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## **THE GRANITE STATE POLL\***

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**FOR RELEASE**  
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### **TIGHT RACE FOR U.S. SENATE IN NH**

DURHAM, NH -- Democratic Governor Jeanne Shaheen is in a dead heat with incumbent Senator Bob Smith, but trails Congressman John Sununu in the race for U.S. Senate from New Hampshire. Sununu also leads Smith for the GOP nomination.

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 three (703) adults were interviewed between October 19 and October 29, 2001. The margin of sampling error for the survey is +/-3.8%.

### **THEY'RE OFF!**

Although the November 5, 2002 election for Senate, Governor, and Congress in New Hampshire is almost a year away, the candidates are already campaigning and fundraising in what will likely be the most expensive election in New Hampshire history. Currently, at least 6 people are running for Governor and 3 are running for Senate.

### **U.S. SENATE**

The race that is attracting the most nationwide attention is for the U.S. Senate seat currently held by Wolfeboro Republican Bob Smith. Although Smith has been elected twice, he is considered by many analysts to be the most vulnerable Senator running for reelection in 2002. Smith has attracted strong opponents both inside the GOP and from the Democrats.

Smith came under considerable fire within his own party for an abortive run for President in 2000 during which he briefly quit the GOP and ran as an Independent. He later rejoined the party and was rewarded with the Chairmanship of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. However, his hiatus from the party weakened his standing among New Hampshire Republicans and has led to a primary challenge by 1<sup>st</sup> District Congressman, John Sununu. Sununu, of Bedford, was elected to his third term in Congress in 2000 and has benefited from voter familiarity with his father, former Governor John Sununu.

Currently, Sununu leads Smith in the race for the GOP nomination with 53% of likely GOP primary voters saying they plan to vote for Sununu, 35% plan to vote for Smith, 4% favor some other candidate, and only 8% are undecided. "The low percentage of undecided voters is a sign that these two well known candidates face a polarized Republican electorate, even though they hold similar issue positions" said Andrew Smith, the Director of the UNH Survey Center. "The campaign for the GOP nod will hinge on the personalities of the candidates and on the ability of their respective organizations to rally their supporters. It will likely be a bruising campaign by these two well financed, well known candidates."

Whoever survives the GOP primary will face a formidable opponent in the general election. Three-term Democratic Governor Jeanne Shaheen of Madbury does not face a primary challenge, has a proven campaign organization, and will be well financed. A hypothetical race between Smith and Shaheen is currently deadlocked. Forty-five percent of New Hampshire registered voters favor Shaheen, 44% favor Smith, 5% favor some other candidate, and only 7% are undecided.

Sununu fares much better than Smith versus Shaheen. Currently, 50% of registered voters favor Sununu, 38% favor Shaheen, 3% favor some other candidate, and 9% are undecided.

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### **FAVORABILITY RATINGS**

Because the election is far in the future, most voters are heavily influenced by their perceptions of the candidates rather than specific issue positions. John Sununu is leading in the race for U.S. Senate, in part, because he has high favorability ratings. Among registered voters, 66% have a favorable opinion of Sununu, only 19% have an unfavorable opinion, 7% are neutral, and 7% don't know enough about him to say. Sununu's net favorability rating, the percentage having a favorable opinion of him minus those having an unfavorable opinion, is a very high +47%. Bob Smith's favorability ratings are considerably lower than Sununu's with 50% of New Hampshire registered voters saying they have a favorable opinion of Smith, 29% having an unfavorable opinion, 9% are neutral, and 12% not knowing enough about him to say. Smith's net favorability rating is a moderate +21%. Jeanne Shaheen's favorability ratings are also lower than Sununu's with 59% having a favorable opinion of Shaheen, 31% having an unfavorable opinion of her, 8% are neutral, and 3% don't know enough to say. Shaheen's net favorability rating is +28%.

