

THE FIELD POLL

THE INDEPENDENT AND NON-PARTISAN SURVEY
OF PUBLIC OPINION ESTABLISHED IN 1947 AS
THE CALIFORNIA POLL BY MERVIN FIELD

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BUSH'S JOB RATING REMAINS AT VERY LOW LEVEL IN CALIFORNIA, STRONG DISAPPROVAL OF HIS HANDLING OF THE SITUATION IN IRAQ. TWO IN THREE SUPPORT WITHDRAWING SOME OR ALL U.S. TROOPS FROM THAT COUNTRY.

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By Mark DiCamillo and Mervin Field

Only about one in four registered voters in this state (26%) approve of the overall job that President George W. Bush is doing. Almost two in three (65%) disapprove. These findings are very similar to what was found in the last *Field Poll* of voters conducted earlier this year.

Californians' overwhelming unfavorable view of Bush's handling of the situation in Iraq continues to be the chief contributor to the President's low esteem. Three times as many voters disapprove of Bush's actions in Iraq (72%) as approve (24%).

A growing proportion of Californians (65%) support either withdrawing all (39%) or some (26%) of the U.S. troops now stationed in Iraq. In addition, nearly six in ten (58%) favor Congress passing legislation that would set a deadline to begin withdrawing troops from Iraq by next spring.

Voters are somewhat less negative of Bush in his handling of the economy. Still, a 58% to 34% majority disapprove of his performance in this regard.

These are the findings from the latest *Field Poll* conducted among 1,029 registered voters in California between August 3 and 12.

Bush's overall job approval remains at very low level

During the months prior to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, President Bush received mixed overall job ratings from the California public (42% approve and 45% disapprove). Immediately after the attacks, Bush's approval rating spiked to 74%. However, the President's job marks have declined steadily since then, to where only about one in four voters approve of his performance in polls conducted this year.

Currently, just one in eleven Democrats (9%) approve of the job Bush is doing, while 85% disapprove. Among Republicans, a little more than one-half (53%) rate the President positively, while 36% give him negative marks. The views of non-partisans are closer to that of Democrats, with 72% disapproving and just 19% approving.

Table 1
Overall approval of the job Bush is doing as President
(among California registered voters)

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
August 2007	26%	65	9
<u>Party</u>			
Democrats	9%	85	6
Republicans	53%	36	11
Non-partisans/others	19%	72	9
<u>Prior measures</u>			
March 2007	26%	67	7
2006 (average)	32%	61	7
2005 (average)	37%	57	6
2004 (average)	44%	51	5
2003 (average)	49%	45	6
2002 (average)	68%	25	7
September 2001 (post-9/11 attack)	74%	16	10
2001 (pre-9/11 attack average)	42%	46	12

Bush's Iraq performance viewed very negatively

Three times as many California voters rate Bush's handling of the Iraq situation negatively (72%) as positively (24%). This is similar to voter assessments last March and represents a continuation of the year-by-year drop in approval since the first month of the war in April 2003. At the time the war began, 60% approved of Bush's performance regarding Iraq and 37% disapproved.

Only about one in eleven California Democrats (9%) approve of the way Bush is handling the Iraq situation and 90% disapprove. Republicans are more evenly divided, with 49% disapproving and 46% approving. Three in four non-partisans (74%) give Bush poor marks on Iraq, while just 19% approve.

Table 2
Voter appraisal of the job Bush is doing
in handling the situation in Iraq
(among California registered voters)

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
August 2007	24%	72	4
<u>Party</u>			
Democrats	9%	90	1
Republicans	46%	49	5
Non-partisans/others	19%	74	7
<u>Prior measures</u>			
March 2007	24%	72	4
2006 (average)	30%	66	4
2005 (average)	36%	61	3
2004 (average)	41%	56	3
September 2003	40%	52	8
August 2003	52%	44	4
April 2003	60%	37	3

Growing support for U.S. troop withdrawal

Currently, 65% of California voters support either a complete (39%) or partial (26%) withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq. This compares to just 18% who favor keeping the number of U.S. troops at their current levels and 10% who favor sending in more troops.

Today's findings represent an increase in support for troop withdrawal compared to two years ago, the last time the *Field Poll* asked this question. In August 2005, a little more than one-half (52%) thought that either all or some of the U.S. forces in Iraq should be withdrawn.

Voter support for a troop withdrawal has increased across all partisan groups. Two years ago, 71% of Democrats favored a withdrawal policy. Now, 82% have this opinion.

Among Republicans, sentiment for drawing down troop levels has increased from 26% to 40% over the same period, while among non-partisans 66% favor withdrawing some or all troops, up from 56% two years ago.

