

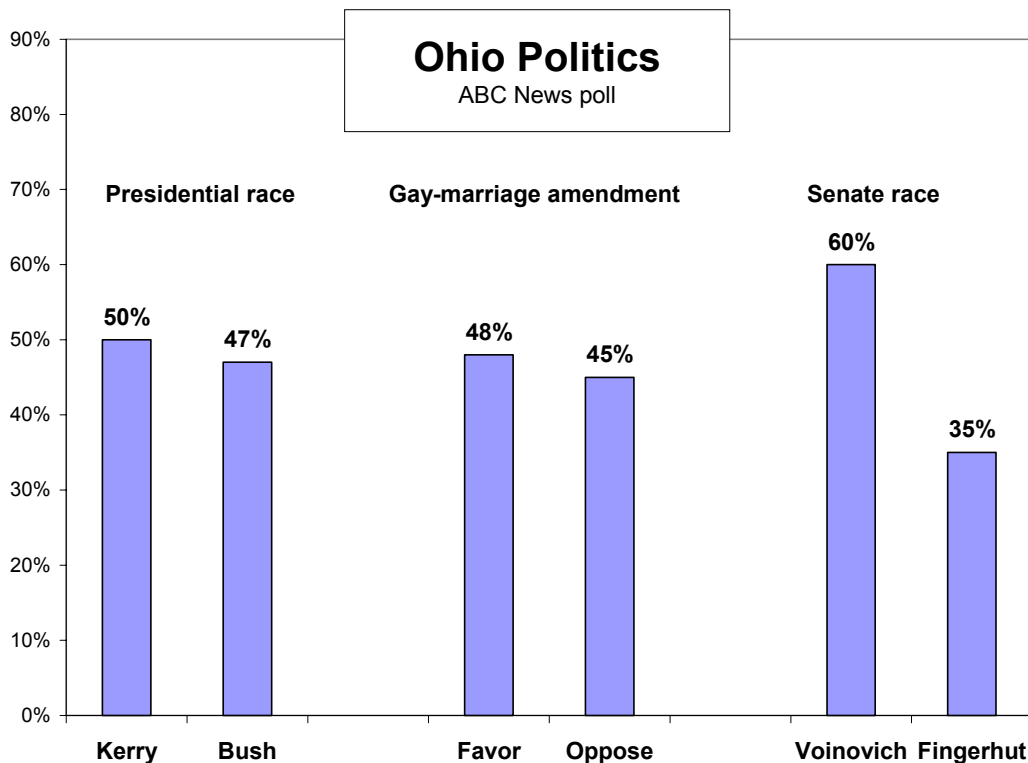
## **Economic Issues in Ohio**

### **Work to Kerry's Advantage**

The economy and jobs dominate as the top issue in Ohio, lending fuel to John Kerry's candidacy – and keeping the presidential race very close in this potentially crucial state.

