

LOS ANGELES TIMES POLL ALERT

ELECTION LOOKS DIFFERENT IN THREE BATTLEGROUND STATES

- **The race is even in Pennsylvania; Bush leading in Florida and Kerry leading in Ohio**

As the campaign for president slips into its final days, the presidential candidates are aggressively trying to woo voters in the tightly defined swing states. The Los Angeles Times Poll, in trying to gauge the depth of commitment by voters in these battleground states, conducted surveys in three of the most hotly contested states – Florida, Ohio and Pennsylvania. These three states make up 68 electoral votes. Republicans have not won a presidential election without Ohio; and pundits and political consultants are predicting that the winner of the election needs to win two out of three of these states.

In the 2000 election, George W. Bush beat Al Gore in Ohio just by 3.5% of the vote (50% to 46.5%); in Pennsylvania, Gore beat Bush by 4.2% (50.6% to 46.4%); and in Florida everyone knows Bush beat Gore by 537 votes. So, it is not surprising that the campaigns are basically living in these three states leading up to the election.

The poll shows Bush gaining in Florida, losing in Ohio and splitting the vote with John Kerry in Pennsylvania. The Times poll explains why this is happening. It shows that Florida voters are on the more positive end of the scale for Bush, while Ohio voters on the more negative end of the scale and Pennsylvania voters are somewhere in the middle (often splitting their vote). For example, voters were asked the ongoing question of whether Bush deserves to be reelected to a second term as president. In Florida, voters think he should get a second term, Ohioans don't want him reelected and Pennsylvanians are divided. And the question: Is the country better off because of Bush's policies and should proceed in the direction he set out, or do you think the country is not better off and needs to move in a new direction? This time, Florida voters are split on this, while Ohioans adamantly want a new course for the country, while Pennsylvania voters also think the country needs to proceed in a new direction (although not as vociferously as voters in Ohio).

There have been several polls recently showing the race closer with either Bush up by as many as two points, or Kerry up by the same spread or showing the race tied.

As Ron Brownstein writes in his poll story today,

“Some local experts in both Florida and Ohio said they would be surprised if the leads [in the Times poll in these two states] were that large. ‘It is possible, but I don’t think it is likely,’ said Jim Kane, executive director of the non-partisan Florida Poll. From another angle, though, the Times Poll

results track a potentially revealing trend in both Florida and Ohio. In Ohio, whatever the margin between Bush and Kerry, the president is attracting 47% of the vote or less in almost every public survey released this month – a troubling trend for an incumbent. By contrast, in Florida, Bush’s support has routinely come closer to the 50% level considered a critical indicator of health for an incumbent.”

FLORIDA

The Times poll shows that Florida likely voters appear to be trending toward Bush. Ralph Nader, who captured 1.6% of the vote in 2000 and was partly blamed for Gore losing in that state, is again on the Florida ballot. In a three-way race, the Bush/Cheney ticket received 51% of the vote, to Kerry/Edwards at 43%. Nader is receiving just about the same support as he did in 2000 with 2% of the vote and 4% are undecided. Among registered voters, it is 49% for Bush, 41% for Kerry, 3% for Nader and 7% undecided.

Bush vs. Kerry

Demographics: A fifth of voters who describe themselves as Democrats say they will vote for Bush, but less than one in 10 self-described Republicans say they will support Kerry. Nearly three out of five independents would back Bush and more than a third are behind the Democrat. Half of moderates say they will back Bush and more than four in ten would support the Democratic challenger. A fifth of conservative voters would support the challenger, while 6% of liberals say they will vote for the incumbent. In Florida, voters may register by party and the poll’s breakout by party registration is:

	RV	LV
Democrat	39%	41%
Republican	39%	43%
Ind/Other	22%	16%

A majority of whites are behind the president, while almost three out of five minorities support Kerry. Voters of all different educational backgrounds are dividing their vote. The less affluent and the wealthiest are supporting Bush and the middle income households are supporting Kerry. There is a gender gap in this state -- men are solidly behind the president, while women are dividing their vote between the two candidates. Voters in big cities support the Democrat, while suburban, small town and rural voters support the president.

