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In SC, Obama tops Palin, Gingrich, trails DeMint narrowly

Raleigh, N.C. – Except for 1976, South Carolina has not voted for a Democratic presidential candidate since 1960, when the South was still blue. But add the Palmetto State to the growing list of previously unreachable stars for President Obama, as he beats Sarah Palin, 47-41, and Newt Gingrich, 44-43, while trailing native son Jim DeMint only 45-47, Mike Huckabee, 43-49, and Mitt Romney, 42-49. John McCain prevailed here by a slightly larger nine points, already much closer than 2004 and other recent elections.

The president manages to hold more of his base in each matchup than the Republicans do of theirs. In most red states, Romney and Huckabee, as here typically the two strongest, outdo the president in that department. Bolstered by the large African-American population which has remained behind him through thick and thin, Obama unites 89% or 90% of Democrats regardless of his opponent, a good sign for his ability to excite and turn out the base. Palin pulls only 76% and Gingrich 80% of the GOP, but the others take either 86% or 87%, also pretty good, especially when they have a five-point registration advantage built in.

Palin does so poorly not only because only about three quarters of the GOP is behind her but because Obama builds an enormous 50-32 edge with independents over her. A pretty sizeable 22% of voters do not affiliate with either party, and except for a narrow 40-36 lead over Gingrich, they favor the Republicans in the other matchups by two (versus DeMint) or eight points (against both Romney and Huckabee).

With a 49-34 approval rating, DeMint is tied for the 15th most popular senator in his home state of the 78 PPP has measured in the last year. Less than 60% of Democrats disapprove, but when it comes down to a choice between him and their president, most of the 19% who approve abandon him. The president, for his part, has a pretty decent 44-52 approval rating, about in the middle of the pack of 41 states in which he has been gauged in the last year. Palin and Gingrich are about as unpopular here as in most blue states.

“People forget that South Carolina was a single digit race in 2008,” said Dean Debnam, President of Public Policy Polling. “If Republicans nominate a weak enough candidate and Obama can improve on his share of the white vote he has a chance there.”

PPP surveyed 1,167 South Carolina voters from January 28th to 30th. The survey’s margin of error is +/-2.9%. Other factors, such as refusal to be interviewed and weighting, may introduce additional error that is more difficult to quantify.



South Carolina Survey Results

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

Approve 44%
Disapprove..... 52%
Not sure 4%

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

Favorable..... 32%
Unfavorable 46%
Not sure 21%

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

Favorable..... 48%
Unfavorable 32%
Not sure 20%

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

Favorable..... 34%
Unfavorable 58%
Not sure 8%

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

Favorable..... 42%
Unfavorable 34%
Not sure 24%

Q6 Do you approve or disapprove of Senator Jim DeMint's job performance?

Approve 49%
Disapprove..... 34%
Not sure 17%

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 43%
Undecided..... 12%

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

Barack Obama..... 43%
Mike Huckabee 49%
Undecided..... 8%

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

Barack Obama..... 47%
Sarah Palin 41%
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..... 42%
Mitt Romney..... 49%
Undecided..... 9%

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

Barack Obama..... 45%
Jim DeMint..... 47%
Undecided..... 8%





Q12 Who did you vote for President in 2008?

John McCain..... 53%
Barack Obama..... 40%
Someone Else/Don't Remember..... 7%

Q13 Would you describe yourself as a liberal, moderate, or conservative?

Liberal..... 15%
Moderate..... 44%
Conservative..... 40%

Q14 If you are a woman, press 1. If a man, press 2.

Woman 54%
Man..... 46%

Q15 If you are a Democrat, press 1. If a Republican, press 2. If you are an independent or identify with another party, press 3.

Democrat 37%
Republican..... 42%
Independent/Other..... 22%

Q16 If you are white, press 1. If African-American, press 2. If other, press 3.

White 69%
African-American 26%
Other..... 4%

Q17 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.

