

Good News For Romney From Massachusetts?!

☒ The Democrats would like you to believe that it's all over, that the trend is in President Obama's favor and that if the election were held today he would win re-election against Mitt Romney, and that come Election Day he will win by an even bigger margin than he would today. They want the Republicans to give up and stay home on that momentous Tuesday.

Sorry, fellas, but there is new evidence rebutting that theory, and it comes from Massachusetts, of all places.

Rasmussen came out today with its latest poll results from Massachusetts, showing Obama with 55 percent of the Massachusetts vote, while Romney polled 40 percent. On the surface, that might not seem like good news for Romney, and probably nobody expects Romney to win lopsidedly Democratic Massachusetts under any circumstances, even though he served as governor of the state a while back.

But if you compare today's report with the way the candidates stacked up the last time Rasmussen polled Massachusetts, back in May, Romney has made a significant gain. At that time Obama was favored by 56 percent of those polled, 1 percentage point more than he draws now, while Romney polled only 35 percent – meaning that he has now enjoyed a 5 point pop.

To refine the figures further, Obama drew 61.5 percent of the major-party voters in May, and now draws only 57.9 percent. (The rest of the electorate remain undecided or will vote for one of the splinter candidates.)

A showing of less than 60 percent in Massachusetts is lousy for a Democrat. Obama himself won more than 63 of that state's major-party votes in 2008, and John Kerry (the Massachusetts

senator) won more than 62 percent in 2004 against George W. Bush.

Draw your own conclusions about the why, but clearly Obama has lost significant support in Massachusetts among voters who thought he was the cat's meow in 2008 – a pattern that can be observed in most of the states where Rasmussen has polled.

There can be no question that the U.S. electorate as a whole is less enthusiastic about Obama than last time, a fact that drives liberals crazy, even those who think their man will eke out a victory.

Rasmussen, it should be pointed out, is widely acclaimed as the polling organization that produces the most believable results, because it uses the most scientifically precise electoral models. Other polls tend to overweight the opinions of registered Democrats, because they lack either competence or integrity.

It is the other, skewed polls that have made Obama's supporters so giddy with optimism – or professed optimism – in recent days.

This Election Could Wind Up In a Tie

✘ I'm sure you have heard more than once the phrase "If the election were held today." What could be more frustrating? Unless today happens to be November 6, you might as well be spitting into the wind.

We are still more than eleven weeks away from that fateful day when voters will choose either Mitt Romney or Barack Obama in

what is correctly being called the most important presidential election of our lifetime. Most of the polling organizations are still revving up, neither the Republican nor Democratic convention has yet been held, anything could happen.

There may be many millions of voters who have never even heard of Mitt Romney, who may only start thinking about him after the GOP convention brings him into the spotlight at the end of this month. I know that sounds astonishing, but as someone who has conducted opinion polls as a journalist, I can assure you that it is true.

Now that I've got that off my chest, let's discuss what might happen if the election were held today!

Judging from the polling so far, the damned thing could wind up in a tie. It would be an incredible statistical freak if the popular vote were tied, but a tie in the Electoral College is entirely possible. There are, as always, 538 electoral votes up for grabs, which means that it takes 270 or more to win. There would be a tie if Obama and Romney each won 269.

How might this happen? Suppose Romney wins 180 electoral votes by taking the same states won by John McCain in 2008. Can anybody think of a state that voted for McCain that is likely to go for Obama this time? Not in this economy.

Then there are certain states that McCain lost but Romney is expected to carry, such as Indiana and North Carolina, and there are several others where Romney is either a slight favorite in the early polling or has a strong fighting chance. There is more than one combination of plausible state-by-state outcomes that could throw this thing into a tie.

In that case the newly elected House would choose the president, with each state's delegation casting a single vote.

A likely win for Romney. The Senate would choose the vice president, with one vote allotted to each senator. It's too early to say which party might win the Senate in November.

You have to wonder whether President Romney would invite Vice President Biden to his cabinet meetings.

However, I am willing to bet anyone a quarter – even money – that the electoral vote will not wind up in a tie.

The fact that people are talking about possible ties at this early date suggests strongly that Romney might pull this thing out. You may recall that Ronald Reagan was losing in the early polling in his 1980 campaign against Jimmy Carter. It takes a while for the challenger to catch up in a race against an incumbent, because the incumbent starts out with tremendous name recognition, and with the power to distribute largesse that may bolster his support.

You should take a look at the electoral map compiled by the Rasmussen polling firm. (See http://www.rasmussenreports.com/public_content/archive/2012_electoral_college_scoreboard)

As of this moment, Rasmussen shows 206 electoral votes either safe, likely or leaning to Romney, 247 in those same categories for Obama, and 85 votes considered tossups.

The tossup states are Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Ohio, Virginia and Wisconsin. Rasmussen's polling shows Romney ahead in Florida, Iowa and Wisconsin, tied in Colorado and Ohio, and behind in Virginia. If we exclude Colorado and Ohio for now, but give each candidate the states where he is ahead, the tentative outcome is 260 for Obama, 251 for Romney and 27 still up for grabs.

Given that scenario, Romney would have to win both Ohio and Colorado for a clear victory. If he lost Colorado but won Ohio, the electoral vote would be tied, and he would likely win in the House. If he lost Ohio, fuggedaboddit.

Whew!

I have cited the Rasmussen poll because it is widely considered to be the most scientific. Other pollsters appear to be less precise in creating the demographic models from

which they draw their predictions. Several polls have been accused of overweighting their polling samples with Democrats, or with including unlikely voters in the samples.

However, I do have a bone to pick with Rasmussen. So far it has polled in only 20 states. I can understand why they wouldn't be in any hurry to poll in the likes of Illinois and New York, which we can assume are sure things for Obama, or in Utah and Wyoming, where Romney clearly has a lock.

But why no polling yet in Minnesota? Obama won 55 percent of the vote there

in 2008, but that is by no means an airtight margin, considering that he

appears to be doing worse than he did in 2008 in all but two of the 20

states where Rasmussen has polled. (The exceptions are New Mexico and Nebraska.)

While not doing any polling there, Rasmussen has labeled Minnesota – and its 10 electoral votes – a likely pick-up for Obama.

Ten electoral votes could be as good as 100 in this frustratingly close election.