

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

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IPPSR Outlook '08 Update: Battlegrounds Fall to Nine, Obama Retains Edge

The number of battleground states has narrowed, two states remain locked in a tie and Democrat Barack Obama still retains an apparent Electoral College lead over Republican John McCain in the 2008 presidential race, a new analysis shows.

An updated Institute for Public Policy and Social Research (IPPSR) analysis puts Colorado, Florida, Indiana, Montana, Nevada, North Carolina, Ohio, South Dakota and Virginia in battleground contention as a result of polling last week.

The nine states account for 106 of the 270 Electoral College votes that the candidates will need to win the U.S. presidency and the White House, said IPPSR Director Douglas B. Roberts, Ph.D.

IPPSR launched Outlook '08, designed to track public opinion polling in all 50 states and as one of the few projections to focus on the Electoral College, in early August. The analysis will continue through the Nov. 4 presidential election.

IPPSR's poll of polls analyzes the latest surveys, identifies battleground states and assigns likely Electoral College votes to the two major party candidates.

In public opinion polls taken last week, not including the narrowly divided battleground states, McCain would be awarded 168 Electoral College votes while Obama would earn 264. Neither would have the required 270 without votes from the toss-up states.

Electoral College votes are based on state population as counted by the U.S. Census. Each state and the District of Columbia are assigned at least three Electoral College votes. Michigan has 17.

After McCain and Obama visited Michigan last week, national polling gave the edge in the state to Obama and reduced the apparent undecided voters to 6 percent, removing Michigan from IPPSR's battleground lineup for the week. Oregon also dropped from toss-up status.

IPPSR's analysis defines battleground states as those with narrowly divided electorates and a high percentage of undecided voters.

Battlegrounds Montana and Nevada remained evenly split over the two candidates in national polls through Monday, Aug. 11.

Within Michigan State University's College of Social Science, IPPSR specializes in policy education, leadership training and survey research.

Note to Media: Analysis, charts and results are available at www.ippsr.msu.edu/Outlook.htm

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