Floridians are not as negative about the country as voters nationally or in Ohio (where they mirror the nation at saying the country is off in the wrong direction). Voters in the southern state are ambivalent, with 46% saying the country is on the right track and virtually the same share of voters saying the country is heading in the wrong direction. More than nine out of 10 voters who say the country is on the right track are voting for the president and 88% of voters who say the nation is off in the wrong direction is supporting Kerry.

Most minds are made up as to whom voters will vote for. Just 5% say there is a chance they could vote for someone else or are undecided. And as in the nation, a record number of voters are ‘very’ interested in the presidential election. Nearly four out five say they are very interested and this group’s support of a candidate is dead even (47% for both Bush and Kerry).

More than a third of voters in the Sunshine State think that how the candidate stands on the issues is more important to them when deciding on who they are going to vote for, while slightly more than a

quarter believe a candidate's character and strength of leadership is more important. A third think both of these are important. Those citing issues are more apt to vote for Kerry (72%), while those citing character are supporting Bush (70%).

Florida voters are split as to whether they think the country should move in a new direction or stay the course with Bush's policies. Those who want to stay the course are virtually all voting for the president, while 85% of those who want to change directions are voting for Kerry.

Attributes/Issues: Floridians like Bush and think many of the personal attributes cited in the poll belong to the president. They think the president cares about them, will be a strong leader for the country, has honesty and integrity, will keep the country safe from terrorism, shares their moral values, has developed a plan to achieve success in Iraq, will be more of an effective commander-in-chief and has a detailed plan for the next four years. But on the issue of economy, voters are split on whether either candidate can strengthen the nation's economy.

In terms of domestic issues, which Kerry wins most of these issues nationally, Floridians split on some of them. Florida voters split on who can handle health care and create jobs, but give Bush the lead in handling taxes and social issues such as abortion and gay marriage. But nearly half believe Bush has made the economy worse, while a third think he made it better and a fifth say it has remained the same.

Iraq: Once again, Florida voters are divided and this time over the Iraq war. Nearly half (49%) say that the situation in Iraq was worth going to war over, but nearly the same share of voters (44%) say it wasn't worth it. And nearly half of the voters also think that Iraq has a better chance of becoming a stable and secure nation under Bush, than Kerry. A third thought Kerry would fulfill that mission. But a slim majority think that the military action in Iraq has made the world a safer place, compared to 38% who disagree. A small majority of voters (52%) think that Bush made the right decision in going to war despite a new CIA report that found that Saddam Hussein did not possess weapons of mass destruction, or have any active programs underway to produce them when the United States invaded Iraq last year. That report also stated that Hussein intended to someday reconstitute at least some weapons if United Nations sanctions were eased and he had the opportunity. Forty-five percent thought the president made the wrong decision. The voters are split on whether the Iraq war was part of the war on terrorism (47%) or separate from it (44%).

Debates: Nine out of ten voters watched or listened to at least one presidential debate (65% saw or listened to all three). Less than one in 10 didn't see or hear anything about the debates. If the voters saw all three debates, they were more impressed with Kerry and backed him over Bush by 50% to 46%.

President's Job Ratings

Bush is popular among Florida voters. More than half of the voters (53%) approve of the overall job performance of the president (including 45% who strongly approve), while 46% disapprove. They also approve of the way he is handling the situation in Iraq (52%). Forty-six percent disapprove. Almost three fifths of voters (56%) give the president positive marks for his handling of the war on terrorism, including 47% who strongly approve. Two in five voters disapprove. Nationally, the president's handling of the economy is not a strong issue and the same holds true for him in Florida. Voters are splitting their vote (49% approve or disapprove)

OHIO

Heading north to the Buckeye State the Times Poll finds a completely different picture than the one found in Florida. Ohio voters are more pessimistic about the country and are negative toward the president. So it is not surprising that among likely voters Kerry is leading Bush by six points (50% to 44% for Bush) in a two-way horserace. Six percent are undecided. Ralph Nader is not on the ballot. Among registered voters, the race is 49% for Kerry and 45% for Bush. Six percent are undecided.

