

**Report on Arab American Battleground States Poll**  
**April 22-24, 2004**

**Conducted by Zogby International  
for  
The Arab American Institute**

**Analysis by Dr. James J. Zogby**

## **Introduction**

From April 22 to April 24, 2004 the Arab American Institute polled 503 Arab American voters in four states: Florida, Michigan, Ohio and Pennsylvania.

This is the second in a series of six polls of Arab American voters in these four states. Because these states will be among those to be hotly contested in the 2004 election, and because they also contain sizable Arab American communities, we believed that it was useful to track the attitudes of Arab American voters in these “battleground states.”

The four states covered in our study all rank among the top ten in Arab American population. Together they include more than 1.1 million persons. Given the propensity of Arab Americans to vote in somewhat larger numbers than the overall population, Arab Americans in these four states represent a likely voter turnout of more than 510,000 voters (235,000 in Michigan, 120,000 in Florida, 85,000 in Ohio, and 75,000 in Pennsylvania.) The Arab American vote represents slightly more than 5% of the overall vote in Michigan, 2% in Florida, just under 2% in Ohio, and more than 1.5% of all Pennsylvania voters.

In 2000, Gore won Michigan and Pennsylvania by slightly more than 200,000 votes in each state. Bush won Ohio by 165,000 and the two virtually tied in Florida.

In February 2004, we conducted our first poll in this series. In that poll we established a benchmark for President Bush’s job performance and reelection in a two-way and three-way race.

In this poll we sought to evaluate the importance that Arab American voters attach to several key issues and which candidate they feel would be best qualified to address these issues.

The results for the April poll follow. Where relevant, for purposes of comparison the February 2004 results appear in parentheses ( ).

### **Results of Second Arab American Battleground State Tracking Poll**

#### **A. Bush Performance and Reelection**

Our April poll shows that Arab American voters continue to show deep dissatisfaction with the President’s job performance.

1) How would you rate President Bush’s performance on the job?

	<b>April %</b>	<b>February %</b>
Excellent/Good	30	(32)
Fair/Poor	67	(67)

2) If the election for President were held today, and the candidates were Republican George W. Bush and Democrat John Kerry, for whom would you vote?

	<b>All %</b>	<b>Born US %</b>	<b>Immigrant %</b>	<b>Dem%</b>	<b>Repub%</b>	<b>Ind%</b>
Bush	30 (30)	34 (35)	19 (18)	9 (13)	63 (56)	26 (23)
Kerry	49 (54)	46 (48)	60 (73)	76 (81)	20 (30)	42 (43)
Other/NS	21 (16)	21 (18)	21 (10)	16 (7)	17 (14)	32 (34)

  

	<b>Catholic %</b>	<b>Orthodox %</b>	<b>Muslim %</b>	<b>MI %</b>	<b>OH %</b>	<b>PA %</b>	<b>FL %</b>
Bush	37 (36)	37 (39)	10 (12)	28	24	28	40
Kerry	45 (47)	46 (43)	62 (78)	49	48	53	47
Other/NS	18 (17)	17 (18)	28 (10)	23	28	19	13

3) If the election for President were held today; and the candidates were Republican George W. Bush, Democrat John Kerry and Independent Ralph Nader, for whom would you vote?

	<b>All %</b>	<b>Born US %</b>	<b>Immigrant %</b>	<b>Dem %</b>	<b>Repub %</b>	<b>Ind %</b>
Bush	28 (27)	30 (31)	21 (16)	10 (10)	59 (53)	19 (18)
Kerry	45 (43)	44 (39)	49 (54)	73 (70)	18 (19)	35 (37)
Nader	14 (20)	13 (20)	17 (22)	8 (15)	10 (17)	28 (32)
Other /NS	14 (10)	14 (11)	14 (8)	10 (5)	14 (12)	18 (16)

  

	<b>Catholic %</b>	<b>Orthodox %</b>	<b>Muslim %</b>	<b>MI %</b>	<b>OH %</b>	<b>PA %</b>	<b>FL %</b>
Bush	33 (31)	33 (37)	10 (8)	25	25	26	35
Kerry	46 (44)	41 (29)	50 (57)	42	50	52	40
Nader	10 (13)	13 (20)	19 (32)	19	5	12	14
Other/NS	11 (12)	13 (15)	21 (3)	14	20	11	11

### **What Happened Between February 26 and April 22**

A) In the two-way race, support for Kerry declined by 5%. This came mainly from two overlapping groups: Arab American immigrants (down 13%), Arab American Muslims (down 16%).

The two-way race among native born and Christian Arab Americans did not change from February to April.

The overall percentage of Arab American voters who are undecided in the two-way race has increased 5%.

B) In the three-way race, Nader's percentage dropped by 6%. This decline was across the board in all groups but was especially significant among Arab American Muslims (13%).

Nader's decline did not appreciably benefit either Bush or Kerry, but those who said they were not sure or who indicated a preference for "other" candidates increased by 4%.

