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### **PRESIDENT BUSH RATES HIGHEST AMONG AMERICANS ON HANDLING WAR ON TERRORISM AND FOREIGN POLICY; RATES LOWER ON DOMESTIC POLICY ISSUES**

#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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*Between December 7 and December 10, 2001, Ipsos Public Affairs interviewed a representative sample of 1,000 U.S. adults nationwide by telephone. The margin of error is +/- 3.1%.*

#### **Ipsos Public Affairs: Presidential Approval Ratings**

### **75% OF AMERICANS APPROVE OF JOB BUSH IS DOING AS PRESIDENT; 14% DISAPPROVE**

President Bush continues to receive the high approval ratings he has enjoyed since the terrorist attacks of September 11<sup>th</sup>. Overall, 75% of Americans approve of the job he is doing as President (rate his performance a 5,6, or 7 on a 1-to-7 scale), and only 14% disapprove (rate his performance a 1,2, or 3 on a 1-to-7 scale). His scores on other issues are far less imposing, however, suggesting that once the focus on the war on terrorism ends, Bush will find significant resistance to his domestic policies in the U.S.

“Support for George W. Bush as Commander-in-Chief casts a rosy glow over all other job performance ratings for Bush and his Administration. His overall job performance ratings are positive by a 5-to-1 margin. His scores on handling the war are even higher—83% positive, with 50% giving him the highest possible score of 7 on a 1-to-7 scale. Foreign policy also earns him very good scores, 72%-16%,” reports Thomas Riehle, President of Ipsos Public Affairs in the U.S.

“But outside the halo of war and foreign policy we find a very different picture. Only 57% or 58% endorse his handling of issues such as taxes, the economy and education, and his scores on the environment are absolutely mediocre, with 43% positive and 34% negative. On the economy, non-whites give him scores of 44% positive and 32% negative. Barely half (50%) of people in the West endorse his tax policy performance. Among college-educated Americans, his performance ratings on education issues are 45% positive and 33% negative. When it comes to the environment, among adults age 18-34 only 40% give him positive marks, 35% negative.

“People who describe themselves as Independent of the parties give Bush an overall job performance rating of 71%-11%, and endorse his foreign policy by a 4-to-1 margin, but Independents are less favorable in their ratings of Bush on education (51%-24%), the economy (53%-23%), and taxes (49%-23%), and reject his environmental policies (33%-36%), and Democrats are more negative than positive in their assessment of Bush on taxes, the economy and the environment” says Riehle.

“Another middle-of-the road group with two views of Bush are those who give Bush an overall job performance rating of 4. That group may like the way he is handling the war (67%-13%) and foreign policy (41%-21%), but they are negative on education (30%-43%), the economy (14%-56%), taxes (16%-53%) and the environment (8%-65%),” says Riehle. “When the war goes away, so will their support for Bush’s performance as President. His high approval ratings are no more substantial than the favorable light shining on him as a result of his performance in leading the war effort. When that light dims, so will his support,” concludes Riehle.



Overall, how would you rate the job George W. Bush is doing as President? Please use a scale from 1 to 7, where 7 means he is doing an excellent job and 1 means he is doing a poor job. You can use any number from 1 to 7 depending on how strongly you feel.

7, excellent job.....	34%
6.....	19
5.....	21
4.....	10
3.....	6
2.....	3
1, poor job.....	5
Not sure.....	1
<b>Total Approve (5-7).....</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>Total Disapprove (1-3).....</b>	<b>14</b>
<i>Mean</i> .....	<i>5.4</i>

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When it comes to his approval on individual aspects of his job, President Bush receives his highest approval ratings for his handling of the war on terrorism and foreign policy. 83% of Americans approve of his handling of the war on terrorism (rate a 5, 6, or 7 on a 7-point scale) and 72% of Americans approve of his handling of foreign policy terrorism (rate a 5, 6, or 7 on a 7-point scale). “President Bush’s high approval ratings are driven by his handling of the war on terrorism,” reports Riehle. “When it comes to his ratings on domestic policy issues, both on the typically strong Republican issues, such as taxes and the economy, and on the typically strong Democratic issues, such as education and the environment, Bush’s approval ratings are less than stratospheric.” Still, a majority of Americans approve of President Bush’s performance on taxes (58% give ratings of 5, 6, or 7 on a 7 point scale), handling the economy (58%), and education (57%). Less than half of all Americans, however, approve of President Bush’s handling of the environment (43%).

*THIS TABLE HAS BEEN RANKED BY THE MEAN*

	<i>Mean</i>	Excellent Job			Total Approve (5-7)	4	Total Disapprove (1-3)	Poor Job			Not Sure
		7	6	5				3	2	1	
Handling the war on terrorism.....	5.9	50	22	12	<b>83</b>	5	<b>10</b>	3	3	4	1
Handling foreign policy..	5.3	32	21	19	<b>72</b>	10	<b>16</b>	6	4	6	2
Taxes .....	4.7	20	15	22	<b>58</b>	15	<b>24</b>	9	6	10	3
Handling the economy ..	4.6	18	15	24	<b>58</b>	17	<b>24</b>	9	6	9	2
Education .....	4.6	17	16	24	<b>57</b>	15	<b>24</b>	10	6	8	4
The environment .....	4.1	11	11	21	<b>43</b>	17	<b>34</b>	11	8	15	5



And how would you rate the job Bush is doing when it comes to ... (RANDOMLY INSERT FIRST CHARACTERISTIC)? Again, use the 7-point scale, where a 7 means he is doing an excellent job and a 1 means he is doing a poor job. You can use any number from 1 to 7.

(Read remaining items:) And how would you rate him on... (INSERT & RANDOMIZE CHARACTERISTIC)?

Approval Ratings of President Bush							
Percentage of Americans who Approve of President Bush's Performance (Rate a 5 - 7 on a 7-point scale)							
By Party Affiliation and By Overall Bush Job Performance Ratings							
		POLITICAL AFFILIATION			AMONG THOSE WHO GIVE BUSH AN OVERALL JOB PERFORMANCE RATING OF....		
	All %	Repub- licans %	Democ- rats %	Indepen- dents %	5-7 %	4 %	1-3 %
Overall	75	94	58	71	100	--	--
Handling war on terrorism	83	96	74	78	95	67	34
Handling foreign policy	72	91	57	64	88	41	15
Handling economy	58	82	37	53	74	14	8
Taxes	58	83	37	49	73	16	9
Education	57	75	41	51	69	30	12
Environment	43	66	25	33	56	8	3

*Ipsos Public Affairs conducts research on behalf of corporations, governments, industry and professional associations, and the not-for-profit sector in the areas of corporate reputation and issues management on a local and global scale.*

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