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Rocky Mountain Poll

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DEAN LEADS IN ARIZONA, BUT CLARK TAKES LEAD AMONG DEMOCRATS MOST LIKELY TO VOTE

Phoenix, Arizona, January 14, 2004. Wesley Clark trails Howard Dean by only three percentage points and the proportion of Democrats who are completely up in the air about their choice for the primary has been cut in half – now only 25 percent compared to close to over 45 percent just prior to the turn of the year. More important, among Democrat voters most likely to participate in next month's primary, Wesley Clark is emerging as the favorite, with 34 percent compared to 27 percent for Dean. Clearly, the bruising attacks on Dean are having an impact in Arizona and Clark's strategy to avoid such attacks is accruing him voters.

Overall, Howard Dean is the choice of 29 percent of Democrat voters, while Wesley Clark is the choice of 26 percent. Dean's strength in Arizona, however, depends significantly on high voter turnout among Arizona's Democrats under the age of 35. If such a turnout does not materialize, Clark's strengths among older Democrats gives him added strength.

Joe Lieberman is in a distant third place with six percent and, unless there is a major shift in his appeal in the coming weeks, it appears unlikely that he can close the gap. Fourth place is now held by Dick Gephardt with just over four percent of the overall vote and, six percent among Democrats most likely to vote. He is now strong competition to overtake Lieberman for the third-place slot.

Each of the remaining candidates in the field, Al Sharpton, Dennis Kucinich, John Kerry, John Edwards and Carol Mosely Braun, attract three percent or less of the vote.

The outcome of the Iowa caucus, which is less than a week away, could have a profound impact on Arizona Democrats as they decide not only who they like, but also who they believe may have the best chance to defeat incumbent George W. Bush. In a second set of questions, we explored candidate preferences of all voters in a hypothetical general election pairing George Bush and Dick Cheney against three sets of Democrat candidates: a Dean-Clark ticket, a Dean- Edwards ticket and a Clark-Lieberman ticket.

The results of these test elections makes it apparent that a Bush-Cheney ticket, although stronger than any of the Democrat tickets, is not an automatic winner in Arizona. More specifically, a Dean-Clark Democratic ticket is already within striking distance of a Bush-Cheney ticket in Arizona – 50 percent to 38 percent, a 12-point spread.

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A Howard Dean-John Edwards ticket or a Joe Lieberman-Wesley Clark ticket trail by a wider margin (16 points), but George Bush attracts few additional voters in those contests, as Dean-Clark voters simply move into the “undecided” column.

George Bush’s current job approval rating (50%) is at its lowest level since July of 2001 and the disapproval rating has risen to 29 percent, the highest since taking office. It appears that in Arizona, Mr. Bush’s popularity is riding principally on voter beliefs that he has done a good job in keeping America safe from terrorism. On this dimension, 56 percent give him good ratings and only 20 percent rate his performance as poor. He also gets fairly good ratings on managing the war in Iraq (46 percent positive to 34 percent negative).

But in five other public policy arenas, President Bush receives much less lustrous assessments: *reducing taxes*: 39 percent favorable; *Improving the economy*: 37 percent favorable; *protecting the environment*, 32 percent favorable; *improving world opinion of the U.S.*, 34 favorable and finally *reducing health care costs for Americans*, only 24 percent favorable. In each of these cases, unfavorable assessments are nearly equal to or greater than favorable ones.

A most interesting aspect of this poll is that as the Democrat candidates attack and counterattack one another, their rhetoric may be forcing voters to take a hard look at issues other than terrorism and Iraq. And, as of the moment, their assessment of the President in non-war policy areas, is less than glowing. As well, there is little evidence in this survey that Mr. Bush has yet received much credit for improving economic conditions.

The Democratic presidential primary in Arizona appears to be having at least one clear impact on Democrats: fewer are defecting to the GOP column in the test general election ballots (about 16%) than was seen early last year (about 33%). At the same time, however, Republicans are remaining intensely loyal to Mr. Bush. This election has all the making of an intense and, perhaps, as divisive a partisan election as has been seen in recent years.

The findings outlined in this report are based on a survey of 641 voters across Arizona and conducted between January 6th and January 12th, 2004, 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 (2004-I-01) is based on 641 telephone interviews with voters, conducted from January 6th through January 12th, 2004 throughout Arizona. 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 voter population been surveyed. The Democrat sample included 301 voters and has an estimated margin of error of plus or minus 5.7 percent. 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
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For this and other polls, see www.brcpolls.com/results.

“On February 3rd, Arizona Democrats will vote to nominate their choice for the Democratic candidate for President of the United States. If the Democratic primary election for president were being held today, which of the following candidates would you vote for?” (Names rotated randomly)

ASKED ONLY OF ARIZONA DEMOCRATS

	Total	Most Likely to Vote
Howard Dean	29%	27%
Wesley Clark	26	34
Joe Lieberman	6	6
Richard Gephardt	4	6
John Edwards	3	3
John Kerry	3	3
Al Sharpton	2	*
Carol Mosely Braun	1	1
Dennis Kucinich	1	*
Uncommitted	25	21

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*“If the election for president of the United States were being held today how would you vote if the candidates were: Republican George Bush for President and Dick Cheney for Vice President versus: (three separate questions rotated)*

*Democrat Howard Deal for President and Wesley Clark for Vice President.  
Democrat Howard Dean for President and John Edwards for Vice President.  
Democrat Joe Lieberman for President and Wesley Clark for Vice President.”*

ASKED OF ALL ARIZONA VOTERS

|                   | Total | Most Likely<br>to Vote |
|-------------------|-------|------------------------|
| Bush / Cheney     | 50%   | 50%                    |
| Dean / Clark      | 38    | 39                     |
| Unsure            | 12    | 11                     |
| Bush / Cheney     | 51%   | 50%                    |
| Dean / Edwards    | 35    | 37                     |
| Unsure            | 14    | 13                     |
| Bush / Cheney     | 51%   | 51%                    |
| Lieberman / Clark | 35    | 36                     |
| Unsure            | 14    | 13                     |

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"Next, I'd like to read you the names of some public officials. As I read each one, please just tell me if you think the job they are doing in office is excellent, good, fair, poor or very poor." (READ EACH; ROTATE LIST)

		EXCELLENT/ GOOD	FAIR	POOR/VERY POOR	(NET POS TO NEG)
President George W. Bush					
January	2004	50%	16%	29%	(+ 21)
October	2003	51	19	27	(+ 24)
July	2003	56	20	21	(+ 35)
April	2003	69	13	14	(+ 55)
January	2003	57	21	18	(+ 39)
October	2002	58	19	20	(+ 38)
July	2002	63	21	15	(+ 48)
April	2002	73	15	10	(+ 63)
January	2002	77	15	7	(+ 70)
October	2001	79	14	5	(+ 74)
July	2001	44	27	21	(+ 23)
April	2001	49	24	19	(+ 30)

OVERALL JOB PERFORMANCE RATINGS OF PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH

	Excellent/ Good	Fair	Poor/ Very Poor	Net
Making the U.S. safe from terrorism	56%	21%	20%	(+36)
Managing the situation in Iraq	46	19	34	(+12)
Reducing your taxes	39	24	32	(+ 7)
Improving the nation's economy	37	27	34	(+ 3)
Protecting the environment	32	26	36	(- 4)
Improving world opinion of the U.S.	34	20	41	(- 7)
Reducing health care costs for Americans	24	27	42	(- 18)