Bush vs. Kerry

Demographics: At least nine out of ten Democrats and Republicans are supporting their candidate, while 45% of independents (including voters who identify with minor parties) are behind Kerry. More liberals (86%) than conservatives (79%) each are supporting their respective candidates and three fifths of moderates are backing Kerry. The younger voter, 18-44 years old, are splitting their vote as are the baby boomers. Elderly voters are strongly behind the Democratic challenger. White voters who make up a core group for Bush nationally, are divided, while nearly three fifths of minority voters support Kerry. The more affluent voters (households with earnings of \$60,000 or more) are backing the president, while the less affluent (less than \$40,000 household income) supports Kerry. The middle income voters are split. More than half of married voters support Bush, while a huge 69% of unmarried voters are behind the challenger. Voters who live in a city or suburb support the Democrat, while small town voters are somewhat split but leaning toward Bush, and voters in rural areas are solidly behind Bush. Ohio voters do not register by party, but looking at their party affiliation in this poll, it breaks out:

	RV	LV
Democrats	43%	42%
Republicans	37%	38%
Ind/Other	20%	20%

Interest in Voting: Three quarters of the voters in Ohio are 'very' interested in this presidential campaign and they are strongly supporting Kerry by 12 points over Bush. As in Florida, virtually all voters in the Buckeye State are certain of their vote.

Nearly two out of five voters (37%) say that how the candidate stands on the issues is most important when they decide on their candidate, compared to a quarter who say it is the candidate's character and strength of leadership that is the overriding factor for them. But 36% say both are important when they choose who they will vote for. Ohioans are no different from the rest of the nation or these other two swing states in that those who say issues are the most important are solidly supporting Kerry and those citing character is just as strongly supporting the president.

But Ohioans and Floridians differ on whether they think the country is better off proceeding in a new direction or staying the course with Bush's policies. Nearly three fifths of Ohio voters say they want the country steered in a new direction, compared to the not quite two in five who want to stay the course with the president. More than four out of five voters who want to change direction are voting for Kerry, while one in 10 in this group would still vote for the president.

Ohio voters are more pessimistic than their counterparts in Florida, Pennsylvania and even nationally. Nearly three out of five voters think the country is heading off on the wrong track, while

slightly more than a third say the country is going in the right direction. Yet among voters who say the country is on the wrong track, 12% are still backing Bush and 82% are supporting the Democrat.

Attributes/Issues: Kerry leads Bush in almost all of the personal attributes the poll asked voters. More than half of Ohio voters say Kerry is the candidate that cares about them (38% say that about Bush), 50% think Kerry is the candidate that has strong leadership ability (44% thought that of Bush), 47% think Kerry is honest and has integrity (41% believe that of Bush), 56% believe Kerry will strengthen the nation's economy (36% believe that of Bush), 49% think Kerry is the candidate to achieve success in Iraq (43% believe Bush could achieve that), 49% think Kerry would make an effective commander-in-chief (44% thought Bush would), and 44% believe Kerry has a more detailed plan for the next four years (39% believe Bush does). Keeping the country safe from terrorism is an issue that goes to the president's strength (as he wins this nationally as well). Almost half say he is the candidate to keep the country safe from terrorism, while 41% think that of Kerry. Voters split their vote on which candidate shares their moral values.

Kerry is also seen by more Ohioans as the candidate to best handle health care and create jobs. Voters divide their vote on the issues of which candidate would be best at handling social issues such as abortion and gay marriage and on the subject of taxes.

