

GALLUP NEWS SERVICE

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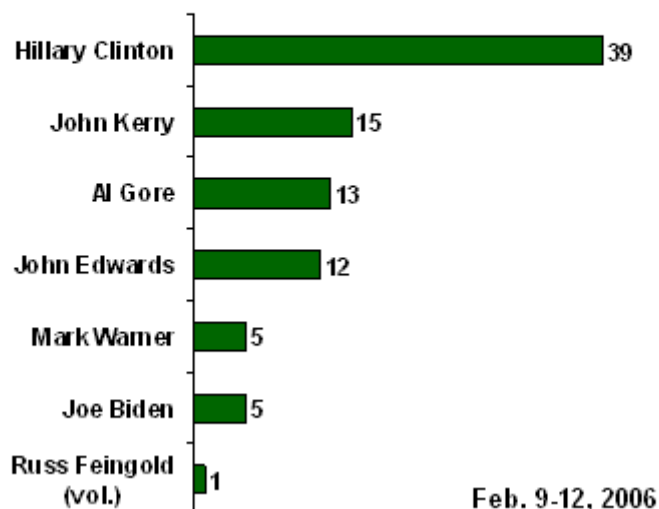
Clinton, Giuliani, McCain Still Dominate for 2008

Little change in support since December

by Lydia Saad

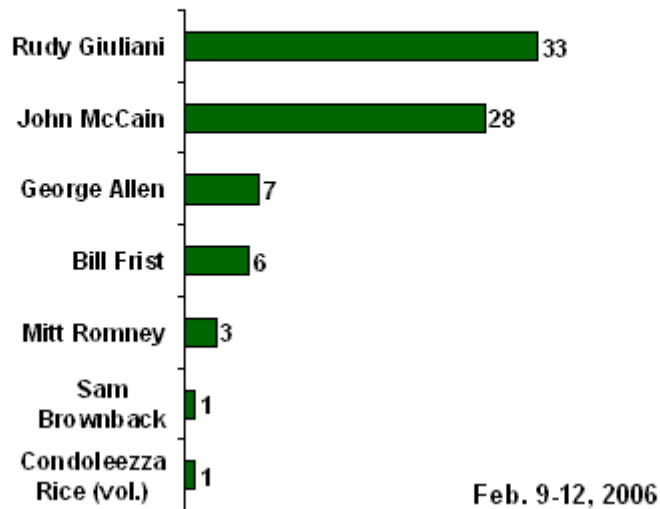
PRINCETON, NJ -- With more than two years until the 2008 presidential election, New York Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton remains the front-runner for the Democratic nomination amidst a field of relatively well-established political figures. Her lead includes a better than two-to-one margin over Massachusetts Sen. John Kerry among Democratic registered voters (39% to 15%), according to a CNN/*USA Today*/Gallup poll conducted Feb. 9-12. Essentially tied with Kerry are former Vice President Al Gore and former Sen. John Edwards, receiving 13% and 12% support respectively.

Democratic Primary in 2008
(Based on Democrats or Democratic leaners registered to vote)
Numbers shown in percentages



The Republican contest is more competitive by comparison. Former New York City mayor Rudy Giuliani and Arizona Sen. John McCain lead a closely contested race among Republican registered voters. Giuliani has a five percentage-point edge over McCain, 33% to 28%, which is within the poll's margin of error. The remaining GOP candidates (mostly lesser-known names) register in the single digits.

Republican Primary in 2008
(Based on Republicans or Republican leaners registered to vote)
Numbers shown in percentages



Has support for Clinton changed?

Gallup previously measured voter intentions for the 2008 primary races in early December 2005. At that time, the Democratic field of candidates Gallup asked about was slightly different from those included in the new poll, with the most notable difference being the addition of Gore in the latest survey.

With Gore now receiving 13% of the vote, Clinton's lead fell slightly from 43% in December to 39% now. This change is within the margin of error given the relatively small sample of Democratic voters. Only minor changes were seen in support for other candidates.

Democratic Primary Field -- Recent Changes

	Dec. 2005	Feb. 2006
	%	%
Hillary Clinton	43	39
John Edwards	14	12
John Kerry	14	15
Joe Biden	8	5
Mark Warner	3	5
Bill Richardson	3	(not included in list)
Evan Bayh	1	(not included in list)
Tom Vilsack	1	(not included in list)
Al Gore	(not included in list)	13

Has support for Giuliani and McCain changed?

The field of likely Republican candidates also has changed since December, most notably with the removal of Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. Gallup removed her name from the question because of Rice's repeated pronouncements that she does not plan to run for president in 2008.

Rice registered as a solid contender in Gallup's December poll, with 18% of registered Republican voters saying they would most likely support her and putting her into a virtual tie for second place with McCain. At that time, Giuliani led McCain by eight percentage points, 30% vs. 22%.

With Rice off the list, Giuliani has picked up three percentage points overall and McCain has picked up six points. As a result, Giuliani no longer has a statistically significant lead over McCain.

Republican Primary Field -- Recent Changes		
	Dec. 2005	Feb. 2006
	%	%
Rudy Giuliani	30	33
John McCain	22	28
Condoleezza Rice	18	1% (volunteered)
George Allen	7	7
Bill Frist	3	6
Haley Barbour	2	(not included in list)
Mitt Romney	2	3
Sam Brownback (not included in list)		1

Does anything distinguish Clinton's supporters?

Sample sizes for subgroups within the Democratic portion of this survey are generally too small for detailed analysis of voting preferences. However, there are sufficient numbers of men and women to conclude that Democratic women are more likely than men to back Clinton for the 2008 nomination, 44% vs. 33%. Gallup found the same pattern in December 2005.

