

## **WMUR-TV/CNN POLL**

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### **BUSH LEADS REPUBLICAN PRIMARY FIELD IN NEW HAMPSHIRE**

**DURHAM, NH**-George W. Bush is pulling away from the Republican primary field in New Hampshire. Elizabeth Dole and John McCain are vying for the second slot and the remaining candidates are picking up little support. While it is still early in the campaign, Bush is far ahead of the other candidates due to strong positive name recognition among New Hampshire Republicans. These findings are based on the latest **WMUR-TV/CNN POLL**, conducted by the University of New Hampshire Survey Center. The WMUR-TV/CNN POLL is sponsored by *WMUR* TV, Channel 9 in Manchester New Hampshire and CNN.

#### **The Leaders ...**

With nine months remaining until the New Hampshire First in the Nation Presidential Primary, Texas Governor George W. Bush holds a 21 percentage point lead over his nearest rivals, former Director of the American Red Cross, Elizabeth Dole and Arizona Senator John McCain. Bush is currently favored by 37% of New Hampshire's Republican primary voters, Dole is favored by 16%, and McCain is favored by 14% of GOP primary voters.

When asked who their second choice would be, 26% of Granite State Republican primary voters said they would vote for Elizabeth Dole, 19% would vote for George W. Bush, and 9% would vote for John McCain.

In a Channel 9 poll conducted in January, 1999, Elizabeth Dole and George W. Bush were essentially tied. Thirty-one percent of Republicans favored Dole in January, 30% favored Bush, and 7% favored McCain.

#### **Other Candidates**

Among the other candidates vying for the Republican nomination, political commentator Pat Buchanan is favored by 7% of GOP primary voters, businessman Steve Forbes is favored by 6%, former Tennessee Governor Lamar Alexander is favored by 5%, former

Vice President Dan Quayle is favored by 4%, native son Senator Bob Smith is favored by 2%, Ohio Congressman John Kasich is favored by 1%, Chairman of the Campaign for Working Families Gary Bauer is favored by less than 1%, 1% prefer some other candidate, and 8% say they are undecided.

When asked who their second choice would be, the second tier candidates remain relatively unpopular when compared with Bush, Dole, and to a lesser degree, McCain. Steve Forbes is the second choice of 8% of GOP primary voters, 6% favor Alexander, 5% favor Buchanan, 5% favor Quayle, 5% favor Kasich, 3% favor Bob Smith, 1% favor Gary Bauer, 1% prefer some other candidate, and 11% are undecided about a second choice.

### **Favorability Ratings**

Bush and Dole are at the top of the Republican heap primarily because they are the best known and best liked candidates among New Hampshire Republicans. Seventy-eight percent of Granite State GOP primary voters have a favorable opinion of both Elizabeth Dole and George W. Bush. Also, the unfavorable ratings for Dole and Bush are quite low-15% say they have an unfavorable opinion of Dole and only 8% say they have an unfavorable opinion of Bush.

Gary Bauer, John Kasich and John McCain are the least well know of the candidates. Seventy-two percent of GOP primary voters say they don't know enough about Bauer to have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of him, 65% say they don't know enough about Kasich, and 40% say they don't know enough about McCain. For these candidates to make headway, it is essential that they turn their unknowns into favorable ratings.

### **Net Favorability**

The net favorability ratings of Bush and Dole (the percent unfavorable subtracted from the percent favorable) are extremely high -- +70 and +63 -- showing that few New Hampshire GOP primary voters have unfavorable opinions of them.

Among the other candidates running in the New Hampshire Republican primary who have modest net favorability ratings are John McCain, whose net favorability rating is +41, and Bob Smith who has a net favorability rating of +36.

Steve Forbes (+22), John Kasich (+18), Dan Quayle (+17), Lamar Alexander (+17), Gary Bauer (+8), and Pat Buchanan (+7) all have low net favorability ratings among Republican primary voters in New Hampshire.