18 to 29..... 8%
30 to 45..... 28%
46 to 65..... 44%
Older than 65..... 20%





Crosstabs

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone Else/Don't Remember
Obama Approval				
Approve	44%	11%	91%	15%
Disapprove	52%	84%	6%	78%
Not sure	4%	5%	4%	7%

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone Else/Don't Remember
Gingrich Favorability				
Favorable	32%	51%	7%	38%
Unfavorable	46%	28%	71%	40%
Not sure	21%	21%	22%	22%

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone Else/Don't Remember
Huckabee Favorability				
Favorable	48%	71%	17%	61%
Unfavorable	32%	18%	55%	6%
Not sure	20%	11%	28%	33%

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone Else/Don't Remember
Palin Favorability				
Favorable	34%	55%	5%	49%
Unfavorable	58%	35%	91%	38%
Not sure	8%	9%	4%	13%





Crosstabs

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone Else/Don't Remember
Romney Favorability				
Favorable	42%	58%	19%	51%
Unfavorable	34%	22%	54%	10%
Not sure	24%	19%	27%	39%

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone Else/Don't Remember
DeMint Approval				
Approve	49%	75%	14%	52%
Disapprove	34%	15%	62%	20%
Not sure	17%	11%	24%	28%

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone Else/Don't Remember
Obama/Gingrich				
Barack Obama	44%	11%	93%	13%
Newt Gingrich	43%	71%	5%	62%
Undecided	12%	18%	3%	26%

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone Else/Don't Remember
Obama/Huckabee				
Barack Obama	43%	11%	90%	6%
Mike Huckabee	49%	78%	7%	73%
Undecided	8%	11%	3%	21%





Crosstabs

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone Else/Don't Remember
Obama/Palin				
Barack Obama	47%	14%	95%	15%
Sarah Palin	41%	68%	4%	58%
Undecided	12%	18%	1%	27%

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone Else/Don't Remember
Obama/Romney				
Barack Obama	42%	8%	92%	11%
Mitt Romney	49%	81%	5%	55%
Undecided	9%	10%	3%	34%

	Base	2008 Vote		
		John McCain	Barack Obama	Someone Else/Don't Remember
Obama/DeMint				
Barack Obama	45%	11%	93%	17%
Jim DeMint	47%	78%	5%	63%
Undecided	8%	11%	3%	20%

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Obama Approval				
Approve	44%	79%	55%	20%
Disapprove	52%	18%	41%	76%
Not sure	4%	4%	5%	4%





Crosstabs

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Gingrich Favorability				
Favorable	32%	15%	16%	56%
Unfavorable	46%	63%	62%	23%
Not sure	21%	22%	22%	21%

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Huckabee Favorability				
Favorable	48%	25%	34%	73%
Unfavorable	32%	45%	41%	17%
Not sure	20%	31%	25%	10%

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Palin Favorability				
Favorable	34%	13%	21%	57%
Unfavorable	58%	78%	74%	33%
Not sure	8%	9%	5%	10%

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Romney Favorability				
Favorable	42%	33%	37%	50%
Unfavorable	34%	40%	39%	27%
Not sure	24%	27%	24%	23%





Crosstabs

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
DeMint Approval				
Approve	49%	29%	35%	71%
Disapprove	34%	50%	46%	15%
Not sure	17%	21%	19%	14%

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Obama/Gingrich				
Barack Obama	44%	84%	56%	17%
Newt Gingrich	43%	13%	31%	68%
Undecided	12%	3%	13%	15%

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Obama/Huckabee				
Barack Obama	43%	81%	54%	17%
Mike Huckabee	49%	16%	33%	78%
Undecided	8%	3%	12%	6%

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Obama/Palin				
Barack Obama	47%	82%	62%	18%
Sarah Palin	41%	13%	26%	68%
Undecided	12%	5%	12%	14%





