

THE WISCONSIN PUBLIC RADIO- ST. NORBERT COLLEGE SURVEY CENTER POLL

EMBARRGOED FOR RELEASE UNTIL APRIL 26, 2001

"BUSH TAX PLAN FAVORED BY ABOUT HALF OF WISCONSIN CITIZENS."

TOPIC: Bush Tax Plan/Job Performance Ratings

Release Date: April 26, 2001

Sample: 391 ADULTS Statewide in Wisconsin

FEDERAL BUDGET ISSUES

"As you may know, the Federal Government now has a budget surplus. In your opinion, would you prefer to see the federal surplus used mainly to: cut taxes, pay down the national debt faster, make Social Security and Medicare more financially stable, or to increase spending on domestic programs such as education, health and the environment?"

	<u>Wisconsin</u>	<u>National</u>
Cut Taxes	27%	20%
Pay Down Debt Faster	19	18
Use for Social Security / Medicare	36	24
Increase Domestic Spending	16	37
Not Sure	2	1

National data is from a ABC News/Washington Post nationwide survey of 903 adults conducted March 28-29, 2001

"Based on what you know about it, do you favor or oppose President Bush's plan for a \$1.6 trillion dollar tax cut?"

	<u>Wisconsin</u>	<u>National</u>
Favor	50%	51%
Oppose	38	37
Not Sure	12	12

National data is from a CBS News Nationwide Poll of 660 adults conducted April 4-5, 2001

"Do you think the tax cut plan that President Bush has proposed would mainly benefit lower-income people, middle-income people, upper-income people or all people about equally?"

	<u>Wisconsin</u>	<u>National</u>
Lower-Income People	2%	4%
Middle-Income People	9	8
Upper-Income People	49	47
All People About Equally	30	33
Not Sure	10	8

National results from the ABC News/Washington Post Poll conducted nationwide with 1,050 adults February 21-25, 2001

Job Performance Ratings

President George W. Bush

	George W. Bush <i>April 2001</i>	Bill Clinton <i>March 1993</i>	George Bush <i>March 1989</i>
Excellent	15%	8%	5%
Good	47	57	67
Not So Good	19	19	17
Poor	12	8	5
Not Sure	3	8	6

Vice President Dick Cheney

	Dick Cheney <i>April 2001</i>	Al Gore <i>March 1993</i>	Dan Quayle <i>March 1989</i>
Excellent	15%	4%	1%

Good	48	51	44
Not So Good	15	16	24
Poor	4	7	8
Not Sure	18	22	23

Senator Herb Kohl

	<u>October 2000</u>	<u>Current</u>
Excellent	18%	18%
Good	59	56
Not So Good	10	11
Poor	3	6
Not Sure	10	9

Senator Herb Kohl

	Fall 1996	Spring 1997	Fall 1997	Spring 1998	Fall 1998	Spring 1999	Fall 1999	Spring 2000
Excellent	10%	5%	9%	11%	10%	11%	10%	13%
Good	57	57	65	60	63	60	64	60
Not So Good	14	14	10	11	11	14	10	11
Poor	6	5	5	3	4	5	5	3
Not Sure	13	16	15	14	11	11	11	14

Senator Russ Feingold

	<u>October 2000</u>	<u>Current</u>
Excellent	15%	17%
Good	51	50
Not So Good	12	15
Poor	6	5
Not Sure	15	14

Senator Russ Feingold

	Fall 1996	Spring 1997	Fall 1997	Spring 1998	Fall 1998	Spring 1999	Fall 1999	Spring 2000
Excellent	9%	7%	6%	12%	9%	8%	10%	13%
Good	45	48	54	55	51	60	57	51
Not So Good	16	17	12	14	18	17	14	15
Poor	7	5	7	3	12	7	6	4
Not Sure	22	23	21	17	11	8	13	16