Ohio has been struggling with lost jobs and a poor economy. Bush and his policies are not seen by voters as helping their fellow citizens. A majority of Ohio voters (52%) say the economy has gotten worse under Bush's policies (including 39% who say much worse). Almost three in 10 say the economy has gotten better and a fifth say it has remained the same. Among those who say worse, 86% are voting for Kerry.

Iraq: Whereas Florida was somewhat divided as to whether the situation in Iraq was worth it, half of Ohio voters say it was *not* worth the war. They also believe the president made the wrong decision (53%) after hearing about the new CIA report explaining that Saddam Hussein did not possess weapons of mass destruction or have any active programs underway. Forty-five percent say he made the right decision. However, a large plurality say that the world is a safer place (49%) because of the military action taken in Iraq. They split on whether Bush or Kerry would be able to make Iraq secure and stable. Differing from their southern counterparts, half of Ohio voters feel that the Iraq war is separate from the war on terrorism; 45% say it is part of it.

Debates: Roughly nine in 10 voters watched or listened to at least one debate, including 56% who watched or listened to all three. Voters who watched all three gave Kerry a 10-point advantage (53% to 43%). About four in 10 voters say the debate performance of Bush made them less likely to vote for him, more than four in 10 say it would have no effect and a fifth say it would make them more likely to vote for the president. Nearly half of voters (45%) say Kerry's debate performance would make them more likely to vote for him, 21% less likely and 32% say it would have no effect.

President's Job Ratings

Most of the results in this poll show how unpopular Bush is in this state. More than half (51%) disapprove of the president's overall job performance (including 39% who strongly disapprove), while 47% approve. Almost the same share of voters disapprove of the president handling of the situation in Iraq (52%), of which 47% strongly disapprove. Forty-four percent approve. The president, however, receives positive ratings on his handling of the war on terrorism – 52% approve, while 44% disapprove.

More than half of voters (54%) disapprove of Bush handling of the economy (including 43% who strongly disapprove), while 45% approve.

PENNSYLVANIA

If Florida paints a somewhat sunny picture for the president and Ohio paints a more gloomy picture, Pennsylvania paints a more mixed assessment for the candidates. Ralph Nader has lost his bid to appear on the Keystone state's ballot. So, in a two-way race, among likely voters Kerry and Bush draw to a tie – 48% each with 4% undecided. Among registered voters, Kerry's lead is 3 points (48% to 45% for Bush). Seven percent are still undecided.

Bush vs. Kerry

Demographics: As with the other states, voters in their respective parties are voting for their candidate. Still, almost two thirds of independents are supporting the Democratic challenger, as are three fifths of moderates. A fifth of conservative voters are supporting Kerry, while one in eight liberals are backing the president. The younger voters (18-44 years old) are dividing their vote, while baby boomers are solidly behind the president and almost the same share of the elderly are solidly behind the Democrat. A slim majority of white voters are behind the president, while more than six out of 10 minorities are with Kerry. The less affluent support the Democrat, while the wealthier voters support Bush. There is no gender gap in this state – both men and women are splitting their vote. As the poll shows in the other states, married voters support the president and unmarried voters are behind Kerry. Urban voters are backing Kerry, while small town and rural voters back the president. Suburban voters are splitting their vote. In Pennsylvania, voters register by party and the breakdown of party registration is:

	RV	LV
Democrat	41%	45%
Republican	39%	40%
Ind/Other	20%	15%

Almost half of the voters in Pennsylvania think the country is off on the wrong track, while 41% believe it is going in the right direction. Among voters who say wrong direction, 89% of them are voting for Kerry. Does Bush deserve to be reelected? Keystone voters are split – 48% believe the president deserves to be reelected, while 50% say he doesn't. But more than half of the voters (53%) want to steer the country in a new direction rather than keep Bush's policies. Forty-four percent want to stay the course. And among those who want a new direction for the country, they are overwhelmingly in Kerry's column (88%).

