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# THE OHIO POLL\*

**FOR RELEASE**

September 16, 2008

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## **MOST OHIOANS CONFIDENT IN ELECTION PROCESS, BUT DOUBTS LINGER AMONG DEMOCRATS**

Cincinnati, OH--Most likely voters are confident that the current election process in Ohio produces fair election outcomes and that their 2008 presidential ballot will be counted accurately. However, Republican likely voters express higher levels of confidence in the process than do Democratic likely voters.

These findings are based on the latest Ohio Poll, conducted by the Institute for Policy Research at the University of Cincinnati. The Ohio Poll is sponsored by the University of Cincinnati. The Poll was conducted from September 5 through September 10, 2008.

### **OHIO AND CONFIDENCE IN ELECTIONS**

The latest Ohio Poll asked likely voters about their confidence in the Ohio election process, in the wake of two presidential elections (2000 and 2004) where partisans openly debated the fairness of each election. In summarizing the findings of the Poll, Eric W. Rademacher, The Ohio Poll's Co-Director, said, "While Ohio voters overall have confidence in the election process, Democrats are less confident than Republicans that the process produces fair election outcomes."

### **THE OHIO ELECTION PROCESS**

Ohio likely voters were first asked about their level of confidence that the current election process in Ohio produces fair election outcomes.

A large majority of likely voters (84%) are either "very confident" or "somewhat confident" that the election process produces fair election outcomes. An additional 11 percent of likely voters are "not too confident" that the process results in fair outcomes, and four percent are "not at all confident."

Overall, 95 percent of Republican likely voters are either "very confident" or "somewhat confident" in the process, while 78 percent of Democratic likely voters are either "very confident" or "somewhat confident."

However, while 58 percent of Republican likely voters say they are "very confident" that the election process produces fair election outcomes, just 26 percent of Democratic likely voters are "very confident."

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**WILL PRESIDENTIAL BALLOTS BE COUNTED ACCURATELY IN 2008?**

Ohio likely voters were also asked how confident they are that their presidential ballot will be counted accurately in the upcoming election.

Most likely voters (92%) are either “very confident” or “somewhat confident” that their presidential ballot will be counted accurately. An additional five percent of likely voters are “not too confident” that their ballot will be counted accurately and three percent are “not at all confident.”

While nearly seven out of ten (69%) Republican likely voters are “very confident” that their presidential ballot will be counted accurately, about four out of ten (38%) Democratic likely voters are “very confident.”

**WERE PRESIDENTIAL BALLOTS COUNTED ACCURATELY IN 2004?**

When asked if they felt their ballot was counted accurately in 2004, most likely voters who cast ballots in 2004 (85%) are either “very confident” or “somewhat confident” that their presidential ballot was counted accurately. An additional eight percent of likely voters are “not too confident” that their ballot was counted accurately and seven percent are “not at all confident.”

Republican likely voters (72%) are “very confident” that their presidential ballot was counted accurately in 2004 far more frequently than Democratic likely voters (38%).

### Ohio Poll Methodology

These findings are based on the most recent Ohio Poll conducted by the Institute for Policy Research at the University of Cincinnati between September 5 and September 10, 2008.

A random sample of 775 likely voters from throughout the state was interviewed by telephone. In 95 of 100 cases, the statewide estimates will be accurate to plus or minus 3.5 percent.

In addition to sampling error, there are other sources of variation inherent in public opinion studies, such as non-response, question wording, or context effects that can introduce error or bias.

Reported percentages may not total to 100% due to rounding.

Results reported for subgroups have potential for somewhat larger variation than those for the entire population.

Respondents to the Ohio Poll were asked:

- “How confident are you that the current election process in Ohio produces fair election outcomes . . . are you . . . very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident, or not at all confident?”
- “Thinking about the 2004 presidential election . . . how confident are you that your ballot was counted accurately in the 2004 presidential election . . . are you . . . very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident, or not at all confident?” (ASKED ONLY OF THOSE WHO VOTED IN 2004.)
- “And, thinking about the next presidential election in November . . . how confident are you that your ballot will be counted accurately in the November presidential election . . . are you . . . very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident, or not at all confident?”

#### Confidence in Current Election Process in Ohio

	<u>Very Confident</u>	<u>Somewhat Confident</u>	<u>Not Too Confident</u>	<u>Not at All Confident</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	
September 2008 (Latest)	40%	44%	11%	4%	*	(N=774)

#### Confidence That Ballot Will be Counted Accurately in 2008

	<u>Very Confident</u>	<u>Somewhat Confident</u>	<u>Not Too Confident</u>	<u>Not at All Confident</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	
September 2008 (Latest)	52%	40%	5%	3%	*	(N=772)

#### Confidence That Ballot Was Counted Accurately in 2004

	<u>Very Confident</u>	<u>Somewhat Confident</u>	<u>Not Too Confident</u>	<u>Not at All Confident</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	
September 2008 (Latest)	55%	30%	8%	7%	1%	(N=688)

\* Less than one percent.

