42%
September, 2005	48%	39%
July, 2005	48%	42%
May, 2005	43%	45%
March, 2005	46%	39%