Nearly two out of five voters believe that how a candidate feels on issues is the most important way for them to decide which candidate to choose, while more than a third think it is the candidate's character and strength of leadership. But a quarter say both are important to them. Voters in the Keystone state are parroting the voters in the other two states. Just like them, when voters in Pennsylvania mention character, they strongly back the president and when they cite issues, they are solidly behind the challenger.

Attributes/Issues: Along with the state voters being split on the vote and reelection of Bush, they are also split on many of the personal attributes that the Times Poll asked. Because of this division, one can see why the candidates are tied in this state.

For instance, they split over whether Bush or Kerry cares about them, who would be the stronger leader, who is more honest and has more integrity, who can achieve success in Iraq, who would be a more effective commander-in-chief and who has a detailed plan for the next four years. But Bush has nudged ahead of Kerry on the issue of keeping the country safe from terrorism (48% to 40% for Kerry). Bush also leads Kerry on the issue of sharing the voters' same moral values (48% to 42% for Kerry). But an important issue in this state is economy. Kerry beats Bush on the issue of strengthening the nation's economy by 50% to 41.

Kerry also bests Bush on handling health care (52% to 35% for Bush) and creating jobs (55% to 36% for Bush). Bush beats Kerry on handling social issues by 49% to 37%, but the candidates split the vote on the issue of taxes.

Less than half of the voters (45%) say that Bush's economic policies have made the country worse over the last four years, 27% say it has made the country better and 26% say the country has remained the same. Among the voters who say worse, 83% are supporting Kerry.

Iraq: Voters are somewhat divided on the issue of the war on Iraq. Nearly half (47%) say the situation in Iraq was not worth the war and 45% say it was worth it. Half of the voters think the country is safer because of the military action (45% believe the country is not safer). But more voters believe Bush rather than Kerry will make Iraq a secure and stable country. Nearly half of Pennsylvania voters believe the Iraq war is part of the war on terrorism, while 46% believe it is separate from it.

Debates: Roughly nine in ten voters watched or listened to at least one debate, with 53% watching or listening to all three. Among voters who watched all three debates, Kerry beats Bush by 5 points.

President's Job Ratings

The president is a little more popular in this state than in Ohio, but less so than in Florida. Slightly more than half (51%) approve of the overall job performance by the president, while 46% disapprove. In these groups, 37% strongly approve and 39% strongly disapprove. They also approve of his handling of the war on terrorism (52%) compared to 47% who disapprove. But 51% of voters disapprove of his handling the situation in Iraq (including 46% who strongly disapprove), while 46% approve; 52% disapprove of his handling of the nation's economy (including 43% who strongly disapprove), while 46% approve.

-Analysis by Susan H. Pinkus

Results from the Times Poll National Poll

October 22-26, 2004

Guide to Column Headings

FLA Likely voters in the state of Florida
 OHI Likely voters in the state of Ohio
 PEN Likely voters in the state of Pennsylvania

Note:

Results for *registered voters* are only given in the *horserace* questions.

“-“ indicates a value of 0.5% or less.

Q1. Do you think things in this country are generally going in the right direction or are they seriously off on the wrong track?

	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>
Right direction	46	36	41
Wrong track	45	56	49
Don't know	7	8	10
	2	-	-

(ORDER OF TWO HORSERACE QUESTIONS AND CANDIDATES IS ROTATED)

Q4. If the November general election for president were being held today and the choices were George W. Bush and Dick Cheney on the Republican ticket, and John Kerry and John Edwards on the Democratic ticket, for whom would you vote: Bush/Cheney or Kerry/Edwards? (INCLUDES LEANERS) (FLORIDA HAS RALPH NADER ON THE BALLOT)

	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>		<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>
Bush/Cheney	52	44	48	—Registered Voters—	51	45	45
Kerry/Edwards	45	50	48		43	49	48
Don't know	3	6	4		6	6	7

(ORDER OF CANDIDATES IS ROTATED)

