

## **BUSH APPROVAL REMAINS HIGH**

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DURHAM, NH -- President George W. Bush continues to enjoy high job approval ratings in New Hampshire. While his ratings have slipped slightly since October, Bush's job performance is near historic highs in New Hampshire.

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. Seven-hundred thirty (730) adults were interviewed between January 25 and February 5, 2002. The margin of sampling error for the survey is +/-3.6 percent. (For more detailed results, 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 an economy that is struggling to get out of recession, President George W. Bush continues to enjoy extremely high approval among New Hampshire residents for his performance as president. In the most recent Granite State Poll, 87 percent of New Hampshire adults say they approve of the job Bush is doing as president, only 9 percent disapprove, and 4 percent are neutral. Bush's approval ratings have slipped somewhat since the October 2001 Granite State Poll when 92% of New Hampshire adults approved of his performance as president, 6 percent disapproved, and 2 percent were neutral. "People in New Hampshire think that Bush is doing a good job handling the war on terrorism," said Andrew Smith, Director of the UNH Survey Center. "The success of the operation in Afghanistan has so far helped the Bush administration avoid being hurt by the recession or even problems with Enron."

Another indicator of support for Bush in New Hampshire is that his personal favorability ratings are very high. Currently, 84 percent of New Hampshire adults say they have a favorable opinion of Bush, 11 percent have an unfavorable opinion of him, and 5 percent are neutral. In October, 88 percent of New Hampshire adults said they had a favorable opinion of Bush, 8 percent had an unfavorable opinion, and 4 percent were neutral. Bush's net favorability

rating, the percentage having a favorable opinion minus the percentage having an unfavorable opinion, is +73, down from +80 in October.

### **Foreign Affairs**

Bush has reached these high levels of personal popularity and job approval largely because of his response to the September 11 attacks. When asked about the job Bush is doing handling foreign affairs, 86 percent of New Hampshire residents say they approve, 10 percent disapprove, and 4 percent are neutral. These figures are almost unchanged since the October Granite State Poll when 88 percent said they approved of the job Bush was doing handling foreign affairs, 7 percent disapproved, and 4 percent were neutral.

### **Economic Approval Rating**

While the New Hampshire economy has shown signs of improvement, recent job layoffs at Tyco and Enterasys are indicators that the New Hampshire is not back to the dynamic growth it showed in the late 1990s. Typically, Presidents get blamed for bad economies, even during times of war, as President George Herbert Walker Bush discovered in 1991 and 1992. But President George W. Bush has been able to do something his father was unable to do, maintain high job approval ratings in the face of an economic recession. In the most recent Granite State Poll, 69 percent of New Hampshire residents say they approve of the job President Bush is doing handling the economy, 25 percent disapprove, and 6 percent are neutral. In October, 75 percent approved of Bush's handling of the economy, 18 percent disapproved, and 8 percent were neutral. By comparison, at the height of the economic boom in September, 1999, only 72 percent of New Hampshire adults approved of President Clinton's handling of the economy.

### **SUB-GROUP ANALYSIS**

Bush enjoys high job approval ratings from all groups of New Hampshire adults but his highest ratings come from 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.

Granite Staters are more divided over Bush's handling of the economy. Republicans and conservatives strongly approve of his performance. However, 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> |
|---------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Approve             | 92%              | 87%              |
| Neutral, don't know | 2                | 4                |
| Disapprove          | 6                | 9                |
|                     | (N=687)          | (N=724)          |

**Presidential Approval - Economy**

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

**Presidential Approval - Foreign Affairs**

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

**Favorability Rating - President George W. Bush**

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

## 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 January 25 to February 5, 2002. A random sample of 730 New Hampshire adults was interviewed by telephone. In 95 of 100 cases, the statewide estimates will be accurate to plus or minus 3.6 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 Rating - George W. Bush**