### **NH GOVERNOR**

The race for New Hampshire Governor is in much greater flux with most candidates vying for both the Republican and Democratic nomination currently unknown to NH voters. On the Democratic side, former State Senate President Bev Hollingworth of Hampton is viewed favorably by 17% of registered voters, 3% have an unfavorable opinion of her, 9% are neutral, and 71% don't know enough to say. Hollingworth's net favorability rating is +14%. Her major primary opponent, State Senator Mark Fernald of Sharon is also not well known. Fifteen percent of New Hampshire voters say they have a favorable opinion of Fernald, 8% have an unfavorable opinion, 9% are neutral, and 67% don't know enough about him to say. Fernald's net favorability rating is +7%.

Among the Republican candidates, all are essentially unknowns except former U.S. Senator Gordon Humphrey of Chichester, who ran unsuccessfully for Governor against Jeanne Shaheen in 2000. Forty-two percent of registered voters have a favorable opinion of Humphrey, 26% have an unfavorable opinion, 13% are neutral, and 20% don't know enough to say. Humphrey's net favorability rating is +16%.

Cabletron founder Craig Benson of Rye is already airing television commercials in his campaign for the GOP nomination. Currently, 10% of NH registered voters have a favorable opinion of Benson, 8% have an unfavorable opinion of him, 6% are neutral, and 76% don't know enough about him to say. Benson's net favorability rating is +2%.

Former State Representative, and UNH Political Science professor Dave Corbin of Stratham is viewed favorably by 6% of NH registered voters, 2% have an unfavorable opinion of him, 8% are neutral, and 84% don't know enough about him to say. Corbin's net favorability rating is +4%.

Former State Senator Bruce Keough of Dublin is viewed favorably by 7% of registered voters, 3% have an unfavorable opinion of him, 7% are neutral and 84% don't know enough about him to say. Keough's net favorability rating is +4%.

### **FAVORABILITY RATINGS OF OTHER PUBLIC FIGURES**

The Granite State Poll also asked about voter knowledge of several other elected officials and hopefuls. Among candidates for U.S. Congress, current 2<sup>nd</sup> District Congressman Charlie Bass has a very strong net favorability rating of +42%. Martha Fuller Clark, in her second run at the 1<sup>st</sup> District seat being vacated by Sununu, has a net favorability rating of +13%. Former Congressman Dick Swett, who has been mentioned as a possible candidate for Congress, has a net favorability rating of +17%.

In New Hampshire's other U.S. Senate seat, incumbent Republican Judd Gregg of Rye enjoys high popularity with a net favorability rating of +51%.

And President George W. Bush is wildly popular among NH registered voters with a net favorability rating of +80%.

**U.S. Senate Election - Smith vs. Shaheen (Registered Voters)**

	<u>Percent</u>
Shaheen (D)	45%
Smith (R)	44
Other/Neither	5
Undecided	7
	(N=505)

**U.S. Senate Election - Sununu vs. Shaheen (Registered Voters)**

	<u>Percent</u>
Sununu (R)	50%
Shaheen (D)	38
Other/Neither	3
Undecided	9
	(N=505)

**U.S. Senate Election - Likely GOP Primary Voters**

	<u>Percent</u>
Sununu (R)	53%
Smith (R)	35
Other/Neither	4
Undecided	8
	(N=202)

## Favorability Ratings - All NH Adults

	<u>Favorable</u>	<u>Unfavorable</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>DK Enough</u>	<u>Net</u>	<u>(N)</u>
<u>US Senate</u>						
John Sununu (R)	63%	17%	8%	12%	+46%	(681)
Jeanne Shaheen (D)	58	29	9	4	+29%	(680)
Bob Smith (R)	48	25	10	17	+23%	(681)
<u>US Congress</u>						
Charlie Bass (R)	52	13	12	24	+39%	(681)
Dick Swett (D)	36	17	13	34	+19%	(681)
Martha Fuller Clark (D)	19	9	9	63	+10%	(681)
<u>NH Governor</u>						
Gordon Humphrey (R)	40	21	13	26	+19%	(681)
Dave Corbin (R)	7	2	7	83	+5%	(680)
Craig Benson (R)	10	7	6	78	+3%	(680)
Bruce Keough (R)	6	3	6	85	+3%	(681)
Bev Hollingworth (D)	15	3	8	75	+12%	(681)
Mark Fernald (D)	13	7	8	72	+6%	(681)
<u>Other</u>						
George W. Bush (R)	88	8	4	0	+80%	(678)
Judd Gregg (R)	62	13	9	16	+49%	(679)

