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# *Rocky Mountain Poll*

NEWS RELEASE  
RMP 2004-III-10

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## ARPAIO STILL THE MAN TO BEAT

Phoenix, Arizona, August 20, 2004. Incumbent Maricopa County Sheriff Joe Arpaio has a two-to-one lead over challenger Dan Saban in the GOP primary scheduled for next month. Additionally, Arpaio appears to be much the stronger candidate to defeat his likely Democrat and Independent opponents in November.

Sheriff Joe Arpaio was stung twice this month when top GOP County Republican officials voted to endorse his opponent, Dan Saban, in the primary election, shortly after the hugely popular U.S. Senator John McCain also endorsed Saban. The endorsement of Saban by GOP County officials apparently traces to their anger that Arpaio had in 2002 defended Democratic candidate for governor Janet Napolitano's law enforcement credentials in television commercials during what turned out to be a very close election. The McCain endorsement of his rival, says Arpaio, traces to the fact that Arpaio had endorsed George Bush for president over John McCain.

Whatever their reasons may have been, it appears that the self-proclaimed "toughest sheriff in America" may weather the storm, as he currently enjoys a 53 percent to 25 percent lead over Dan Saban among Republican voters in Maricopa County.

Tom Bearup, whose name will be on the ballot but who has withdrawn from the race, nevertheless may attract four percent from Republicans who like neither Arpaio or Saban. The balance of Republicans, nearly 20 percent, are undecided how to vote.

The findings outlined in this report are based on a survey of 452 voters, including 210 Republican voters, throughout Maricopa County conducted between August 13 and August 17, 2004, 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](http://www.brcpolls.com) to read this and other recent polls.

If Republican party officials who dislike Arpaio are successful in mounting an effort to convince current fence-sitters that Sheriff Joe has got to go, the GOP primary could end up being very close. On the other hand, Sheriff Arpaio has proven in the past to have a deep well of loyal supporters who like his tough guy approach to law enforcement and, with only 20 days to go until the election, a major flurry of campaign activity will be needed to create some momentum for Saban.

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Another factor which may weigh in the minds of Republican voters is that, although both Arpaio and Saban appear able to defeat Democrat Robert Ayala and Independent Steven Martin, Arpaio is by far the stronger of the two, both as regards keeping Republicans home and in attracting crossover Democratic and Independent voters. Thus, Arpaio beats Democrat Ayala by 51 to 18 percent, but in a Saban versus Ayala race, Saban attracts only 30 percent and, while Ayala fails to improve his vote, the “uncommitted” column jumps to nearly 50 percent.

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**EDITOR'S NOTE:** This Rocky Mountain Poll Arizona (2004-III-10) is based on 452 telephone interviews conducted from August 13 through August 17, 2004, with voters throughout Maricopa County. In a sample of this size, one may say with 95 percent certainty that the results have a statistical precision of plus or minus 4.7 percent of what they would have been had the entire voter population been surveyed. The Republican sample included 210 voters and has a margin of error of plus or minus 6.9 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.

**BELOW:** Statistical data

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

**STATISTICAL DATA**

Behavior Research Center  
Rocky Mountain Poll - Arizona  
RMP 2004-III-10

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*"In the Republican primary for County Sheriff, which of the following candidates would you vote for if the election were being held today."  
(NAMES ROTATED)*

GOP VOTERS ONLY

Joe Arpaio	53%
Dan Saban	25
Tom Bearup	4
Uncommitted	18

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*(ASKED ALL VOTERS) "If the election for Sheriff of Maricopa County were being held today, who would you vote for if the candidates were:"*

|                           |     |                           |     |
|---------------------------|-----|---------------------------|-----|
| Republican Joe Arpaio     | 51% | Republican Dan Saban      | 30% |
| Democrat Robert Ayala     | 18  | Democrat Robert Ayala     | 17  |
| Independent Steven Martin | 9   | Independent Steven Martin | 7   |
| Uncommitted               | 22  | Uncommitted               | 46  |

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