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Obama ties Palin but trails everyone else in Tennessee

Raleigh, N.C. – Tennessee was a rare state where Barack Obama performed worse in 2008 than John Kerry did in 2004, albeit by less than one point on the margin. But the state now joins red-turned-blue neighbors North Carolina and Virginia as states where Obama has actually improved since the last election. While he lost to John McCain by 15 points last time, he now trails next year's crop of Republican frontrunners by no more than 12.

Neighboring Arkansas' Mike Huckabee typically does best against the president in Southern states, and he comes closest to matching McCain's margin of victory here, 53-41. The other candidate who usually runs closest to Obama, Mitt Romney, beats him here, 48-41. But neighboring Georgia's Newt Gingrich can manage only a 46-43 lead, and Sarah Palin actually ties the president at 45%.

President Obama's 42-52 approval rating puts his standing here near the bottom third of the 42 states in which PPP has measured him in the last year. But except Huckabee, none of the Republicans is seen a whole lot better. The former Arkansas governor has a pretty outstanding 50-29 favorability margin because he is liked the best across the partisan spectrum. All the others are seen negatively by both independents and all voters.

Not surprisingly then, Huckabee is the only candidate who soundly beats the president with independents, 51-40. Romney manages an inconsequential 43-42 lead, but against Gingrich, Obama wins, 43-35, and he prevails 49-38 against Palin.

The secret to these candidates maintaining at least a tie against the president overall is that they all capitalize on the 43-37 Republican turnout advantage by pulling more Democratic voters from Obama than he does Republicans from them. Palin and Gingrich only barely do so, hence their razor-thin horserace results. But Huckabee takes 13% and Romney 12% of Obama's partisans while each losing only 4% the other way. Also, while a good chunk of Republicans are on the fence about whether to support Palin, Romney, or Gingrich, Huckabee locks up 90% of the GOP versus the others' 80-84%. Obama himself maintains 83-88% of Democrats' votes, and few Democrats are undecided.

“Tennessee is further proof that a Sarah Palin nomination would lead to an Obama landslide, but otherwise, the state should stay in the GOP’s hands,” said Dean Debnam, President of Public Policy Polling.

PPP surveyed 500 Tennessee voters from February 9th to 13th. The survey’s margin of error is +/-4.4%. Other factors, such as refusal to be interviewed and weighting, may introduce additional error that is more difficult to quantify.



Tennessee Survey Results

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

Approve 42%
Disapprove..... 52%
Not sure 6%

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

Favorable..... 30%
Unfavorable 49%
Not sure 21%

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

Favorable..... 50%
Unfavorable 29%
Not sure 21%

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

Favorable..... 39%
Unfavorable 51%
Not sure 10%

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

Favorable..... 33%
Unfavorable 41%
Not sure 26%

Q6 If the candidates for President next year were Democrat Barack Obama and Republican Newt Gingrich, who would you vote for?

Barack Obama..... 43%
Newt Gingrich..... 46%
Undecided..... 11%

Q7 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..... 53%
Undecided..... 6%

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

Barack Obama..... 45%
Sarah Palin..... 45%
Undecided..... 9%

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

Barack Obama..... 41%
Mitt Romney..... 48%
Undecided..... 11%

Q10 Do you approve or disapprove of Governor Bill Haslam's job performance?

Approve 44%
Disapprove..... 17%
Not sure 39%

Q11 Do you approve or disapprove of Senator Lamar Alexander's job performance?

Approve 50%
Disapprove..... 29%
Not sure 21%





Q12 Do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of Bill Frist?

Favorable..... 44%
Unfavorable 22%
Not sure 34%

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

Very liberal..... 8%
Somewhat liberal 15%
Moderate..... 29%
Somewhat conservative..... 24%
Very conservative 25%

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

Woman 55%
Man..... 45%

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..... 43%
Independent/Other..... 20%

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

White 80%
African-American 16%
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..... 10%
30 to 45..... 32%
46 to 65..... 39%
Older than 65..... 19%





Crosstabs

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Obama Approval						
Approve	42%	79%	78%	65%	17%	8%
Disapprove	52%	21%	16%	25%	76%	89%
Not sure	6%	-	6%	10%	7%	2%

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Gingrich Favorability						
Favorable	30%	25%	9%	12%	39%	57%
Unfavorable	49%	63%	76%	64%	38%	21%
Not sure	21%	12%	16%	23%	23%	22%

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Huckabee Favorability						
Favorable	50%	29%	19%	30%	69%	80%
Unfavorable	29%	54%	55%	39%	13%	7%
Not sure	21%	17%	26%	30%	18%	12%

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Palin Favorability						
Favorable	39%	12%	10%	23%	53%	72%
Unfavorable	51%	76%	86%	70%	31%	18%
Not sure	10%	12%	4%	8%	15%	10%





