



CONFIDENTIAL MEMORANDUM

TO: Interested Parties

FROM: Tony Fabrizio and David Lee

RE: Charlie Crist's Quandary

DATE: January 31, 2010

Our most recent statewide survey of 800 Likely 2010 Voters in Florida finds Gov. Charlie Crist in a very precarious political position if he still wants to be a U.S. Senator.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS:

- ***Overall, Crist has fallen behind Rubio by double digits in the GOP Senate Primary. Several factors appear to be conspiring against him putting the outcome of his Senate bid seriously in question.***
- ***Based on his current standing in the GOP Senate Primary, Crist's most viable path to the Senate appears to be running as an Independent.***
- ***The only GOP Primary Crist appears to be able to win this year is the Gubernatorial primary where he leads Bill McCollum by several points and performs far better across the board.***
- ***Despite all his internal GOP problems, Crist still remains the strongest general election contender in either the Senate or Gubernatorial races assuming he can get the GOP nod.***

KEY FINDINGS AND DATA:

What follows is the data supporting our key findings:

- ***Overall, Crist has fallen behind Rubio by double digits in the GOP Senate Primary. Several factors appear to be conspiring against him putting the outcome of his Senate bid seriously in question.***

<i>“If the Republican Primary for U.S. Senate were held today and the candidates were (ROTATE) Charlie Crist and Marco Rubio, for whom would you vote?”</i>							
	All Voters	Moderate GOP	Conservative GOP	FL Headed Wrong Track	Approve Crist Job	Top Issue – Jobs/Economy	Opinion of Both
Crist	30	43	27	25	47	33	18
Rubio	44	35	52	51	29	41	68
Undecided	25	22	22	24	24	26	14

As the above data illustrates, several factors are conspiring against Crist:

- Ideologically, Rubio has clearly flanked him on the right where he holds almost a 2 to 1 lead. With nearly two-thirds of GOP voters calling themselves Conservatives this trend should be most alarming to the Crist team.
- Rubio is benefitting from the discontent with the direction of the state. Among the 61% of GOP voters who say the state is headed in the wrong direction, Crist trails by a 2 to 1 margin.
- Crist is failing to generate intensity of support for his candidacy even among the 61% of GOP voters who approve of the job he is doing as Governor. Among this group he doesn’t even garner 50% of their votes.
- Jobs and the economy is the top issue for these voters. Crist currently trails Rubio among these voters – a trend he can’t allow to continue.
- Among those GOP voters who have an opinion (positive or negative) of BOTH Crist and Rubio, Crist trails Rubio by a 50 point margin. While these results are somewhat exaggerated, it spells big trouble for Crist because Crist is known to 100% of GOP voters whereas Rubio is known to about 60%. Based on this data, if Rubio’s image growth is left unchecked, it is likely that Crist will fall even further behind in the ballot.

- **Based on his current standing in the GOP Senate Primary, Crist’s most viable path to the Senate appears to be running as an Independent.**

“If the election for U.S. Senator were held today and the candidates were (ROTATE) Marco Rubio, the Republican, Kendrick Meek, the Democrat and Charlie Crist, the Independent, for whom would you vote?”

	All Voters	GOP	Democrat	Independent
Rubio	31	55	9	30
Meek	24	3	50	8
Crist	26	24	22	41
Undecided	19	17	19	21

“If the election for U.S. Senator were held today and the candidates were (ROTATE) Marco Rubio, the Republican, Maurice Ferre, the Democrat and Charlie Crist, the Independent, for whom would you vote?”

	All Voters	GOP	Democrat	Independent
Rubio	32	57	10	27
Ferre	19	2	41	8
Crist	29	24	27	45
Undecided	20	16	22	20

In a three-way race with either Meek or Ferre, surprisingly Crist is able to hold roughly a quarter of both the GOP and Democrat vote while leading among Independents. Any minor improvement for Crist within the GOP or with Democrats coupled with a maximization of support among Independents could easily put him in the lead in a three-way Senate contest.