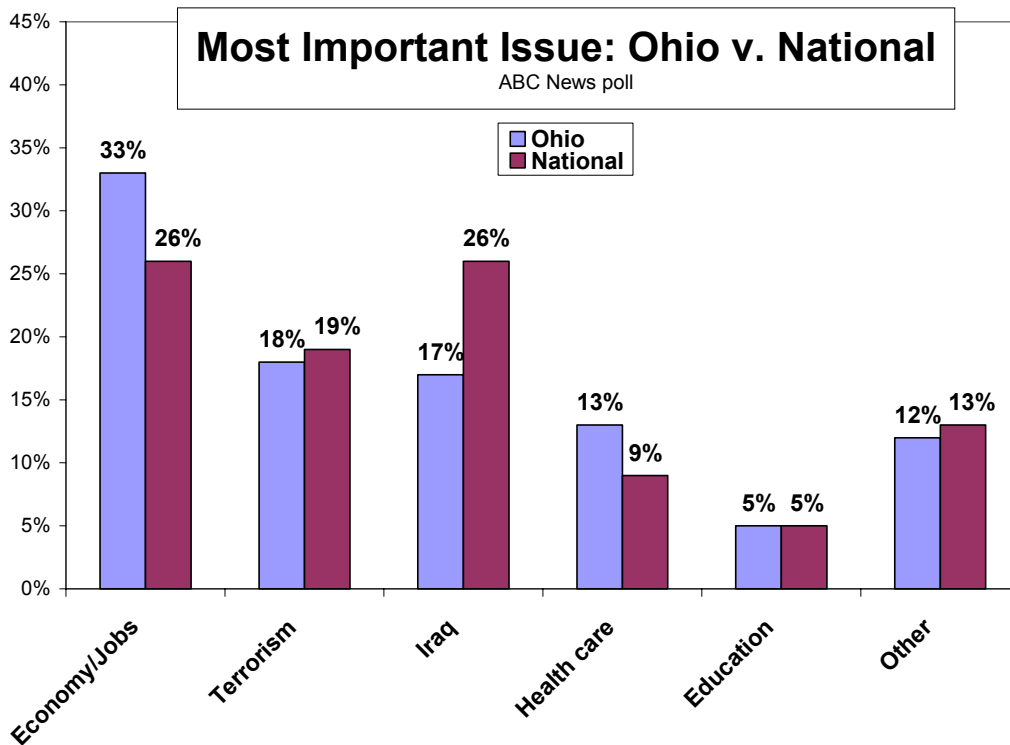
A third of likely voters in Ohio call the economy and jobs the most important issue in their vote, putting it substantially ahead of terrorism, Iraq or health care. The economy stands taller as the top concern in Ohio than nationally – and that helps Kerry. Likely voters who pick it as their top issue favor him over George W. Bush by 73-25 percent.

In the race overall, 50 percent of Ohio likely voters in this ABC News poll favor Kerry, with 47 percent for Bush– a close race, with the difference between the candidates within the survey's margin of sampling error. It remains 50-47 percent with Nader in the race; he's currently off the ballot with a court challenge pending.



In another contest of interest, likely voters divide on a proposed amendment to the Ohio state constitution banning gay marriage, with 48 percent in favor, 45 percent opposed. That contest may be pulling a few, but just a few, voters to the polls: Four percent call it

the most important contest on the ballot. And preferences in the state's U.S. Senate race show a very large lead for the incumbent Republican, George Voinovich.



**ECONOMY** – The economic concerns make sense: Unemployment in Ohio (in the latest data, from August) is 6.3 percent, up from 4.2 percent in August 2000, when Bush beat Al Gore in the state by 166,735 votes. In 2000 Ohio's unemployment rate was almost identical to the national average, 4.1 percent; now Ohio's rate is nearly a point worse than unemployment nationally.

More than half of likely voters, 54 percent, say most Ohioans are not as well off financially as when Bush became president, underscoring his vulnerability on the economy. Just 10 percent say most people are better off, while about a third think most people in the state are about the same financially as when Bush came to office.

These views inform votes. Among likely voters who say most people in Ohio are worse off, 83 percent favor Kerry for president. By equally huge margins, those who say the state's residents are better off, or the same, favor Bush.

Ohioans' financial situation:	Vote preference (among likely voters)	
	Bush	Kerry
Better	93%	6
Worse	15	83
Same	84	13

On the economic front it's notable, too, that Kerry leads Bush by 61-36 percent among voters with household incomes under \$50,000 – while among better-off voters, Bush leads by 55-43 percent.

Election history prompts the intense focus on Ohio this year. No Republican presidential candidate has won the presidency without Ohio, and only two Democrats have won without Ohio since 1900 — Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1944 and John F. Kennedy in 1960. At the same time, history is not predictive, and each election is new.

The race is hardly decided. Kerry holds an edge over Bush on some issues – helping the middle class, creating jobs and health care. But they're close to even (Kerry +4) in trust to handle the economy overall, and Bush leads in Ohio, as elsewhere, on terrorism and the war in Iraq.

Bush also beats Kerry on four of eight candidate qualities – some by large margins – including leadership, clarity and making the country safer. And Bush's job approval rating among likely voters, at 51 percent, is just over the crucial halfway mark.

All these suggest a hard-fought race in Ohio during the next two weeks.