## Favorability Ratings - Registered Voters

	<u>Favorable</u>	<u>Unfavorable</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>DK Enough</u>	<u>Net</u>	<u>(N)</u>
<u>US Senate</u>						
John Sununu (R)	66%	19%	7%	7%	+47%	(521)
Jeanne Shaheen (D)	59	31	8	3	+28%	(521)
Bob Smith (R)	50	29	9	12	+21%	(521)
<u>US Congress</u>						
Charlie Bass (R)	56	14	11	19	+42%	(521)
Dick Swett (D)	37	20	14	30	+17%	(521)
Martha Fuller Clark (D)	22	9	9	60	+13%	(521)
<u>NH Governor</u>						
Gordon Humphrey (R)	42	26	13	20	+16%	(521)
Dave Corbin (R)	6	2	8	84	+4%	(521)
Bruce Keough (R)	7	3	7	84	+4%	(521)
Craig Benson (R)	10	8	6	76	+2%	(520)
Bev Hollingworth (D)	17	3	9	71	+14%	(521)
Mark Fernald (D)	15	8	9	67	+7%	(521)
<u>Other</u>						
George W. Bush (R)	88	8	4	0	+80%	(520)
Judd Gregg (R)	66	15	9	11	+51%	(520)

## 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 October 19 through October 29, 2000. A random sample of 703 New Hampshire adults was interviewed by telephone. In 95 of 100 cases, the statewide estimates will be accurate to plus or minus 3.8 percent. Results reported for other subgroups have potential for somewhat larger variation than those for the entire population. The margin of sampling error for registered voters (N=505) is +/-4.4%. The margin of sampling error for the GOP Senate primary question (N=202) is +/-6.7%.

The data have been weighted to adjust for numbers of adults and telephone lines within households, respondent sex, and for 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:

- "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. New Hampshire Congressman Charlie Bass."
- "Businessman Craig Benson."
- "President George W. Bush."
- "State Representative Martha Fuller Clark."
- "Former State Representative Dave Corbin."
- " State Senator Mark Fernald."
- "State Senator Bev Hollingworth."
- "New Hampshire Senator Judd Gregg."
- "Former Senator Gordon Humphrey."
- "Former State Senator Bruce Keough." (KEY - OH)
- "New Hampshire Governor Jeanne Shaheen."
- "New Hampshire Senator Bob Smith."
- "New Hampshire Congressman John Sununu."
- "Former Ambassador Dick Swett."
  
- "I am going to read the names of the candidates who are expected to be on the Republican primary ballot for U.S. Senator. If you were voting in the Republican primary for U.S. Senate today, would you vote for ... Bob Smith ... or John Sununu?" (ROTATE CANDIDATES) IF OTHER, UNDECIDED, NEITHER, DK: "As of today, which of these candidates are you leaning towards?"
- "Suppose the 2002 election for U.S. Senator for New Hampshire was being held TODAY and the candidates were John Sununu, the Republican, and Jeanne Shaheen, the Democrat. Would you vote for John Sununu ... or Jeanne Shaheen?" (ROTATE CANDIDATES) IF OTHER, UNDECIDED, NEITHER, DK: "As of today, do you lean more toward Jeanne Shaheen, the Democrat, or John Sununu, the Republican?"
- "Suppose the 2002 election for U.S. Senator for New Hampshire was being held TODAY and the candidates were Bob Smith, the Republican, and Jeanne Shaheen, the Democrat. Would you vote for Bob Smith ... or Jeanne Shaheen?" (ROTATE CANDIDATES) IF OTHER, UNDECIDED, NEITHER, DK: "As of today, do you lean more toward Jeanne Shaheen, the Democrat, or Bob Smith, the Republican?"