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Presidential Reelection And Generic Congressional Ballots Show Slight Declines As Republicans Begin To Lose Support Among Independents

Presidential approval dips slightly for first time since war in Iraq began; all aspects of presidential approval are apparently down except foreign affairs.

Between April 15-17, 2003, and May 6-8, 2003, Ipsos-Public Affairs interviewed for the Cook Political Report a representative sample of 2,001 adult Americans nationwide, including 1,532 registered voters. The margin of error for the combined surveys is $\pm 2.2\%$ for all adults, $\pm 2.5\%$ for registered voters.

Washington, D.C., May 12, 2003 — In interviews with 1,532 registered voters conducted April 15-17, 2003 and May 6-8, 2003, the Ipsos-Public Affairs/*Cook Political Report* Poll finds Presidential reelection and generic Congressional ballots declining slightly as Republicans lose some support among Independents.

- The current Ipsos-Public Affairs/*Cook Political Report* Poll finds an apparent decline in attitudes toward reelecting George W. Bush. However, the 2-point shift is within the statistical margin of error. While the overall change in opinion is marginal, some interesting partisan differences do exist.
- Attitudes toward reelection have stayed the same among Republicans and Democrats. Among swing-voting Independents, however, attitudes change significantly after the conclusion of the shooting war in Iraq. The net change for those who would definitely vote to reelect George W. Bush is -6, and those who would consider someone else is +8.

	Presidential Reelection							
	Current Survey (4/15-17 & 5/6-8)				Previous Survey (4/1-3 & 4/15-17)			
	Total	Repub- licans	Democrats	Indepen- dents	Total	Repub- licans	Democrats	Indepen- dents
Definitely reelect Bush	45%	83%	13%	25%	47%	82%	13%	31%
Consider someone else	23%	12%	30%	40%	22%	12%	30%	32%
Definitely vote for someone else	29%	4%	54%	25%	28%	4%	54%	28%

- Current survey results are comparable to early March, when 23% of Independents stated they would definitely vote to reelect George W. Bush and 25% reported they would definitely vote for someone else.
- A similar pattern exists with regard to generic Congressional vote. A marginally significant decrease in the support for a Republican Congress is apparent from mid-April to early May; the apparent gains for the Democrats are within the margin of error. However, Independents show significant change, both away from Republican control and toward Democratic control of Congress.

	Generic Congressional Vote							
	Current Survey (4/15-17 & 5/6-8)				Previous Survey (4/1-3 & 4/15-17)			
	Total	Repub- licans	Democrats	Indepen- dents	Total	Repub- licans	Democrats	Indepen- dents
Republicans	44%	91%	4%	18%	47%	91%	6%	24%
Democrats	42%	3%	84%	31%	40%	4%	82%	27%
Neither	10%	5%	9%	33%	9%	4%	9%	32%

- Among Independents, the net change among those who would want to see the Republicans win control of Congress is -6 and among those who would want to see the Democrats win control of Congress, the gap is +4.
 - The percentage of Independents who currently would like to see the Republicans win control of Congress is roughly comparable with early March (18% versus 21% in early March). However, the proportion of Independents who would like to see the Democrats win control of Congress has increased 10 points since early March, when 21% of Independents favored the Democrats winning control of Congress.

- Overall presidential approval marginally declined by two points since mid-April (the first drop since early March). This dip in approval is within the statistical margin of error, however, and overall approval still rests ten points higher than in early March.

	Overall Presidential Approval		
	Current Survey (4/15-17 & 5/6-8)	mid-April Survey (4/1-17/03)	Early March Survey (2/18-3/6/03)
Total Approve	63%	65%	53%
Total Disapprove	34%	32%	42%
Net Difference	+29	+33	+11

- A slim majority of Americans still approve of the way President Bush is handling domestic issues.

Current Survey (4/15-17 & 5/6-8)				
	Overall Approval	Approval - Economy	Approval - Domestic Issues	Approval - Foreign Policy
Total Approve	63%	51%	50%	70%
Total Disapprove	34%	46%	47%	28%
Net Difference	+29	+5	+3	+42

- When it comes to the economy, approval has slightly declined (3 points) since mid-April, but rests 5 points higher than in early March.
- On domestic issues like health care, education, the environment and energy, approval has declined somewhat (3 points) since mid-April, and rests only 3 points higher than in early March.
- On foreign policy issues, Bush continues to exhibit strong approval numbers and shows a nominal increase of 1 point since mid-April.

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About Ipsos US Public Affairs

The survey was conducted by Ipsos-Public Affairs, the Washington, D.C.-based division of Ipsos, which is the world's fourth largest polling and market research organization, based in Paris. Ipsos-Public Affairs is a non-partisan, objective public affairs research organization made up of Democratic and Republican campaign and political polling veterans. It was established in Washington in August 2001, and it is led by Thomas Riehle, who has more than 15 years of experience as a political pollster in Washington. The Ipsos/Cook Political Report poll and the Ipsos Consumer Attitudes and Spending by Household (CASH) Index poll are usually conducted the first and third week of every month, as part of Ipsos-Public Affairs weekly omnibus polling service.

The political survey is designed in conjunction with Charlie Cook of the Cook Political Report. Founded in 1984, The Cook Political Report is an independent, non-partisan newsletter that analyzes elections for the U.S. House, Senate, governor and President as well as domestic American political trends. The New York Times has called the publication, "a newsletter that both parties consider authoritative" while the dean of the Washington political press corps, the Washington Post's David Broder has called Charlie Cook, its editor and publisher, "perhaps the best political handicapper in the nation." Cook also writes two weekly columns that appear in National Journal magazine and CongressDaily/AM and on nationaljournal.com, and serves as a political analyst for Cable News Network's show "Inside Politics." Researched and written by a staff of five based in Washington, D.C., the Cook Political Report's subscribers are primarily the lobbyists and managers for the political action committees of the nation's major corporations, trade associations and labor unions as well as by news organizations, foreign governments and others with an interest in detailed, impartial information and analysis of Congressional, gubernatorial and presidential elections.