- **The only GOP Primary Crist appears to be able to win this year is the Gubernatorial primary where he leads Bill McCollum by several points and performs far better across the board.**

“If the Republican Primary for Governor were held today and the candidates were (ROTATE) Charlie Crist, Bill McCollum and Paula Dockery, for whom would you vote?”

	All Voters	Moderate GOP	Conservative GOP	FL Headed Wrong Track	Approve Crist Job	Top Issue – Jobs/ Economy
Crist	39	44	39	32	59	39
McCollum	31	19	37	36	22	25
Dockery	4	9	3	5	2	7
Undecided	25	28	20	27	18	29

Crist’s performance in the Gubernatorial Primary stands in stark contrast to that of the Senate Primary. Comparatively, Crist leads with Conservatives, holds a large lead (breaking 50%) among those who approve the job he is doing as Governor and holds a healthy lead among those who say jobs and the economy are their top issue. Moreover, Crist also holds his own among those voters who say the state is headed in the wrong direction.

While Crist’s image remains the same with GOP voters in both these races, there is clearly a difference in how these voters view Rubio and McCollum that contributes to the significantly different results. McCollum appears to be markedly weaker with these GOP voters than Rubio is.

- ***Despite all his internal GOP problems, Crist still remains the strongest general election contender in either the Senate or Gubernatorial races assuming he can get the GOP nod.***

Senate Match Ups:

“If the election for U.S. Senator were held today and the candidates were (ROTATE) Charlie Crist, the Republican and Kendrick Meek, the Democrat, for whom would you vote?”

	All Voters	GOP	Democrat	Independent
Crist	47	69	26	55
Meek	29	10	53	17
Undecided	24	22	21	28

“If the election for U.S. Senator were held today and the candidates were (ROTATE) Charlie Crist, the Republican and Maurice Ferre, the Democrat, for whom would you vote?”

	All Voters	GOP	Democrat	Independent
Crist	49	68	31	54
Ferre	27	9	49	19
Undecided	24	23	20	27

“If the election for U.S. Senator were held today and the candidates were (ROTATE) Marco Rubio, the Republican and Kendrick Meek, the Democrat, for whom would you vote?”

	All Voters	GOP	Democrat	Independent
Rubio	42	75	12	45
Meek	30	5	60	16
Undecided	28	20	28	39

“If the election for U.S. Senator were held today and the candidates were (ROTATE) Marco Rubio, the Republican and Maurice Ferre, the Democrat, for whom would you vote?”

	All Voters	GOP	Democrat	Independent
Rubio	43	75	16	42
Ferre	27	4	54	20
Undecided	29	21	31	38

Gubernatorial Match Ups:

<i>“If the election for Governor were held today and the candidates were (ROTATE) Charlie Crist, the Republican and Alex Sink, the Democrat, for whom would you vote?”</i>				
	All Voters	GOP	Democrat	Independent
Crist	48	70	28	52
Sink	31	12	54	19
Undecided	22	18	19	29

<i>“If the election for Governor were held today and the candidates were (ROTATE) Bill McCollum, the Republican and Alex Sink, the Democrat, for whom would you vote?”</i>				
	All Voters	GOP	Democrat	Independent
McCollum	41	72	19	29
Sink	32	8	59	25
Undecided	27	20	23	45

In every Senate and Gubernatorial match up, Crist is tantalizingly close to the magic 50% mark. His ballot position is due to his ability to garner significantly more votes among Democrats and Independents compared to the other potential GOP candidates. However, Crist’s lingering weakness remains coalescing his GOP base.