## Ohio Poll #115, September 2008

**Question 9: How confident are you that the current election process in Ohio produces fair election outcomes . . . are you . . . very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident, or not at all confident?**

		Very Confident	Somewhat Confident	Not Too Confident	Not at All Confident	DON'T KNOW
Ohio Likely Voters		40%	44%	11%	4%	0%
Age of Respondent	18 to 29	32%	52%	13%	3%	
	30 to 45	44%	45%	9%	2%	1%
	46 to 64	45%	39%	10%	7%	1%
	65 and over	37%	48%	11%	4%	
Race	African-American*	25%	40%	23%	13%	
	White	43%	45%	9%	4%	1%
Sex	Male	45%	39%	11%	4%	1%
	Female	36%	48%	10%	5%	0%
Sex and Race Combined Variable	African-American*	25%	40%	23%	13%	
	White male	45%	42%	9%	4%	1%
	White female	41%	47%	9%	3%	0%
Education	Less than high school*	22%	61%	5%	6%	6%
	High school graduate	34%	46%	15%	4%	0%
	Some college	41%	43%	12%	4%	
	College graduate	46%	42%	6%	5%	0%
Geographical Region	Northeast Ohio	40%	45%	11%	3%	0%
	Northwest Ohio	33%	52%	8%	7%	
	Central Ohio	45%	39%	11%	4%	1%
	Southeast Ohio*	33%	54%	9%	2%	2%
	Southwest Ohio	43%	40%	11%	5%	
Ideology	Liberal	34%	41%	12%	12%	1%
	Moderate	36%	49%	12%	3%	0%
	Conservative	51%	40%	6%	3%	0%
Party Identification	Democrat	26%	52%	15%	7%	1%
	Independent*	31%	47%	15%	5%	1%
	Republican	58%	37%	3%	2%	

Ohio Poll #115, September 2008  
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\*Note: Number of respondents is 75 or less. Additional caution should be taken when interpreting the findings of this subgroup because of the potential for larger variation.

## Ohio Poll #115, September 2008

**Question 11: Thinking about the 2004 presidential election . . . how confident are you that your ballot was counted accurately in the 2004 presidential election . . . are you . . . very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident, or not at all confident? [ASKED ONLY OF THOSE WHO VOTED IN 2004]**

		Very Confident	Somewhat Confident	Not Too Confident	Not at All Confident	DON'T KNOW
Ohio Likely Voters		55%	30%	8%	7%	1%
Age of Respondent	18 to 29*	64%	17%	17%	2%	
	30 to 45	54%	36%	3%	7%	
	46 to 64	55%	31%	6%	7%	0%
	65 and over	57%	25%	12%	4%	1%
Race	African-American*	15%	40%	16%	29%	
	White	59%	29%	7%	4%	1%
Sex	Male	63%	25%	5%	6%	1%
	Female	49%	34%	10%	7%	0%
Sex and Race Combined Variable	African-American*	15%	40%	16%	29%	
	White male	65%	25%	4%	5%	1%
	White female	55%	33%	8%	4%	0%
Education	Less than high school*	50%	16%	11%	23%	
	High school graduate	45%	39%	8%	7%	1%
	Some college	56%	28%	8%	7%	1%
	College graduate	61%	27%	7%	5%	0%
Geographical Region	Northeast Ohio	55%	25%	11%	8%	1%
	Northwest Ohio	51%	35%	3%	9%	2%
	Central Ohio	56%	33%	5%	6%	
	Southeast Ohio*	48%	45%	6%	1%	
	Southwest Ohio	59%	29%	7%	5%	0%
Ideology	Liberal	43%	30%	14%	13%	0%
	Moderate	51%	35%	9%	5%	1%
	Conservative	69%	24%	2%	4%	1%
Party Identification	Democrat	38%	35%	14%	11%	1%
	Independent*	44%	47%	7%		1%
	Republican	72%	23%	2%	3%	0%

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**Question 12: And, thinking about the next presidential election in November . . . how confident are you that your ballot will be counted accurately in the November presidential election . . . are you . . . very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident, or not at all confident?**

		Very Confident	Somewhat Confident	Not Too Confident	Not at All Confident	DON'T KNOW
Ohio Likely Voters		52%	40%	5%	3%	0%
Age of Respondent	18 to 29	45%	48%	2%	5%	
	30 to 45	50%	43%	4%	3%	0%
	46 to 64	55%	37%	5%	3%	0%
	65 and over	56%	32%	8%	4%	0%
Race	African-American*	18%	55%	12%	15%	
	White	56%	38%	4%	2%	0%
Sex	Male	54%	38%	4%	4%	1%
	Female	50%	41%	6%	3%	0%
Sex and Race Combined Variable	African-American*	18%	55%	12%	15%	
	White male	57%	37%	4%	2%	1%
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Geographical Region	Northeast Ohio	54%	38%	6%	2%	0%
	Northwest Ohio	43%	46%	3%	8%	
	Central Ohio	59%	34%	4%	2%	1%
	Southeast Ohio*	35%	58%	6%		
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Party Identification	Democrat	38%	50%	8%	4%	0%
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	Republican	69%	27%	2%	2%	0%

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