



CBS NEWS POLL
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**THE DEMOCRATS, PROSPECTS FOR A LONG NOMINATION FIGHT,
AND LOOKING AHEAD TO THE GENERAL ELECTION**
March 15-18, 2008

Democratic voters appear to be bracing themselves for a long nomination struggle - one they fear could eventually leave them with a weakened nominee to face Republican John McCain in the fall. The manner in which this nomination fight is settled could be crucial: many Obama and Clinton supporters say there would be widespread disappointment - and even anger among the losing candidate's supporters - if superdelegates are seen as overturning the will of the voters.

Two-thirds think the party will not be able to settle on a nominee until the convention.

WHEN WILL THE DEMOCRATIC NOMINEE BE CLEAR?

(Among Democratic primary voters)

Before the convention 22%
Not until the convention 67

Democratic primary voters think a protracted nomination fight will leave the eventual nominee weakened for the general election: 44% say it will. Fewer, 27%, think the nominee will be stronger by being tempered by the heat of a longer battle.

Democrats' vote choice heavily colors their analysis: those backing Obama - the current delegate leader - think an eventual nominee would be hurt by a long fight. Clinton backers are more likely to see a longer battle as ultimately helpful.

**WOULD A LONG NOMINATION FIGHT
HELP OR HURT NOMINEE FOR GENERAL ELEC.?**

(Among Democratic primary voters)

	All	Support for nomination:	
		Obama	Clinton
Help	27%	20%	37%
Hurt	44	51	33
No difference	24	24	25

If the party's superdelegates are seen as reversing the will of the voters (expressed either through elected delegates or total popular vote) there could be widespread dissatisfaction - and plenty of outright anger - among supporters of the losing candidate.

If Barack Obama wins more elected delegates, but the superdelegates side with Clinton and she then wins the nomination, almost all of Obama's current backers would be upset: 56% would be disappointed plus another 36% would be angry. Just 8% would accept that result with satisfaction.

OBAMA SUPPORTERS:

IF CLINTON WINS BECAUSE OF SUPERDELEGATES, WOULD YOU BE...

(Among Democratic primary voters backing Obama)

Angry	36%
Disappointed	56
Satisfied	8

Hillary Clinton could conceivably end up with more of the total popular vote than Obama if she does well in the remaining primaries, and depending on what happens with Michigan and Florida. If Clinton did win more total votes yet the superdelegates sided with Obama and he then won the nomination, Clinton's backers would also be unhappy - eight in ten would be either angry or disappointed. Just 22% say they would be angry, however.

CLINTON SUPPORTERS:

IF OBAMA WINS BECAUSE OF SUPERDELEGATES, WOULD YOU BE...

(Among Democratic primary voters backing Clinton)

Angry	22%
Disappointed	51
Satisfied	26

As for the criteria the superdelegates should use to decide whom to back, many Democratic voters say whichever candidate wins the most votes in primaries and caucuses should earn their favor. But the divisions may have as much to do with candidate preference as principle. A majority of Obama supporters want superdelegates to side with the candidate who wins the most primaries and caucuses. More Clinton backers think superdelegates should back the candidate they think can best win in November. One in five Democratic voters say the superdelegates should vote for whomever they like.

HOW SHOULD SUPERDELEGATES MAKE THEIR CHOICE?

(Among Democratic primary voters)

	All	Support for nomination:	
		Obama	Clinton
Candidate with most primary/caucuses	46%	56%	31%
Whichever candidate superdels want	21	20	22
Candidate with best chance to win	30	22	43

Democratic uneasiness seems relegated to the process, not the candidates, however: in general, Democrats remain satisfied with both of their potential nominees.

SATISFIED WITH ... IF THEY WERE THE NOMINEE?

(Among Democratic primary voters)

Obama	76%
Clinton	70%

However, as was the case last month, only about half of each candidate's backers would be satisfied if the other candidate won, and few of them would be very satisfied.

Most Democratic primary voters now say their party's nomination fight includes unfair attacks between the two candidates. Many see attacks originating from both sides, though Clinton is more often seen as making them against Obama.