Crosstabs

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Obama/Romney				
Barack Obama	42%	81%	53%	16%
Mitt Romney	49%	14%	37%	74%
Undecided	9%	5%	10%	9%

	Base	Ideology		
		Liberal	Moderate	Conservative
Obama/DeMint				
Barack Obama	45%	83%	56%	17%
Jim DeMint	47%	15%	32%	75%
Undecided	8%	2%	11%	8%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Obama Approval			
Approve	44%	51%	36%
Disapprove	52%	45%	60%
Not sure	4%	5%	4%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Gingrich Favorability			
Favorable	32%	27%	38%
Unfavorable	46%	43%	50%
Not sure	21%	30%	12%





Crosstabs

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Huckabee Favorability			
Favorable	48%	39%	59%
Unfavorable	32%	33%	31%
Not sure	20%	28%	10%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Palin Favorability			
Favorable	34%	32%	37%
Unfavorable	58%	59%	57%
Not sure	8%	9%	6%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Romney Favorability			
Favorable	42%	37%	48%
Unfavorable	34%	33%	36%
Not sure	24%	30%	16%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
DeMint Approval			
Approve	49%	42%	56%
Disapprove	34%	36%	32%
Not sure	17%	22%	11%





Crosstabs

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Obama/Gingrich			
Barack Obama	44%	51%	37%
Newt Gingrich	43%	40%	47%
Undecided	12%	9%	16%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Obama/Huckabee			
Barack Obama	43%	51%	34%
Mike Huckabee	49%	40%	59%
Undecided	8%	9%	7%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Obama/Palin			
Barack Obama	47%	53%	41%
Sarah Palin	41%	35%	49%
Undecided	12%	12%	11%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Obama/Romney			
Barack Obama	42%	51%	33%
Mitt Romney	49%	42%	56%
Undecided	9%	7%	11%





Crosstabs

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Obama/DeMint			
Barack Obama	45%	51%	37%
Jim DeMint	47%	38%	58%
Undecided	8%	11%	5%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Obama Approval				
Approve	44%	89%	8%	39%
Disapprove	52%	7%	89%	54%
Not sure	4%	4%	3%	7%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Gingrich Favorability				
Favorable	32%	10%	59%	17%
Unfavorable	46%	66%	22%	60%
Not sure	21%	24%	18%	23%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Huckabee Favorability				
Favorable	48%	20%	75%	45%
Unfavorable	32%	54%	12%	34%
Not sure	20%	26%	13%	21%





Crosstabs

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Palin Favorability				
Favorable	34%	7%	62%	28%
Unfavorable	58%	91%	27%	62%
Not sure	8%	2%	11%	10%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Romney Favorability				
Favorable	42%	22%	64%	31%
Unfavorable	34%	56%	16%	35%
Not sure	24%	23%	20%	34%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
DeMint Approval				
Approve	49%	19%	78%	41%
Disapprove	34%	58%	10%	42%
Not sure	17%	23%	12%	17%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Obama/Gingrich				
Barack Obama	44%	89%	8%	40%
Newt Gingrich	43%	5%	80%	36%
Undecided	12%	6%	12%	24%





Crosstabs

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Obama/Huckabee				
Barack Obama	43%	90%	6%	36%
Mike Huckabee	49%	5%	87%	48%
Undecided	8%	5%	7%	16%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Obama/Palin				
Barack Obama	47%	90%	8%	50%
Sarah Palin	41%	7%	76%	32%
Undecided	12%	3%	16%	18%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Obama/Romney				
Barack Obama	42%	89%	4%	38%
Mitt Romney	49%	6%	86%	46%
Undecided	9%	5%	9%	16%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Obama/DeMint				
Barack Obama	45%	89%	7%	40%
Jim DeMint	47%	6%	86%	42%
Undecided	8%	5%	7%	18%





