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# Obama Surge in West Virginia – The Campaign's Take

Thu Oct 9, 2008 11:40 PM EDT

[politics](#), [obama](#), [mccain](#), [campaign](#), [polls](#), [west-virginia](#)

By [Gawk Squawk](#)

Since I **posted** yesterday evening on the the Presidential polls in West Virginia, ARG has released a new poll showing Senator Obama ahead in the state by 8 points. In an average of polls, **Real Clear Politics** and **Pollster** now have Senator McCain's lead under 3 points. Both sites now consider West Virginia to be a tossup. This represents a stunning turnaround for Senator Obama, who lost the West Virginia primary to Senator Clinton **by 41 points.**

To get a closer perspective on the race in West Virginia, I spoke with Tom Vogel, Senator Obama's West Virginia campaign Director and the state party's Executive Director. He attributed the movement in the polls to voters taking a look at the issues and individuals running and deciding that Senator Obama would be best to deal with our economy. Vogel believes that Obama's strong performances in the debates and Senator Clinton's public support have been most important in convincing West Virginia voters. While Vogel acknowledged that there is racism in West Virginia, as there is everywhere else, he believes the media exaggerated and blew out of proportion racism's role in the primary results. He stressed that primary voters did not vote against Senator Obama, but in favor of Senator Clinton who, along with her husband, has a long history in the state.

Senator Obama has a small but active operation in West Virginia. The state has 6 *Vote for Change* offices with 30 paid staffers. While this is less than half number of offices, per capita, than in neighboring Virginia, nearby Kentucky and Tennessee have only 1 *Vote for Change* office between them. During the primaries, Democrats enjoyed a nearly **2 to 1 registration advantage** over the Republicans. Vogel does not believe state demographics have changed much since 2004, but he does expect an uptick in student turnout as registration has recently picked up at West Virginia University and Marshall University.

The state party has been very aggressive in supporting its candidates. They are planning an 8 county bus tour for the state ticket. Senator Clinton **will be in Charleston tomorrow** to support a Congressional candidate and Ohio Governor Ted Strickland will visit Wheeling this weekend. The party has had success recently; it holds all statewide offices except 1 of 5 seats on the WV Supreme Court of Appeals and Secretary of State. It also has majorities in both houses of the state legislature. In a year of general dissatisfaction with Republicans, the strong Democratic party organization may be able to pull Obama to victory. When I asked Vogel what one thing Obama could do to boost his chances in West Virginia, he said a visit to the state would be most helpful.

I made calls to two McCain West Virginia campaign officials for comment, but my messages have not been returned. I

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**[arcanebliss](#)** 

A surge Barack Hussein Obama II and his supporters can believe in. ;]

**#1** – Fri Oct 10, 2008 12:04 AM EDT REPLY  10 votes


**[ABD3](#)**


I love this story! I've been following this closely since the miner's story a few weeks ago. I've made two trips (N/S) through the state and made a point of hitting all the stops.

Like everyone else, these folks are scared. Not of "manchurian terrorist cells", but of life. And guess what else?...They've got ideas and want to DO something about it.


This election will unify America more than any "event" or "national discussion" could. The best part is that it WILL STICK!


**#11** – Fri Oct 10, 2008 6:45 AM EDT 4 votes

REPLY 

**[Barbara in Houston](#)** 

Music to my ears!

**#2** – Fri Oct 10, 2008 12:39 AM EDT REPLY  8 votes

**[Jim Dent](#)** 

♪♪ Country roads... take me home... ♪♪

[#2.1](#) - Fri Oct 10, 2008 1:11 AM EDT

6 votes

**Barbara in Houston**

Yes Jim AND the Halleluja chorus from Handel's Messiah.

[#2.2](#) - Fri Oct 10, 2008 11:56 AM EDT

2 votes

REPLY 

**Xanthiana**

Ok, you guys are managing to shake all the knowledge I had acquired of individual states ....

[#3](#) - Fri Oct 10, 2008 3:55 AM EDT

REPLY 

2 votes

**Barbara in Houston**

Xan, I don't see that here. Where?

[#3.1](#) - Fri Oct 10, 2008 11:57 AM EDT

1 vote

REPLY 

**njb**



Would that be amazing? What a statement to the RNC--Obama takes West Virginia!

These are interesting times we are a living in...they sure are....

[#4](#) - Fri Oct 10, 2008 4:10 AM EDT

REPLY 

6 votes

**Kteachums**

This is wonderful news! I was hoping that WV would go for Obama!

[#5](#) - Sat Oct 11, 2008 3:50 PM EDT

REPLY 

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