HAVE THE CANDIDATES ATTACKED EACH OTHER UNFAIRLY?

(Among Democratic primary voters)

Both attacked each other	35%
Clinton attacked Obama	23
Obama attacked Clinton	1
No, no unfair attacks	35

CHOICE FOR THE NOMINATION

For the first time this year, this poll has asked all registered voters (not just Democratic primary voters) their preference for the Democratic Party's nomination. Obama narrowly leads Clinton among all registered voters 39% to 37%. By a wide margin, Independents choose Obama, with Democrats evenly split. Republicans frequently say they do not have a choice, but those Republicans who do prefer Clinton.

ALL VOTERS: CHOICE FOR DEMOCRATIC NOMINATION

(Among ALL registered voters)

	All	Dems	Reps	Inds
Obama	39%	45%	27%	43%
Clinton	37	44	35	29
Someone else	10	3	16	14
Undecided/DK	14	8	22	14

Among Democratic primary voters in particular - both those who have voted already and those planning to do so in the remaining states - Obama is only slightly preferred over Clinton, 46% to 43%, a big change from his larger lead last month.

CHOICE FOR DEMOCRATIC NOMINATION

(Among Democratic primary voters)

	Now	2/2008	1/2008
Obama	46%	54%	27%
Clinton	43	38	42
Undecided/DK	8	7	16

Since last month, among Democratic primary voters, Obama's national support among men has slipped considerably, but he still retains the lead. Clinton has gained ground among women.

DEMOCRATIC CHOICE FOR NOMINATION: BY GENDER

(Among Democratic primary voters)

		Men	Women		
	Now	2/08	Now	2/08	
Obama	53%	67%	40%	45%	
Clinton	36	28	48	46	

LOOKING AHEAD TO THE FALL CAMPAIGN

Whatever the outcome of the Democratic nominating contest, either Barack Obama or Hillary Clinton could face a close race against the presumptive Republican nominee, John McCain - and the Arizona Senator is doing better now among Independents than he was last month.

If the election were held today, McCain would be within two points of Senator Hillary Clinton and trails Senator Barack Obama by five. Last month, Obama had a wider lead over McCain.

IF THE CANDIDATES WERE..., WHO WOULD YOU VOTE FOR?

(Among registered voters)

	Now	2/08		Now	2/08
Obama	48%	50%	Clinton	46%	46%
McCain	43	38	McCain	44	46
Undecided/DK	6	9	Undecided/DK	6	5

In a turnaround from last month, McCain now leads both Obama and Clinton among independent voters. Obama led McCain by 10 points among this group last month.

IF THE CANDIDATES WERE..., WHO WOULD YOU VOTE FOR?

(Among independent registered voters)

	Now	Feb.		Now	Feb.
McCain	46%	36%	McCain	47%	52%
Obama	38	46	Clinton	36	35
Undecided/DK	12	14	Undecided/DK	12	10

THE CANDIDATES: CAN THEY DELIVER?

Registered voters are skeptical as to whether any of these presidential candidates can deliver on some of their stated promises if they succeed in capturing the White House.

More than half do not think Clinton will be able to deliver on her promise to provide health care to all Americans, including 77% of Republicans. Democrats are more optimistic: 56% think Clinton will make good on her promise to provide health care to all.

CAN CLINTON DELIVER ON PROMISE TO PROVIDE HEALTH CARE FOR ALL?

(Among Registered voters)

	All	Rep	Dem	Ind
Yes	37%	17%	56%	32%
No	56	77	37	62

56% of voters do not think Obama will unite Democrats and Republicans if he his elected president. Democrats are more likely than both Republicans and Independents to say Obama would be able to unite the parties.

CAN OBAMA DELIVER ON PROMISE TO UNITE DEMS AND REPS?

(Among Registered voters)

	All	Rep	Dem	Ind
Yes	38%	25%	50%	33%
No	56	69	43	59

Voters doubt that McCain could deliver on his promise to cut government waste and spending. Again, party plays a role. 56% of Republicans are confident McCain will accomplish this if elected president. Most Democrats think he will not.

