



## Poll shows McCain with narrow lead over Obama in Texas

12:00 AM CDT on Friday, June 27, 2008

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AUSTIN – Republican John McCain has only a slight lead over Democrat Barack Obama in reliably red Texas, according to a new poll.

The survey of likely voters also found Republican Sen. John Cornyn and Democratic challenger Rick Noriega in a statistical tie, with a quarter of the electorate yet to pick a candidate.

Democrats touted the poll as evidence of a partisan realignment that portends well for the party in November. But Republicans dismissed the survey, saying it oversamples Democrats in a state where the GOP has dominated politics for a decade.

The poll, conducted for the Texas Lyceum, a nonpartisan leadership group, found that Mr. McCain leads Mr. Obama 43 percent to 38 percent.

Pollster Daron Shaw said the results reflect heightened enthusiasm among Democrats with Mr. Obama's historic candidacy topping the ticket and Republicans more divided than in recent years.

But Mr. Shaw cautioned that the survey is a snapshot, not a prediction, and that an unsettled political environment and GOP dominance in recent Texas elections could be determining factors in the fall.

Cornyn spokesman Kevin McLaughlin took aim at the poll's sample of an equal number of Republicans and Democrats.

"Believe this one at your own peril," he said of the poll showing a 38-36 Cornyn edge.

Holly Shulman, press secretary for Mr. Noriega's Senate campaign, touted the poll as an indication that Texans are ready for a change.

"As Texans meet Rep. Noriega, time and again they are convinced that he's the best one for the job," she said of the Houston Democrat, a member of the Texas House.