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www.cawp.rutgers.edu/WomensVoteWatch

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White Women Show Stronger Support for Democratic Ticket than in 2004; Gender Gaps Remain in National and Battleground State Polls

National presidential polls find white women either evenly divided between the presidential candidates or favoring Senator Obama, according to the Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP). This marks a shift from the 2004 presidential election, when the exit polls from Edison Media Research/Mitofsky International found that 55 percent of white women voted for President Bush and 44 percent for Senator Kerry.

“This shift in support among white women from 2004 to 2008 is one reason Obama is faring better than Senator Kerry did in the last election,” observes CAWP director Debbie Walsh.

A gender gap is evident among white voters, as it is among voters overall. In recent national polls, gender gaps among white women range from 3 to 12 percentage points, depending on the particular poll, with white women more likely than white men to support Senator Obama.

There is no notable gender difference among black voters; polls have consistently shown that about nine of every ten black voters – women and men – support Obama.

The Center’s latest review of polls is part of Women’s Vote Watch, a weekly look at the women’s vote in the 2008 presidential election. Polling data can be found at www.cawp.rutgers.edu/WomensVoteWatch.

National Polls - White Voters Only					
White Voters % for Obama		White Voters % for McCain		Gender Gap* (percentage point difference)	Source and Dates of Poll
Women	Men	Women	Men		
45	42	43	46	3 pts.	Pew (Oct 23-26)
50	38	48	59	12 pts.	ABC/Washington Post (Oct. 22-25)
49	43	45	50	6 pts.	NBC/Wall Street Journal (Oct. 17-20)

* The gender gap shown for each poll in the table is based on the responses for the candidate leading in that poll.

Battleground States: CAWP also continues to track the gender gap in key battleground states as the list of closely contested states keeps shifting over time. In recent polls in nine battleground states—Colorado, Florida, Indiana, Nevada, North Carolina, Missouri, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Virginia – gender gaps of varying sizes are apparent, all in the same direction, with women supporting Senator Obama by larger margins than men. The gender gaps in these critical battleground states mirror the gender gap evident in national polls, with women more likely than men to support Obama.

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Women in the battleground states not only support Obama by larger margins than men, but also show a consistent preference for Obama over McCain in the vast majority of recent polls. The picture with men is more mixed; sometimes—in some states in some polls—men break for McCain, sometimes a majority of men support Obama, and sometimes they are about evenly divided between the two candidates.

“If Obama does well in most of these battleground states on Tuesday, he will do so in large part because of the votes of women,” according to CAWP senior scholar Susan J. Carroll.

Battleground State Polls								
State	Overall%		% for Obama		% for McCain		Gender Gap* (percentage point difference)	Source and Dates of Poll
	Obama	McCain	Women	Men	Women	Men		
CO	50	46	54	45	43	50	9 pts.	Fox/Rasmussen (10/26)
FL	50	43	51	49	41	44	2 pts.	LA Times/Bloomberg (10/29)
IN	49	45	53	44	40	51	9 pts.	Survey USA (10/21-10/22)
MO	48	47	49	47	46	48	2 pts.	Fox/Rasmussen (10/26)
NV	50	45	51	49	46	45	2 pts.	Rasmussen (10/16)
NC	48	49	55	38	42	57	15 pts.	Fox/Rasmussen (10/26)
OH	49	40	54	41	38	44	13 pts.	LA Times/Bloomberg (10/29)
PA	53	46	59	45	40	53	14 pts.	Rasmussen (10/27)
VA	51	47	56	46	42	52	10 pts.	Fox/Rasmussen (10/26)

* The gender gap shown for each poll in the table is based on the responses for the candidate leading in that poll. For the poll where the candidates are tied overall, gender gaps are shown for both.

Additional state and national polling data are available at www.cawp.rutgers.edu/WomensVoteWatch

This release is part of *Women’s Vote Watch*, a joint effort by The Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP) and the Communications Consortium Media Center (CCMC) to provide a gender gap analysis of the women’s vote from key polls conducted on the presidential race at the national level and in battleground states.

CAWP will issue a post-election report on the women’s vote shortly after the election at www.cawp.rutgers.edu/WomensVoteWatch.

About CAWP

The Center for American Women and Politics, a unit of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, is a university-based research, education and public service center. Its mission is to promote greater knowledge and understanding about women’s changing relationship to politics and government and to enhance women’s influence and leadership in public life. CAWP is a leading authority in its field and a respected bridge between the academic and political worlds.

About CCMC

The Communications Consortium Media Center (CCMC) is a public interest media center dedicated to helping nonprofit organizations use media and new technologies as tools for policy change. It seeks to influence the public debate in ways that respect and support individual rights, healthy families, cultural diversity and a sustainable environment. Its mission is to use communications strategies for policy change. CCMC is a 501 (c)3 nonprofit organization.

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