Crosstabs

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
Obama Approval				
Approve	44%	26%	86%	72%
Disapprove	52%	69%	11%	25%
Not sure	4%	5%	3%	4%

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
Gingrich Favorability				
Favorable	32%	42%	10%	8%
Unfavorable	46%	39%	63%	65%
Not sure	21%	19%	28%	27%

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
Huckabee Favorability				
Favorable	48%	59%	25%	27%
Unfavorable	32%	27%	45%	42%
Not sure	20%	15%	30%	30%

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
Palin Favorability				
Favorable	34%	46%	7%	11%
Unfavorable	58%	46%	86%	85%
Not sure	8%	8%	7%	4%





Crosstabs

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
Romney Favorability				
Favorable	42%	51%	18%	27%
Unfavorable	34%	29%	50%	34%
Not sure	24%	20%	32%	39%

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
DeMint Approval				
Approve	49%	61%	22%	8%
Disapprove	34%	26%	52%	51%
Not sure	17%	12%	26%	42%

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
Obama/Gingrich				
Barack Obama	44%	26%	88%	72%
Newt Gingrich	43%	59%	7%	15%
Undecided	12%	15%	4%	13%

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
Obama/Huckabee				
Barack Obama	43%	26%	85%	59%
Mike Huckabee	49%	64%	13%	21%
Undecided	8%	10%	2%	19%





Crosstabs

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
Obama/Palin				
Barack Obama	47%	30%	89%	72%
Sarah Palin	41%	57%	5%	11%
Undecided	12%	13%	6%	17%

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
Obama/Romney				
Barack Obama	42%	24%	86%	73%
Mitt Romney	49%	66%	9%	8%
Undecided	9%	10%	4%	19%

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
Obama/DeMint				
Barack Obama	45%	26%	87%	79%
Jim DeMint	47%	64%	10%	8%
Undecided	8%	10%	3%	13%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Obama Approval					
Approve	44%	62%	42%	48%	34%
Disapprove	52%	38%	56%	47%	60%
Not sure	4%	-	2%	5%	6%





Crosstabs

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Gingrich Favorability					
Favorable	32%	23%	27%	29%	49%
Unfavorable	46%	38%	54%	49%	33%
Not sure	21%	38%	19%	22%	18%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Huckabee Favorability					
Favorable	48%	36%	44%	48%	60%
Unfavorable	32%	29%	40%	34%	18%
Not sure	20%	36%	17%	17%	22%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Palin Favorability					
Favorable	34%	31%	27%	33%	49%
Unfavorable	58%	62%	69%	58%	41%
Not sure	8%	8%	4%	8%	10%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Romney Favorability					
Favorable	42%	31%	42%	38%	55%
Unfavorable	34%	15%	40%	39%	25%
Not sure	24%	54%	19%	24%	20%





Crosstabs

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
DeMint Approval					
Approve	49%	38%	54%	43%	56%
Disapprove	34%	46%	27%	39%	29%
Not sure	17%	15%	19%	17%	15%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Obama/Gingrich					
Barack Obama	44%	62%	44%	48%	32%
New t Gingrich	43%	31%	44%	39%	58%
Undecided	12%	8%	13%	14%	10%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Obama/Huckabee					
Barack Obama	43%	62%	48%	44%	27%
Mike Huckabee	49%	31%	50%	45%	62%
Undecided	8%	8%	2%	11%	11%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Obama/Palin					
Barack Obama	47%	62%	50%	49%	33%
Sarah Palin	41%	31%	44%	37%	52%
Undecided	12%	8%	6%	14%	15%





Crosstabs

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Obama/Romney					
Barack Obama	42%	54%	44%	45%	30%
Mitt Romney	49%	38%	50%	45%	59%
Undecided	9%	8%	6%	10%	10%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Obama/DeMint					
Barack Obama	45%	64%	44%	47%	33%
Jim DeMint	47%	29%	54%	42%	55%
Undecided	8%	7%	2%	11%	12%