| <b>STATEWIDE</b>      | <u>Approve</u><br><b>87%</b> | <u>Neutral</u><br><b>4%</b> | <u>Disapprove</u><br><b>9%</b> | <u>(N=)</u><br><b>724</b> |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Registered Democrat   | 73                           | 8                           | 18                             | 134                       |
| Undeclared            | 87                           | 4                           | 9                              | 254                       |
| Registered Republican | 98                           | 0                           | 1                              | 160                       |
| Not registered        | 85                           | 4                           | 11                             | 169                       |
| Democrat              | 73                           | 7                           | 19                             | 288                       |
| Independent           | 88                           | 4                           | 9                              | 131                       |
| Republican            | 99                           | 1                           | 0                              | 278                       |
| Liberal               | 72                           | 5                           | 23                             | 140                       |
| Moderate              | 86                           | 5                           | 9                              | 329                       |
| Conservative          | 98                           | 1                           | 1                              | 203                       |
| 2 Years or less in NH | 84                           | 4                           | 12                             | 52                        |
| 3 to 5 years          | 86                           | 2                           | 11                             | 55                        |
| 6 to 10 years         | 91                           | 0                           | 9                              | 70                        |
| 11 to 20 years        | 90                           | 2                           | 8                              | 166                       |
| More than 20 years    | 85                           | 5                           | 9                              | 376                       |
| 18 to 29              | 85                           | 6                           | 9                              | 117                       |
| 30 to 39              | 91                           | 1                           | 8                              | 154                       |
| 40 to 49              | 86                           | 5                           | 10                             | 168                       |
| 50 to 59              | 89                           | 1                           | 10                             | 131                       |
| 60 to 69              | 86                           | 4                           | 10                             | 69                        |
| 70 and over           | 80                           | 11                          | 10                             | 68                        |
| Male                  | 88                           | 3                           | 9                              | 351                       |
| Female                | 86                           | 5                           | 9                              | 373                       |
| High school or less   | 89                           | 4                           | 6                              | 213                       |
| Some college          | 88                           | 4                           | 8                              | 165                       |
| College graduate      | 91                           | 3                           | 6                              | 232                       |
| Post-graduate         | 72                           | 5                           | 23                             | 112                       |
| Less than \$30K       | 77                           | 5                           | 18                             | 88                        |
| \$30K to \$60K        | 88                           | 3                           | 9                              | 228                       |
| \$60K to \$75K        | 86                           | 4                           | 10                             | 77                        |
| \$75K to \$100K       | 90                           | 1                           | 8                              | 91                        |
| More than \$100K      | 91                           | 2                           | 7                              | 91                        |
| Married               | 88                           | 3                           | 8                              | 490                       |
| Divorced/separated    | 85                           | 4                           | 10                             | 111                       |
| Never married         | 80                           | 6                           | 13                             | 116                       |
| Northern NH           | 90                           | 4                           | 7                              | 94                        |
| Western NH            | 71                           | 7                           | 22                             | 68                        |
| Central/Lakes         | 89                           | 3                           | 8                              | 114                       |
| Hillsborough County   | 89                           | 4                           | 7                              | 220                       |
| Seacoast              | 86                           | 4                           | 10                             | 227                       |
| 1st District          | 88                           | 4                           | 8                              | 369                       |
| 2nd District          | 85                           | 4                           | 11                             | 355                       |

### Economic Approval Rating - George W. Bush

| <b>STATEWIDE</b>      | <u>Approve</u><br><b>69%</b> | <u>Neutral</u><br><b>6%</b> | <u>Disapprove</u><br><b>25%</b> | <u>(N=)</u><br><b>725</b> |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Registered Democrat   | 44                           | 8                           | 48                              | 136                       |
| Undeclared            | 67                           | 4                           | 29                              | 254                       |
| Registered Republican | 90                           | 4                           | 7                               | 160                       |
| Not registered        | 71                           | 9                           | 20                              | 168                       |
| Democrat              | 46                           | 6                           | 47                              | 288                       |
| Independent           | 72                           | 7                           | 21                              | 130                       |
| Republican            | 91                           | 3                           | 6                               | 278                       |
| Liberal               | 50                           | 7                           | 43                              | 140                       |
| Moderate              | 68                           | 4                           | 28                              | 327                       |
| Conservative          | 86                           | 5                           | 9                               | 203                       |
| 2 Years or less in NH | 68                           | 1                           | 31                              | 52                        |
| 3 to 5 years          | 72                           | 7                           | 21                              | 55                        |
| 6 to 10 years         | 72                           | 6                           | 22                              | 70                        |
| 11 to 20 years        | 77                           | 7                           | 16                              | 166                       |
| More than 20 years    | 65                           | 6                           | 29                              | 377                       |
| 18 to 29              | 72                           | 7                           | 21                              | 116                       |
| 30 to 39              | 76                           | 5                           | 20                              | 155                       |
| 40 to 49              | 69                           | 7                           | 23                              | 168                       |
| 50 to 59              | 67                           | 2                           | 31                              | 132                       |
| 60 to 69              | 60                           | 8                           | 32                              | 69                        |
| 70 and over           | 61                           | 10                          | 30                              | 68                        |
| Male                  | 69                           | 5                           | 26                              | 352                       |
| Female                | 69                           | 6                           | 25                              | 372                       |
| High school or less   | 71                           | 12                          | 16                              | 213                       |
| Some college          | 77                           | 3                           | 20                              | 166                       |
| College graduate      | 72                           | 3                           | 25                              | 233                       |
| Post-graduate         | 47                           | 4                           | 50                              | 112                       |
| Less than \$30K       | 66                           | 6                           | 27                              | 88                        |
| \$30K to \$60K        | 66                           | 7                           | 27                              | 228                       |
| \$60K to \$75K        | 74                           | 2                           | 23                              | 77                        |
| \$75K to \$100K       | 68                           | 4                           | 28                              | 92                        |
| More than \$100K      | 72                           | 7                           | 21                              | 91                        |
| Married               | 70                           | 5                           | 24                              | 490                       |
| Divorced/separated    | 68                           | 5                           | 27                              | 111                       |
| Never married         | 64                           | 9                           | 28                              | 117                       |
| Northern NH           | 74                           | 4                           | 22                              | 96                        |
| Western NH            | 56                           | 8                           | 37                              | 68                        |
| Central/Lakes         | 73                           | 6                           | 21                              | 114                       |
| Hillsborough County   | 70                           | 6                           | 25                              | 218                       |
| Seacoast              | 68                           | 6                           | 26                              | 228                       |
| 1st District          | 71                           | 7                           | 22                              | 370                       |
| 2nd District          | 66                           | 5                           | 29                              | 354                       |

