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To: Friends of Democracy Corps and Greenberg Quinlan Rosner

From: Stan Greenberg and James Carville; Democracy Corps
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OBAMA EMERGES AHEAD IN OHIO

Winning on the Economy, Middle Class Advocacy and Reform

On the heels of the news that John McCain permanently suspended his campaign in economically strapped Michigan, its southern neighbor now favors Barack Obama over McCain 49 to 43 percent. Obama's lead in Ohio is built on impressive 48 to 35 percent edge among independent voters. A new Democracy Corps survey by Greenberg Quinlan Rosner highlights the three factors that propel Obama's 6-point lead in Ohio.¹

- 1) **McCain's attempt to seize the mantle of change is falling on deaf ears in Ohio.** By 24 points, voters in the Buckeye state believe Obama, not McCain, is the reformer. By 18 points, Ohioans believe Obama will bring the right kind of change (Obama leads by 11 points on this measure in the latest Democracy Corps national and battleground survey).²

Obama's ability to bring change, a new direction, or an end to the last eight years of Bush stands out when his supporters cite the central reason they support Obama (26 percent). To the contrary, almost no McCain voters point to change, reform or his maverick image as the main reason they support him.

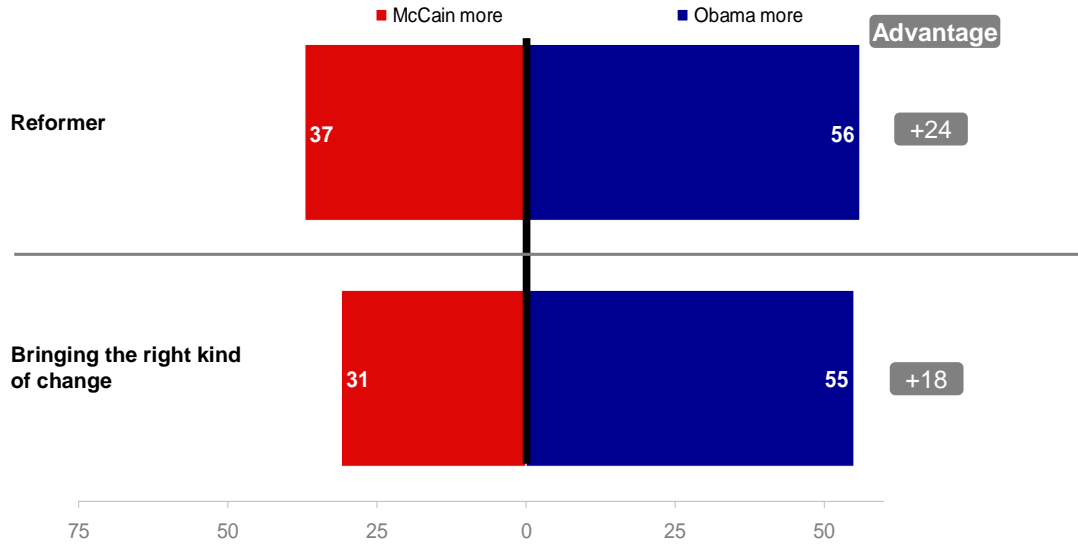
¹ Democracy Corps survey of 600 likely voters in Ohio conducted September 29 – October 1, 2008.

² <http://www.democracycorps.com/strategy/2008/10/obama-emerges-with-first-real-lead/?section=Survey>



Obama considered the true agent of change

Now I would like to ask which presidential candidate you associate more with these terms, Barack Obama or John McCain...