Crosstabs

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Romney Favorability						
Favorable	33%	14%	14%	27%	45%	45%
Unfavorable	41%	69%	56%	41%	31%	32%
Not sure	26%	17%	30%	31%	24%	23%

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Obama/Gingrich						
Barack Obama	43%	79%	81%	66%	16%	8%
Newt Gingrich	46%	19%	14%	21%	65%	84%
Undecided	11%	2%	5%	12%	19%	8%

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Obama/Huckabee						
Barack Obama	41%	79%	79%	61%	16%	6%
Mike Huckabee	53%	19%	16%	32%	76%	90%
Undecided	6%	2%	5%	7%	9%	4%

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Obama/Palin						
Barack Obama	45%	83%	84%	70%	19%	7%
Sarah Palin	45%	12%	12%	22%	67%	82%
Undecided	9%	5%	4%	7%	15%	11%





Crosstabs

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Obama/Romney						
Barack Obama	41%	79%	77%	60%	19%	6%
Mitt Romney	48%	17%	15%	27%	68%	83%
Undecided	11%	5%	9%	13%	13%	11%

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Haslam Approval						
Approve	44%	28%	16%	41%	54%	61%
Disapprove	17%	28%	30%	23%	10%	5%
Not sure	39%	44%	54%	36%	36%	33%

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
Alexander Approval						
Approve	50%	34%	35%	48%	63%	55%
Disapprove	29%	44%	41%	32%	20%	22%
Not sure	21%	22%	24%	20%	17%	23%

	Base	Ideology				
		Very liberal	Somewhat liberal	Moderate	Somewhat conservative	Very conservative
First Favorability						
Favorable	44%	14%	21%	35%	56%	65%
Unfavorable	22%	52%	40%	25%	9%	10%
Not sure	34%	33%	39%	40%	35%	25%





Crosstabs

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Obama Approval			
Approve	42%	45%	39%
Disapprove	52%	46%	58%
Not sure	6%	8%	3%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Gingrich Favorability			
Favorable	30%	27%	34%
Unfavorable	49%	48%	50%
Not sure	21%	25%	15%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Huckabee Favorability			
Favorable	50%	46%	55%
Unfavorable	29%	26%	32%
Not sure	21%	28%	13%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Palin Favorability			
Favorable	39%	37%	42%
Unfavorable	51%	51%	51%
Not sure	10%	12%	8%





Crosstabs

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Romney Favorability			
Favorable	33%	29%	37%
Unfavorable	41%	37%	46%
Not sure	26%	34%	16%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Obama/Gingrich			
Barack Obama	43%	47%	38%
Newt Gingrich	46%	42%	51%
Undecided	11%	11%	11%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Obama/Huckabee			
Barack Obama	41%	45%	35%
Mike Huckabee	53%	47%	61%
Undecided	6%	7%	4%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Obama/Palin			
Barack Obama	45%	49%	41%
Sarah Palin	45%	41%	51%
Undecided	9%	10%	9%





Crosstabs

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Obama/Romney			
Barack Obama	41%	44%	37%
Mitt Romney	48%	43%	54%
Undecided	11%	13%	9%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Haslam Approval			
Approve	44%	41%	48%
Disapprove	17%	13%	22%
Not sure	39%	45%	31%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
Alexander Approval			
Approve	50%	54%	46%
Disapprove	29%	23%	37%
Not sure	21%	23%	17%

	Base	Gender	
		Woman	Man
First Favorability			
Favorable	44%	40%	48%
Unfavorable	22%	18%	26%
Not sure	34%	41%	25%





Crosstabs

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Obama Approval				
Approve	42%	83%	7%	41%
Disapprove	52%	10%	88%	50%
Not sure	6%	6%	5%	9%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Gingrich Favorability				
Favorable	30%	11%	50%	23%
Unfavorable	49%	70%	26%	58%
Not sure	21%	19%	24%	19%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Huckabee Favorability				
Favorable	50%	21%	74%	55%
Unfavorable	29%	49%	11%	28%
Not sure	21%	30%	15%	17%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Palin Favorability				
Favorable	39%	9%	69%	33%
Unfavorable	51%	83%	19%	58%
Not sure	10%	8%	11%	9%





Crosstabs

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Romney Favorability				
Favorable	33%	17%	45%	36%
Unfavorable	41%	54%	30%	40%
Not sure	26%	29%	25%	24%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Obama/Gingrich				
Barack Obama	43%	86%	5%	43%
Newt Gingrich	46%	9%	84%	35%
Undecided	11%	6%	11%	22%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Obama/Huckabee				
Barack Obama	41%	83%	4%	40%
Mike Huckabee	53%	13%	90%	51%
Undecided	6%	4%	6%	9%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Obama/Palin				
Barack Obama	45%	88%	7%	49%
Sarah Palin	45%	9%	80%	38%
Undecided	9%	3%	13%	13%