Q5. If the November general election for president were being held today and the choices were George W. Bush and Dick Cheney on the Republican ticket, John Kerry and John Edwards on the Democratic ticket, and Ralph Nader and Peter Camejo running on an independent ticket, for whom would you vote: Bush/Cheney, Kerry/Edwards or Nader/Camejo? (INCLUDES LEANERS) (OHIO & PENNSYLVANIA DO NOT HAVE RALPH NADER ON THE BALLOT)

	—Registered Voters—					
	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>
Bush/Cheney	51	42	49	49	42	45
Kerry/Edwards	43	51	47	41	49	48
Nader/Camejo	2	1	—	3	2	1
Don't know	4	6	4	7	7	6

(IF ANY PRESIDENTIAL TICKET IS MENTIONED IN Q5)

Q6. Are you certain you're going to vote for those candidates, or is it possible that you might end up voting for somebody else?

	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>
Certain	98	97	98
Might vote for someone else	1	3	1
Don't know	1	—	1

Q7. Lots of people don't pay much attention to political campaigns. How about you? So far this year, would you say you have been very interested in following the political campaign for president, or somewhat interested, or somewhat uninterested, or very uninterested in following the political campaign for president so far this year?

	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>
Interested (Net)	98	97	93
Very interested	79	76	71
Somewhat interested	19	21	23
Uninterested (Net)	2	2	6
Somewhat uninterested	—	1	2
Very uninterested	2	1	3
Don't know	—	1	1

Q9. Generally speaking, what is more important to you when you decide whom you are going to vote for, for president: a candidate's character and strength of leadership or how a candidate stands on the issues?

	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>
Character/leadership	27	25	35
How he stands on issues	35	37	38
Both	33	36	26
Depends	2	1	—
Don't know	3	1	1

Q10. Do you think George W. Bush deserves to be reelected to a second term as president, or not?

	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>
Deserves reelection	51	42	48
Doesn't deserve reelection	45	52	50
Both	4	6	2
Don't know	-	-	-

Q11. Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president? (IF APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE) Do you (approve/disapprove) strongly or do you (approve/disapprove) somewhat?

	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>
Approve (Net)	53	47	51
Approve strongly	45	33	37
Approve somewhat	8	14	14
Disapprove (Net)	46	51	46
Disapprove somewhat	11	12	7
Disapprove strongly	35	39	39
Don't know	1	2	3

(ORDER OF NEXT THREE QUESTIONS IS ROTATED)

Q12. Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the situation in Iraq? (IF APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE) Do you (approve/disapprove) strongly or do you (approve/disapprove) somewhat?

	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>
Approve (Net)	52	44	46
Approve strongly	41	31	34
Approve somewhat	10	13	12
Disapprove (Net)	46	52	51
Disapprove somewhat	5	5	5
Disapprove strongly	42	47	46
Don't know	2	4	3

Q13. Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the war on terrorism? (IF APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE) Do you (approve/disapprove) strongly or do you (approve/disapprove) somewhat?

	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>
Approve (Net)	56	52	52
Approve strongly	47	36	44
Approve somewhat	9	16	8
Disapprove (Net)	40	44	47
Disapprove somewhat	10	9	9
Disapprove strongly	30	35	37
Don't know	4	4	1

Q14. Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the economy? (IF APPROVE OR DISAPPROVE)
Do you (approve/disapprove) strongly or do you (approve/disapprove) somewhat?

	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>
Approve (Net)	49	45	46
Approve strongly	40	29	28
Approve somewhat	9	16	17
Disapprove (Net)	49	54	52
Disapprove somewhat	6	11	10
Disapprove strongly	43	43	43
Don't know	2	1	2

Q15. Generally speaking, do you think the country is better off because of George W. Bush's policies and should proceed in the direction he set out, or do you think the country is not better off and needs to move in a new direction?

	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>
Continue policies of George W. Bush	49	37	44
Needs new direction	48	58	53
Don't know	3	5	3

(ORDER OF NEXT 9 QUESTIONS AND CANDIDATE NAMES IS ROTATED)

Q16. "He cares about people like me": Does this apply more to George W. Bush or more to John Kerry?