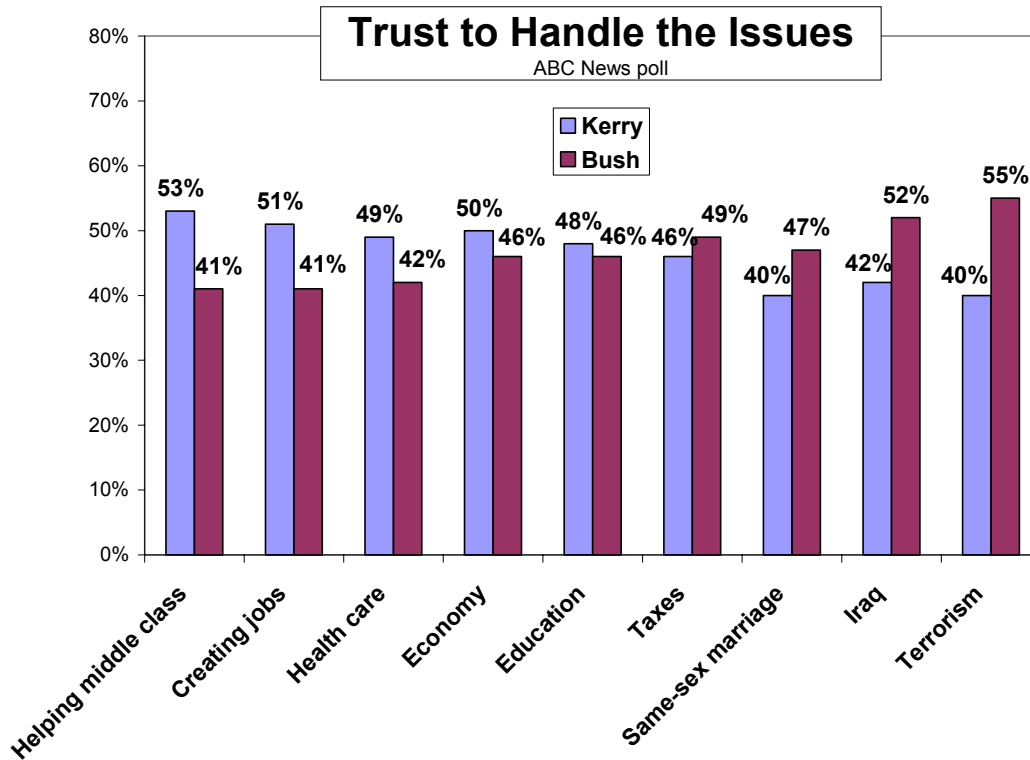
ENTHUSIASM – In another difference from the race nationally, Kerry and Bush run about evenly in voter enthusiasm in Ohio: Fifty-eight percent of Bush's supporters say they're "very enthusiastic" about his candidacy; 54 percent of Kerry's voters say the same about their guy. Nationally, by contrast, Bush has the advantage on strong enthusiasm, with 59 percent compared to Kerry's 45 percent.

	Strong enthusiasm (among likely voters)	
	Ohio	Nationally
Among Bush supporters	58%	59%
Among Kerry supporters	54%	45%

Enthusiasm can influence turnout, critical in a close race. So can individual contact, and the campaigns have been impressively active in Ohio: Thirty-two percent of likely voters say they've been contacted by the Bush campaign, 30 percent by the Kerry campaign. Each side is having about equal success: Sixty-one percent of those contacted by the Bush campaign say they'll vote for him, and two-thirds of those contacted by Kerry's campaign favor Kerry. About a third each say they'll be going for the other guy.

ISSUES – Kerry's biggest leads on individual issues are a 12-point advantage in "helping the middle class" and a 10-point lead on creating jobs – both clearly of interest to Ohio voters. Bush has a 15-point lead in trust to handle terrorism, and a 10-point advantage in trust to handle the war in Iraq – the Nos. 2 and 3 items on the list of top issues. It's Kerry +7 on the next most-cited issue, health care.

