



behavior research center's

Rocky Mountain Poll

NEWS RELEASE
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BANNING CELL PHONE USE BY DRIVERS FAVORED TWO TO ONE

Phoenix, Arizona, August 2, 2001. Sixty-two percent of adults in Arizona favor passage of a state law that would make it illegal for drivers to use hand-held cell phones while operating a vehicle. Just under a third are opposed and only six percent have no opinion.

Support for such a law appears very broad-based, cutting across all age groups and is reported in all geographic regions of Arizona. Banning hand-held cell phone use while driving gets noticeably above average support in Pima County (77%).

The use of cell phones by individuals simultaneously operating moving vehicles has become increasingly controversial due to concerns about whether a correlation exists between use of phones and traffic accidents. This debate will probably be elevated in the wake of a report released this week in *NeuroImage* magazine by Marcel Just, psychology professor and co-director for the Center of Cognitive Brain Imaging at Carnegie Mellon University. His research reveals that when an individual goes from doing one task to doing two tasks, each requiring activity in a different part of the brain, brain activity does not double but instead decreases. This implies that a person doing two such tasks at the same time (for example, driving a vehicle and verbalizing) results in less brain activity for each one of the tasks compared to when those tasks are being done alone. In short, one's concentration is reduced.

Attitudes on this issue do reveal some partisan differences. Thus, while 69 percent of Democrats and 63 percent of Independents favor such a ban, the figure drops to 54 percent among registered Republicans (42 percent oppose the ban).

The findings outlined in this report are based on a survey of 702 adults across Arizona conducted between July 5, 2001 and July 11, 2001 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 poll results.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This Rocky Mountain Poll - Arizona (2001-III-10), is based on 702 interviews with adults throughout Arizona between July 5, 2001 and July 11, 2001. 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 +/- 3.7 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 sponsored by the Center.

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

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

STATISTICAL DATA

Behavior Research Center
 Rocky Mountain Poll - Arizona
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“Do you favor or oppose a state law that would make it illegal for drivers to use hand held phones while operating a vehicle?”

	FAVOR	OPPOSE	UNSURE
Statewide	62%	32%	6%
Men	60	35	5
Women	65	29	6
Age under 35	56	34	10
35 to 44	65	34	1
45 to 54	66	32	2
55 +	64	30	6
Maricopa	59	35	6
Pima	77	18	5
Rural	61	34	5
Republican	54	42	4
Democrat	69	27	4
Independent	63	29	8

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