



behavior research center's

Rocky Mountain Poll

NEWS RELEASE [RMP 2007-IV-11]

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President

VIEWES ON POLICE ENFORCEMENT OF IMMIGRATION LAWS NOT SO SIMPLE

Phoenix, Arizona, November 28, 2007. Public support for the straight forward proposition to require local police throughout the state to enforce federal immigration laws by verifying the nationality of anyone they stop in the course of their regular duties, measures at 58 percent with 32 percent opposed and the balance unsure whether they can support the proposition. The issue is highly divisive, however, when one looks at the responses of Latinos vs non-Latinos in Arizona. While six of ten non-Latinos support the proposition, 73 percent of Latinos oppose it, leaving little doubt that for most Latinos, concerns about racial profiling against Latinos is very powerful. It also raises the question as to whether non-Latinos understand the degree to which U.S. born Latinos believe they have been stigmatized by the debate

We drilled down deeper on this issue to see what public opinion might be if taking on such responsibilities resulted in a reduction in the amount of time police officers have to deal with their regular law enforcement duties, as some police departments have claimed, or if it resulted in a need for higher taxes to fund police capacity to do both jobs. In both cases, support ratchets downward sharply.

More specifically, if such enforcement detracts police from their normal law enforcement responsibilities, support for having them check the nationality of anyone they stop drops to 47 from 58 percent and opposition rises from 32 to 38 percent. And if a tax hike were needed to fund the police to manpower levels adequate to do both tasks, support falls to 39 percent and opposition rises to 45 percent.

This issue also sharply divides the ranks of Democrats who start off with only 50 percent in support of law officers enforcing immigration laws and 38 percent opposed. They remain divided (42 for to 44 against) if doing so detracts from their regular duties and then finally tip toward opposing the idea if tax hikes might be involved.

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The biggest shifts in opinion, however, are registered among Republicans and Independents. Republicans support for such enforcement starts out at a robust 72 percent, shrinks to 58 percent if it interferes with regular law enforcement and shrinks again to 50 percent if tax increases might be required. Nonetheless, despite a 22 point drop in support, Republicans remain in of the opinion that local police officers should enforce immigration laws.

The views of Independent voters also proved to be pretty volatile – going from two to one in support of the basic idea (62% to 31%) to leaning against the idea (48% opposed to 41% in favor) if it results in higher taxes.

This report is based on a survey of 800 interviews with adult heads-of-household across Arizona, conducted between November 12 and 15, 2007 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 for this and other poll results.

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EDITOR’S NOTE: This Rocky Mountain Poll - Arizona (2007-IV-11), is based on 800 interviews with adult heads-of-household across Arizona, conducted between November 12 and 15, 2007. 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 3.5 percent of what they would have been had the entire 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.

ENCLOSED: Statistical tables.

STATISTICAL DATA

Behavior Research Center
Rocky Mountain Poll - Arizona
RMP (2007-IV-11)

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

- QB:** *"In general, do you favor or do you oppose requiring local police in addition to their regular duties, to enforce immigration laws by requiring officers to verify the nationality of anyone they stop in the course of their regular law enforcement duties?"*
- QB:** *"Would you favor or would you oppose them to do so if it reduced the amount of time police officers have for their regular law enforcement duties in your community?"*
- QC:** *"Would you be willing to pay more taxes to increase local law enforcement manpower to do both jobs?"*

	QA BASIC ENFORCEMENT QUESTION	QB IF IT DETRACTS FROM DUTIES	QC IF TAX HIKE NEEDED
TOTAL			
For	58%	47%	39%
Against	32	38	45
Unsure	10	15	16
REPUBLICANS			
For	72	58	50
Against	16	25	33
Unsure	17	17	17
DEMOCRATS			
For	50	42	38
Against	38	44	48
Unsure	12	14	14
INDEPENDENTS			
For	62	52	41
Against	31	38	48
Unsure	7	10	11
HISPANICS			
For	20	14	14
Against	73	76	78
Unsure	7	10	8