

## **BUSH APPROVAL SLIPS SLIGHTLY, BUT SUPPORT REMAINS HIGH**

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DURHAM, NH -- President George W. Bush continues to enjoy strong job approval ratings in New Hampshire. His ratings have fallen somewhat since February but are still at remarkably high levels.

These findings are based on the latest **Granite State Poll**, conducted by the University of New Hampshire Survey Center. The Granite State Poll is sponsored by the University of New Hampshire. Six hundred ninety-four (694) New Hampshire adults were interviewed between April 10 and April 18, 2002 (margin of sampling error, +/-3.7 percent). For more detailed results and methodology, visit the Survey Center web site at [www.unh.edu/survey-center](http://www.unh.edu/survey-center) and click on Press Releases.

### **Presidential Approval**

Despite ongoing trouble in the Middle East and lingering economic problems at home, President George W. Bush continues to enjoy high approval ratings among New Hampshire residents for his performance as president. In the most recent Granite State Poll, 81 percent of New Hampshire adults say they approve of the job Bush is doing as president, only 13 percent disapprove, and 6 percent are neutral. Bush's approval ratings have slipped somewhat since the February 2002 Granite State Poll, when 87 percent of New Hampshire adults approved of his performance as president, 9 percent disapproved, and 4 percent were neutral. "Eventually, Bush's job approval figures will return to more normal levels, but he continues to enjoy tremendous support in the wake of September 11 and the war on terrorism," says Andrew Smith, Director of the UNH Survey Center.

The slip in Bush's approval rating among New Hampshire residents mirrors those measured nationwide. The Gallup Poll's measure of job approval for President Bush fell from 82 percent in early February to 77 percent in its most recent poll.

A second indicator of strong support for Bush in New Hampshire is that his personal favorability ratings remain very high. Currently, 78 percent of New Hampshire adults say they have a favorable opinion of Bush, 15 percent have an unfavorable opinion of him, and 7 percent are neutral. In February, 84 percent of New Hampshire adults said they had a favorable opinion of Bush, 11 percent had an unfavorable opinion, and 5 percent were neutral. Bush's net favorability

rating, the percentage having a favorable opinion minus the percentage having an unfavorable opinion, is +63, down from +73 in February. Nationally, Bush's favorability rating fell from 81 percent in early February to 75 percent in April, according to a FOX News/Opinion Dynamics poll.

### **Foreign Affairs**

Bush has recently been criticized at home and abroad for his Middle East policy, but support for his overall handling of foreign affairs remains strong. When asked about the job Bush is doing handling foreign affairs, 76 percent of Granite Staters say they approve, 19 percent disapprove, and 5 percent are neutral. Approval of Bush's handling of foreign affairs has dropped 10 percent since the February Granite State Poll when 86 percent said they approved of the job Bush was doing handling foreign affairs, 10 percent disapproved, and 4 percent were neutral.

### **Economic Approval Rating**

Bush has maintained high approval ratings for his handling of the economy in the face of an economic downturn. Currently, 70 percent of New Hampshire residents say they approve of the job President Bush is doing handling the economy, 23 percent disapprove, and 7 percent are neutral. In February, 69 percent approved of Bush's handling of the economy, 25 percent disapproved, and 6 percent were neutral.

### **SUB-GROUP ANALYSIS**

While Bush enjoys high job approval ratings from all groups of New Hampshire adults, his strongest supporters remain Republicans and conservatives. While somewhat less supportive, groups that usually give low ratings to Republican presidents -- Democrats, liberals, people with post graduate degrees, and resident of western New Hampshire -- also give Bush high job performance ratings.

Similarly, Bush enjoys high approval rating for his handling of foreign affairs from all groups of New Hampshire adults. Those least likely to approve of his handling of foreign affairs include Democrats, liberals, and residents over 60 years of age. Republicans and conservatives strongly approve of Bush's handling of the economy, but Democrats, liberals, and people with post-graduate educations are split over Bush's handling of the economy.

### Presidential Approval

	<u>Oct. 2001</u>	<u>Feb. 2002</u>	<u>April 2002</u>
Approve	92%	87%	81%
Neutral, don't know	2	4	6
Disapprove	6	9	13
	(N=687)	(N=724)	(N=685)

### Presidential Approval - Economy

	<u>Oct. 2001</u>	<u>Feb. 2002</u>	<u>April 2002</u>
Approve	75%	69%	70%
Neutral, don't know	8	6	7
Disapprove	18	25	23
	(N=684)	(N=725)	(N=688)

### Presidential Approval - Foreign Affairs

	<u>Oct. 2001</u>	<u>Feb. 2002</u>	<u>April 2002</u>
Approve	88%	86%	76%
Neutral, don't know	4	4	5
Disapprove	7	10	19
	(N=685)	(N=722)	(N=690)