On another issue of interest, given the proposed constitutional amendment, Ohioans trust Bush over Kerry to handle the issue of same-sex marriage, by a comparatively close 47-40 percent.



As noted, Kerry leads Bush by 48 points among Ohio likely voters who say the economy is their No. 1 issue, by 40 points among those who say it's health care and by 18 points among Iraq issue voters. Terrorism is Bush's comeback: Among likely voters who say it's the top issue, he leads Kerry by 76 points, 87-11 percent.

Top issue:	Vote Preference	
	Kerry	Bush
Economy/jobs	73%	25
Terrorism	11	87
Iraq	57	39
Health care	68	28

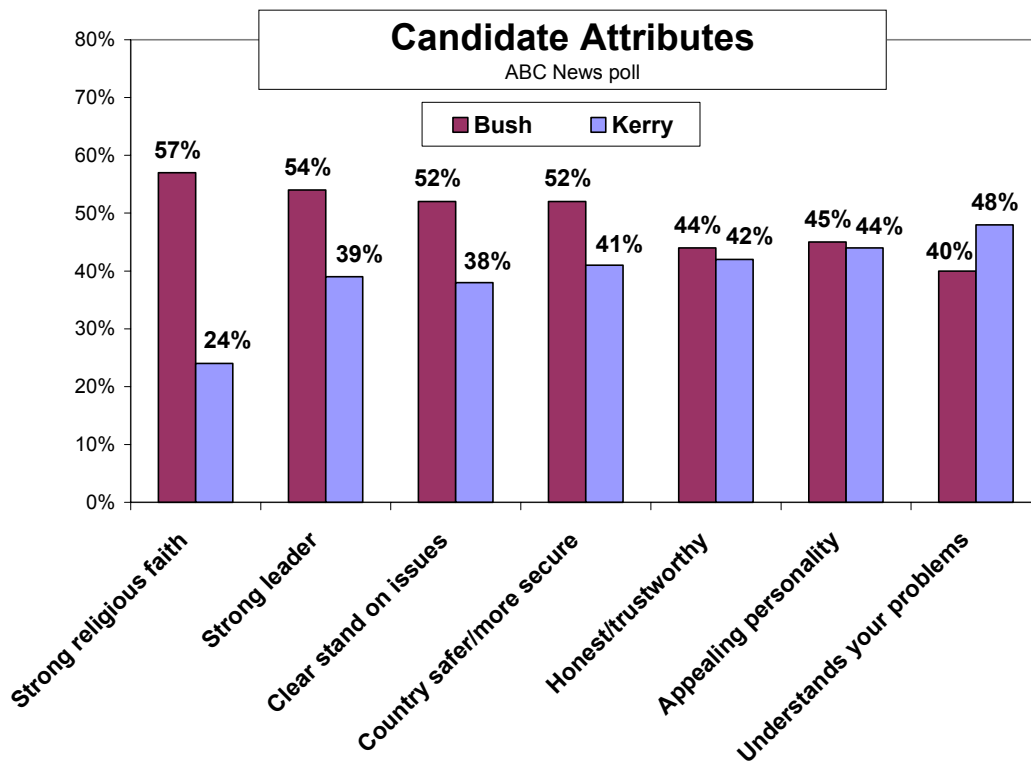
Underlying attitudes about the war, terrorism and the president also define the Ohio battleground. By more than 2-1 (62-30 percent) likely voters think the country is safer now than before 9/11, a benefit for Bush. But they're split straight down the middle on whether the Iraq war was worth fighting, 49-49 percent.

ATTRIBUTES – Bush holds significant leads over Kerry on several key attributes, a potential source of strength among wavering or moveable voters. Bush leads by 33 points as the candidate likely voters think has strong religious faith; by 15 points on strong

leadership; by 14 points on taking a clear stand on the issues; and by 11 points on making the country safer and more secure.

But Bush and Kerry run about evenly, 44-42 percent, on honesty and trustworthiness, perhaps the most fundamental candidate quality; that compares to a nine-point Bush lead on honesty nationally. Ohioans are similarly evenly split on which candidate has the more appealing personality (45-44 percent); and it's dead even on who shares voters' values – 47 percent pick Bush, 47 percent Kerry.

