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QUESTIONS ABOUT THE POLL: TOM JENSEN 919-744-6312

Obama beats Palin, Gingrich in S.D., Thune would rout

Raleigh, N.C. – Unless the GOP nominates favorite son John Thune, South Dakota could become a marginally competitive presidential swing state in 2012. President Obama lost to John McCain by less than nine points in 2008, closer than the state usually comes to turning blue. But the president trails Mike Huckabee and Mitt Romney, the two strongest challengers right now, by respective 47-41 and 46-40 margins, and beats Newt Gingrich, 44-42, and Sarah Palin, 48-40. Thune, however, would put the state out of reach, winning it, 57-37.

PPP has polled potential candidates Romney in Massachusetts, Tim Pawlenty in Minnesota, Rick Santorum in Pennsylvania, Chris Christie in New Jersey, and Rick Perry in Texas against Obama, and none of them has beaten the president in his home state.

South Dakota's independents help to make up for the 48-38 Republican registration advantage over Democrats. They give the president a 53-38 job approval margin toward his decent 42-49 overall, tying with Ohio in the middle of the pack of 41 states in which PPP has tested him in the last year. He wins independents' vote by 13 (against Huckabee) to 26 points (versus Palin), but because unaffiliated voters like Thune equally as well as the president, they go for their senator by a 50-43 margin.

Thune is also moderately popular across the aisle, with a third of Democrats approving of his job performance toward his 58-31 overall, making him the fifth most popular of 77 senators PPP has measured. As such, Thune takes 23% of Democrats' support against the president, while the others can pull only 9% (Gingrich) to 13% (Huckabee).

The disparity between the Palin and Thune matchups is most clearly explained by the fact that Obama pulls 83% of his party to Palin's 67% of hers, while Thune flips that, taking 85% of the GOP to Obama's 70% of Democrats.

“John Thune is one of the few potential Republican Presidential candidates for next year whose home state voters seem really supportive of,” said Dean Debnam, President of Public Policy Polling. “Meanwhile Sarah Palin being down 8 in South Dakota may be the strongest evidence yet that her nomination would be a disaster for the GOP.”

PPP surveyed 1,045 South Dakota voters from January 28th to 30th. The survey's margin of error is +/-3.0%. Other factors, such as refusal to be interviewed and weighting, may introduce additional error that is more difficult to quantify.



South Dakota Survey Results

Q1 Do you approve or disapprove of President Barack Obama's job performance?

Approve 42%
Disapprove..... 49%
Not sure 9%

Q2 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Newt Gingrich?

Favorable..... 31%
Unfavorable 43%
Not sure 26%

Q3 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Mike Huckabee?

Favorable..... 40%
Unfavorable 30%
Not sure 29%

Q4 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Sarah Palin?

Favorable..... 37%
Unfavorable 55%
Not sure 8%

Q5 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Mitt Romney?

Favorable..... 35%
Unfavorable 34%
Not sure 32%

Q6 Do you approve or disapprove of Senator John Thune's job performance?

Approve 58%
Disapprove..... 31%
Not sure 10%

Q7 If the candidates for President next year were Democrat Barack Obama and Republican Newt Gingrich, who would you vote for?

Barack Obama..... 44%
Newt Gingrich 42%
Undecided..... 14%

Q8 If the candidates for President next year were Democrat Barack Obama and Republican Mike Huckabee, who would you vote for?

Barack Obama..... 41%
Mike Huckabee 47%
Undecided..... 12%

Q9 If the candidates for President next year were Democrat Barack Obama and Republican Sarah Palin, who would you vote for?

Barack Obama..... 48%
Sarah Palin 40%
Undecided..... 12%

Q10 If the candidates for President next year were Democrat Barack Obama and Republican Mitt Romney, who would you vote for?

Barack Obama..... 40%
Mitt Romney..... 46%
Undecided..... 14%

Q11 If the candidates for President next year were Democrat Barack Obama and Republican John Thune, who would you vote for?

Barack Obama..... 37%
John Thune..... 57%
Undecided..... 6%

Q12 Do you want John Thune to run for President next year?

Yes..... 41% *Not sure* 18%
No 41%





Q13 Who did you vote for President in 2008?

<i>John McCain</i>	50%
<i>Barack Obama</i>	43%
<i>Someone else/Don't remember</i>	7%

Q14 Would you describe yourself as a liberal, moderate, or conservative?