### Favorability Rating - President George W. Bush

	<u>Oct. 2001</u>	<u>Feb. 2002</u>	<u>April 2002</u>
Favorable	88%	84%	78%
Neutral, don't know	4	5	7
Unfavorable	8	11	15
	(N=678)	(N=726)	(N=693)

## Granite State Poll Methodology

These findings are based on the most recent Granite State Poll conducted by the University of New Hampshire Survey Center from April 10 to April 18, 2002. A random sample of 694 New Hampshire adults was interviewed by telephone. In 95 of 100 cases, the statewide estimates will be accurate to plus or minus 3.7 percent. Results reported for other subgroups have potential for somewhat larger variation than those for the entire population.

The data have been weighted to adjust for numbers of adults and telephone lines within households, respondent sex, and region of the state. In addition to potential sampling error, all surveys have other potential sources of non-sampling error including question order effects, question wording effects, and non-response.

Respondents to the Granite State Poll were asked:

- "GENERALLY SPEAKING, do you approve or disapprove of the way President Bush is handling his job as president?" (IF APPROVE): "Would you say that you STRONGLY approve of the way he is handling his job as president, or that you approve only SOMEWHAT?" (IF DISAPPROVE): "Would you say that you STRONGLY disapprove of the way he is handling his job as president, or that you disapprove only SOMEWHAT?" (IF NEITHER, NOT SURE, DK): "Would you say that you lean a little more toward APPROVING or DISAPPROVING of the way he is handling his job as president?"
- "GENERALLY SPEAKING, do you approve or disapprove of the way President Bush is handling FOREIGN AFFAIRS?" (IF APPROVE): "Would you say you STRONGLY approve of the way he is handling foreign affairs, or that you approve only SOMEWHAT?" (IF DISAPPROVE): "Would you say you STRONGLY disapprove of the way he is handling foreign affairs, or that you disapprove only SOMEWHAT?" (IF NEITHER, NOT SURE, DK): "Would you say you lean a little more toward APPROVING or DISAPPROVING of the way he is handling foreign affairs?"
- "GENERALLY SPEAKING, do you approve or disapprove of the way President Bush is handling THE ECONOMY?" (IF APPROVE): "Would you say you STRONGLY approve of the way he is handling the economy, or that you approve only SOMEWHAT?" (IF DISAPPROVE): "Would you say you STRONGLY disapprove of the way he is handling the economy, or that you disapprove only SOMEWHAT?" (IF NEITHER, NOT SURE, DK): "Would you say you lean a little more toward APPROVING or DISAPPROVING of the way he is handling the economy?"
- "Next, I'd like to get your overall opinion of some people in the news. As I read each name, please say if you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of this person - or if you have never heard of him or her. President George W. Bush."

### Presidential Approval

<b>STATEWIDE</b>	<u>Approve</u> <b>81%</b>	<u>Neutral</u> <b>6%</b>	<u>Disapprove</u> <b>13%</b>	<u>(N)</u> <b>685</b>
Registered Democrat	59	5	36	117
Undeclared	78	8	14	225
Registered Republican	96	1	2	150
Not registered	85	8	6	185
Democrat	66	7	27	267
Independent	82	7	11	116
Republican	95	3	2	284
Liberal	62	6	32	130
Moderate	80	7	13	311
Conservative	95	1	3	193
18 to 29	79	8	13	129
30 to 39	89	5	6	142
40 to 49	82	4	14	157
50 to 59	79	5	16	114
60 to 69	68	11	21	63
70 and over	81	1	18	58
Male	80	5	15	334
Female	81	7	12	351
High school or less	87	5	8	226
Some college	80	8	11	144
College graduate	78	5	16	208
Post-graduate	72	5	23	101
Less than \$30K	81	4	15	100
\$30K to \$60K	78	8	14	186
\$60K to \$75K	79	4	17	73
\$75K to \$100K	81	7	12	87
More than \$100K	82	1	17	87
Weekly church attendees	87	4	9	147
1-2 times a month	83	6	11	98
Less often	80	6	15	259
Never	75	8	17	158
Northern NH	73	7	20	91
Western NH	76	7	18	64
Central/Lakes	79	10	11	104
Hillsborough County	85	2	13	210
Seacoast	82	6	11	215
1st District	82	7	11	357
2nd District	79	5	16	329