Crosstabs

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Obama/Romney				
Barack Obama	41%	83%	4%	41%
Mitt Romney	48%	12%	83%	42%
Undecided	11%	6%	13%	17%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Haslam Approval				
Approve	44%	24%	63%	43%
Disapprove	17%	28%	3%	26%
Not sure	39%	49%	33%	32%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
Alexander Approval				
Approve	50%	35%	65%	47%
Disapprove	29%	41%	16%	34%
Not sure	21%	24%	18%	19%

	Base	Party		
		Democrat	Republican	Independent/Other
First Favorability				
Favorable	44%	21%	62%	47%
Unfavorable	22%	36%	7%	26%
Not sure	34%	43%	30%	27%





Crosstabs

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
Obama Approval				
Approve	42%	32%	87%	68%
Disapprove	52%	61%	8%	28%
Not sure	6%	6%	5%	4%

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
Gingrich Favorability				
Favorable	30%	34%	15%	21%
Unfavorable	49%	47%	54%	63%
Not sure	21%	19%	31%	17%

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
Huckabee Favorability				
Favorable	50%	56%	26%	40%
Unfavorable	29%	26%	41%	28%
Not sure	21%	18%	33%	32%

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
Palin Favorability				
Favorable	39%	46%	10%	25%
Unfavorable	51%	46%	72%	71%
Not sure	10%	9%	18%	4%





Crosstabs

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
Romney Favorability				
Favorable	33%	37%	18%	20%
Unfavorable	41%	39%	49%	48%
Not sure	26%	24%	33%	32%

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
Obama/Gingrich				
Barack Obama	43%	32%	90%	68%
Newt Gingrich	46%	55%	8%	28%
Undecided	11%	13%	3%	4%

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
Obama/Huckabee				
Barack Obama	41%	29%	90%	68%
Mike Huckabee	53%	63%	10%	32%
Undecided	6%	8%	-	-

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
Obama/Palin				
Barack Obama	45%	35%	90%	68%
Sarah Palin	45%	54%	8%	28%
Undecided	9%	11%	3%	4%





Crosstabs

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
Obama/Romney				
Barack Obama	41%	30%	90%	64%
Mitt Romney	48%	57%	10%	20%
Undecided	11%	13%	-	16%

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
Haslam Approval				
Approve	44%	50%	21%	28%
Disapprove	17%	15%	26%	20%
Not sure	39%	35%	54%	52%

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
Alexander Approval				
Approve	50%	52%	44%	40%
Disapprove	29%	28%	33%	36%
Not sure	21%	20%	23%	24%

	Base	Race		
		White	African-American	Other
First Favorability				
Favorable	44%	47%	31%	32%
Unfavorable	22%	21%	28%	20%
Not sure	34%	32%	41%	48%





Crosstabs

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Obama Approval					
Approve	42%	49%	37%	49%	35%
Disapprove	52%	48%	55%	46%	59%
Not sure	6%	4%	8%	5%	6%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Gingrich Favorability					
Favorable	30%	28%	25%	27%	46%
Unfavorable	49%	45%	51%	53%	38%
Not sure	21%	27%	24%	20%	16%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Huckabee Favorability					
Favorable	50%	44%	55%	43%	60%
Unfavorable	29%	22%	25%	35%	26%
Not sure	21%	34%	20%	22%	14%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Palin Favorability					
Favorable	39%	37%	38%	34%	55%
Unfavorable	51%	48%	52%	57%	39%
Not sure	10%	15%	11%	10%	6%





Crosstabs

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Romney Favorability					
Favorable	33%	30%	28%	30%	49%
Unfavorable	41%	38%	41%	45%	34%
Not sure	26%	33%	31%	25%	16%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Obama/Gingrich					
Barack Obama	43%	52%	40%	48%	33%
Newt Gingrich	46%	39%	43%	44%	57%
Undecided	11%	9%	17%	7%	10%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Obama/Huckabee					
Barack Obama	41%	51%	37%	45%	31%
Mike Huckabee	53%	48%	56%	48%	62%
Undecided	6%	2%	6%	7%	7%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Obama/Palin					
Barack Obama	45%	56%	42%	52%	33%
Sarah Palin	45%	37%	47%	42%	55%
Undecided	9%	7%	11%	7%	13%





Crosstabs

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Obama/Romney					
Barack Obama	41%	46%	37%	46%	34%
Mitt Romney	48%	39%	51%	43%	59%
Undecided	11%	15%	12%	11%	8%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Haslam Approval					
Approve	44%	42%	47%	41%	49%
Disapprove	17%	20%	14%	20%	14%
Not sure	39%	38%	39%	39%	37%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
Alexander Approval					
Approve	50%	63%	48%	48%	52%
Disapprove	29%	15%	26%	36%	28%
Not sure	21%	23%	26%	16%	19%

	Base	Age			
		18 to 29	30 to 45	46 to 65	Older than 65
First Favorability					
Favorable	44%	42%	47%	41%	47%
Unfavorable	22%	20%	18%	27%	19%
Not sure	34%	38%	35%	33%	34%

