

Humphrey Institute Surveys of Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Iowa: Bush Opens Lead Among Protestants, Catholics, and the Religiously Active

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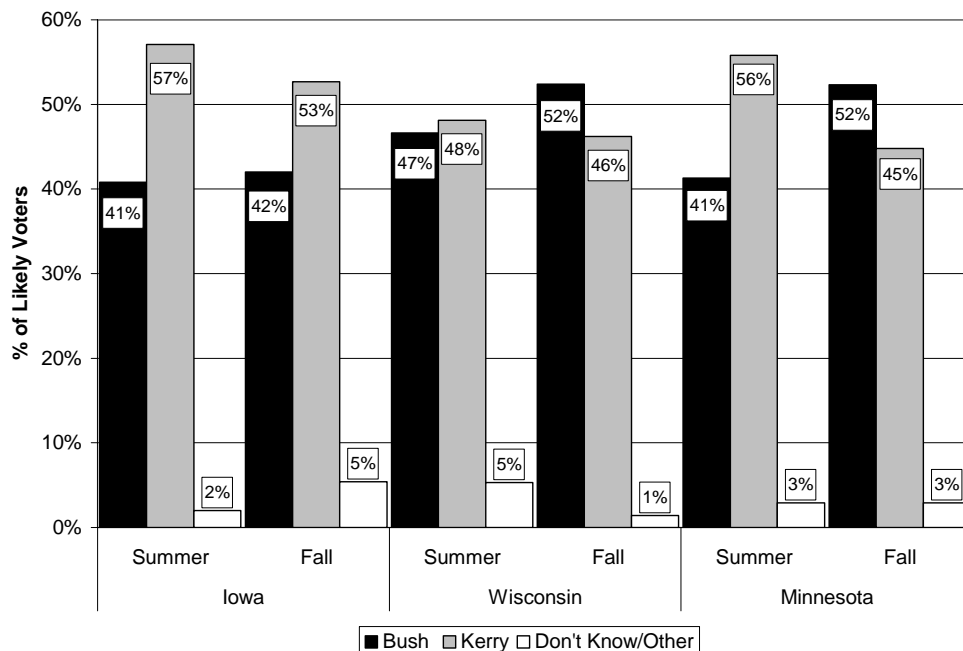
President George W. Bush has made significant headway in locking down the support of large religious groups and reversing the advantage that Democrats once enjoyed among some of these critical voting blocks. In 1987–88, Democrats held the upper hand over Republicans among Protestants (37% to 29%) and white Catholics (39% to 26%), according to national surveys by the Pew Research Center. By 2002–03, the Republicans had reached parity.

President Bush holds a decided advantage among Protestants throughout the Upper Midwest and has even won over Catholic voters in Minnesota and Wisconsin, according to recent Humphrey Institute surveys. This is surprising given Senator John Kerry’s increasingly public discussion of his Catholic faith. The President also dominates among voters who are most religiously active.

Bush Takes Catholic Vote

Bush’s success among Catholic voters is one of the biggest surprises of the 2004 presidential election. Recent Humphrey Institute surveys of likely voters finds that the President is running ahead of his Democratic rival by 6 points in Wisconsin, and by 8 points in Minnesota (reversing a 15 point Kerry lead), with Kerry holding the edge in Iowa. The President’s leads are not large but they are impressive given the Senator’s open courting of the Catholic vote and the draw that the Democratic Party once enjoyed among these voters.