**Presidential Approval - Economy**

<b>STATEWIDE</b>	<u><b>Approve</b></u> <b>70%</b>	<u><b>Neutral</b></u> <b>7%</b>	<u><b>Disapprove</b></u> <b>23%</b>	<u><b>(N)</b></u> <b>688</b>
Registered Democrat	45	5	50	118
Undeclared	68	6	26	226
Registered Republican	95	1	5	150
Not registered	72	13	16	186
Democrat	52	5	43	267
Independent	66	14	20	117
Republican	90	4	5	284
Liberal	49	9	42	131
Moderate	70	4	25	310
Conservative	88	3	8	194
18 to 29	67	11	22	130
30 to 39	77	7	15	142
40 to 49	72	5	23	158
50 to 59	71	5	24	114
60 to 69	59	9	32	63
70 and over	69	3	28	58
Male	70	5	25	336
Female	71	8	21	352
High school or less	77	9	14	225
Some college	74	9	17	144
College graduate	66	4	30	209
Post-graduate	59	5	35	103
Less than \$30K	65	11	24	102
\$30K to \$60K	68	6	26	185
\$60K to \$75K	63	11	25	74
\$75K to \$100K	83	1	16	87
More than \$100K	72	3	25	89
Weekly church attendees	73	6	22	149
1-2 times a month	67	5	28	100
Less often	74	6	20	260
Never	65	9	26	156
Northern NH	67	5	28	91
Western NH	71	1	28	63
Central/Lakes	65	12	23	108
Hillsborough County	75	4	21	209
Seacoast	70	9	21	216
1st District	70	7	23	358
2nd District	71	6	23	330

### Presidential Approval - Foreign Affairs

<b>STATEWIDE</b>	<u>Approve</u> <b>76%</b>	<u>Neutral</u> <b>5%</b>	<u>Disapprove</u> <b>19%</b>	<u>(N)</u> <b>690</b>
Registered Democrat	57	3	40	118
Undeclared	74	6	20	227
Registered Republican	94	3	4	150
Not registered	79	7	15	186
Democrat	63	4	34	269
Independent	77	11	12	117
Republican	90	3	7	284
Liberal	55	4	41	132
Moderate	80	4	17	311
Conservative	87	5	8	194
18 to 29	75	6	18	131
30 to 39	86	3	11	142
40 to 49	77	6	16	159
50 to 59	76	2	22	114
60 to 69	64	7	28	63
70 and over	64	6	30	58
Male	80	3	18	336
Female	73	7	20	354
High school or less	77	7	16	225
Some college	76	6	18	144
College graduate	78	3	18	210
Post-graduate	69	3	27	104
Less than \$30K	69	8	23	102
\$30K to \$60K	74	6	20	186
\$60K to \$75K	76	0	24	75
\$75K to \$100K	84	3	13	87
More than \$100K	80	2	18	89
Weekly church attendees	80	4	15	149
1-2 times a month	69	10	21	100
Less often	79	3	18	261
Never	72	5	23	157
Northern NH	73	1	26	91
Western NH	77	7	17	63
Central/Lakes	71	12	18	108
Hillsborough County	78	4	18	210
Seacoast	79	4	17	217
1st District	76	5	18	359
2nd District	76	5	19	331

**G.W. Bush Favorability Rating**

<b>STATEWIDE</b>	<b><u>Favorable</u></b> <b>78%</b>	<b><u>Neither</u></b> <b>6%</b>	<b><u>Unfavorable</u></b> <b>15%</b>	<b><u>DK</u></b> <b>1%</b>	<b><u>(N)</u></b> <b>693</b>
Registered Democrat	55	7	38	0	118
Undeclared	74	7	18	1	229
Registered Republican	96	1	3	0	150
Not registered	83	7	9	1	187
Democrat	60	8	31	1	270
Independent	76	10	13	1	118
Republican	96	1	2	0	284
Liberal	55	8	37	0	132
Moderate	79	6	15	0	312
Conservative	94	1	4	1	194
18 to 29	76	8	16	1	132
30 to 39	91	3	6	0	142
40 to 49	78	6	15	1	160
50 to 59	75	6	19	0	114
60 to 69	63	13	23	1	63
70 and over	79	1	19	1	58
Male	80	4	16	0	336
Female	76	7	15	1	356
High school or less	83	6	11	0	228
Some college	80	6	12	2	144
College graduate	76	5	18	0	210
Post-graduate	67	7	25	0	104
Less than \$30K	74	9	16	1	102
\$30K to \$60K	75	5	18	1	186
\$60K to \$75K	77	4	19	0	75
\$75K to \$100K	83	3	14	0	87
More than \$100K	79	6	15	0	90
Weekly church attendees	84	7	9	0	149
1-2 times a month	79	5	16	0	99
Less often	79	4	16	1	262
Never	70	7	21	1	159
Northern NH	72	8	19	1	92
Western NH	75	4	20	2	65
Central/Lakes	70	13	16	0	108
Hillsborough County	83	4	13	0	210
Seacoast	80	4	15	1	217
1st District	81	4	14	1	360
2nd District	75	8	17	0	333