

# THE GRANITE STATE POLL

## THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

### BUSH RECEIVES MEDIOCRE RATINGS IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

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**FOR RELEASE**  
May 5, 2004

DURHAM, NH – New Hampshire residents continue to give George W. Bush mediocre job approval ratings. Approval for Bush's handling of the situation with Iraq has slightly improved and overall support for the war in Iraq remains solid.

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. Five hundred forty-two (542) randomly selected adults were interviewed by telephone between April 19 and April 26, 2004. The margin of sampling error for the survey is +/-4.2 percent. (For more detailed results, visit the Survey Center web site at [www.unh.edu/survey-center/pres50504.pdf](http://www.unh.edu/survey-center/pres50504.pdf) )

#### **Approval Holds**

Two years ago, President George W. Bush was riding a wave of support in New Hampshire in the wake of the terrorist attacks on September 11<sup>th</sup> and the subsequent war in Afghanistan. However, his job approval ratings have declined steadily since then. Bush's approval ratings are now below 50 percent, but the decline appears to have stopped. In the most recent Granite State Poll, 48 percent of New Hampshire adults say they approve of the way Bush is handling his job as president, 46 percent disapprove, and 6 percent are neutral. Bush's overall job approval rating has remained essentially unchanged since February when 47 percent approved of the job he is doing as president, 48 disapproved, and 5 percent were neutral. "Anytime an incumbent President has approval ratings below 50 percent, he faces a challenging reelection campaign," said Andrew Smith, Director of the UNH Survey Center. "The improving economy should help Bush over the summer, but he is not currently in a strong position."

#### **Economic Approval Rating**

Approval of the job Bush is doing handling the economy has also stabilized but remains low. In the most recent Granite State Poll, only 43 percent of New Hampshire residents say they approve of the job President Bush is doing handling the economy, 51 percent disapprove, and 6 percent are neutral. The percentage who approve of Bush's handling of the economy is up slightly from 41 percent in February. "Although the U.S. and New Hampshire economies are experiencing strong growth, Bush is not yet getting credit for it" said Dr. Smith.

#### **Foreign Affairs & Iraq**

With the economy improving, the greatest challenge facing the Bush administration is the situation in Iraq. New Hampshire adults are split over Bush's handling of foreign affairs and Iraq. In the most recent Granite State Poll, 48

percent of New Hampshire adults say they approve of the way President Bush is handling foreign affairs, 48 percent disapprove, and 5 percent are neutral. In the February 2004 Granite State Poll, 44 percent approved of Bush's handling of foreign affairs, 52 percent disapproved, and 4 percent were neutral.

April was the deadliest month for American troops since the official end of the war in Iraq. Despite this, Granite Staters are somewhat more positive about Iraq than they were in February. (Interviews were conducted before the recent revelations of abuse of Iraqi prisoners by American troops.) When asked if they approved of the way Bush is handling the situation with Iraq, 49 percent approve, 47 percent disapprove, and 4 percent are neutral. The percentage who approve of the Bush administration's handling of Iraq has increased 5 percentage points since February.

Despite the high number of U.S. deaths in April, most New Hampshire residents still support the war with Iraq. Currently, 59 percent of New Hampshire adults support the United States having gone to war with Iraq, 37 percent oppose the U.S. having gone to war, and 4 percent are neutral. Support for the war in Iraq has increased 5 percentage points since the February Granite State Poll.

### **Subgroup Analysis**

Bush gets his highest approval ratings from Republicans, conservatives, Protestants, those making more than \$100,000 annually, Protestants, and people who attend church weekly. Democrats, liberals, union households, residents of Western New Hampshire, and those with post-graduate educations have the most unfavorable opinion of Bush.

Republicans and conservatives are the strongest supporters of U.S. involvement in Iraq while Democrats and liberals are most opposed to the war. It is important to note that political independents support the war by a 2 to 1 margin.

### **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 19 to April 26, 2004. A random sample of 542 New Hampshire adults was interviewed by telephone. In 95 of 100 cases, the statewide estimates will be accurate to plus or minus 4.2 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.

