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Ohio

**Recent Election Returns**

The process of electing the President of the United States is greatly determined and associated with certain “battleground” states. Since the 1980’s Ohio has been one such state.

The state of Ohio has seen an interesting change in its partisan leaning during the last few elections. In the year 2000 the state leaned slightly republican with 50% of the vote going to George W. Bush and 47 % to Al Gore. In 2004 the state saw a slight increase in the republican vote with 51% voting for George W. Bush; however the democratic vote also increased slightly to 49%. In the latest election of 2008, the state shifted slightly with only 47% voting republican for John McCain and 52% choosing democratic candidate Barack Obama.

The change in percentage in 2008 was not enormous, but it was enough to shift the balance of the state and choose the democratic candidate. It is also interesting to note that during the last three elections the state has chosen the candidate that was eventually elected President, thus making the state a great indicator of who will most likely win the election.

United States House of Representatives elections in Ohio 2010 fared better for the Republican Party than the democratic. The republicans added five seats to the U.S. house while the democrats lost that same number. Currently the state has thirteen republican seats and five democratic.

This data shows that the state slightly favored Barack Obama in 2008. The Republican Party has been able to regain some lost ground with the election of five representatives to the U.S. House versus the democratic loss of five representatives. The margins are not wide and even relatively small factors could play a huge role, however the state of Ohio currently leans slightly republican.

**Economic Conditions in the State**

According to percentage of gross domestic product, Ohio’s largest industries are manufacturing, trade, and transportation. The state’s two leading export commodities are motor vehicles and machinery. Ohio’s two largest manufacturing industries are closely identified with a number of nationally recognized firms with a major presence in Ohio, including General Electric, General Motors, Ford, Chrysler, and Honda. The service-producing sectors produce 80 percent of the state GDP and will account for virtually all job growth over the 2008-2018 period.

During the 2008 – 2012 recession, Ohio has seen expected ups and downs. The economic fall was not a drastic one when compared to other states. State unemployment spiked during the end of 2009, and the beginning of 2010 with 650,000 jobless. Since the beginning of 2010, the state has seen a continuous decrease in unemployment and currently approximately 440,000 are without work. This decrease is due to many conflicting factors; however, the continued allocation of funds for the auto bail-out and the rebound of a robust real estate industry should mostly receive credit.

Ohio has fared quite well in spite of the recession which will highly favor President Obama; however, it is important to note that the auto bail-out was started by President Bush in his last few weeks of presidency. The people of Ohio understand that President Obama has, in reality, done little to help them. Republicans have offered stout opposition to spending of government funds in the failing auto industry which will hurt them. Mitt Romney was an auto company Chief Executive; this experience makes him the better choice to continue to stimulate Ohio’s economics.

**Further Analysis**

President Obama will do well in Ohio because of how well the state economy is doing. However, informed voters will understand that the President himself has not had a lot to do with how well the local economy is doing. The state has been able to weather the recession so well mainly because of well thought out programs and cuts made by Governor John Kasich.

The main issue on everyone’s mind will undoubtedly be the economy during this election. Informed voters will understand that their lives have been much more affected by their republican Governor than their democratic President. This will really pack a punch during election time. Voters will realize how well republican ideals and ideology have influenced their state and want more of the same from Mitt Romney.

The creation of new jobs will also greatly affect the outcome of who will win in Ohio. President Obama has been most severely criticized for not reducing unemployment below 9%. However, he can't force businesses to hire.

Mitt Romney's plan is to minimize government in business. Only the private sector has the economic muscle to create the millions of jobs needed. To do this, Romney proposes lowering personal, investment and corporate taxes. Informed voters from either political party will easily see that while current policy has worked, it hasn’t been enough. Clearly Mitt Romney does not have a solution to every problem; however he does bring a new perspective, due in large part to his business experience, that the people of Ohio will want.

Ohio does not have many racial minorities with 83.6 percent of the population considering themselves “white.” This large percentile of whites and more specifically, white males, will undoubtedly favor the Republican candidate. Jonathan Chait of New York Magazine states, “To squeak out a majority, Mitt Romney probably needs to win at least 61 percent of the white vote.”

Mitt Romney also has in his favor the large amount of citizens, who consider themselves religious. According to recent polls and surveys 76 percent of Ohioans identify themselves as Christian. Both the large percent of white voters and Christian voters are up for grabs, anything could happen, however it does seem that Mitt Romney currently has the upper hand.

**Conclusion and Prediction**

The margins by which Ohio will be won will be tight, and almost any factor could swing the state one way or the other. With that being said, Mitt Romney will win the state.

To win the state; Mitt Romney must get at least half or more of the 76 percent of the state who call themselves Christians out to vote for him. It will also be necessary that he has campaigned well enough that regular citizens see how the government, under his presidency, will help them individually. Small business owners must believe that Romney has more business experience, and because of that experience, will know how to help them better than President Obama.

The people of Ohio, even those generally pleased with the current President, must believe that the government should step back. They must believe that they do not need to be governed more, but that they need a more efficient government. If Mitt Romney has instilled any of those thoughts or beliefs in the people of Ohio, he will win. On the other hand, if he has failed to do even one of the previously discussed items, he will narrowly lose.

**Newspaper Sources**

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