### Foreign Affairs Approval Rating - George W. Bush

| <b>STATEWIDE</b>      | <u>Approve</u><br><b>86%</b> | <u>Neutral</u><br><b>4%</b> | <u>Disapprove</u><br><b>10%</b> | <u>(N=)</u><br><b>722</b> |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Registered Democrat   | 72                           | 3                           | 25                              | 136                       |
| Undeclared            | 87                           | 3                           | 10                              | 253                       |
| Registered Republican | 97                           | 0                           | 3                               | 159                       |
| Not registered        | 85                           | 8                           | 7                               | 168                       |
| Democrat              | 75                           | 5                           | 21                              | 289                       |
| Independent           | 89                           | 6                           | 5                               | 130                       |
| Republican            | 95                           | 2                           | 3                               | 277                       |
| Liberal               | 74                           | 6                           | 20                              | 140                       |
| Moderate              | 85                           | 3                           | 12                              | 327                       |
| Conservative          | 94                           | 2                           | 4                               | 203                       |
| 2 Years or less in NH | 88                           | 0                           | 12                              | 52                        |
| 3 to 5 years          | 81                           | 5                           | 14                              | 55                        |
| 6 to 10 years         | 87                           | 0                           | 13                              | 70                        |
| 11 to 20 years        | 86                           | 5                           | 10                              | 164                       |
| More than 20 years    | 86                           | 4                           | 10                              | 376                       |
| 18 to 29              | 82                           | 5                           | 13                              | 116                       |
| 30 to 39              | 90                           | 3                           | 7                               | 154                       |
| 40 to 49              | 86                           | 4                           | 10                              | 168                       |
| 50 to 59              | 86                           | 2                           | 12                              | 131                       |
| 60 to 69              | 85                           | 1                           | 14                              | 68                        |
| 70 and over           | 83                           | 7                           | 10                              | 68                        |
| Male                  | 87                           | 3                           | 10                              | 350                       |
| Female                | 84                           | 4                           | 11                              | 372                       |
| High school or less   | 87                           | 6                           | 8                               | 211                       |
| Some college          | 87                           | 3                           | 9                               | 165                       |
| College graduate      | 90                           | 2                           | 8                               | 234                       |
| Post-graduate         | 74                           | 3                           | 23                              | 112                       |
| Less than \$30K       | 73                           | 8                           | 19                              | 88                        |
| \$30K to \$60K        | 89                           | 3                           | 8                               | 226                       |
| \$60K to \$75K        | 83                           | 3                           | 14                              | 76                        |
| \$75K to \$100K       | 91                           | 1                           | 8                               | 92                        |
| More than \$100K      | 92                           | 1                           | 7                               | 91                        |
| Married               | 88                           | 3                           | 10                              | 489                       |
| Divorced/separated    | 80                           | 7                           | 12                              | 111                       |
| Never married         | 85                           | 4                           | 12                              | 115                       |
| Northern NH           | 83                           | 4                           | 13                              | 96                        |
| Western NH            | 66                           | 8                           | 26                              | 68                        |
| Central/Lakes         | 88                           | 4                           | 8                               | 114                       |
| Hillsborough County   | 89                           | 2                           | 9                               | 217                       |
| Seacoast              | 89                           | 3                           | 8                               | 227                       |
| 1st District          | 90                           | 4                           | 6                               | 368                       |
| 2nd District          | 82                           | 4                           | 15                              | 354                       |