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Rocky Mountain Poll

NEWS RELEASE
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GOVERNOR'S RACE VERY TIGHT: SALMON HAS EDGE OVERALL;
NAPOLITANO LEADS AMONG LIKELY VOTERS;
INDEPENDENTS MAY DETERMINE OUTCOME

Phoenix, Arizona, October 2, 2002. The governor's election in Arizona is likely to be very close if voter intentions today are an accurate measure of what will happen in November. Only one percentage point separates the major candidates, and challenges from the Libertarian Party and an Independent candidate are having little impact thus far.

As of the time of this survey, 35 percent of voters who declare an interest in the outcome of this election favor Janet Napolitano (D) while 36 percent favor Matt Salmon (R). Independent Dick Mahoney is drawing six percent and there is some evidence his vote is beginning to expand after several weeks of registering at four percent or less. Libertarian Party candidate Barry Hess attracts only two percent.

About one of five voters remain uncommitted as of the time of this survey.

The statewide survey, based on interviews with 538 voters with an interest in the outcome of the governor's race was completed between September 23rd and the 29th. The study is a part of the Behavior Research Center's ongoing non-partisan and independent polls conducted in the public interest.

Democrat Napolitano trails Republican Salmon in populous Maricopa county by a narrow 37 to 34 percent, but has a modest 38 to 35 percent lead in Pima county and a 35 to

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34 percent lead in the rural countries. In Pima and the rural counties, Napolitano's once formidable lead is narrowing so the race is now literally a dead heat in every region of the state.

There is very little difference in the voting intentions of men and women, a finding that suggests gender is not a significant issue in the minds of voters.

On the other hand, the race might be shaping up as a old fashioned partisan battle in which the political party that gets the largest turnout of its rank and file members will be the winner. Thus, Napolitano attracts 62 percent of the Democratic vote and gives up only three percent to Salmon. Salmon attracts 68 percent of the GOP vote but 13 percent are crossing over to the Napolitano candidacy. Independent Dick Mahoney is drawing evenly from both major parties (3% each) while getting most of his votes from the ranks of Independents.

As the parties battle to get their troops to the polls, the potential fly in the ointment may be the turnout of Independents, who now constitute close to 20 percent of the electorate. Among Independent voters, 32 percent favor Napolitano, 17 percent Salmon and 15 percent Mahoney. A week ago, Mahoney was attracting only eight percent to his candidacy but he has nearly doubled that number in just one week. Of interest is the finding that his gain among Independents is coming entirely from the ranks of Independents who were previously undecided. Napolitano appears to be gaining a little ground among Independents and if she can hold her numbers within their ranks, it could be very important on election day.

The survey also finds that the appeal of the Libertarian candidate to Independent voters is weak (7%), a finding that may trace to the lawsuit the Libertarian party filed to block Independents from voting in primary elections.

Statewide, Republicans hold an edge in registration over Democrats, so for Napolitano to be successful given the current numbers she needs to succeed on three fronts: getting a Democratic turnout that is at least on a par with the Republicans, attracting 15 to 20 percent of Republican voters to her column and attracting from a third to 40 percent of Independent voters. Right now, her biggest concern has to be getting rank and file Democratic voters to

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take an interest in this election. It also appears that voters who plan on early voting by mail give the edge to Matt Salmon, a finding that may trace principally to the fact that somewhat greater numbers of Republicans (52%) than Democrats (46%) plan to vote early. Only 23 percent of Independents plan early voting, which could prove to make them even more important on election day if they turn out in numbers proportionate to their registration.

-30-

EDITOR'S NOTE: This Rocky Mountain Poll Arizona (2002-III-13) is based on 538 interviews with registered voters across Arizona conducted from September 23rd through September 29th, 2002 who express interest in voting in the November election. Where necessary, figures for age, sex, and race were weighted to bring them into line with their actual proportion in the population. In a sample of this size, one may say with a 95 percent certainty that the results have a statistical precision of plus or minus 4.3 percent of what they would have been had the entire voter population been surveyed. The Republican sample was 231 and the Democratic sample was 201. Independents constituted 105. The respective margins of error for the Republican and Democrat samples are +/- 6.5 and +/- 6.9. 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 data for reference.

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

STATISTICAL DATA

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 RMP 2002-III-13

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"If the election for Governor of Arizona were being held today, which one of the following candidates would you vote for?"

	Interested Voters	Most Likely Voters	Early Voters
Matt Salmon (R)	36%	36%	39%
Janet Napolitano (D)	35	39	34
Dick Mahoney (I)	6	5	4
Barry Hess (L)	2	2	1
Uncommitted	<u>21</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>22</u>
	100%	100%	100%