<i>Liberal</i>	13%
<i>Moderate</i>	44%
<i>Conservative</i>	43%

Q15 If you are a woman, press 1. If a man, press 2.

<i>Woman</i>	52%
<i>Man</i>	48%

Q16 If you are a Democrat, press 1. If a Republican, press 2. If you are an independent or identify with another party, press 3.

<i>Democrat</i>	38%
<i>Republican</i>	48%
<i>Independent/Other</i>	14%

Q17 If you are white, press 1. If other, press 2.

<i>White</i>	95%
<i>Other</i>	5%

Q18 If you are 18 to 29 years old, press 1. If 30 to 45, press 2. If 46 to 65, press 3. If you are older than 65, press 4.

<i>18 to 29</i>	10%
<i>30 to 45</i>	28%
<i>46 to 65</i>	41%
<i>Older than 65</i>	21%





Crosstabs

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone else/Don't remember
Obama Approval				
Approve	42%	9%	85%	16%
Disapprove	49%	83%	7%	66%
Not sure	9%	8%	8%	18%

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone else/Don't remember
Gingrich Favorability				
Favorable	31%	52%	9%	13%
Unfavorable	43%	22%	67%	44%
Not sure	26%	26%	24%	42%

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone else/Don't remember
Huckabee Favorability				
Favorable	40%	60%	18%	36%
Unfavorable	30%	18%	46%	24%
Not sure	29%	22%	36%	40%

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone else/Don't remember
Palin Favorability				
Favorable	37%	64%	6%	32%
Unfavorable	55%	26%	88%	54%
Not sure	8%	10%	6%	14%





Crosstabs

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone else/Don't remember
Romney Favorability				
Favorable	35%	51%	18%	24%
Unfavorable	34%	22%	48%	29%
Not sure	32%	27%	34%	47%

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone else/Don't remember
Thune Approval				
Approve	58%	83%	30%	56%
Disapprove	31%	9%	59%	23%
Not sure	10%	8%	11%	21%

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone else/Don't remember
Obama/Gingrich				
Barack Obama	44%	9%	86%	26%
New t Gingrich	42%	77%	5%	31%
Undecided	14%	14%	8%	42%

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone else/Don't remember
Obama/Huckabee				
Barack Obama	41%	7%	84%	18%
Mike Huckabee	47%	81%	7%	44%
Undecided	12%	11%	9%	38%





Crosstabs

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone else/Don't remember
Obama/Palin				
Barack Obama	48%	12%	92%	33%
Sarah Palin	40%	73%	4%	37%
Undecided	12%	15%	4%	30%

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone else/Don't remember
Obama/Romney				
Barack Obama	40%	6%	83%	22%
Mitt Romney	46%	80%	7%	41%
Undecided	14%	14%	10%	36%

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone else/Don't remember
Obama/Thune				
Barack Obama	37%	7%	76%	14%
John Thune	57%	88%	19%	67%
Undecided	6%	5%	6%	19%

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone else/Don't remember
Want Thune to Run for Pres?				
Yes	41%	54%	26%	43%
No	41%	25%	61%	32%
Not sure	18%	22%	13%	25%





Crosstabs

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Obama Approval				
Approve	42%	79%	60%	12%
Disapprove	49%	16%	29%	80%
Not sure	9%	4%	10%	8%

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Gingrich Favorability				
Favorable	31%	9%	16%	53%
Unfavorable	43%	70%	54%	24%
Not sure	26%	21%	30%	24%

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Huckabee Favorability				
Favorable	40%	14%	29%	60%
Unfavorable	30%	54%	35%	19%
Not sure	29%	32%	37%	21%

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Palin Favorability				
Favorable	37%	14%	18%	63%
Unfavorable	55%	83%	73%	28%
Not sure	8%	4%	9%	9%





Crosstabs

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Romney Favorability				
Favorable	35%	15%	28%	47%
Unfavorable	34%	58%	36%	24%
Not sure	32%	26%	36%	29%

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Thune Approval				
Approve	58%	24%	46%	81%
Disapprove	31%	65%	40%	12%
Not sure	10%	11%	14%	6%

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Obama/Gingrich				
Barack Obama	44%	82%	62%	14%
Newt Gingrich	42%	13%	23%	71%
Undecided	14%	5%	15%	15%

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Obama/Huckabee				
Barack Obama	41%	79%	57%	13%
Mike Huckabee	47%	14%	27%	77%
Undecided	12%	7%	15%	11%