Other Key Data:

<i>“Do you think the state of Florida is headed in the right direction or do you think things have gotten off on the wrong track?”</i>				
	All Voters	GOP	Democrat	Independent
Right Direction	30	27	32	32
Wrong Track	57	61	56	57
DK/Refused	13	12	12	11

<i>Image -- Charlie Crist</i>				
	All Voters	GOP	Democrat	Independent
Favorable	54	54	54	52
Unfavorable	32	33	33	30
No Opinion	8	8	9	10
Never Heard Of	6	5	4	9

<i>“Generally speaking, do you approve or disapprove of the job Charlie Crist is doing as Governor?”</i>				
	All Voters	GOP	Democrat	Independent
Approve	60	61	60	60
Disapprove	34	33	35	35
DK/Refused	6	6	5	5

<i>Image -- Barack Obama</i>				
	All Voters	GOP	Democrat	Independent
Favorable	51	18	79	52
Unfavorable	45	77	17	41
No Opinion	5	4	3	7

<i>Image -- Marco Rubio</i>				
	All Voters	GOP	Democrat	Independent
Favorable	28	39	17	30
Unfavorable	11	8	15	9
No Opinion	16	15	16	17
Never Heard Of	45	38	53	45

<i>Image -- Bill McCollum</i>				
	All Voters	GOP	Democrat	Independent
Favorable	32	37	31	25
Unfavorable	11	9	14	11
No Opinion	21	22	18	23
Never Heard Of	36	32	36	41

<i>“Which of the following issues is MOST important to you personally” (READ AND ROTATE CHOICES)</i>				
	All Voters	GOP	Democrat	Independent
Jobs & the economy	31	29	32	33
Honesty & integrity in government	18	25	12	18
Health care	11	7	16	12
Medicare & Social Security	10	7	14	8
Education	8	4	12	7
Gov't Spending	8	14	2	7
Taxes	3	5	3	2
Terrorism	2	2	2	4
War in Iraq & Afghanistan	2	2	3	1
Environment	1	1	1	1
Crime & Drugs	0	0	1	1
DK/Refused	4	5	3	5

Methodology and Key Demographic Data:

Survey Methodology:

This survey of 800 Likely 2010 Voters was conducted statewide in Florida between January 27th & 28th, 2010. All interviews were conducted via telephone by professionally trained interviewers using computer-assisted interviewing technology (CATI). Respondent selection was random within pre-determined geographic units utilizing a sample frame based on actual voter turnout in past Gubernatorial elections. This survey of 800 Likely 2010 Voters has a margin of error of +/- 3.46% at the 95% confidence interval. The GOP sub-sample of 296 GOP voters has a margin of error of +/- 5.6% at the 95% confidence interval.

Key Demographic Data:

<i>Political Party:</i>	
	All Voters
Republican	37
Democrat	40
Independent	19
Something else	1
DK/Refused	3

<i>Age:</i>	
	All Voters
18-24 years	6
25-34	9
35-44	11
45-54	18
55-64	22
65+	31
Refused	3

<i>Religious Affiliation:</i>	
	All Voters
Protestant	46
Catholic	27
Jewish	3
Atheist/Agnostic	6
Other	2
DK/Refused	16

<i>Born Again or Evangelical:</i>	
	All Voters
Yes	42
No	49
Refused	9

<i>Racial Background:</i>	
	All Voters
White	72
African American/Black	11
Hispanic/Latino	13
Asian American	2
Refused	1

<i>National Ancestry – Among Hispanics Only:</i>	
	All Voters
Cuban	4
Mexican	2
Puerto Rican	2
South American	2
Central American	1
Other Hispanic	1
Hispanic DK/Refused	1

<i>Gender:</i>	
	All Voters
Male	48
Female	52
Female, Working woman	20
Female, Homemaker	28
Female/Refused	4

<i>Media Market:</i>	
	All Voters
Miami	17
West Palm	11
Tampa/ St. Pete	26
Gainesville	2
Ft. Myers/Naples	6
Orlando/Daytona	20
Jacksonville	8
Tallahassee	3
Mobile/Pensacola	4
Panama City	2