	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>
George W. Bush	50	38	46
John Kerry	44	53	46
Both equally	2	3	2
Neither	2	5	5
Don't know	2	1	1

Q17. "He will be a strong leader for the country": Does this apply more to George W. Bush or more to John Kerry?

	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>
George W. Bush	53	44	45
John Kerry	42	50	48
Both equally	1	3	4
Neither	1	1	2
Don't know	3	2	1

Q18. "He has the honesty and integrity to serve as president": Does this apply more to George W. Bush or more to John Kerry?

	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>
George W. Bush	49	41	45
John Kerry	42	47	43
Both equally	2	5	2
Neither	2	6	8
Don't know	5	1	2

Q19. "He would be best at keeping the country safe from terrorism": Does this apply more to George W. Bush or more to John Kerry?

	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>
George W. Bush	52	49	48
John Kerry	37	41	40
Both equally	5	3	2
Neither	1	3	7
Don't know	5	4	3

Q20. "He has better ideas for strengthening the nation's economy": Does this apply more to George W. Bush or more to John Kerry?

	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>
George W. Bush	45	36	41
John Kerry	43	56	50
Both equally	1	1	3
Neither	3	3	3
Don't know	8	4	3

Q21. "He shares my moral values": Does this apply more to George W. Bush or more to John Kerry?

	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>
George W. Bush	51	42	48
John Kerry	40	43	42
Both equally	3	6	5
Neither	2	5	3
Don't know	4	4	2

Q22. "He is more likely to develop a plan for achieving success in Iraq": Does this apply more to George W. Bush or more to John Kerry?

	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>
George W. Bush	48	43	48
John Kerry	38	49	45
Both equally	3	1	1
Neither	6	3	5
Don't know	5	4	1

Q23. "He would be more effective as Commander-in-Chief": Does this apply more to George W. Bush or more to John Kerry?

	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>
George W. Bush	52	44	51
John Kerry	41	49	47
Both equally	1	2	-
Neither	1	3	1
Don't know	5	2	1

Q24. "He has provided a more detailed plan for the policies he would pursue in the next four years": Does this apply more to George W. Bush or more to John Kerry?

	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>
George W. Bush	47	39	43
John Kerry	40	44	42
Both equally	3	4	5
Neither	3	8	9
Don't know	7	5	1

(ORDER OF NEXT 4 QUESTIONS AND CANDIDATES IS ROTATED)

Q25. Who do you think would do the best job of handling the health care situation in the country: George W. Bush or John Kerry?

	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>
George W. Bush	45	34	35
John Kerry	45	52	52
Both equally	1	-	-
Neither	5	5	8
Don't know	4	9	5

Q26. Who do you think would do the best job of creating jobs in the United States: George W. Bush or John Kerry?

	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>
George W. Bush	43	34	36
John Kerry	45	55	55
Both equally	1	1	3
Neither	4	5	4
Don't know	7	5	2

Q27. Who do you think would do the best job of handling taxes: George W. Bush or John Kerry?

	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>
George W. Bush	48	43	44
John Kerry	39	43	42
Both equally	2	1	1
Neither	3	5	8
Don't know	8	8	5

Q28. Who do you think would do the best job of handling social issues, such as abortion and gay marriage: George W. Bush or John Kerry?

	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>
George W. Bush	50	40	49
John Kerry	39	42	37
Both equally	2	2	3
Neither	4	7	7
Don't know	5	9	4

Q29. Would you say this country is better off because of George W. Bush's economic policies than when he became president almost four years ago, or worse off, or in about the same financial shape it was then? (IF BETTER OR WORSE) Is the country much (better/worse) off or only somewhat (better/worse) off?

	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>
Better (Net)	32	27	27
Much better off	25	12	18
Somewhat better off	7	15	10
Worse (Net)	47	52	45
Somewhat worse off	12	13	14
Much worse off	35	39	30
About the same	20	20	26
Don't know	1	1	2

Q30. All in all, do you think the situation in Iraq was worth going to war over, or not?