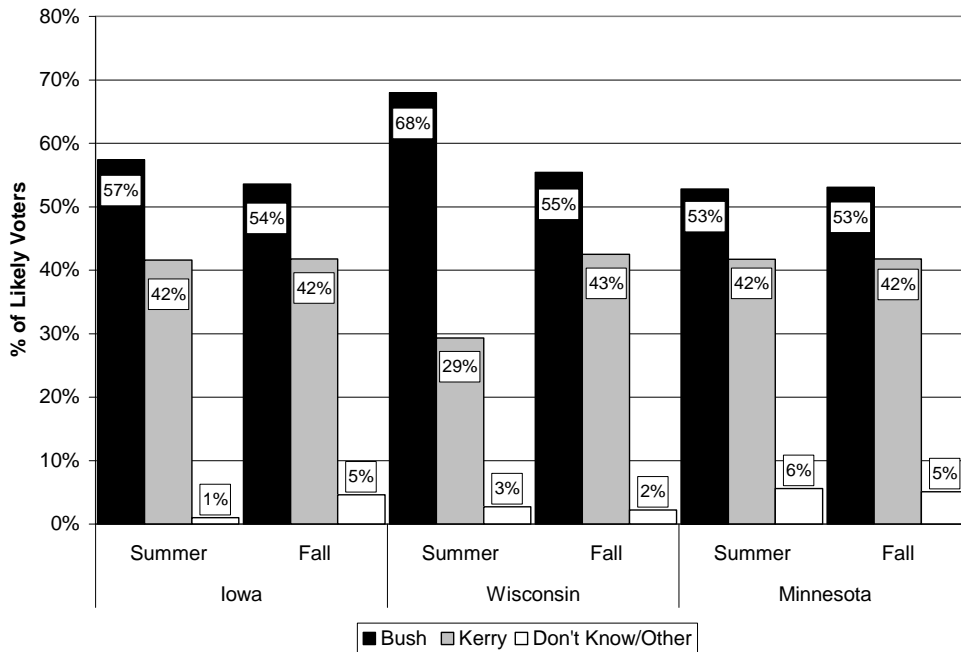
Catholic Likely Voters in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Iowa



Bush Advantage Among Protestant Voters

Bush also leads Kerry among Protestant voters in the Upper Midwest. The President is running 11 points in front in Minnesota and 12 points ahead in Iowa and in Wisconsin (the results in Wisconsin represent a decline from Bush’s 39-point differential during the summer), according to recent Humphrey Institute surveys.

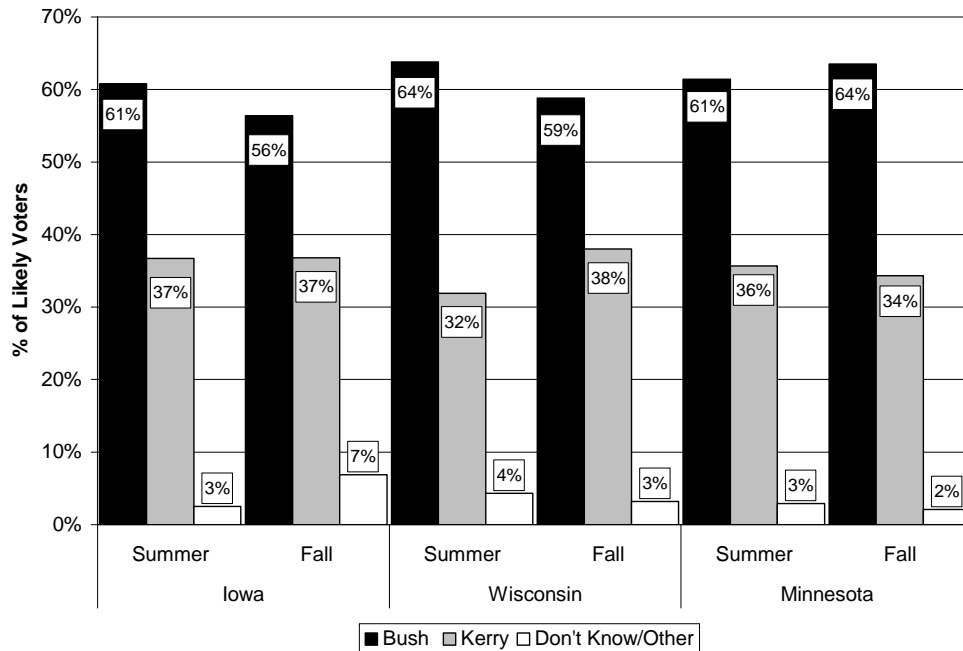
Protestant Likely Voters in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Iowa



Bush Advantage Among Voters Who Regularly Attend Religious Services

President Bush commands a strong following among likely voters who attend religious services every week. He leads Kerry by 20 to 30 points in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Iowa, an advantage he has enjoyed since the summer. These voters represent about four out of 10 likely voters in Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Iowa.

Voters Who Attend Religious Services Once A Week in Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa



The summer Humphrey Institute Survey was conducted between June 21 and July 12, 2004, and consisted of 448 likely voters in Iowa, 504 likely voters in Wisconsin, and 509 likely voters in Minnesota. The fall Humphrey Institute Surveys were conducted with 599 likely Iowa voters from September 27 to October 3, 2004, with 623 likely Wisconsin voters contacted between October 14 and 19, 2004, and with 690 likely Minnesotan voters from October 21 to 26, 2004.