CAN MCCAIN DELIVER ON PROMISE TO CUT GOV'T WASTE AND SPENDING?

(Among Registered voters)

	All	Rep	Dem	Ind
Yes	38%	56%	30%	30%
No	54	35	66	58

Voters give the all three candidates similar marks on their ability to make the right decisions about Iraq. McCain recently visited Iraq with Vice President Cheney and other U.S. officials. As expected, views on the war have an impact: voters who think U.S. action in Iraq was the right thing are more likely to express confidence in McCain, but those who think the U.S. should have stayed out are more apt to express confidence in Clinton and Obama.

CONFIDENT WILL MAKE RIGHT DECISIONS ON IRAQ

(Among registered voters)

	Obama	Clinton	McCain
Very	17%	17%	19%
Somewhat	39	36	37
Not confident	42	46	43

VOTERS CONTINUE TO PAY ATTENTION

This election campaign continues to attract the attention of American voters - nearly nine in 10 are following the presidential campaign, including 52% who are paying a lot of attention to it. Similar numbers of Democratic and Republican voters are following the campaign.

ATTENTION TO THE PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN

(Among registered voters)

	All	Rep	Dem
A lot	52%	57%	53%
Some	35	31	35
Not much/none	12	9	12

Democrats are more excited about it than Republicans. 57% of Democrats say they are more enthusiastic about this election than usual, compared to just 25% of Republicans who say that. Overall, more than four in 10 voters are enthusiastic about this year's presidential campaign.

ENTHUSIASM ABOUT VOTING IN THE 2008 ELECTION

(Among registered voters)

	All	Rep	Dem
More than usual	41%	25%	57%
Less than usual	23	34	12
Same	35	40	29

THE MEDIA ON THE CANDIDATES

There has been much discussion about the media's treatment of the presidential candidates - including skits on "Saturday Night Live" that poked fun at the media's treatment of Clinton and Obama. Voters think the media has been harder on Clinton than on the other presidential candidates - and Democratic primary voters felt this way even before the Saturday Night Live skits. Few say the media has been easier on Clinton.

COMPARED TO OTHER CANDIDATES, THE NEWS MEDIA HAS BEEN ...

(Among registered voters)

	Harder on	Easier on	Same
Clinton	31%	13	53
Obama	15%	28	54
McCain	14%	22	60

Women especially think Clinton has been treated harsher than the other candidates - 39% say that. Also, more than a third of Democrats think Clinton has been treated harder than other candidates; half as many Democrats say this about Barack Obama.

Interestingly, 39% of African Americans think the media has been harder on Hillary Clinton compared to other presidential candidates. Just 24% of African Americans say this about Obama.

As for John McCain, Republicans are more likely than Democrats to say the media has been harder on him - but still just 19% say that.

COMPARED TO OTHER CANDIDATES, THE NEWS MEDIA HAS BEEN HARDER ON...

(Among registered voters)

	Clinton	Obama	McCain
Total	31%	15%	14%
Men	23%	18%	14%
Women	39%	13%	14%
Whites	30%	14%	15%
Blacks	39%	24%	7%
Republicans	24%	13%	19%
Democrats	36%	18%	9%
Independents	32%	15%	14%

OVERALL OPINIONS OF THE CANDIDATES

Registered voters overall have more positive views of Obama and McCain than they have of Clinton. Even though Obama's unfavorable rating is up slightly from last month, more people continue to view him favorably than unfavorably.

OPINIONS OF THE CANDIDATES

(Among registered voters)

	Favorable	Not Favorable	Undecided/ Haven't heard
Obama	44%	28	28
McCain	38%	31	31
Clinton	39%	41	19

Of those who have an unfavorable view of Hillary Clinton, the most frequently-cited reason why is that she is seen as "too much of a politician."