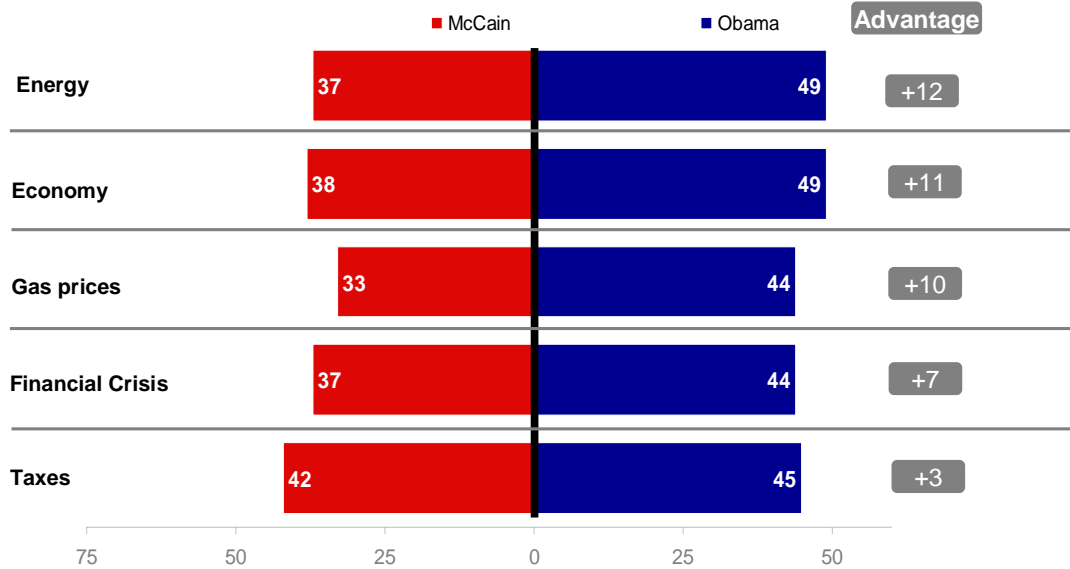


2) **Obama is winning the economic debate. Obama’s aggressive positioning on the economic contrast against McCain is working and has given him large advantages on every important economic measure in a state where the economy is king.** In a state where the economy is the most important issue on voters’ minds, Obama leads by 11 points on which candidate will do a better job on the economy, by 7 points on handling the financial crisis, by 11 points on gas prices and 12 points on energy. In a blow to the heart of McCain’s economic message, Obama leads by 4 points on taxes. And in a core test of economic priorities, by 51 to 44 percent Ohio voters are more concerned McCain will continue the economic policies that have cost jobs and caused higher prices than that Obama will raise taxes and increase government spending. Among white senior citizens, Obama leads by 12 points on handling the economy and by 4 points among non-college educated white voters.



Obama leads on important issues

Now I am going to ask you something different. I am going to read a list of issues and I want you to tell me whether, overall, you think Barack Obama or John McCain would do a better job with this issue.



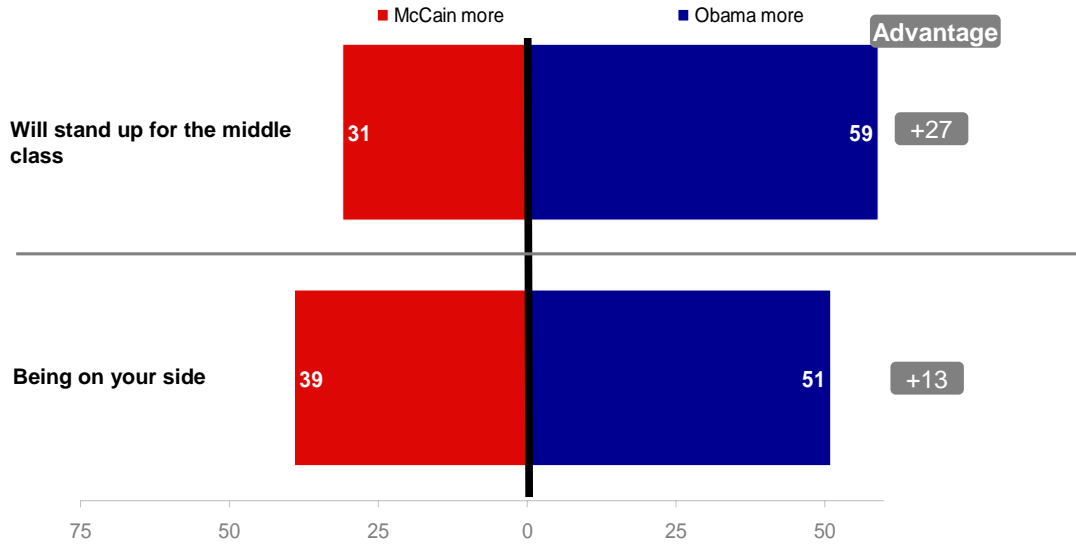
3) **The perception that Obama will stand up for the middle class is trumping concerns about race, religion or patriotism.** Perhaps most startling, Obama leads by 27 points on which candidate *will stand up for the middle class* and by 13 on which candidate is *on your side*. Obama leads by 15 points among white senior citizens and by 19 points among non-college educated white voters on middle class advocacy.

Ultimately, the economy and middle class advocacy are overpowering concerns about race, religion or patriotism. Obama’s lead comes in spite of McCain’s 25-point advantage on handling national security and 6-point advantage on Iraq. And by a 54 to 31 percent margin, Ohio voters are more concerned that McCain will put the rich and big corporations first than that Obama will put minorities first.



Obama leads on middle class advocacy

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In addition to the 13-point lead with independent voters, Obama builds his lead on performing above partisan trends in the Columbus area and Northeastern Ohio, matching Democratic partisanship in the heavily Democratic Cuyahoga County. He slightly underperforms in the Cincinnati-Dayton corridor, while underperforming in the heavily white, less educated southeastern and northwestern parts of the state.