

## 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> <b>87%</b>	<u>Neutral</u> <b>4%</b>	<u>Disapprove</u> <b>9%</b>	<u>(N=)</u> <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> <b>69%</b>	<u>Neutral</u> <b>6%</b>	<u>Disapprove</u> <b>25%</b>	<u>(N=)</u> <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> 86%	<u>Neutral</u> 4%	<u>Disapprove</u> 10%	<u>(N=)</u> 722
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