This poll was conducted among a random sample of 1,067 adults nationwide, interviewed by telephone March 15-18, 2008. The error due to sampling for results based on the entire sample could be plus or minus three percentage points. The error for subgroups is higher. An oversample of African Americans was also conducted for this poll, for a total of 122 interviews among this group and 106 African American registered voters. The results were then weighted in proportion to the racial composition of the adult population in the U.S. Census. The margin of error for African Americans (overall and registered voters) is plus or minus nine percentage points.

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**The Democrats, Prospects for a Long Nomination Fight, and Looking Ahead
March 15-18, 2008**

q1-14 RELEASED SEPARATELY

q15 Who would you like to see the Democratic party nominate as its presidential candidate in 2008 -- Hillary Clinton or Barack Obama?

	** REGISTERED VOTERS **				Dem.	
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind	Prim. Voters	DPV* Feb08a
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Clinton	37	35	44	29	43	38
Obama	39	27	45	43	46	54
Someone else/None (Vol.)	10	16	3	14	3	1
Undecided (Vol.)	7	4	6	9	6	6
DK/NA	7	18	2	5	2	1

*Trend is among Democratic Primary Voters.

q16 Regardless of how you intend to vote, who do you expect to finally win the Democratic nomination for President in 2008 -- Hillary Clinton or Barack Obama?

						DPV*
Clinton	31	30	30	33	31	23
Obama	53	55	56	47	55	68
Someone else(Vol.)	1	1	0	2	0	--
DK/NA	15	14	14	18	13	9

*Trend is among Democratic Primary Voters.

q17 Is your opinion of Hillary Clinton favorable, not favorable, undecided, or haven't you heard enough about Hillary Clinton yet to have an opinion?

					Feb08a
Favorable	39	19	59	31	35
Not favorable	41	67	21	43	43
Undecided	15	11	15	20	18
Haven't heard enough	4	3	4	6	3
Refused	1	0	1	0	1

q18 Is your opinion of Barack Obama favorable, not favorable, undecided, or haven't you heard enough about Barack Obama yet to have an opinion?

Favorable	44	23	61	41	45
Not favorable	28	52	12	25	23
Undecided	20	20	18	21	23
Haven't heard enough	8	5	8	12	9
Refused	0	0	1	1	0

q19 Is your opinion of John McCain favorable, not favorable, undecided, or haven't you heard enough about John McCain yet to have an opinion?

Favorable	38	63	19	38	36
Not favorable	31	13	48	26	32
Undecided	21	18	21	24	22
Haven't heard enough	10	6	11	12	9
Refused	0	0	1	0	1

q20-25 RELEASED SEPARATELY

q26 How would you feel if Hillary Clinton wins the Democratic nomination for president-- would you feel very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?

	** DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY VOTERS **	Feb08a
	%	%
Very satisfied	38	40
Somewhat satisfied	32	29
Somewhat dissatisfied	16	20
Very dissatisfied	13	11
DK/NA	1	0

q27 How would you feel if Barack Obama wins the Democratic nomination for president-- would you feel very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?

Very satisfied	42	46
Somewhat satisfied	34	33
Somewhat dissatisfied	13	11
Very dissatisfied	10	8
DK/NA	1	2

q28 Do you think either Hillary Clinton or Barack Obama have attacked the other unfairly in their campaigns?

Yes	60
No	35
DK/NA	5

q29 Do you think Hillary Clinton has attacked Barack Obama unfairly, do you think Barack Obama has attacked Hillary Clinton unfairly, or have both of them attacked the other unfairly?

Both attacked each other	35%
Clinton attacked Obama	23
Obama attacked Clinton	1
No, no unfair attacks	35

q30 Do you think it will be clear who the Democratic nominee is before the party's national convention takes place in August, or do you think the Democratic nominee will not be decided until the convention?

Before the convention	22
At the convention	67
DK/NA	11

q31 Suppose the race for the Democratic nomination continues through the summer. Some people say that this would help the eventual nominee's chances in November because the nominee would have been tested and better prepared for the general election. Other people say that this would hurt the eventual nominee's chances in November because the Democratic candidates will have made critical statements about each other that will weaken the nominee in the general election. What do you think -- if the race continues through the summer will that help the Democratic nominee's chances in November, hurt the Democratic nominee's chances in November, or will it have no effect?