Apart from this gender gap, Gallup finds no significant demographic patterns in support for Clinton among Democrats. She is the preferred candidate of all major age, educational, income, and regional subgroups. She also leads among Democrats of differing political orientations, including self-described liberals, moderates, and conservatives.

Who is supporting Giuliani vs. McCain?

There are some important ideological distinctions among the potential GOP candidates. Giuliani is known as a conservative on crime and national security, but supports abortion and gay rights. McCain has a reputation for being a "moderate" but has a mostly conservative voting record, particularly on economic and social issues. Other candidates are even further to the political right.

Given these differences, it is interesting to focus on candidate preferences according to Republicans' personal ideology.

Gallup finds some slight differences in the vote choice of "conservative" and "moderate" Republicans. Giuliani leads McCain by a 31%-to-26% margin among self-described Republican conservatives. By contrast, McCain has a slight edge over Giuliani among "moderate" Republicans, 38% to 33%. Neither of these leads is statistically significant given the margin of error associated with the small sample sizes of these subgroups.

Three candidates with reputations as solid conservatives -- Virginia Sen. George Allen, Massachusetts governor Mitt Romney, and Kansas Sen. Sam Brownback -- all receive minor levels of support from conservative and moderate Republicans, alike.

How does Clinton's lead compare with previous Democratic nomination battles?

At 39%, support for Clinton gives her a substantial lead in the 2008 Democratic presidential contest, especially when compared with past primary seasons leading up to the elections of 2004, 1992, 1976, 1972, and 1960. In each of these cases, the Democratic field was wide open with no candidate supported by more than one-third of Democratic voters, and two or more candidates closely competing for the top spot.

Still, Clinton's lead does not have the "shoo-in" quality seen for Al Gore in 2000, the only sitting vice president to run for the Democratic nomination since Hubert Humphrey in 1968. For most of the year prior to that election, Gore garnered well in excess of 50% of the vote among Democrats, and he maintained that level of support throughout the 2000 primary season.

How does the GOP field compare with previous years?

The competitive nature of the 2008 race for the Republican nomination -- with Giuliani and McCain vying for the top position -- closely resembles the GOP race a year before the 1968 election, when Richard Nixon led George Romney by only a slim margin, as well the year prior to 1980, when Ronald Reagan and Gerald Ford were closely matched.

In most other years (excluding those featuring an incumbent Republican president) there has been a strong frontrunner from the start -- such as George W. Bush in 2000, Bob Dole in 1996, George H. W. Bush in 1988, and Richard Nixon in 1960.

1964 was an anomalous year for the GOP because the early frontrunner (Nelson Rockefeller) enjoyed a solid lead over the eventual nominee, Barry Goldwater; the race eventually turned highly competitive and was not decided until the national convention.

Of course, as seen in several cases -- such as Jimmy Carter in 1976, Michael Dukakis in 1988, and Bill Clinton in 1992 -- the eventual nominee could be someone not even being considered at this early stage.

Survey Methods

These results are based on telephone interviews with a randomly selected national sample of 1,000 adults, aged 18 and older, conducted Feb. 9-12, 2006.

For results based on the sample of 429 Republicans or Republican leaners, the maximum margin of sampling error is ± 5 percentage points.

For results based on the sample of 400 Republicans or Republican leaners who are registered to vote, the maximum margin of sampling error is ± 5 percentage points.

For results based on the sample of 485 Democrats or Democratic leaners, the maximum margin of sampling error is ± 5 percentage points.

For results based on the sample of 437 Democrats or Democratic leaners who are registered to vote, the maximum margin of sampling error is ± 5 percentage points.

In addition to sampling error, question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of public opinion polls.

15. *Next, I'm going to read a list of people who may be running in the Republican primary for president in the next election. After I read all the names, please tell me which of those candidates you would be most likely to support for the Republican nomination for President in the year 2008, or if you would support someone else.*

[Virginia Senator, George Allen; Kansas Senator, Sam Brownback; Tennessee Senator, Bill Frist; Former New York City Mayor, Rudy Giuliani; Arizona Senator, John McCain; Massachusetts Governor, Mitt Romney]

BASED ON 400 REPUBLICANS AND REPUBLICAN LEANERS WHO ARE REGISTERED TO VOTE

BASED ON 429 REPUBLICANS AND REPUBLICAN LEANERS

2006 Feb 9-12	Republican	
	Registered voters	All Republicans
	%	%
Rudy Giuliani	33	32
John McCain	28	29
George Allen	7	7

Bill Frist	6	6
Mitt Romney	3	3
Sam Brownback	1	1
CONDOLEEZA RICE (vol.)	1	1
Other	3	3
None	6	5
All/any	--	--
No opinion	12	13

16. Next, I'm going to read a list of people who may be running in the Democratic primary for president in the next election. After I read all the names, please tell me which of those candidates you would be most likely to support for the Democratic nomination for President in the year 2008, or if you would support someone else.

[Delaware Senator, Joe Biden; New York Senator, Hillary Rodham Clinton; Former North Carolina Senator, John Edwards; Former Vice President, Al Gore; Massachusetts Senator, John Kerry; Former Virginia Governor, Mark Warner]

BASED ON 437 DEMOCRATS AND DEMOCRATIC LEANERS WHO ARE REGISTERED TO VOTE

BASED ON 485 DEMOCRATS AND DEMOCRATIC LEANERS

2006 Feb 9-12	Democratic	
	Registered voters	All Democrats
	%	%
Hillary Clinton	39	39
John Kerry	15	15
Al Gore	13	12
John Edwards	12	11
Mark Warner	5	6
Joe Biden	5	5
RUSS FEINGOLD (vol.)	1	1
Other	3	3