Kerry leads Bush on one attribute of the eight tested: When it comes to who “understands the problems of people like you,” Ohio likely voters pick Kerry by 48-40 percent.



On overall popularity, Ohioans divide on both men. Bush has a favorable-unfavorable rating of 50-45 percent; Kerry, 47-45 percent. Both are similar to their ratings nationally.

**SAME-SEX MARRIAGE** – Ohio’s “Issue 1” would amend the state constitution to define marriage as only being between a man and a woman, and would prohibit legally recognized civil unions for gay and lesbian couples. As noted, likely voters are about evenly divided; 48 percent say they’d vote for it; 45 percent against.

The amendment is the main draw for few voters – but in a close presidential race, a few can make the difference. Overall four percent of likely voters call the amendment the most important contest on the ballot – much too small a group to reliably analyze their

presidential preference. Among one of the target voter groups for this amendment – white evangelical Protestants – seven percent say it’s the main draw.

The amendment incites strong opinions on both sides, but slightly stronger on the support side. Thirty-nine percent of likely voters strongly support the amendment, while 32 percent strongly oppose it. Two-thirds of opponents of the amendment favor Kerry for president; about the same number of amendment supporters favor Bush.

Views on the amendment draw sharp lines across the electorate. Republicans, conservatives and evangelical white Protestants support it by about 40-point margins. White Catholics, key swing voters who supported Bush over Gore by seven points in Ohio in 2000, favor the amendment by a closer 51-41 percent.

Democrats are not as lopsided in their view; 54 percent of Democrats oppose the amendment, but 37 percent of Democrats support it. Independents oppose it by a very similar margin as Democrats, 54-41 percent.

Women and men divide about evenly on the proposal, with marital status a key factor. Married men and women alike support the amendment; unmarried men and women oppose it.

	Same-sex marriage amendment	
	Favor	Oppose
Likely voters	48%	45
Democrat	37	54
Republican	66	28
Independent	41	54
Liberal	30	65
Moderate	41	50
Conservative	69	26
White evangelical Protestants	68	28
White non-evangelical Protestants	42	51
White Catholics	51	41
Married women	54	37
Married men	52	42
Unmarried women	37	54
Unmarried men	44	54

Polling results on a controversial amendment such as this one can be sensitive to how the question is asked. A University of Cincinnati poll last month, which found 2-1 support for the amendment, first asked likely voters if they were aware of the “Marriage

Protection Act,” and then read them the full text of the ballot language: “Only a union between one man and one woman may be a marriage valid or recognized by Ohio and its political subdivisions. Ohio and its political subdivisions shall not create or recognize a legal status for relationships of unmarried individuals that intends to approximate the design, qualities, significance or effect of marriage.”

This ABC News poll, by contrast, summarized: “There’s a proposed amendment to the Ohio constitution that would define marriage as being only between a man and a woman, and that would prohibit legally recognized civil unions for gay and lesbian couples.”

GROUPS – Both presidential candidates are strong in their core groups: Kerry loses nine percent of Democrats to Bush, Bush loses the same number of Republicans to Kerry.

In the two key swing voter groups, independents divide by 52-44 percent, and white Catholics by a closer 49-50 percent, Kerry-Bush. Union voters may be another key: Voters in union households favor Kerry by 27 points, and they made up 36 percent of the Ohio electorate in 2000.

Regionally, Bush has double-digit leads in the northwestern (including Toledo) and southwestern (including Cincinnati) areas of the state. Kerry has a 43-point lead in Cleveland, and a 14-point lead in the northeast. Central Ohio splits about evenly.

Men are worth watching: They divide by 51-46 percent, Bush-Kerry; in 2000, by contrast, Bush beat Gore by 18 points among men. Kerry currently holds a 10-point lead among women; Gore won them by 53-45 percent in 2000.

SENATE – As noted, Republican Sen. George Voinovich holds a commanding lead over Democratic challenger Eric Fingerhut, 60-35 percent. Voinovich leads across almost all demographic groups; only among Democrats, non-whites, liberals and those who pick health care as their top issue do majorities favor Fingerhut. Indeed Voinovich is supported by a sizable 26 percent of Democrats, and he leads in all regions of the state but Cleveland.