### **Likely Winners**

In order to get a better understanding of the dynamics of the Republican primary race, GOP primary voters were asked which of the Republican candidates they thought have a good chance of winning the Republican nomination for President. Eighty-one percent of New Hampshire Republicans think that George W. Bush has a good chance of winning the GOP nomination and 51% think that Elizabeth Dole has a good chance of winning the nomination. None of the other candidates break 20%.

### **Abortion**

Many analysts have predicted deep divisions among Republicans over the issue of abortion. However, the WMUR-TV/CNN POLL shows that neither Bush nor Dole are significantly hurt by the abortion issue. While Bush runs stronger among people who think that abortion should be legal in all circumstances (44% of whom support Bush), he currently gets one-third of the votes of Republicans who either oppose all abortions or support abortion only in limited circumstances. Similarly, there is no significant difference in the support that Dole receives depending on a persons position on abortion.

### **Sub-Group Analysis**

George W. Bush runs strongly with all subgroups of Republicans and is particularly popular among Republicans who earn between \$30,000 and \$50,000 per year.

Elizabeth Dole's strongest support comes from women.

John McCain's strongest support comes from college graduates and non church goers.

**Republican Favorability Ratings**  
(Republicans Primary Voters)

	<u>Favorable</u>	<u>Unfavorable</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Don't Know</u>	<u>Net Favorable</u>
George W. Bush	78%	8%	4%	10%	+70
Elizabeth Dole	78%	15%	3%	4%	+63
John McCain	48%	7%	6%	40%	+41
Bob Smith	60%	24%	8%	9%	+36
Steve Forbes	59%	27%	7%	7%	+22
Dan Quayle	54%	37%	7%	2%	+17
John Kasich	24%	6%	6%	65%	+18
Lamar Alexander	47%	30%	9%	14%	+17
Gary Bauer	16%	8%	3%	72%	+8
Pat Buchanan	49%	42%	5%	4%	+7

**Candidate Favored in Republican Primary**  
(Republicans Primary Voters)

**First Choice Second Choice**

	<u>First Choice</u>	<u>Second Choice</u>
George W. Bush	37%	19%
Elizabeth Dole	16%	26%
John McCain	14%	9%
Pat Buchanan	7%	5%
Steve Forbes	6%	8%
Lamar Alexander	5%	6%
Dan Quayle	4%	5%
Bob Smith	2%	3%
John Kasich	1%	5%
Gary Bauer	*	1%

Other	1%	1%
Undecided	8%	11%
	(N=276)	(N=254)

**Candidate Likely to Win GOP Primary \***  
(Republicans Primary Voters -- Choose all that apply)

	<u>Percent</u>
George W. Bush	81%
Elizabeth Dole	51%
John McCain	17%
Pat Buchanan	13%
Steve Forbes	11%
Lamar Alexander	8%
Dan Quayle	8%
Bob Smith	8%
John Kasich	2%
Gary Bauer	1%

\* Multiple response variable. Percentages sum to more than 100%

**Republican Candidates You Can Trust Most of the Time\***  
(Republicans Primary Voters -- Choose all that apply)

	<u>Percent</u>
George W. Bush	57%
Elizabeth Dole	54%
John McCain	25%
Pat Buchanan	25%
Steve Forbes	24%

Lamar Alexander	22%
Dan Quayle	21%
Bob Smith	20%
John Kasich	9%
Gary Bauer	6%

\* Multiple response variable. Percentages sum to more than 100%

**Republican Candidates with Strong Leadership Qualities\***  
 (Republicans Primary Voters -- Choose all that apply)

	<u>Percent</u>
George W. Bush	65%
Elizabeth Dole	55%
John McCain	25%
Pat Buchanan	24%
Steve Forbes	17%
Lamar Alexander	16%
Dan Quayle	15%
Bob Smith	13%
John Kasich	8%
Gary Bauer	5%

\* Multiple response variable. Percentages sum to more than 100%