Among Arab American Muslims, Kerry dropped 7%, Nader dropped 13%, and those who indicated “not sure” or “other” increased 18%.

- C) Overall, both polls show that President Bush continues to perform poorly with Arab American voters. His job performance has dropped to a mere 30% and he wins the support of less than one-third of Arab Americans, including less than two-thirds of Arab American Republicans.
- D) In 2000, our polling showed that Bush beat Gore among Arab American voters in these four states by a margin of 46 to 29 with Nader receiving 13%. At present Kerry is in a position to completely flip these results by beating the President 45 to 28, with Nader at 13%.

This represents a flip of more than 170,000 votes from the Republican to the Democratic column in these four states!

- E) Despite the small size of the four-state subgroups, Kerry appears to hold a double-digit lead over Bush in MI, OH and PA. Only in FL do both the two-way and three-way races appear close.

**B. Importance of Key Issues to Arab American Voters**

1) When asked to evaluate how important each of the following issues would be in determining their choice for President, the following rank order of issues occurs:

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Very Important%</b>	<b>Somewhat Important%</b>	<b>Not Important%</b>
Economy	89	11	1
Health Care	83	15	1
Terrorism/ National Security	82	17	1
Education	80	18	1
Foreign Policy	74	23	3
Iraq	73	20	6
Israel-Palestine	72	18	7
Taxes	63	36	3
Environment	62	33	4
Patriot Act/ Civil Liberties	61	22	9

2) When asked which candidates for President would do the best jobs dealing with each of these issues, the results were as follows:

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Kerry%</b>	<b>Bush%</b>	<b>Nader%</b>	<b>None%</b>
Economy	<b>44</b>	27	14	4
Health Care	<b>43</b>	22	15	4
Terrorism/Nat'l Security	30	<b>39</b>	12	5
Education	<b>41</b>	26	14	4
Foreign Policy	<b>37</b>	26	17	6
Iraq	36	29	13	10

Israel-Palestine	28	19	<b>21</b>	32
Taxes	36	<b>37</b>	12	5
Environment	35	17	<b>29</b>	4
Patriot Act/ Civil Liberties	31	20	<b>26</b>	4

3) When asked which candidate for president would do the best job dealing with each of these issues, the results were as follows:

A review of selected cross tabs on four of these issues reveals the following:

	<b>Economy As Issue</b>						<b>Israel-Palestine As Issue</b>				
	<u>All%</u>	<u>All%</u>	<u>US%</u>	<u>IN%</u>	<u>D%</u>	<u>R%</u>	<u>All %</u>	<u>US %</u>	<u>IN%</u>	<u>D%</u>	<u>R%</u>
Kerry	45	44	41	54	72	17	28	30	24	46	14
Bush	28	27	30	18	7	62	19	20	16	6	<b>36</b>
Nader	14	14	14	14	10	14	21	20	25	19	20
NS/None	14	15	15	14	11	7	<b>32</b>	30	35	28	30

	<b>Patriot Act/Civ. Lib As Issue</b>						<b>Terrorism As Issue</b>				
	<u>All%</u>	<u>All%</u>	<u>US%</u>	<u>IN%</u>	<u>D%</u>	<u>R%</u>	<u>All%</u>	<u>US%</u>	<u>IN%</u>	<u>D%</u>	<u>R%</u>
Kerry	45	31	31	31	47	19	30	29	34	49	9
Bush	28	20	32	16	8	<b>39</b>	39	40	36	27	64
Nader	14	26	25	29	23	23	12	12	13	9	10
NS/None	14	22	22	24	22	19	18	19	17	15	17

4) Finally, when asked “Where it comes to resolving the Israeli-Palestinian dispute, would you say you have more confidence in George W. Bush, John Kerry, both equally, or neither?”, the results were:

<b>Confidence</b>	<b>%</b>
Bush	16
Kerry	22
Both	6
Neither	48
Not Sure	8

### Analysis

- The rank order of issue concerns for Arab American voters appears, for the most part, to be no different than it is for other U.S. voters, with the economy, health care, terrorism, and education as the top concerns. The only significant difference is the greater concern Arab American place on resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
- Kerry holds at least a double-digit lead over Bush in four of the top five rated issues. Bush leads by a significant margin in only one area: combating terrorism.

- c) Nader receives higher performance ratings than Bush in dealing with three areas: the environment, resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and defending civil liberties.
- d) Arab American voters do not give high marks to any of the candidates in dealing with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. While Kerry leads in the area with 28%, and Nader beats Bush (21% - 19%), the plurality (32%) favors none of these candidates. In a separate question, “Where it comes to resolving the Israeli-Palestinian dispute, would you say you have more confidence in George W. Bush, John Kerry, both equally, or neither?”, 48% indicate confidence in neither of the two candidates.
- e) While much of the evaluation given to the candidates by Arab American voters follows along partisan lines, Bush does not perform well among Republicans in two areas: solving the Israeli-Palestinian dispute (36%) and Patriot Act/Defending Civil Liberties (39%).