** DEMOCRATIC PRIMARY VOTERS **

	%
Help	27
Hurt	44
No effect	24
DK/NA	5

q32 The delegates to the Democratic party convention include superdelegates, who are usually party and elected officials like governors and members of Congress. Which of these comes closest to your thinking about how the superdelegates should decide who to vote for at the party convention in August? 1. The superdelegates should vote for whichever candidate received the most votes in the primaries and caucuses. 2. The superdelegates should vote for whomever they want. 3. The superdelegates should vote for the candidate they think has the best chance to win in November.

Vote for cand. w/ most votes	46
Vote for who they want	21
Vote for most electable	30
DK/NA	3

q33 Suppose Barack Obama wins more elected delegates than Hillary Clinton in the primaries and caucuses, but most of the superdelegates decide to support Clinton and she becomes the nominee. How would that make you feel--angry, disappointed but not angry, or would you be satisfied with that decision?

** OBAMA SUPPORTERS **

Angry	36
Disappointed not angry	56
Satisfied	8
DK/NA	0

q34 Suppose Hillary Clinton wins more votes than Barack Obama in the primaries and caucuses, but most of the superdelegates decide to support Obama and he becomes the nominee. How would that make you feel -- angry, disappointed but not angry, or would you be satisfied with that decision?

** CLINTON SUPPORTERS **

Angry	22
Disappointed not angry	51
Satisfied	26
DK/NA	1

q35 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE

q36 Regardless of how you intend to vote, do you think Hillary Clinton could deliver on her promise to provide health care coverage to all Americans if she become president, or don't you think she could do that?

	** REGISTERED VOTERS **			
	*** Party ID ***			
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
Could	37	17	56	32
Could not	56	77	37	62
DK/NA	7	6	7	6

q37 How confident are you in Hillary Clinton's ability to make the right decisions about the war in Iraq--are you very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident, or not at all confident?

					Feb07a
Very confident	17	6	29	13	16
Somewhat confident	36	23	49	33	34
Not too confident	20	25	13	24	22
Not at all confident	26	46	8	29	26
DK/NA	1	0	1	1	2

q38 BLANK

q39 Regardless of how you intend to vote, do you think Barack Obama could deliver on his promise to unite Republicans and Democrats if he become president, or don't you think he could do that?

	** REGISTERED VOTERS **			
	*** Party ID ***			
	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
Could	38	25	50	33
Could not	56	69	43	59
DK/NA	6	6	7	8

q40 How confident are you in Barack Obama's ability to make the right decisions about the war in Iraq--are you very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident, or not at all confident?

					Feb07a
					%
Very confident	17	4	31	10	20
Somewhat confident	39	26	47	43	37
Not too confident	20	29	12	21	21
Not at all confident	22	39	9	23	19
DK/NA	2	2	1	3	3

q41 BLANK

q42 Regardless of how you intend to vote, do you think John McCain could deliver on his promise to cut government waste and spending if he become president, or don't you think he could do that?

** REGISTERED VOTERS **

*** Party ID ***

	Total	Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%	%
Could	38	56	30	30
Could not	54	35	66	58
DK/NA	8	9	4	12

q43 How confident are you in John McCain's ability to make the right decisions about the war in Iraq--are you very confident, somewhat confident, not too confident, or not at all confident?

					Feb07a
Very confident	19	38	7	14	27
Somewhat confident	37	48	23	43	31
Not too confident	20	8	28	20	18
Not at all confident	23	5	39	18	22
DK/NA	1	1	3	5	2

q44-50 RELEASED SEPARATELY

	<u>Unweighted</u>	<u>Weighted</u>
Total Respondents	1,067	
Total Republicans	324	286 (27%)
Total Democrats	414	419 (39%)
Total Independents	329	362 (34%)
Total Registered Voters	952	906