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The WMUR / CNN Poll

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BUSH CONTINUES TO LEAD REPUBLICAN PRIMARY FIELD IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

DURHAM, NH George W. Bush has maintained his lead over the Republican primary field in New Hampshire. Elizabeth Dole, John McCain, and Steve Forbes are vying for the second slot and the remaining candidates are picking up little support. Bush also has strong positive name recognition among New Hampshire Republicans.

These findings are based on the latest **WMUR / CNN Poll**, conducted by the University of New Hampshire Survey Center. The WMUR / CNN Poll is sponsored by WMUR TV, Channel 9 in Manchester, New Hampshire and CNN. We ask users to properly attribute this copyright information to the "WMUR/CNN Poll", conducted by the University of New Hampshire Survey Center.

The Leaders ...

With 5 months remaining until the New Hampshire First in the Nation Presidential Primary, Texas Governor George W. Bush has increased his lead over his nearest rivals, former Director of the American Red Cross, Elizabeth Dole, Arizona Senator John McCain, and businessman Steve Forbes. Bush is currently favored by 45% of New Hampshire's likely Republican primary voters, Dole is favored by 15%, McCain is favored by 12%, and Forbes is favored by 10%.

In the May, 1999 WMUR / CNN Poll, George W. Bush was favored by 37% of likely Republican primary voters, Dole was favored by 16%, 14% favored McCain, and 6% favored Forbes.

Bush has three important, self-reinforcing strengths – he has raised enormous amounts of campaign cash, much more than any of his GOP challengers, he has gotten the endorsement of more GOP elected officials than have his challengers, and he has better poll numbers than his challengers. Bush's wide lead in money, endorsements, and the polls will make it very difficult for another Republican to defeat him in New Hampshire.

Dole's strong third place finish in the Iowa GOP Straw Poll has not translated into increased support in New Hampshire.

Other Candidates

Among the other candidates vying for the Republican nomination, political commentator Pat Buchanan is favored by 5% of likely GOP primary voters, former UN Ambassador Alan Keyes is favored by 4%, former Vice President Dan Quayle is favored by 3%, Chairman of the Campaign for Working Families Gary Bauer is favored by 1%, Utah Senator Orrin Hatch is favored by 1%, 1% prefer some other candidate, and 3% say they are undecided.

Since the May, 1999 WMUR / CNN Poll, Lamar Alexander and John Kasich have dropped out of the race and New Hampshire Senator Bob Smith has quit the Republican Party. Pat Buchanan's inability to catch on with Republican voters has also led him to seriously consider abandoning the Republican Party for the Reform Party ticket. Dan Quayle has already closed up his campaign in Iowa to concentrate on New Hampshire, and his continuing low numbers here may lead him to also abandon his quest for the Presidency in 2000. Keyes and Bauer are likely to continue their quixotic pursuit of the nomination.

When asked who their second choice would be, the second tier candidates remain relatively unpopular when compared with Bush, Dole, McCain, and Forbes. Quayle is the second choice of 7% of GOP primary voters, 6% favor Buchanan, 3% favor Keyes, 1% favor Hatch, 6% prefer some other candidate, and 9% are undecided about a second choice.

Strength of Support

Another indication of George W. Bush's strength in New Hampshire is the commitment of his supporters. Likely GOP primary voters were asked how strongly they supported their choice for the New Hampshire Primary. Among the leading candidates, Bush supporters are more likely to say they are certain to vote for their candidate than are the supporters of other candidates 49% of Bush voters say they are certain to vote for Bush, 33% of Dole supporters are certain to vote for her, 47% of McCain supporters are certain to vote for him, and 38% of Forbes supporters are certain to vote for him.

Second Thoughts

When asked who their second choice would be, 24% of Granite State Republican primary voters said they would vote for George W. Bush, 22% would vote for Elizabeth Dole, 12% would vote for John McCain, and 10% would vote for Steve Forbes.

Favorability Ratings

Despite lingering questions about past drug use, George W. Bush has maintained very high favorability ratings among likely Republican primary voters 81% say they have a favorable opinion of Bush, 10% have an unfavorable opinion, 6% are neutral, and 2% say they don't know enough about him. Bush's net favorability rating (the percent favorable minus the percent unfavorable) stands at +71, virtually unchanged since the May, 1999 WMUR / CNN Poll when it stood at +70.

Elizabeth Dole has not been able to translate her high favorability ratings into votes. Seventy-eight percent of Granite State GOP primary voters say have a favorable opinion of Elizabeth Dole, 14% have an unfavorable opinion, 6% are neutral, and 2% don't know enough about her to say. Dole's net favorability rating of +64 is essentially unchanged since the May WMUR / CNN Poll when it was +63.

John McCain is viewed favorably by 53% of likely Republican primary voters, 11% have an unfavorable opinion, 9% are neutral, and 27% still say they don't know enough about him to say. His net favorability rating of +42 has moved little since May when it was +41.

Steve Forbes has increased his overall favorability since the May WMUR / CNN Poll, an indication that his early television advertisements have worked somewhat. In May, Forbes' net favorability rating stood at +22 and it has risen to +29

Alan Keyes (+25) and Orrin Hatch (+12), and Gary Bauer (+7) have low, but positive net favorability ratings while Dan Quayle (-1) and Pat Buchanan (-1) have seen their net favorability ratings decline even lower since the May WMUR / CNN Poll.

