

## **A Supporting Role For Mrs. Dole?**

Republicans have a consolation prize for failed presidential candidate Elizabeth Dole: She's their overwhelming favorite for *vice* president.

If George W. Bush wins the GOP presidential nomination, 46 percent of Republicans pick Dole out of a list of five top-mentioned vice presidential possibles. That puts her nearly 30 points ahead of No. 2 John McCain, who's still aiming for the top slot.

Back in the single digits are three Northeastern governors, none of whom has had much in the way of broad national exposure: New Jersey's Christine Whitman, New York's George Pataki and Pennsylvania's Tom Ridge.

All of this, of course, is premature. But Dole's 46 percent support for vice president is interesting at least in comparison to her tepid backing for the presidential nomination, which languished in the teens all summer, slumping to 12 percent by the time she bailed out of the race last week, citing fundraising problems.

A few days after Dole's withdrawal, Bush himself called it "way too early to speculate" on a running mate. But he listed the qualities he'd seek – someone who's qualified to be president, whose integrity he trusts, who agrees with him philosophically on most issues – and said, "There is no question, on all of those, that Elizabeth Dole fits that."

Preference for V.P. Among Leaned Republicans	
Dole	46%
McCain	17
Whitman	8
Pataki	7
Ridge	3

These results are among leaned Republicans, meaning Republicans and independents who lean toward the Republican Party. Preference for Dole is 13 points lower among leaned Democrats, some of whom may suspect she'd strengthen the GOP ticket.

AUSTIN/RALEIGH? - Choice of a vice presidential candidate has been a subject of political fascination at least since the Austin/Boston connection, when Lyndon B. Johnson delivered his home state of Texas to John F. Kennedy in 1960.

In practice, though, the ticket's No. 2 usually has little influence on vote choices; it's the rare voter who finds the presidential candidates so similar that the v.p. nominee becomes the deciding factor. Lloyd Bentsen didn't bail out Michael Dukakis in 1998 (or even bring him Texas), and Dan Quayle didn't torpedo George Bush that same year.

There's speculation that having Dole on the ticket could help Bush win more support from women, who generally are less apt than men to vote for Republicans. It's possible; among all Americans, women are 12 points more likely than men to favor Dole for the vice presidential nomination.

At the same time, having Geraldine Ferraro on the ticket didn't rescue Walter Mondale's 1984 campaign: He lost women as well as men to Ronald Reagan (albeit women by less of a landslide). Mondale also lost voters who said the vice presidential nominees were "very important" in their vote (albeit, again, by less of a margin). And he lost Ferraro's home state, New York, by eight percentage points.

Dole, on the other hand, is from North Carolina, which has voted Republican in seven of the last eight presidential elections.

METHODOLOGY - This ABC News.com survey was conducted by telephone Oct. 20-24, 1999, among a random national sample of 1,011 adults. The results have a three-point error margin. Fieldwork by ICR-International Communications Research of Media, Pa.

Analysis by Gary Langer.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com on the Internet at:

<http://www.abcnews.com/sections/us/PollVault/PollVault.html>

17. If George W. Bush is the Republican nominee for president next year, who would you like to see him pick as his vice-presidential running mate - (scramble) Elizabeth Dole, John McCain, George Pataki, Tom Ridge or Christine Whitman?

10/24/99	Dole	McCain	Pataki	Ridge	Whitman	Other (vol.)	None (vol.)	No opin.
All	36	13	6	3	9	3	16	14
Leaned Reps.	46	17	7	3	8	3	5	10
Leaned Dems.	33	11	3	4	10	3	22	15