	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>
Yes, worth going to war	49	44	45
No, not worth going to war	44	50	47
Don't know	7	6	8

Q31. As you may know, a new CIA report has found that Saddam Hussein did not possess weapons of mass destruction, or have any active programs underway to produce them when the United States invaded Iraq last year. The report also states that Hussein intended to someday reconstitute at least some weapons of mass destruction if United Nations sanctions were eased and he had the opportunity. Based on what you heard about this new CIA report, do you think George W. Bush made the right decision to go to war with Iraq, or do you *not* think he made the right decision to go war with Iraq?

	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>
Made the right decision	52	45	49
Did not make the right decision	45	53	47
Don't know	3	2	4

Q32. Generally speaking, do you think that U.S. military action against Iraq will make the world a safer place, or not?

	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>
Safer	51	49	50
Not safer	38	41	45
Don't know	11	10	5

(ORDER OF CANDIDATES IS ROTATED)

Q33. Do you think Iraq has a better chance of becoming a stable and secure nation under the policies George W. Bush would pursue, or under the policies John Kerry would pursue?

	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>
George W. Bush	47	41	44
John Kerry	34	39	39
Both equally	-	1	1
Neither	8	8	9
Don't know	11	11	7

Q34. Do you think of the war with Iraq as part of the war against terrorism, or as separate from the war against terrorism?

	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>
Part of the war on terrorism	47	45	49
Separate from the war on terrorism	44	50	46
Don't know	9	5	5

Q35. Did you by any chance get an opportunity to watch or listen to any of the three presidential debates that took place over the last few weeks between George W. Bush and John Kerry, or not? (IF YES) How many of the debates did you watch or listen to? (IF NOT) Did you hear any discussion or commentary about the debates, or did you read about any of them, or not?

	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>
Watched (Net)	90	88	87
One	5	11	9
Two	21	21	25
Three	65	56	53
Heard (Net)	1	1	3
Did not watch/heard (Net)	9	11	10
Don't know	-	-	-

(ORDER OF NEXT TWO QUESTIONS IS ROTATED)

Q36. Did George W. Bush's performance in the debates make you more likely to vote for him in November, less likely to vote for him, or did Bush's performance not affect the way you might vote one way or the other?

	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>
No effect	39	42	38
More likely	28	20	24
Less likely	31	38	37
Don't know	2	-	1

Q37. Did John Kerry's performance in the debates make you more likely to vote for him in November, less likely to vote for him, or did Kerry's performance not affect the way you might vote one way or the other?

	<u>FLA</u>	<u>OHI</u>	<u>PEN</u>
No effect	28	32	32
More likely	41	45	45
Less likely	28	21	23
Don't know	3	2	-

How the Poll Was Conducted

The Times Poll contacted 3,301 adults in the three “battleground” states of Florida, Ohio and Pennsylvania. Included were 941 registered voters of which 510 voters are deemed likely to vote in Florida; 1,026 registered, among them 585 likely in Ohio; and 927 registered, among them 568 likely in Pennsylvania. Likely voters were determined by a screening process which included questions on intention to vote, certainty of vote, interest in the campaign, first time voter, or past voting history. All interviews were conducted by telephone October 22 through 26, 2004. Telephone numbers for each state sample were chosen from a list of all exchanges in that state and random digit dialing techniques were used to allow listed and unlisted numbers to be contacted. Adults in each state were weighted slightly to conform with their respective census figures for sex, race, age, education, and in Florida and Pennsylvania, party registration. The margin of sampling error for each state’s registered voters is plus or minus 3 percentage points in either direction and for likely voters it is plus or minus 4. For certain subgroups in all samples, the error margin may be somewhat higher. Poll results may also be affected by factors such as question wording and the order in which questions are presented. Telephone interviews were conducted by Interviewing Services of America, Van Nuys.