SUMMARY

President Bush's Tax Cut Plan

About half of Wisconsin citizens favor President Bush's tax cut plan according to the latest Wisconsin Public Radio-St. Norbert College Survey Center Poll released today. Fifty percent of those interviewed say they Favor President Bush's proposed 1.6 trillion dollar tax cut, 38% are Opposed and 12% were Not sure. These results are nearly identical to a recent CBS News Poll national survey conducted in early April that found 51% of adults nationwide Favor Bush's \$1.6 trillion tax cut plan, 37% Oppose and 12 are Not Sure. This issue is becoming a very partisan issue and that partisan divide shows up in our Wisconsin Survey results as well. Among Republicans 79% Favor, 12% Oppose and 10 are Not Sure; among Democrats in Wisconsin 26% Favor, 63% Oppose and 12% are Not Sure. Again those partisan differences here in Wisconsin mirror the differences nationally.

Some of these partisan differences no doubt emerge based on who partisans believe will benefit the most from this tax cut. The largest share of Wisconsin citizens think that the upper-income people will benefit the most (49%), 30% think that all people will benefit equally, 9% say that middle-income people will benefit the most, 2% say lower-income people will benefit the most and 10% are Not Sure. Once again partisan differences appear as Democrats are most likely to think the Bush tax cut plan would benefit the upper-income people most (72%) and Republicans perceive that it would most likely benefit all people equally (58%).

Wisconsin citizens do differ somewhat from the nation as a whole in how we feel the current budget surplus should be used. When how they would prefer to see the current federal budget surplus used 36% say to make Social Security and Medicare more financially stable, 27% say to cut taxes, 19% say to pay down the federal debt faster, 16% say to increase spending on domestic programs such as education, health and the environment, and 2% say they are Not Sure. In a recent ABC New Washing Post Poll 37% said Increase domestic spending, 24% said stabilize Social Security and Medicare, 20% said cut taxes, 18% said pay down the debt faster and 1% were Not Sure. Once again partisan differences emerge: Democrats in Wisconsin would most like to see the surplus used for Social Security and Medicare (47%), while Republicans would most like to see it used for a tax cut (50%). These differences clearly represent some of the basic ideological and constituency differences between the two parties.

Job Performance Ratings

President Bush's job performance ratings are very similar to President Clinton's rating at this point in his administration and are only slightly lower than his father's ratings in March of 1989. Currently George W. Bush has a 62% positive rating (15% Excellent and 47% Good) compared with former President Clinton's 65% positive rating and a 72% positive rating for George Bush senior.

Vice President Dick Cheney enjoys a more positive rating than his two predecessors at this same point in the term of office. Cheney has a positive rating of 63%, while Vice President al Gore had a rating of 55% and Vice president Dan Quayle had a positive rating of only 45%.

Both Senator Herb Kohl and Senator Russ Feingold continue to have positive job performance rating from Wisconsin citizens. Kohl has a positive rating of 74% and Feingold's positive rating is at 67%. Both ratings are nearly identical to what they were last October among likely voters in Wisconsin.

HOW THE WISCONSIN SURVEY WAS CONDUCTED

The Wisconsin Survey is a statewide survey of Wisconsin residents conducted by the St. Norbert College Survey Center and Wisconsin Public Radio. The Wisconsin Survey has been conducted biannually since 1984. For this survey telephone interviews were conducted with 391 citizens in the state of Wisconsin between March 26 and April 19, 2001. The sample was a random digit dial sample selected in such a way to include both listed and unlisted phone numbers. Respondents at the household level were selected using the Troidahl-Carter random selection procedure. Up to eight attempts were made on each telephone number to reach someone at each household. With this sample size we can be 95% sure that the sample percentages reported will not vary by more than $\pm 5\%$ from the actual percentage in the population. The margin of error will be larger for smaller subgroups.

For Further Information contact:

Donald P. Kotecki, Director
St. Norbert College Survey Center
100 Grant Street
De Pere, WI 54115
(920) 403-3247