There’s significant crossover voting between the Senate and presidential races: Twenty-seven percent of Voinovich’s supporters prefer Kerry for president.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News poll was conducted by telephone Oct. 14-17, 2004, among a random sample of 1,027 registered voters in Ohio, including 789 likely voters. The results have a 3.5-point error margin for the likely voter sample. Sampling, data collection and tabulation by TNS of Horsham, Pa.

Analysis by Cheryl Arnedt.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com at <http://abcnews.com/pollvault.html>.

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Full results follow (\*= less than 0.5 percent).

1. How closely are you following the 2004 presidential race: very closely, somewhat closely, not too closely, or not closely at all?

	Very closely	Somewhat closely	Not too closely	Not closely at all	No opin.
10/17/04 OH LV	65	31	3	1	*
10/16/04 NAT LV	61	33	4	2	*

3. (and 3a) If the 2004 presidential election were being held today, would you vote for (George W. Bush and Dick Cheney, the Republicans), (John Kerry and John Edwards, the Democrats), or Ralph Nader and Peter Camejo, the independents? Which candidate are you leaning toward?

Net Leaned Vote, Likely Voters:

	Bush	Kerry	Nader	Other (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	Would not vote	No op.
10/17/04 OH	47	50	2	0	1	0	1
10/17/04 NAT	50	47	1	*	*	*	2

Net Leaned Vote, Registered Voters:

	Bush	Kerry	Nader	Other (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	Would not vote	No op.
10/17/04 OH	45	49	2	*	1	1	2
10/17/04 NAT	49	46	1	*	1	*	3

4. (IF NAMED CANDIDATE) Will you definitely vote for (CANDIDATE), or is there a chance you could change your mind and vote for someone else? (IF CHANCE CHANGE MIND) Is there a good chance you'll change your mind, or would you say it's pretty unlikely?

	Definitely vote	---Chance change mind---	No opin.
		NET Good Unlikely	
Likely voters:			
10/17/04 All OH	89	10 2 7	1
Bush OH	89	10 2 7	1
Kerry OH	90	9 2 7	1
10/17/04 All NAT	89	10 4 6	1
Bush NAT	92	7 3 5	1
Kerry NAT	88	12 5 8	1

5. (and 5a) (ASKED OF NADER VOTERS AND DON'T KNOWS) If Nader does not run or is not on the ballot, for whom would you vote - (Bush) or (Kerry)? Which one are you leaning toward?

Net Leaned Vote, Likely Voters:

	Bush	Kerry	Write in Nader (vol.)	Other (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	Would not vote	No op.
10/17/04 OH	47	50	0	*	1	1	*

Net Leaned Vote, Registered Voters:

Write in	Other	Neither	Would	No
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	Bush	Kerry	Nader (vol.)	(vol.)	(vol.)	not vote	op.
10/17/04 OH	46	50	1	*	2	1	2

6. If the 2004 Ohio Senate election were being held today, would you vote for (George Voinovich, the Republican) or (Eric Fingerhut, the Democrat)?

Net Leaned Vote, Likely Voters:

	Voinovich	Fingerhut	Other (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	Would not vote	No opin.
10/17/04 OH	60	35	1	2	*	3

Net Leaned Vote, Registered Voters:

	Voinovich	Fingerhut	Other (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	Would not vote	No opin.
10/17/04 OH	59	35	1	2	*	4

7. There's a proposed amendment to the Ohio constitution that would define marriage as being only between a man and a woman, and that would prohibit legally recognized civil unions for gay and lesbian couples. (Did) (Do you) (support/oppose) this amendment STRONGLY or SOMEWHAT?

	-----Support-----			-----Oppose-----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opin.
10/17/04 OH LV	48	39	9	45	13	32	7

8. Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president? Do you approve/disapprove strongly or somewhat?

