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# ***Rocky Mountain Poll***

NEWS RELEASE [RMP 2008-I-03]

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## **WOMEN MORE INTENSE ABOUT ISSUES THAN MEN EDUCATION, HEALTH CARE AND THE ECONOMY AND IRAQ TOP VOTER CONCERNS**

Phoenix, Arizona. Feb 1, 2008. In Arizona, women voters may prove to be the “the deciders” in this year’s presidential primary election. In pondering how to vote in the presidential election, women voters here are interested in a wider range of issues than are men and appear more intense in their focus as well. They are also somewhat more likely to march to the polls on election day. Of ten issues we tested with respect to their influence on whom to support for president, seven are rated by half to 64 percent of women as issues for which the position of candidates will have a major influence on their vote. Among men, only four issues receive top billing, and at lower levels of intensity. If women emerge from the primary process convinced that they have a choice, it is a good wager that they will be seen in record number at the polls this fall.

For women, 62 percent or more say that candidate positions on four issues are the most likely to help them decide how to vote: *education, health care, the economy and the situation in Iraq*. Three additional issues that are of strong interest to more than half of women include *terrorism, protecting privacy rights of Americans and illegal immigration*.

In contrast, among men only the *situation in Iraq, illegal immigration, terrorism and the economy* are of acute interest to even half of their ranks, and no issue is highly rated by even sixty percent.

Curiously and despite major media attention given to global warming, the rising cost of energy and loss of U.S. prestige overseas, three issues ranked at the bottom of the list by both men and women are the *environment, energy prices and foreign policy*.

The differences between men and women on the issues is only part of the intrigue in voter issue orientation in this year’s election. It is also clear that a deep gap exists between the views of Republican voters as compared to Independents or Democratic voters. From the looks of the data, neither party nor their candidates have been able to focus voters on a single set of issues such as family values, the economy or even the war. Of course, this may change as the field of candidates narrows further and as candidates attempt to position themselves on issues they think will carry the day, but there is such intensity among voters on issues

today that they may not permit candidates to run stock image or vague sound bite campaigns with success. The simple reality is that candidates will face huge challenges in November in identifying a platform capable of building consensus. For example, when we look at Republicans we see a majority saying that terrorism and illegal immigration are their two top issues. But for Democrats the top two are the situation in Iraq and health care while for Independents, they are the situation in Iraq and education.

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**EDITOR'S NOTE: This Rocky Mountain Poll - Arizona (2008-I-03), is based on 628 interviews with voters across Arizona, conducted between January 20 and 24, 2008. 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 3.9 percent of what they would have been had the entire voter population been surveyed. The Democratic voter sub-sample has a margin of error or +/-6.5. and the GOP voter sample has a margin of error of +/-6.3. 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.**

ENCLOSED: Statistical tables.

STATISTICAL DATA

Behavior Research Center  
Rocky Mountain Poll - Arizona  
RMP (2008-I-03)

For this and other polls, see [www.brcpolls.com/results](http://www.brcpolls.com/results).

*“When deciding how to vote in this year’s Presidential election, how important will each of the following issues be to you? In responding, please use a scale of zero to ten, where zero means it is not important at all to you and ten means it is very important to you.”*

Percent Rating Each as Very Important Factors in Their Decision About Who To Support For President

	Women	Men
Education	64%	48%
Health care	63	40
The economy	63	53
Situation in Iraq	62	58
Terrorism	56	55
Protecting privacy rights	55	44
Illegal immigration	52	57
The environment	47	36
Energy prices	44	40
Foreign policy	35	38

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Percent Rating Each as Very Important Factors in Their Decision About Who To Support For President

|                           | Democrats | Independents | Republicans |
|---------------------------|-----------|--------------|-------------|
| Situation in Iraq         | 69%       | 68%          | 49%         |
| Health care               | 67        | 54           | 39          |
| The economy               | 65        | 59           | 49          |
| Education                 | 61        | 61           | 49          |
| Terrorism                 | 57        | 50           | 59          |
| The environment           | 56        | 47           | 26          |
| Protecting privacy rights | 54        | 48           | 48          |
| Energy prices             | 50        | 38           | 37          |
| Illegal immigration       | 46        | 46           | 66          |
| Foreign policy            | 39        | 30           | 37          |

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Supplemental Note

A week prior to next week’s Presidential Primary, 58 percent of voters declared a “definite” interest to vote. Although interest to votes never equals actual vote, it nevertheless shows a pretty high motivation level among voters. At the time of the survey, however, it must be remembered that some voters favorites such as John Edwards, Rudy Guiliani and Fred Thompson had not withdrawn from the race. The data also reveals significant variations on intent to vote within various voter subgroups.

	<u>% Saying They Definitely Plan to Vote</u>
Pima County	69%
High Income Voters	65
Rural Counties	63
Age 35 to 54	62
Caucasian	61
Women	60
Age under 35	59
Republican	59
Democrat	58
Men	56
Maricopa Voters	54
Age 55+	54
Non-Hispanic Minority	52
Hispanic	50
Middle Income	49
Low Income	45

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