Table 3
What should the U.S. do about the number of its troops in Iraq
(among California registered voters)

	Withdraw <u>all</u>	Withdraw <u>some</u>	Keep at about current <u>levels</u>	Send more troops	No <u>opinion</u>
August 2007	39%	26	18	10	7
August 2005	30%	22	25	11	12
<u>Democrats</u>					
August 2007	53%	29	7	5	6
August 2005	46%	25	16	5	9
<u>Republicans</u>					
August 2007	18%	22	35	18	7
August 2005	12%	14	36	21	17
<u>Non-partisans/others</u>					
August 2007	42%	24	14	8	12
August 2005	28%	28	28	9	7

Withdrawal deadline supported

By a 58% to 38% margin, California voters favor Congress passing legislation that would set a deadline for the U.S. to begin withdrawing troops from Iraq by the spring of 2008.

Seventy-five percent of Democrats and 68% of non-partisans endorse the idea of a troop withdrawal deadline. By contrast, just 30% of Republicans hold this view.

Table 4
Should Congress pass legislation that would set a deadline for
the U.S. to begin withdrawing troops from Iraq by next spring
(among California registered voters)

	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
August 2007	58%	38	4
<u>Party</u>			
Democrats	75%	21	4
Republicans	30%	65	5
Non-partisans/others	68%	28	4

Bush's handling of the economy also viewed negatively

Since 2003 California voters have consistently registered greater disapproval than approval of Bush's handling of the nation's economy. In 2003 and 2004 *Field Poll* surveys found disapproval in this regard running about ten percentage points higher than his approval rating. This negative gap has increased in subsequent years. Now, disapproval of Bush's handling of the economy is 58% and approval is 34%, a 24 percentage-point gap.

Four out of five Democrats (80%) rate Bush negatively on the economy, as do 65% of non-partisans. By contrast, Republicans remain quite positive of Bush's handling of the economy, with 65% approving and 26% disapproving.

Table 5			
Voter appraisal of the job Bush is doing in handling the nation's economy (among California registered voters)			
	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
August 2007	34%	58	8
<u>Party</u>			
Democrats	14%	80	6
Republicans	65%	26	9
Non-partisans/others	25%	65	10
<u>Prior measures</u>			
March 2007	33%	61	6
2006 (average)	38%	55	7
2005 (average)	37%	57	6
2004 (average)	43%	52	5
2003 (average)	42%	53	5
2002 (average)	51%	41	8
2001 (average)	57%	35	8

Information About The Survey

Sample Details

The findings in this report are based on a random sample survey of 1,029 registered voters statewide. Interviewing was conducted by telephone in English and Spanish August 3-12, 2007. Up to eight attempts were made to reach and interview each randomly selected voter on different days and times of day during the interviewing period. In order to cover a broad range of issues and still minimize voter fatigue, the statewide voters sample was divided into two random subsamples of 536 and 493 voters each on some of the questions.

The sample was developed from telephone listings of individual voters selected at random from a statewide list of registered voters in California. When drawing samples from registration-based lists, *The Field Poll* stratifies the sample by region and age to insure that the poll includes adequate representations of voters across each major region of the state and across different age categories. Once a voter's name and telephone number has been selected, interviews are attempted only with the specified voter. Interviews can be conducted on either the voter's landline or cell phone, depending on the source of the telephone listing from the voter file. After the completion of interviewing, the results are weighted slightly to *Field Poll* estimates of the demographic and regional characteristics of the state's registered voter population.

Sampling error estimates applicable to any probability-based survey depend on sample size. According to statistical theory, 95% of the time results from findings based on the overall sample of 1,029 registered voters are subject to a sampling error of +/- 3.2 percentage points, while findings from each random subsample have a sampling error of +/- 4.5 percentage points. There are other possible sources of error in any survey other than sampling variability. Different results could occur because of differences in question wording, the sequencing of questions, the rigor with which sampling procedures are implemented, as well as other factors.

Questions Asked

(ASKED OF ALL 1,029 VOTERS)

Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as President?

(ASKED OF A RANDOM SUBSAMPLE OF 493 VOTERS)

Do you approve or disapprove of the job President Bush is doing in handling the situation in Iraq?

Which of the following statements comes closest to your view of what the U.S. should now do about the number of its troops in Iraq: the U.S. should send more troops to Iraq; the U.S. should keep the number of its troops at about current levels; the U.S. should withdraw some of its troops from Iraq; the U.S. should withdraw all of its troops from Iraq.

Do you favor or oppose the U.S. Congress passing legislation that would set a deadline for the U.S. to begin withdrawing troops from Iraq by next spring?

Do you approve or disapprove of the job President Bush is doing in handling the nation's economy?