	-----Approve-----			-----Disapprove-----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opin.
10/17/04 OH LV	51	33	18	48	9	39	2
10/17/04 NAT LV	53	34	19	45	10	36	2

9. Regardless of (how you might vote/who you voted for), please tell me if you have a favorable or unfavorable impression of (NAME) or perhaps you don't know enough to say.

10/17/04 - Summary Table

		Favorable	Unfavorable	No opinion
a. George W. Bush	OH LV	50	45	5
b. John Kerry	OH LV	47	45	9

Trend:

a. George W. Bush

	Favorable	Unfavorable	No opinion
10/17/04 OH LV	50	45	5
10/17/04 NAT LV	52	42	6

b. John Kerry

	Favorable	Unfavorable	No opinion
10/17/04 OH LV	47	45	9
10/17/04 NAT LV	46	43	11

10. What (was/will be) the single most important issue in your vote for president this year: (The U.S. campaign against terrorism), (the war in Iraq), (the economy and jobs), (education), (health care), or something else?

	Terrorism	Iraq	Economy/ jobs	Educ- ation	Health care	Other	No op.
10/17/04 OH LV	18	17	33	5	13	12	2
10/17/04 NAT LV	19	26	26	5	9	13	3

11. What (was) (is) the most important contest to you on the ballot this year - (the Senate race), (the presidential race) or the (same-sex marriage amendment)?

	10/17/04 OH LV
Presidential race	93
Same-sex marriage amendment	4
Senate race	1
Senate race and Presidential Race (vol.)	*
Same-sex marriage and Presidential race OR Same-sex marriage and Senate race (vol.)	*
All issues equally important/ the same (vol.)	1
No opinion	*

12. Who do you trust to do a better job handling (ITEM), (Bush) or (Kerry)?

10/17/04 - Summary Table - OH Likely Voters

	Bush	Kerry	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No op.
a. The economy	46	50	*	3	1
b. The situation in Iraq	52	42	1	2	3
c. Education	46	48	1	3	3
d. The US campaign against terrorism	55	40	1	2	3
e. Health care	42	49	1	5	3
f. Taxes	49	46	*	4	2
g. Helping the middle class	41	53	*	4	2
h. Creating jobs	41	51	1	4	2
i. Same-sex marriage	47	40	1	4	8

Trend:

a. The economy

	Bush	Kerry	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opin.
10/17/04 OH LV	46	50	*	3	1
10/17/04 NAT LV	46	47	1	4	3

b. The situation in Iraq

	Bush	Kerry	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opin.
10/17/04 OH LV	52	42	1	2	3
10/17/04 NAT LV	52	41	1	3	4

c. Education

	Bush	Kerry	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opin.
10/17/04 OH LV	46	48	1	3	3
10/17/04 NAT LV	46	45	2	3	4

d. The U.S. campaign against terrorism

	Bush	Kerry	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opin.
10/17/04 OH LV	55	40	1	2	3
10/17/04 NAT LV	56	36	2	3	3

e. Health care

	Bush	Kerry	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opin.
10/17/04 OH LV	42	49	1	5	3
10/17/04 NAT LV	42	48	1	5	4

f. Taxes

	Bush	Kerry	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opin.
10/17/04 OH LV	49	46	*	4	2
10/17/04 NAT LV	50	42	1	4	4

g. Helping the middle class

	Bush	Kerry	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opin.
10/17/04 OH LV	41	53	*	4	2
9/8/04 NAT LV	45	47	*	5	3

h. Creating jobs

	Bush	Kerry	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opin.
10/17/04 OH LV	41	51	1	4	2
10/17/04 NAT LV	43	47	1	5	4

i. Same-sex marriage

	Bush	Kerry	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No opin.
10/17/04 OH LV	47	40	1	4	8
10/7/04 NAT LV	42	43	1	7	7

13. Please tell me whether the following statement applies more to (Bush) or more to (Kerry).

10/17/04 - Summary Table - OH Likely Voters

	Bush	Kerry	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No op.
a. He is honest and trustworthy	44	42	3	9	2
b. He understands the problems of people like you	40	48	1	10	2
c. He is a strong leader	54	39	2	3	2

d. He will make the country safer and more secure	52	41	2	3	3
e. He shares your values	47	47	1	5	1
f. He has taken a clear stand on the issues	52	38	2	6	2
g. He has an appealing personality	45	44	3	7	1
h. He has strong religious faith	57	24	10	3	6

