

David Bell

Campaigns and elections

3/30/2008

In the last 10 presidential elections the only Democratic nominees that can boast winning Florida in the general election are Bill Clinton and Jimmy Carter. Before them Harry Truman won in 1952. Although any democratic strategist that you ask would tell you winning Florida would more than likely seal the victory for Democrats come November, I do not foresee it happening this year due to traditional Republican backing since 1964. Also stripping of delegates in the Democratic primaries caused candidates to neglect Florida and possibly concede it to the Republicans. Also a division of support to two candidates so late in the campaigning season.

Every poll since November has had McCain in a solid lead to overtake Sen. Obama or Sen. Clinton in a head to head race in Florida. McCain on average leads Obama by 7 points which is well beyond the margin of error. He leads Senator Clinton by nearly 3 points. That is not a sign of change in the norm although Florida has been known for having many independent voters, they generally lean more so to the Republican side. Also, McCain has been compared to a more conservative Joe Lieberman which will undoubtedly win many independent voters in November. While Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton both tend to vote along party lines unlike John McCain who is known as a political Maverick.

If this was the year for Democrats to win Florida I believe the narrow lead they may have been able to grasp onto has been taken away due to the stripping of delegates in the Democratic primary. With no Democrats campaigning in Florida, the Republicans had a clear opportunity to really establish themselves and get undivided attention from the local news and media providers spreading their messages. A new phrase in Florida to

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reference the democrats no showing in Florida is calling them the duh-mocrats there is also a cartoon has a donkey shooting himself in the head which is essentially what the Democrats have done with their chances of winning Florida this year This is only one example of how divided the democratic party is becoming before this election.

Nationally only 28% of Hillary supporters said they would not back Obama and 19% of Obama supporters would not agree to back Clinton. Although I do believe these numbers are low due to the party being divided and that they will inevitably come up, I believe its hard to get independent and republicans on the fence when you cant even get a respectable amount of support from your own party.

This November I expect Florida to go to McCain somewhat easily. If Barack Obama is the Democratic nominee I believe it will go to McCain very easily. I believe Hillary may have a better shot of winning over the 17% of people over 65 than could Potentially give her a shot at keeping it close but inevitably John McCain will win Florida.

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