

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Assignment Editors and Producers  
**FROM:** David Beattie, Hamilton Campaigns  
**DATE:** October 17, 2008  
**RE:** Key Findings in a Florida Statewide Survey

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*This memo is based on a survey of 700 registered voters who are likely to vote in the November 2008 general election in Florida, statewide. Hamilton Campaigns conducted telephone interviewing October 10-15, 2008. The study was conducted for public release and not produced for any campaign or election committee. The margin of error for a sample of this size is  $\pm 3.7$  percentage points, at the 95% confidence level.*

- **Voters are very negative about the direction of the country.** Three-out-of-four voters say the country is headed in the wrong direction (13% right direction – 75% wrong direction – 5% mixed). Across the board, voters of all demographic subgroups are negative about the direction of the country.
- **Voters are more negative than positive on the direction of Florida (37% right direction – 45% wrong direction – 6% mixed).** There is a clear partisan divide regarding opinions on the direction of the state. Democrats are negative about the direction of the state (26% right direction – 57% wrong direction – 6% mixed). Republicans are positive about the direction of the state (50% right direction – 33% wrong direction – 7% mixed).
- **A majority of Florida voters are concerned about the country's economic uncertainty over moral decline or national security.** Fifty-four percent (54%) of Florida voters are concerned about economic uncertainty, while only 17% are concerned about moral decline and 13% are concerned about national security. One-third (34%) of voters in the state say they live paycheck-to-paycheck.
- **Barack Obama leads John McCain in the vote preference for President by +4 percentage points (47% Obama – 43% McCain – 3% other – 7% undecided).** Obama holds a strong lead in the Miami media market (58% Obama – 32% McCain – 0% other – 10% undecided). McCain holds a +11 percentage point lead in the Panhandle/Northeast region of the state (39% Obama – 50% McCain – 6% other – 7% undecided).

- **John McCain is underperforming in the Panhandle/Northeast region.** In 2000 George W. Bush led Al Gore in the Panhandle/Northeast by 58% to 39%. In 2004, George W. Bush led John Kerry by 61% to 38%. McCain's +11 percentage point margin in this region is significantly lower than the margin needed for a Republican candidate to win the state.
- **Voters give Charlie Crist a very positive job rating as governor (70% positive – 25% negative).** However, only 13% of voters rate his performance as "excellent". Crist is rated positively by all voters, regardless of party registration. Democrats rate the Governor 62% positive – 33% negative, Republicans are 80% positive – 16% negative, and Independents are 64% positive – 26% negative.
- **A majority of voters would vote to re-elect Charlie Crist as governor if the 2010 election were held today.** Crist receives 52% of the vote, while a generic Democratic candidate garners 34% of the vote.
- **Mel Martinez appears to be struggling against a generic Democratic candidate in a re-elect vote preference for U.S. Senate.** Just 44% say they would vote to re-elect Senator Martinez, while 40% say they would support a Democratic candidate.
- **Fifty percent (50%) of voters in Florida feel the federal government's plan to help struggling financial markets with \$700 billion in assistance is necessary, while 38% feel it is unnecessary.**