Trend:

a. He is honest and trustworthy

	Bush	Kerry	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No op.
10/17/04 OH LV	44	42	3	9	2
10/17/04 NAT LV	48	39	3	8	3

b. He understands the problems of people like you

	Bush	Kerry	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No op.
10/17/04 OH LV	40	48	1	10	2
10/17/04 NAT LV	45	46	1	6	2

c. He is a strong leader

	Bush	Kerry	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No op.
10/17/04 OH LV	54	39	2	3	2
10/17/04 NAT LV	57	35	3	2	3

d. He will make the country safer and more secure

	Bush	Kerry	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No op.
10/17/04 OH LV	52	41	2	3	3
10/3/04 NAT LV	52	40	1	3	3

e. He shares your values

	Bush	Kerry	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No op.
10/17/04 OH LV	47	47	1	5	1
9/26/04 NAT RV	48	43	1	5	3

f. He has taken a clear stand on the issues

	Bush	Kerry	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No op.
10/17/04 OH LV	52	38	2	6	2
10/17/04 NAT LV	54	36	3	6	1

g. He has an appealing personality

	Bush	Kerry	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No op.
10/17/04 OH LV	45	44	3	7	1
9/26/04 NAT LV	51	32	4	10	3

h. He has strong religious faith

	Bush	Kerry	Both (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	No op.
10/17/04 OH LV	57	24	10	3	6
9/26/04 NAT LV	61	17	8	4	11

14. Thinking about his candidacy for president so far, how enthusiastic are you about (Bush/Kerry) - very enthusiastic, fairly enthusiastic, not too enthusiastic, or not enthusiastic at all?

10/17/04 - Summary Table - Among Leaned Bush/Kerry Supporters

	----Enthusiastic---			-----Not Enthusiastic-----			No op.
	NET	Very	Fairly	NET	Not too	Not at all	
a. Bush OH LV	94	58	36	6	6	*	0
b. Kerry OH LV	91	54	38	8	7	1	*

Trend:

	----Enthusiastic---			-----Not Enthusiastic-----			No op.
	NET	Very	Fairly	NET	Not too	Not at all	
Bush:							
10/17/04 OH LV	94	58	36	6	6	*	0
10/17/04 NAT LV	93	59	35	6	6	1	1
Kerry:							
10/17/04 OH LV	91	54	38	8	7	1	*
10/17/04 NAT LV	94	45	49	6	5	1	*

15. All in all, considering the costs to the United States versus the benefits to the United States, do you think the war with Iraq was worth fighting, or not? Do you feel that way strongly or somewhat?

	----Worth fighting-----			---Not worth fighting---			No op.
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	
10/17/04 OH LV	49	37	12	49	9	39	3
10/3/04 NAT LV	49	34	15	48	11	37	3

16. Compared to before September 11, 2001, do you think the country today is safer from terrorism or less safe from terrorism? IF SAFER: Would you say the country is much safer or somewhat safer?

	-----Safer-----			Less safe	No diff. (vol.)	No opin.
	NET	Much	Somewhat			
10/14/04 OH LV	62	26	36	30	6	2
10/3/04 NAT LV	62	29	33	29	7	2

17. Would you say most people in Ohio are better off financially than they were in 2001 when Bush became president, not as well off, or in about the same shape as then financially?

	Better off	Not as well off	The same	No opinion
10/17/04 OH LV	10	54	32	3
9/26/04* NAT LV	18	45	35	2

\*most Americans

18. Have you personally been contacted by a representative of the (NAME) campaign, either by phone or in-person, asking you for your support, or not?

		-----Bush-----			-----Kerry-----		
		Yes	No	No op.	Yes	No	No op.
10/17/04	OH LV	32	67	1	30	69	1
9/26/04	NAT LV	18	82	*	17	82	1

\*\*\*END\*\*\*