Crosstabs

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Obama/Palin				
Barack Obama	48%	81%	69%	17%
Sarah Palin	40%	10%	21%	69%
Undecided	12%	9%	10%	14%

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Obama/Romney				
Barack Obama	40%	80%	57%	11%
Mitt Romney	46%	13%	27%	74%
Undecided	14%	7%	16%	15%

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Obama/Thune				
Barack Obama	37%	74%	52%	10%
John Thune	57%	21%	40%	85%
Undecided	6%	5%	8%	6%

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Want Thune to Run for Pres?				
Yes	41%	24%	33%	54%
No	41%	60%	49%	26%
Not sure	18%	16%	17%	20%





Crosstabs

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Obama Approval			
Approve	42%	45%	39%
Disapprove	49%	46%	53%
Not sure	9%	9%	8%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Gingrich Favorability			
Favorable	31%	22%	40%
Unfavorable	43%	44%	43%
Not sure	26%	34%	18%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Huckabee Favorability			
Favorable	40%	37%	44%
Unfavorable	30%	27%	34%
Not sure	29%	36%	22%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Palin Favorability			
Favorable	37%	30%	44%
Unfavorable	55%	59%	50%
Not sure	8%	10%	6%





Crosstabs

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Romney Favorability			
Favorable	35%	31%	38%
Unfavorable	34%	30%	38%
Not sure	32%	39%	24%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Thune Approval			
Approve	58%	57%	59%
Disapprove	31%	29%	34%
Not sure	10%	13%	7%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Obama/Gingrich			
Barack Obama	44%	45%	43%
Newt Gingrich	42%	38%	47%
Undecided	14%	17%	10%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Obama/Huckabee			
Barack Obama	41%	43%	39%
Mike Huckabee	47%	43%	50%
Undecided	12%	14%	11%





Crosstabs

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Obama/Palin			
Barack Obama	48%	52%	44%
Sarah Palin	40%	35%	46%
Undecided	12%	13%	9%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Obama/Romney			
Barack Obama	40%	42%	39%
Mitt Romney	46%	43%	48%
Undecided	14%	15%	13%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Obama/Thune			
Barack Obama	37%	39%	35%
John Thune	57%	54%	59%
Undecided	6%	7%	6%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Want Thune to Run for Pres?			
Yes	41%	41%	41%
No	41%	37%	45%
Not sure	18%	22%	14%





Crosstabs

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Obama Approval				
Approve	42%	76%	12%	53%
Disapprove	49%	14%	80%	38%
Not sure	9%	10%	8%	9%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Gingrich Favorability				
Favorable	31%	9%	50%	21%
Unfavorable	43%	66%	24%	51%
Not sure	26%	25%	26%	28%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Huckabee Favorability				
Favorable	40%	21%	57%	35%
Unfavorable	30%	43%	19%	38%
Not sure	29%	36%	25%	28%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Palin Favorability				
Favorable	37%	10%	60%	30%
Unfavorable	55%	84%	30%	62%
Not sure	8%	6%	10%	8%





Crosstabs

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Romney Favorability				
Favorable	35%	16%	50%	31%
Unfavorable	34%	47%	22%	39%
Not sure	32%	37%	28%	30%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Thune Approval				
Approve	58%	33%	81%	49%
Disapprove	31%	56%	11%	34%
Not sure	10%	11%	8%	16%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Obama/Gingrich				
Barack Obama	44%	79%	13%	56%
Newt Gingrich	42%	9%	72%	31%
Undecided	14%	12%	15%	14%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Obama/Huckabee				
Barack Obama	41%	77%	11%	50%
Mike Huckabee	47%	13%	76%	37%
Undecided	12%	10%	13%	13%





Crosstabs

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Obama/Palin				
Barack Obama	48%	83%	18%	57%
Sarah Palin	40%	10%	67%	31%
Undecided	12%	6%	15%	13%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Obama/Romney				
Barack Obama	40%	77%	9%	49%
Mitt Romney	46%	12%	76%	32%
Undecided	14%	11%	15%	18%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Obama/Thune				
Barack Obama	37%	70%	10%	43%
John Thune	57%	23%	85%	50%
Undecided	6%	7%	6%	7%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Want Thune to Run for Pres?				
Yes	41%	26%	54%	37%
No	41%	60%	25%	44%
Not sure	18%	14%	22%	19%





