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Rocky Mountain Poll

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SHERIFF JOE ARPAIO JOB APPROVAL TOPS 64 PERCENT; TRANSPORTATION PLANNERS DRAW A MIXED REVIEW

Phoenix, Arizona, March 14, 2006. Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio continues to ride a wave of popularity and it is one that may actually be growing. Sixty-four percent of Maricopa County residents rate his job performance as "excellent" or "good" while only 16 percent think he is doing a "poor" or a "very poor" job.

What is more, the Sheriff's job ratings are the highest in three years and his negative ratings the lowest. Of particular interest is the finding that he is liked by political conservatives, moderates and liberals alike. Thus, 68 percent of political conservatives rate him well as do 65 percent of moderates and 54 percent of liberals.

County Attorney Andrew Thomas remains an unknown figure to well over half of Maricopa County adults (56%) and those aware of him seem to have favorable regard for the job he is doing in office (27 percent favorable ratings to 17 percent saying he is doing only a fair or poor job). By way of comparison, his predecessor Richard Romley was well known and very widely respected in the county (75 percent awareness and 52 percent favorable job rating). It should be noted that the survey was taken prior to Thomas' recent decision to arrest illegal workers along with so-called coyotes, which drew fire from both sides of the political aisle. Unlike Arpaio, Thomas draws most of his awareness and positive ratings from political moderates. Conservatives and liberals are less aware and less inclined to rate his performance in favorable terms.

The Maricopa County Board of Supervisors appears to be invisible to almost six of ten residents and among those aware of the Board, ratings are mixed. City mayors, on the other hand, are pretty well known (70%) and their job ratings average eight to one in the favorable column but with wide variations: the top ratings are for the Mayors of Phoenix (60%) and Scottsdale (58%). The lowest ratings are in Mesa (28%) and Tempe (36%). Mayors in the high growth communities of the southeast valley and west side tended to receive favorable ratings around 50 percent. Outright negative scores were low in all areas. City Councils were not rated in this survey.

When Valley residents were asked to evaluate the performance of those responsible “for freeway construction here in the valley” and “for the development of public transit in the valley,” we find that more than eight in ten have an opinion. Further, while the plurality view is that freeway construction and development of mass transit is being handled well, it is clear that the applause is muted - especially as regards the development of mass transit services:

Thirty-nine percent rate freeway construction favorable, but 26 percent say the job being done is “only fair” and a fifth rate it as “poor.”

On the development of mass transit, only 30 percent rate the work to date favorably, 29 percent rate it as a “poor” and 24 percent as “only fair.”

The findings outlined in this report are based on a survey of 600 heads of household throughout the metropolitan Phoenix area conducted between February 15, 2006 and February 20, 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.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This Rocky Mountain Poll - Arizona (2006-I-08), is based on 600 telephone interviews with heads of household throughout the metropolitan Phoenix area between February 15 and February 20, 2006. Where necessary, figures for age, sex, race and political party were weighted to bring them into line with their actual proportion in the population. In a sample of this size, one can say with a 95 percent certainty that the results have a statistical precision of plus or minus 4.1 percent of what they would have been had the entire adult population been surveyed. The Rocky Mountain Poll is conducted by the Behavior Research Center of Arizona and is an independent and non-partisan research program sponsored by the Center.

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

BELOW: Statistical data

For this and other polls, see www.brcpolls.com/results

STATISTICAL DATA

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With respect to the following public officials, do you think they are doing an excellent, good, only fair, poor or very poor job in office.?"

MARICOPA COUNTY RESIDENTS

JOB PERFORMANCE RATINGS

	EXCELLENT/ GOOD	ONLY FAIR	POOR VERY POOR	TOTAL ABLE TO EVALUATE EACH
Sheriff Joe Arpaio	64%	13%	16%	93%
County Attorney Andrew Thomas	27	12	5	44
County Board of Supervisors	20	15	8	43
Mayor of your city	49	15	6	70
<u>THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR...</u>				
freeway construction in the Valley	39	26	19	84
development of public transit in the Valley	30	24	29	83

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