



CBS NEWS POLL

For release: Wednesday August 6, 2008

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UNCOMMITTED VOTERS: STILL UP FOR GRABS

August 1 - 5, 2008

The nation's "uncommitted" voters - those not firmly committed to a candidate, or completely undecided about whom to choose -- remain largely up for grabs. In fact, they are less likely to be paying close attention to the campaign than they were a month ago.

In this poll CBS News *re-interviewed* 331 voters who said they were uncommitted (those who had a candidate but said their minds could change, along with those who were completely undecided) from a CBS News/New York Times poll conducted in mid-July. In that poll they made up 36% of all registered voters. (In the most recent CBS News Poll, a similar number, 39%, are uncommitted.)

Today seven in ten of July's uncommitted voters remain uncommitted. A quarter now say they have made a commitment to a candidate that they don't think will change before the election. But many still don't have a candidate choice at all yet.

Overall, each candidate has retained almost all the voters who were backing them last month. But many of those moving toward certainty were already tentative supporters. One-third of Obama's uncertain backers have now solidified their support for him. McCain has gotten about one in five of his uncertain backers to become certain now.

Many voters who were completely undecided (having not even chosen a candidate) a few weeks ago remain so; neither Obama nor McCain has a big edge in drawing them into their camps. 49% of them still haven't picked a candidate at all. Obama has drawn 25% of them and McCain, 21%. Very few have become certain about their choice.

CHANGES IN SUPPORT: TODAY VS. JULY

<u>Choice today</u>	<u>Mid-July choice</u>		
	<u>Obama</u>	<u>McCain</u>	<u>Undecided</u>
Obama, certain	34%	1%	7%
Obama, not certain	39	6	18
McCain, certain	3	21	6
McCain, not certain	7	57	15
Undecided	14	12	49

One possible reason the uncommitted voters haven't changed much: they're paying much less attention to the campaign in the last few weeks.

When asked in mid-July how much attention they'd been paying to the 2008 campaign, generally, 45% said they'd paid a lot and just 14% said not much or none. When asked in this poll how much attention they'd been paying *in the last few weeks*, only 18% reported paying a lot lately.

JULY'S UNCOMMITTED VOTERS: ATTENTION TO CAMPAIGN...

	In last few weeks	Overall (7/7-14/08)
A lot	18%	45%
Some	42	42
Not much/none	40	14

Views of Obama have improved somewhat among this group, while views of McCain have held steady. Many had expressed undecided opinions about the candidates to go along with their uncertain vote choices - and many still do.

JULY'S UNCOMMITTED VOTERS: VIEWS OF THE CANDIDATES

	Now	7/7-14/08
<u>View of Obama</u>		
Favorable	34%	22%
Unfavorable	17	20
Undecided/ Haven't heard	47	56
<u>View of McCain</u>		
Favorable	24%	23%
Unfavorable	20	17
Undecided/ Haven't heard	56	58

The uncommitted voters interviewed for this poll tend to be (perhaps not surprisingly) independents - nearly half, 45%, are. They are mostly moderates (56%) and split between men and women about the same as all voters.

Being uncommitted doesn't mean they'll stay that way, or stay away from the polls. These voters are only a little less likely to say they'll definitely vote (80%) than all registered voters nationwide (83%) in the latest CBS News Poll. One in five say they didn't vote in the 2004 Presidential election, about the same rate as for all registered voters.

REVIEWING CANDIDATE QUALITIES

In mid-July, uncommitted voters had doubts Obama would be an effective Commander-in-Chief of the military. After his overseas trip, he has put that concern to rest for only a few of them. Just 28% now say he

is not likely to be effective, compared with 35% of the same voters last month. Still, McCain continues to have a large advantage on this.

WOULD ... BE EFFECTIVE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF?

(July's uncommitted voters)

	Now	7/7-14/08
Obama:		
Very likely	13%	13%
Somewhat likely	54	49
Not likely	28	35
McCain:		
Very likely	43	43%
Somewhat likely	47	44
Not likely	8	11

In mid-July, these voters were skeptical that either Obama or McCain says what they believe. They still are. But McCain holds a small advantage over Obama here, as well.

DO CANDIDATES SAY WHAT THEY BELIEVE?

(July's uncommitted voters)

	Now	7/7-14/08
Obama says...		
What he believes	36%	35%
What people want to hear	54	57
McCain says...		
What he believes	46%	45%
What people want to hear	44	47

For this poll CBS News re-interviewed 331 uncommitted voters first interviewed by CBS News and the New York Times July 7-14th 2008. This poll was conducted by telephone August 1st - 5th 2008. Error due to sampling for results based on the entire sample of uncommitted voters could be plus or minus five percentage points. Error on measures of individual change is much smaller.

CBS NEWS POLL

Callback of Uncommitted Voters

August 1 - 5, 2008

>rq1< Thinking about the last few weeks, how much attention have you been able to pay to the 2008 presidential campaign -- a lot, some, not much, or no attention in the last few weeks?

>rq2< Is your opinion of Barack Obama favorable, not favorable, undecided, or haven't you heard enough about Barack Obama yet to have an opinion?

>rq3< Is your opinion of John McCain favorable, not favorable, undecided, or haven't you heard enough about John McCain yet to have an opinion?

>rq4< How likely is it that you will vote in the 2008 election for President this November -- would you say you will definitely vote, probably vote, probably not vote, or definitely not vote in the election for President?

>rq5< If the 2008 presidential election were being held today and the candidates were Barack Obama, the Democrat, and John McCain, the Republican, would you vote for Barack Obama or John McCain?

>rq6< Is your mind made up or is it still too early to say for sure?

>q86< Last time we talked with you, you said you were supporting [fill can3]. What made you change your mind?

>q91< Last time we talked with you, you said you had not yet decided on a candidate. What made you change your mind?

>q9< Would you say you like [fill can1] a great deal better than [fill can2], somewhat better than [fill can2], or only a little better than [fill can2]?

>q17< Which of these statements comes closer to your opinion?

1. The Presidential candidates' choices for Vice President will have a great deal of influence on my vote. OR 2. I will vote based mostly on the presidential candidates, not on whom they choose for Vice President.

>q22< Do you think Barack Obama says what he believes most of the time, or does he say what he thinks people want to hear?

>q23< Regardless of how you intend to vote, how likely do you think it is that Barack Obama would be an effective commander-in-chief of the nation's military -- would you say it is very likely, somewhat likely, not very likely, or not at all likely?

>q27< Do you think John McCain says what he believes most of the time, or does he say what he thinks people want to hear?

>q28< Regardless of how you intend to vote, how likely do you think it is that John McCain would be an effective commander-in-chief of the nation's military -- would you say it is very likely, somewhat likely, not very likely, or not at all likely?

Total Respondents: 331