Abortion

Many analysts have predicted deep divisions among Republicans over the issue of abortion. However, the WMUR / CNN Poll shows that neither Bush nor Dole are significantly hurt or helped by the abortion issue. While Bush runs stronger among people who think that abortion should be legal in all circumstances (47% of whom support Bush), he currently gets 37% of the votes of Republicans who oppose all abortions and gets 46% of the votes of those who favor 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 with post-graduate educations and lower income Republicans.

Elizabeth Dole's receives somewhat more support from women than men, but women are still more likely to support Bush.

John McCain's strongest support comes from older Republicans, union households, and non-church goers.

Candidate Favored in Republican Primary

(Likely Republican Primary Voters)

	<u>May '99</u>	<u>Sept. '99</u>
George W. Bush	37%	45%
Elizabeth Dole	16	15
John McCain	14	12
Steve Forbes	6	10
Pat Buchanan	7	5
Alan Keyes	-	4
Dan Quayle	4	3
Gary Bauer	*	1
Orrin Hatch	-	1
Other	1	1
Undecided	14	3

(N=276) (N=366)

*less than one-half of 1 percent

Second Choice

(Likely Republican Primary Voters)

	<u>May '99</u>	<u>Sept. '99</u>
George W. Bush	19%	24%
Elizabeth Dole	26	22
John McCain	14	12
Steve Forbes	6	10
Dan Quayle	4	7
Pat Buchanan	7	6
Alan Keyes	-	3
Orrin Hatch	-	1
Other	10	6
Undecided, no second choice	14	9

(N=254) (N=349)

Strength of Support

(Likely Republican Primary Voters)

Certain to Support May Change Mind)	All GOP	Bush Supporter	Dole Supporter	McCain Supporter	Forbes Supporter	Buchanan Supporter	Keyes Supporter	Quayle Supporter
44%	<u>s</u>	<u>s</u>	<u>s</u>	<u>s</u>	<u>s</u>	<u>s</u>	<u>s</u>	<u>s</u>
56	49%	33%	47%	38%	39%	53%	50%	
51	67	53	62	61	47	50		
(N=355)	(N=166)	(N=54)	(N=45)	(N=37)	(N=18)	(N=15)	(N=10)	

Republican Favorability Ratings

(Likely Republican Primary Voters)

	Favorable	Unfavorable	Neutral	Don't Know	Net Favorable	
George W. Bush	81%	10%	6%	2%	+71	(N=373)
Elizabeth Dole	78	14	6	2	+64	(N=373)
John McCain	53	11	9	27	+42	(N=373)
Steve Forbes	57	28	10	6	+29	(N=373)
Alan Keyes	39	14	12	36	+25	(N=370)
Orrin Hatch	35	23	16	25	+12	(N=372)
Gary Bauer	20	13	15	52	+7	(N=372)
Dan Quayle	46	47	6	1	-1	(N=373)
Pat Buchanan	44	45	8	4	-1	(N=373)

Net Favorability Ratings

(Likely Republican Primary Voters)

	May '99	Sept. '99
George W. Bush	+70	+71
Elizabeth Dole	+63	+64
John McCain	+41	+42
Steve Forbes	+22	+29
Alan Keyes(not asked in May)	-	+25
Orrin Hatch(not asked in May)	-	+12
Gary Bauer	+8	+7
Dan Quayle	+17	-1
Pat Buchanan	+7	-1

WMUR / CNN Poll Methodology

These findings are based on the most recent WMUR / CNN Poll, conducted by the University of New Hampshire Survey Center from September 5 through September 11, 1999.

A random sample of 702 likely New Hampshire primary voters was interviewed by telephone. In 95 of 100 cases, the statewide estimates will be accurate to plus or minus 3.7 percent. This sample included 375 Republican primary voters. In 95 of 100 cases, the statewide estimates for the Republican sub-sample will be accurate to plus or minus 5.1 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 voters and telephone lines within households.

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 WMUR / CNN Poll were asked:

"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 an unfavorable opinion of that person -- or if you have never heard of him or her."
(ROTATE NAMES)

- Chairman of the Campaign for Working Families, Gary Bauer
- Political commentator Pat Buchanan
- Texas Governor George W. Bush
- Former Director of the American Red Cross, Elizabeth Dole
- Businessman Steve Forbes
- Utah Senator Orrin Hatch
- Former UN Ambassador Alan Keyes
- Arizona Senator John McCain
- Former Vice President Dan Quayle

"I am going to read the names of the candidates who are expected to be on the Republican primary ballot. If you were voting in the 2000 New Hampshire primary for President today, would you vote for (ROTATE NAMES) Gary Bauer ... Pat Buchanan ... George W. Bush ... Elizabeth Dole ... Steve Forbes ... Orrin Hatch ... Alan Keyes ... John McCain ... or Dan Quayle?"

"Are you certain to support that person, or do you think you may change your mind and support someone else in the 2000 New Hampshire primary?"