Crosstabs

	Base	Race	
		White	Other
Obama Approval			
Approve	42%	41%	66%
Disapprove	49%	51%	27%
Not sure	9%	9%	8%

	Base	Race	
		White	Other
Gingrich Favorability			
Favorable	31%	31%	26%
Unfavorable	43%	43%	55%
Not sure	26%	26%	20%

	Base	Race	
		White	Other
Huckabee Favorability			
Favorable	40%	41%	30%
Unfavorable	30%	30%	29%
Not sure	29%	29%	42%

	Base	Race	
		White	Other
Palin Favorability			
Favorable	37%	37%	27%
Unfavorable	55%	54%	70%
Not sure	8%	9%	3%





Crosstabs

	Base	Race	
		White	Other
Romney Favorability			
Favorable	35%	35%	34%
Unfavorable	34%	34%	36%
Not sure	32%	32%	30%

	Base	Race	
		White	Other
Thune Approval			
Approve	58%	59%	48%
Disapprove	31%	31%	36%
Not sure	10%	10%	16%

	Base	Race	
		White	Other
Obama/Gingrich			
Barack Obama	44%	42%	71%
Newt Gingrich	42%	44%	17%
Undecided	14%	14%	12%

	Base	Race	
		White	Other
Obama/Huckabee			
Barack Obama	41%	40%	63%
Mike Huckabee	47%	48%	23%
Undecided	12%	12%	14%





Crosstabs

	Base	Race	
		White	Other
Obama/Palin			
Barack Obama	48%	47%	72%
Sarah Palin	40%	41%	21%
Undecided	12%	12%	8%

	Base	Race	
		White	Other
Obama/Romney			
Barack Obama	40%	39%	60%
Mitt Romney	46%	47%	26%
Undecided	14%	14%	15%

	Base	Race	
		White	Other
Obama/Thune			
Barack Obama	37%	36%	55%
John Thune	57%	58%	34%
Undecided	6%	6%	10%

	Base	Race	
		White	Other
Want Thune to Run for Pres?			
Yes	41%	41%	34%
No	41%	40%	52%
Not sure	18%	19%	14%





Crosstabs

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Obama Approval					
Approve	42%	47%	37%	43%	44%
Disapprove	49%	40%	53%	50%	49%
Not sure	9%	13%	10%	7%	7%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Gingrich Favorability					
Favorable	31%	18%	31%	31%	36%
Unfavorable	43%	40%	38%	47%	44%
Not sure	26%	42%	31%	23%	19%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Huckabee Favorability					
Favorable	40%	24%	38%	44%	43%
Unfavorable	30%	31%	30%	31%	29%
Not sure	29%	45%	32%	25%	28%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Palin Favorability					
Favorable	37%	29%	38%	38%	38%
Unfavorable	55%	60%	53%	56%	53%
Not sure	8%	11%	10%	7%	9%





Crosstabs

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Romney Favorability					
Favorable	35%	24%	33%	36%	38%
Unfavorable	34%	29%	34%	37%	30%
Not sure	32%	47%	33%	27%	32%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Thune Approval					
Approve	58%	47%	61%	59%	59%
Disapprove	31%	33%	29%	32%	33%
Not sure	10%	20%	10%	9%	9%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Obama/Gingrich					
Barack Obama	44%	53%	40%	45%	44%
Newt Gingrich	42%	31%	46%	42%	44%
Undecided	14%	16%	14%	13%	12%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Obama/Huckabee					
Barack Obama	41%	53%	38%	40%	42%
Mike Huckabee	47%	36%	49%	48%	47%
Undecided	12%	11%	13%	12%	12%





Crosstabs

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Obama/Palin					
Barack Obama	48%	58%	44%	49%	48%
Sarah Palin	40%	33%	46%	39%	38%
Undecided	12%	9%	11%	12%	14%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Obama/Romney					
Barack Obama	40%	56%	34%	41%	40%
Mitt Romney	46%	33%	51%	45%	46%
Undecided	14%	11%	15%	15%	14%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Obama/Thune					
Barack Obama	37%	42%	31%	38%	42%
John Thune	57%	51%	64%	56%	50%
Undecided	6%	7%	5%	6%	8%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Want Thune to Run for Pres?					
Yes	41%	49%	47%	40%	31%
No	41%	36%	36%	42%	47%
Not sure	18%	15%	18%	18%	22%

