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Rocky Mountain Poll

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U.S. SENATE RACE TIGHTENS UP DRAMATICALLY – PEDERSON NOW TRAILS KYL BY ONLY SEVEN POINTS

Phoenix, Arizona, May 19, 2006. Arizona voters are more closely divided as regards who they want to represent them in the U.S. Senate than was true at the turn of the year. As of the second week in May, 40 percent prefer the Republican incumbent Jon Kyl while 33 percent plan to vote for Democrat challenger and political newcomer Jim Pederson. This is a significant shift from January when Senator Kyl was holding 55 percent of the vote to only 26 percent for Pederson. Beginning in April, Pederson ramped up and launched a major media campaign to put himself before voters with a particular emphasis on his Arizona roots and an independent and non-partisan approach to issues. The result has been dramatic as Pederson has increased his appeal by seven points and simultaneously driven another eight percent into the ranks of undecided. The net result is an impressive drop of 15 points in the proportion of voters pledged to incumbent Jon Kyl.

Most of the movement toward Pederson appears to be coming from within the ranks of middle and lower income Arizona voters and from older voters and women. He has, as well, reduced Kyl's appeal to Democrats from 26 percent noted in January to only 12 percent today.

Pederson has picked up seven points in Maricopa County, an impressive 13 points in rural Arizona, but only two points in Pima County where the test vote has remained basically unchanged since January and where Kyl enjoys a 13 point margin.

The most important gain for Pederson, however, is within the ranks of likely voters. In January he trailed Kyl by 34 points (60% to 26%) but today, trails by only ten points (45% to 35%).

Senator Kyl retains an impressive grip on the loyalties of Republican voters with 78 percent voting for his reelection and only ten percent defecting to Pederson. At the same time, however, the proportion of Republicans not voting for Kyl rose to 22 percent in May from only 14 percent in January.

Finally, anti-incumbent sentiments (those voting against the incumbent or who are in the undecided column) appears to be greatest among women (62%) lower income families (69%) Democrats (88%), Independents (81%) and ethnic minorities(72%).

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The findings outlined in this report are based on a survey of 631 voters across Arizona conducted between May 1st and May 9th, 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.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: This Rocky Mountain Poll Arizona (2006-II-01) is based on 631 telephone interviews with voters, conducted from May 1st through May 9th, 2006. In the overall sample, one may say with 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 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.

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

ENCLOSED: Statistical data for reference.

STATISTICAL DATA

Behavior Research Center
Rocky Mountain Poll – Arizona
2006-II-01

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

*“And finally, if the race for U.S. Senator for Arizona were being held today, which of the following candidates do you favor – Democrat Jim Pederson or Republican Jon Kyl?”
(NAMES ROTATED)*

STATEWIDE	Jon Kyl	Jim Pederson	Uncommitted	(Net Points to Kyl)
May 2006	40%	33%	27%	(+ 7)
January 2006	55	26	19	(+29)
October 2005	54	30	16	(+24)
MAY 2006				
Maricopa	39	33	28	(+ 6)
Pima	44	31	25	(+13)
Rural	41	37	22	(+ 4)
Republican	78	10	12	(+68)
Democrat	12	62	26	(- 50)
Independent	19	31	50	(- 12)
Likely Voters	45	35	20	(+10)
Men	43	32	25	(+11)
Women	38	34	28	(+ 4)
Caucasian	43	32	25	(+11)
Hispanic	33	30	37	(+ 3)
Other	24	49	27	(-25)
Under \$45K	31	38	31	(- 7)
\$45 to 64.9K	46	36	18	(+10)
\$65+K	47	29	24	(+18)
Under 35	38	28	34	(+10)
35 to 54	41	34	25	(+ 7)
55 +	42	37	21	(+ 5)
Retirees	40	38	22	(+ 2)