### Presidential Approval

"GENERALLY SPEAKING, do you approve or disapprove of the way President Bush is handling his job as president?"

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>(N)</u>
Apr. '04	48%	6%	46%	(536)
Feb. '04	47	5	48	(505)
Oct. '03	56	4	40	(502)
June '03	64	5	31	(511)
Apr. '03	71	6	23	(503)
Feb. '03	65	4	30	(646)
June '02	75	5	21	(658)
Apr. '02	81	6	13	(685)
Feb. '02	87	4	9	(724)
Oct. '01	92	2	6	(687)

### Presidential Approval - Economy

"GENERALLY SPEAKING, do you approve or disapprove of the way President Bush is handling THE ECONOMY?"

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>(N)</u>
Apr. '04	43%	6%	51%	(538)
Feb. '04	41	5	54	(506)
Oct. '03	46	4	50	(499)
June '03	51	3	45	(512)
Apr. '03	56	6	38	(502)
Feb. '03	51	6	43	(644)
June '02	62	6	32	(644)
Apr. '02	70	7	23	(688)
Feb. '02	69	6	25	(725)
Oct. '01	75	8	18	(684)

### Presidential Approval - Foreign Affairs

"GENERALLY SPEAKING, do you approve or disapprove of the way President Bush is handling FOREIGN AFFAIRS?"

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>(N)</u>
Apr. '04	48%	5%	48%	(539)
Feb. '04	44	4	52	(507)
Oct. '03	53	3	44	(501)
June '03	63	3	34	(512)
Apr. '03	72	3	25	(506)
Feb. '03	60	4	36	(646)
June '02	69	5	26	(644)
Apr. '02	76	5	19	(690)
Feb. '02	86	4	10	(722)
Oct. '01	88	4	7	(685)

### Presidential Approval - Handling of Situation in Iraq

"Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling the situation with Iraq?"

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>(N)</u>
Apr. '04	49%	4%	47%	(540)
Feb. '04	44	3	53	(509)
Oct. '03	54	3	42	(500)
June '03	64	4	32	(513)
Apr. '03	79	2	18	(503)
Feb. '03	56	7	37	(646)

### Support for War in Iraq

"Do you support or oppose the United States having gone to war with Iraq?"

	<u>Support</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>(N)</u>
Apr. '04	59%	4%	37%	(536)
Feb. '04	54	3	43	(509)
Oct. '03	65	5	30	(502)
June '03	69	4	28	(513)
Apr. '03	77	4	20	(506)

**Presidential Approval Rating - Overall**

<b>STATEWIDE</b>	<b><u>Approve</u> 48%</b>	<b><u>Neutral</u> 6%</b>	<b><u>Disapprove</u> 46%</b>	<b><u>(N=)</u> 536</b>
Registered Democrat	17	2	82	97
Undeclared	39	6	55	199
Registered Republican	83	3	14	136
Not registered	16	43	41	8
Democrat	20	2	79	217
Independent	31	18	51	92
Republican	84	3	12	218
Liberal	14	2	84	105
Moderate	44	4	51	208
Conservative	74	5	21	182
Union household	34	2	64	70
Non-union	50	6	44	463
5 Years or less in NH	51	3	47	71
6 to 10 years	49	7	44	61
11 to 20 years	47	4	49	113
More than 20 years	48	7	46	287
18 to 34	39	11	51	128
35 to 49	52	4	44	204
50 to 64	46	4	50	125
65 and over	56	3	41	68
Male	53	6	41	258
Female	43	6	51	278
High school or less	54	8	38	167
Some college	49	5	46	118
College graduate	49	5	46	170
Post-graduate	33	3	63	79
Less than \$30K	41	10	48	75
\$30K to \$60K	50	4	46	147
\$60K to \$75K	47	10	43	47
\$75K to \$100K	45	0	54	63
More than \$100K	61	2	37	82
Married	53	3	45	358
Divorced/separated	45	11	44	77
Never married	34	13	53	96
Protestant	61	5	35	180
Catholic	49	4	47	168
Other	33	9	58	175
Attend 1 or more/week	63	5	32	128
1-2 times a month	51	4	45	69
Less often	46	5	49	158
Never	37	8	55	172
Northern NH	54	4	42	72
Western NH	30	12	58	51
Central/Lakes	47	5	48	83
Hillsborough County	47	7	46	160
Seacoast	52	4	44	169
1st Congressional District	49	6	45	266
2nd Congressional District	47	6	47	270

