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Poll gives Freddy a 2-point lead

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Bronx Borough President Fernando Ferrer has squeezed out a small lead over Public Advocate Mark Green as they barrel toward Thursday's Democratic mayoral runoff, a Daily News/New York 1 poll shows.

The survey of likely Democratic voters showed Ferrer with 46% and Green with 44% — a statistical tie, given the poll's margin of error of plus or minus 4.5 percentage points. An additional 10% are undecided.

"There are clear sides drawn in this contest with the only question who will get out his troops," said Julie Weprin of Blum & Weprin Associates, which conducted the survey from Thursday through Sunday.

If either candidate has an edge, it might be Ferrer, Weprin said, because his union and Latino supporters appears to be most highly motivated to vote Thursday. Yet Green leads among groups traditionally considered high-turnout voters — whites, the college-educated and seniors.

"The bottom line is that either candidate can win on Thursday," Weprin said.

Ferrer finished ahead of Green 35% to 31% in the Sept. 25 primary. Voters who backed also-rans Alan Hevesi and Peter Vallone in the primary balloting are supporting Green over Ferrer more than 2-to-1, the poll found.

But Green's gains have been offset by some erosion, especially among blacks. A key reason appears to be his support of — and Ferrer's opposition to — Mayor Giuliani's now-dead push for a 90-day extension of his term.

Rudy fallout

The poll found 13% of Green's voters in the primary planned to switch to Ferrer, and an additional 7% were undecided. But only 3% of Ferrer's voters said they are likely to switch to Green, while 5% were undecided.

When Green's voters were asked whether the term-extension issue made them more likely to back Ferrer, 11% said yes. Just 3% of Ferrer's voters said the issue was pushing them to Green.

The poll found Green landing 30% of black voters, down from 34% in the primary. Ferrer now gets 63% of the black vote, up from 54% in the primary. The poll found blacks strongly oppose a Giuliani term extension by 82% to 15%.

"Green's bleeding a little bit there, and Ferrer is gaining, and in a tight race it matters," Weprin said.

Ferrer's 7% support among whites in the primary has climbed to 21%, compared with 66% for Green. Latinos back Ferrer 72% to 19%, while Green romps among Jews, 76% to 11%.

The white Catholic vote has developed into an unexpected battleground, with Green leading 51% to 30%. Ferrer has held his own among this group, running ads touting his support from former vice presidential candidate Geraldine Ferraro and former Sen. Daniel Moynihan.

The Sharpton factor

Green countered yesterday with the endorsement of former Gov. Mario Cuomo.

Former Mayor Ed Koch's support for Ferrer appears to be having little impact: 77% said it was not a factor. But Ferrer's endorsement by the Rev. Al Sharpton might cost him Jewish votes.

Fifty-six percent of Jewish voters said Sharpton's endorsement of Ferrer made them more likely to support Green. Only 1% of Jews said it made them more likely to back Ferrer.

Weprin said she does not think the Sharpton endorsement will be much of a factor on the two largest groups of undecided Democrats still up for grabs: Vallone and Hevesi voters who have not yet taken sides.

One in four Vallone voters said they have not chosen between Green and Ferrer. Of Hevesi voters, 17% said they are undecided.

"The Sharpton factor has been around a while, and these people have not yet taken sides. If they were so anti-Sharpton, they would have chosen sides by now," Weprin said.

In matchups with Republican Michael Bloomberg, both Ferrer and Green would win hands-down in November.

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