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[Election 2008](#)

Election Day Update: South Carolina

by [Linda Wertheimer](#)

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[Morning Edition](#), November 6, 2007 · South Carolina is the seal-of-approval state for Democrats and Republicans.

The Democrats see the state as the place where either Illinois Sen. Barack Obama or John Edwards cement their claim to be the alternative to frontrunner Sen. Hillary Clinton of New York.

Obama because nearly half the Democratic voters in South Carolina are African-American.

Edwards because as a southerner he has a regional claim on this state. Edwards carried the state the last time he tried for the Democratic nomination, his only first-place finish.

However, in South Carolina — as in the rest of the country — they would first have to get by Clinton. She has a comfortable lead in the polls in South Carolina, gathering considerable strength from African-American voters herself, especially African-American women.

On the Republican side, history shows that whoever wins South Carolina wins the Republican nomination. Fred Thompson, Mitt Romney and Rudy Giuliani are all clustered in the high teens with South Carolina Republicans appearing completely unclear as to preference, according to the most recent poll released by Winthrop University and South Carolina educational television.

This creates a dilemma for a critical group of South Carolina voters: evangelical Christians. They have serious doubts about Giuliani's commitment to their values as well as concerns about Romney's Mormon faith.