



*behavior research center's*

# **Rocky Mountain Poll**

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## GASOLINE PRICES NOW A "BIG TIME" ELECTION ISSUE

Phoenix, Arizona, May 26, 2006. Seven of ten Arizona consumers say that the rising cost of gasoline is taking food off their tables at home. Two-thirds say that the state of the economy and now rising fuel costs make them believe that it is a time for change in our elected officials.

Seventy percent of consumers and voters also believe that state and local governments should be working to beef up public transportation services as a means to help them cope with rising fuel costs. And finally, a whopping 84 percent believe the state legislature should pass laws to enable state government to investigate and prosecute oil and gas companies found to engage in price gouging.

The mood of discontent sweeps across all political, economic and age groups and although Republican voters are less intense in their call for political change, a majority of them also say it may be time for a change in political leadership.

Middle and lower income families are most heavily impacted with rising fuel costs as can be seen in the fact that 88 percent of those in the lower income segment say rising fuel prices are taking food off their tables at home. As well, however, 71 percent of families earning between 25,000 dollars and 45,000 dollars say the same.

An April survey for Associated Press by IPSOS found that 66 percent of American consumers are cutting back on the amount of automobile driving they do or are using less fuel to cool and heat their homes. Half say they have cut back on vacation travel plans. Yet it is the cutting back on food for the family that is most likely to generate visceral reactions and to generate resentment for what appears to the public to be an impotent political and governmental system. In Arizona, one interesting aspect of the survey is that families most likely to complain that fuel costs are impacting their food budgets are those who live in rural areas and those in the outer suburban communities of Phoenix such as Chandler, Queen Creek, Litchfield Park, Goodyear, etc. and who may have long commutes.

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The findings outlined in this report are based on a survey of 808 adults across Arizona conducted between May 1<sup>st</sup> and May 9<sup>th</sup>, 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](http://www.brcpolls.com) to read this and other recent polls.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: This Rocky Mountain Poll Arizona (2006-II-04) is based on 808 telephone interviews with adult heads-of-household, conducted from May 1<sup>st</sup> through May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2006. In the overall sample, one may say with 95 percent certainty that the results have a statistical precision of plus or minus 3.5 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.

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## STATISTICAL DATA

Behavior Research Center  
Rocky Mountain Poll – Arizona  
2006-II-04

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

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*Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?*

	AGREE	DISAGREE	UNSURE
<i>“The rising cost of gasoline is taking food off our table at home.”</i>	71%	28%	1%
<u>(BY INCOME)</u>			
Under \$25,000	88	11	1
\$25,000 to \$44,900	70	30	0
\$45,000 to \$64,900	66	33	1
\$65,000 +	59	40	1
<i>“The state of the economy and now gasoline prices make me believe it is time for a change in our elected officials.”</i>			
<u>(BY INCOME)</u>			
Under \$25,000	82	15	3
\$25,000 to \$44,900	76	17	7
\$45,000 to \$64,900	55	40	5
\$65,000 +	59	39	2

(CONTINUED)

**STATISTICAL DATA**

Behavior Research Center  
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*Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?*

	AGREE	DISAGREE	UNSURE
<i>"Our family simply cannot afford the rising cost of gasoline. State and local government needs to beef up public transportation facilities and services immediately."</i>	70%	25%	5%
<u>(BY INCOME)</u>			
Under \$25,000	75	18	7
\$25,000 to \$44,900	73	20	7
\$45,000 to \$64,900	68	30	2
\$65,000 +	71	28	1
<i>"The state legislature should pass laws enabling state government to investigate and prosecute oil and gas companies that engage in price gouging."</i>	84	14	2
<u>(BY INCOME)</u>			
Under \$25,000	85	10	5
\$25,000 to \$44,900	90	8	2
\$45,000 to \$64,900	69	30	1
\$65,000 +	90	9	1

	DEMOCRAT	REPUBLICAN	INDEPENDENT	LIKELY VOTERS	RETIREES
<i>"Gasoline prices take food off our table."</i>	68%	62%	80%	68%	75%
<i>"Time for change in elected officials."</i>	74	51	73	60	59
<i>"State/local government should beef up public transit."</i>	76	67	68	69	74
<i>"Pass laws to investigate and prosecute price gouging."</i>	97	79	86	86	75