**Presidential Approval Rating - Economy**

<b>STATEWIDE</b>	<b><u>Approve</u> 43%</b>	<b><u>Neutral</u> 6%</b>	<b><u>Disapprove</u> 51%</b>	<b><u>(N=)</u> 538</b>
Registered Democrat	10	2	88	97
Undeclared	37	6	57	201
Registered Republican	79	5	16	134
Not registered	50	21	29	8
Democrat	15	3	82	218
Independent	32	18	50	93
Republican	76	4	21	218
Liberal	10	6	84	105
Moderate	37	3	60	208
Conservative	71	5	24	181
Union household	33	3	63	71
Non-union	44	6	49	464
5 Years or less in NH	47	5	48	73
6 to 10 years	52	0	48	61
11 to 20 years	45	4	51	113
More than 20 years	40	8	52	287
18 to 34	32	11	58	128
35 to 49	49	2	49	205
50 to 64	38	8	54	126
65 and over	52	4	44	67
Male	48	7	45	260
Female	38	6	57	278
High school or less	44	10	45	168
Some college	39	7	54	119
College graduate	48	3	49	169
Post-graduate	36	2	62	79
Less than \$30K	24	11	65	73
\$30K to \$60K	46	3	51	147
\$60K to \$75K	48	4	48	47
\$75K to \$100K	46	2	52	63
More than \$100K	55	2	43	82
Married	50	1	49	360
Divorced/separated	38	14	48	77
Never married	20	18	62	96
Protestant	57	5	38	180
Catholic	44	2	54	168
Other	29	10	61	177
Attend 1 or more/week	63	5	32	127
1-2 times a month	49	2	50	69
Less often	36	7	57	158
Never	32	8	60	174
Northern NH	39	6	56	72
Western NH	34	17	49	50
Central/Lakes	41	4	55	85
Hillsborough County	45	5	50	161
Seacoast	47	6	48	170
1st Congressional District	42	6	52	268
2nd Congressional District	44	7	50	271

**Presidential Approval Rating - Foreign Affairs**

<b>STATEWIDE</b>	<b><u>Approve</u> 48%</b>	<b><u>Neutral</u> 5%</b>	<b><u>Disapprove</u> 48%</b>	<b><u>(N=)</u> 539</b>
Registered Democrat	16	3	81	96
Undeclared	39	3	58	201
Registered Republican	81	2	17	136
Not registered	23	35	41	8
Democrat	18	2	80	218
Independent	35	14	51	93
Republican	82	3	15	218
Liberal	13	3	83	104
Moderate	43	3	53	209
Conservative	73	4	23	182
Union household	31	1	69	71
Non-union	50	6	44	465
5 Years or less in NH	54	5	42	73
6 to 10 years	54	0	46	61
11 to 20 years	47	6	47	113
More than 20 years	45	6	49	287
18 to 34	40	10	50	127
35 to 49	53	3	44	205
50 to 64	43	5	52	126
65 and over	52	2	46	69
Male	54	6	41	260
Female	42	4	54	278
High school or less	51	8	40	169
Some college	48	6	47	118
College graduate	49	3	48	170
Post-graduate	38	0	62	79
Less than \$30K	43	6	50	75
\$30K to \$60K	50	3	48	146
\$60K to \$75K	51	4	46	47
\$75K to \$100K	40	3	57	63
More than \$100K	62	1	37	82
Married	51	2	47	360
Divorced/separated	48	9	43	79
Never married	35	13	52	95
Protestant	61	3	37	179
Catholic	47	3	51	169
Other	35	10	56	177
Attend 1 or more/week	62	3	35	129
1-2 times a month	50	4	47	69
Less often	44	4	52	157
Never	39	8	53	174
Northern NH	52	5	43	72
Western NH	34	12	54	51
Central/Lakes	44	4	52	85
Hillsborough County	48	5	47	162
Seacoast	51	3	46	169
1st Congressional District	49	4	46	266
2nd Congressional District	46	6	49	272

