

# *Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin & Associates*

*Opinion Research &  
Public Policy Analysis*

TO: Interested Parties

FROM: Paul Maslin and Ben Tulchin  
Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin & Associates

DATE: August 4, 2004

RE: Recent North Carolina Statewide Poll Results

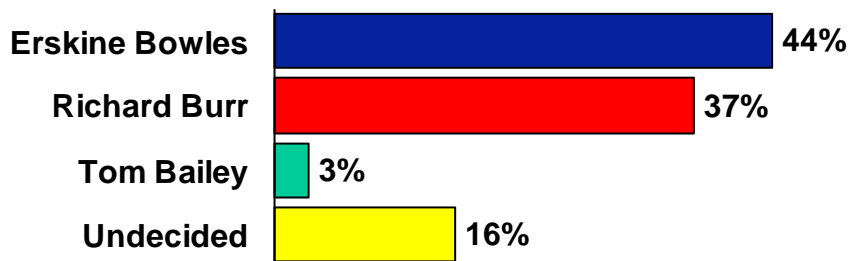
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***DEMOCRATS IN NORTH CAROLINA ARE IN A STRONG POSITION:  
ERSKINE BOWLES LEADS IN THE U.S. SENATE RACE;  
JOHN KERRY AND JOHN EDWARDS ARE EXTREMELY COMPETITIVE***

A recent survey<sup>1</sup> of 600 North Carolina voters who are likely to vote in this November's election found that Democratic candidates running for statewide office in North Carolina are well regarded by the public and well positioned to win in November.

Notably, Erskine Bowles leads in the election to replace John Edwards in the U.S. Senate. Currently, Bowles garners a plurality of support, receiving 44 percent of the statewide vote. His Republican opponent, Richard Burr, receives 37 percent, with the Libertarian Tom Bailey getting 3 percent and the remaining 16 percent undecided.

**Figure 1: Horserace for U.S. Senate in North Carolina**



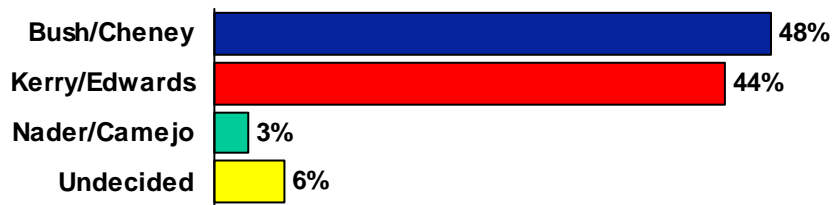
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Bowles leads in this race due to the fact that he attracts support across partisan lines. Currently, he and Burr receive identical levels of support within their own parties (70 percent). However, Bowles receives slightly more votes from Republicans (18 percent) than Burr picks up from Democrats (16 percent). The two major party candidates split independents evenly, with 30 percent each and 31 percent undecided (the Libertarian draws 9 percent). With Democrats holding a double-digit advantage in party registration in North Carolina, Bowles has the upper hand in this election and if can maintain this current vote dynamic, he will win decisively.

Bowles’ chances are boosted by the fact that the presidential contest is highly competitive. This poll was conducted *prior* to the national Democratic convention and it found the presidential horserace to be within the survey’s margin of error. Specifically, President George Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney receive 48 percent of the vote to Senators John Kerry and John Edwards’ 44 percent, with Ralph Nader and Peter Camejo garnering 3 percent and only 6 percent undecided.

**Figure 2: The Presidential Horserace in North Carolina**



There are several factors which suggest that the presidential contest will remain close in North Carolina.

1. More people think the country is headed in the wrong direction (47 percent) than the right direction (40 percent). This is a basic measurement in public attitudes that often reflects voters’ willingness to re-elect an incumbent. It remains a good measure in this case, as most voters who think things are off on the wrong track are supporting Kerry and Edwards and the majority of people who are optimistic indicate they will vote for Bush and Cheney.
2. Nearly half of North Carolina voters believe the war in Iraq has not been worth the toll in lives or other costs (48 percent) versus only 42 percent who feel it has been worth waging. Again, most of the people who now side against the war are voting for Kerry and Edwards and the dwindling numbers of people who believe in the war are backing the incumbents.
3. John Edwards is a major asset to the Democratic ticket. Among all the elected officials and public figures tested in the survey, Edwards is by far the most popular.

<sup>i</sup> From July 19-22, 2004, Fairbank, Maslin, Maullin & Associates (FMM&A) conducted a statewide telephone survey of 600 likely voters in North Carolina on behalf of the League of Conservation Voters. The margin of error for the full sample is plus or minus 4.0%. The margin of error for demographic subgroups will be slightly higher.

