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Rocky Mountain Poll

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BUSH: SUPREME COURT APPOINTMENTS DRAW SUPPORT;
DEFICIT SPENDING, HEALTH CARE POLICIES & IRAQ EXIT STRATEGY
HEAVILY CRITICIZED

Phoenix, Arizona, January 27, 2006. President George W. Bush's job ratings in Arizona have improved slightly (40%) since October when they hit their lowest level (35%), but he is still in the dog house with as many people as there are who think well of his performance. As might be expected, Republicans give Mr. Bush good marks (69% positive), while Democrats rate him poorly (68%). The growing number of Independent voters in Arizona tip toward a negative assessment of Mr. Bush – 43 percent “poor” to 31 percent favorable.

Arizonans are generally positive regarding the President's supreme court appointments (41 percent favorable to 28 percent negative). Their views, however, are deeply partisan with seven of ten Republicans rating him favorably but six of ten Democrats give him poor marks for his appointments. Independent voters split 40 to 30 percent in favor of his Supreme Court appointments.

These favorable views have done little, however, to significantly lift voters' regard for the president's overall performance in the White House. Further, it appears that recent stumping by Mr. Bush's to counter criticism of the Iraq war has not helped his ratings. The proportion critical of his management of the situation in Iraq has grown throughout the year and now stands at its highest level – 48 percent. Additionally, his recent efforts to justify White House approval of federal government spying on Americans is drawing poor reviews: 44 percent rate his performance on safeguarding citizens' privacy as poor, and only 30 percent approve.

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The deepest criticisms of the President, however, trace to dissatisfaction with deficit spending by the administration, little perceived progress on reducing health care costs for Americans and belief that the White House lacks a good exit strategy for Iraq. For each of these, 50 percent or more of Arizonans rate his performance as “poor” and less than three in ten think Mr. Bush is handling them well. In the case of deficit spending and health care costs controls, a fifth or less rate the president favorably.

The findings outlined in this report are based on a survey of 703 adults in Maricopa and Pima Counties conducted between January 5th and January 13th, 2006, by the Behavior Research Center of Arizona as part of the Center’s independent and non-partisan Rocky Mountain Poll series. The public is welcome to visit www.brcpolls.com to read this and other recent polls.

The study also registers growth in negative assessments of Mr. Bush for his efforts to improve the US balance of trade and strengthening of world opinion toward the United States. Modest improvement is registered however, on assuring the financial stability of the social security system although on balance, opinion is still tipped toward the negative (24 percent favorable to 43 unfavorable). It also appears that, even though there are widespread signs that the economy is improving, Mr. Bush is getting little credit for the recovery – by 34 to 39 percent, Arizonans rate his performance on the economy as “poor.”

Favorable regard for Mr. Bush is strongest among men and voters over 55 years of age (45%), high-income families (50%) and Caucasians (44%), but trails off among women (35%), lower-income families (26%) and middle-income families (33%).

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EDITOR'S NOTE: This Rocky Mountain Poll Arizona (2006-I-03) is based on 703 telephone interviews with adults, conducted from January 5th through January 13th, 2006, throughout Arizona, including 550 registered voters. In the overall sample, one may say with 95 percent certainty that the results have a statistical precision of plus or minus 3.7 percent of what they would have been had the entire adult population been surveyed. The registered voter sample has a margin of error of +/- 4.3 percent. The Rocky Mountain Poll is conducted by the Behavior Research Center of Arizona and is an independent and non-partisan research program.

This statement conforms to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

ENCLOSED: Statistical data for reference.

"Would you say George W. Bush is doing an excellent, good, fair, poor or very poor job as President of the United States?" (READ EACH; ROTATE LIST)

President George W. Bush		EXCELLENT/ GOOD	FAIR	POOR/VERY POOR	(NET POS TO NEG)
January	2006	40%	18%	39%	(+ 1)
Oct.	2005	35	21	41	(- 6)
July	2005	43	18	37	(+ 6)
April	2005	41	19	38	(+ 3)
Jan.	2005	53	16	28	(+ 25)
Oct.	2004	50	15	31	(+ 19)
July	2004	52	15	30	(+ 22)
April	2004	45	16	36	(+ 9)
January	2004	50	16	29	(+ 21)
October	2003	51	19	27	(+ 24)
July	2003	56	20	21	(+ 35)
April	2003	69	13	14	(+ 55)
January	2003	57	21	18	(+ 39)
October	2002	58	19	20	(+ 38)
July	2002	63	21	15	(+ 48)
April	2002	73	15	10	(+ 63)
January	2002	77	15	7	(+ 70)
October	2001	79	14	5	(+ 74)
July	2001	44	27	21	(+ 23)
April	2001	49	24	19	(+ 30)

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**January 2006: President Bush**

*"More specifically, would you say President George W. Bush is doing an excellent, good, only fair, poor or a very poor job in each of the following areas?"*

|                                                                     | JANUARY 2006       |              |                   | NET TO POSITIVE |         |         |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------|-------------------|-----------------|---------|---------|
|                                                                     | Excellent/<br>Good | Only<br>Fair | Poor/Very<br>Poor | Jan. 05         | Jul. 05 | Jan. 06 |
| Reducing deficit spending by the Federal government                 | 17%                | 18%          | 55%               | (+ 7)           | (- 34)  | (- 38)  |
| Reducing health care costs for Americans                            | 21                 | 22           | 50                | (+ 13)          | (- 34)  | (- 29)  |
| Developing a good exit strategy for Iraq                            | 28                 | 17           | 51                | (+ 2)           | (- 22)  | (- 23)  |
| Assuring the financial security of the social security system       | 24                 | 27           | 43                | (+ 6)           | (- 20)  | (- 19)  |
| Improving world opinion of the U.S.                                 | 24                 | 20           | 48                | (- 7)           | (- 16)  | (- 24)  |
| Improving the U.S. balance of trade                                 | 28                 | 23           | 40                | (+ 2)           | (- 12)  | (- 12)  |
| Managing the situation in Iraq                                      | 32                 | 18           | 48                | (- 1)           | (- 11)  | (- 16)  |
| Protecting the environment                                          | 30                 | 27           | 37                | (- 8)           | (- 8)   | (- 7)   |
| Improving the nations's economy                                     | 34                 | 24           | 39                | (- 19)          | (- 4)   | (- 5)   |
| Reducing your taxes                                                 | 32                 | 23           | 38                | (- 28)          | (- 2)   | (- 6)   |
| Appointments to the Supreme Court                                   | 41                 | 22           | 28                | na              | na      | (+13)   |
| Protecting the privacy of Americans from snooping by the government | 30                 | 18           | 44                | na              | na      | (- 14)  |

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