**Presidential Approval Rating - Handling of Iraq**

<b>STATEWIDE</b>	<b><u>Approve</u> 49%</b>	<b><u>Neutral</u> 4%</b>	<b><u>Disapprove</u> 47%</b>	<b><u>(N=)</u> 540</b>
Registered Democrat	19	2	79	97
Undeclared	43	4	53	201
Registered Republican	82	2	17	136
Not registered	59	0	41	8
Democrat	21	3	76	220
Independent	41	9	50	93
Republican	82	2	16	218
Liberal	14	1	85	105
Moderate	45	3	52	209
Conservative	75	3	22	182
Union household	29	3	67	71
Non-union	52	4	44	466
5 Years or less in NH	58	0	42	73
6 to 10 years	47	0	53	61
11 to 20 years	49	6	45	113
More than 20 years	48	5	48	289
18 to 34	37	9	54	128
35 to 49	56	1	42	205
50 to 64	47	3	50	126
65 and over	54	3	44	69
Male	55	4	41	260
Female	43	4	53	280
High school or less	54	7	39	169
Some college	50	5	45	119
College graduate	50	1	49	170
Post-graduate	38	2	61	79
Less than \$30K	40	7	53	75
\$30K to \$60K	54	1	45	147
\$60K to \$75K	47	9	44	47
\$75K to \$100K	51	0	49	63
More than \$100K	60	2	39	82
Married	52	2	46	360
Divorced/separated	50	6	44	79
Never married	38	9	53	96
Protestant	62	3	36	180
Catholic	49	3	48	169
Other	37	6	57	177
Attend 1 or more/week	63	4	33	129
1-2 times a month	53	2	45	69
Less often	41	4	55	158
Never	45	4	51	174
Northern NH	56	1	43	72
Western NH	41	7	52	51
Central/Lakes	42	4	54	85
Hillsborough County	51	3	46	162
Seacoast	51	4	45	170
1st Congressional District	50	5	45	268
2nd Congressional District	48	2	49	272

**Support / Oppose War with Iraq**

<b>STATEWIDE</b>	<b><u>Support</u> 63%</b>	<b><u>Neutral</u> 10%</b>	<b><u>Oppose</u> 27%</b>	<b><u>(N=)</u> 536</b>
Registered Democrat	33	10	58	97
Undeclared	56	15	29	198
Registered Republican	89	3	7	136
Not registered	84	8	8	8
Democrat	37	15	48	218
Independent	63	10	27	93
Republican	89	4	7	216
Liberal	31	13	56	103
Moderate	61	14	25	207
Conservative	84	2	14	182
Union household	46	11	43	71
Non-union	66	10	24	461
5 Years or less in NH	66	10	24	73
6 to 10 years	64	18	18	58
11 to 20 years	64	10	25	114
More than 20 years	62	8	30	286
18 to 34	61	12	27	126
35 to 49	73	8	19	202
50 to 64	55	10	35	126
65 and over	53	12	35	70
Male	69	9	22	261
Female	57	11	32	275
High school or less	68	8	23	169
Some college	66	8	25	117
College graduate	63	10	28	168
Post-graduate	49	17	34	79
Less than \$30K	58	10	32	76
\$30K to \$60K	65	9	27	146
\$60K to \$75K	62	8	31	47
\$75K to \$100K	64	10	26	63
More than \$100K	68	9	23	82
Married	65	10	25	356
Divorced/separated	62	9	29	79
Never married	57	11	32	96
Protestant	76	6	18	178
Catholic	59	12	29	169
Other	55	12	34	175
Attend 1 or more/week	70	7	23	130
1-2 times a month	70	11	19	69
Less often	59	9	32	156
Never	59	13	28	170
Northern NH	68	8	24	72
Western NH	55	15	30	48
Central/Lakes	59	9	32	85
Hillsborough County	63	13	24	162
Seacoast	65	8	27	168
1st Congressional District	65	8	27	265
2nd Congressional District	61	12	27	271