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## Consumer Sentiment More Effective in Tracking Presidential Approval

*Direction of the Country is more effective when the national economy is not topping the list of most important national issues*

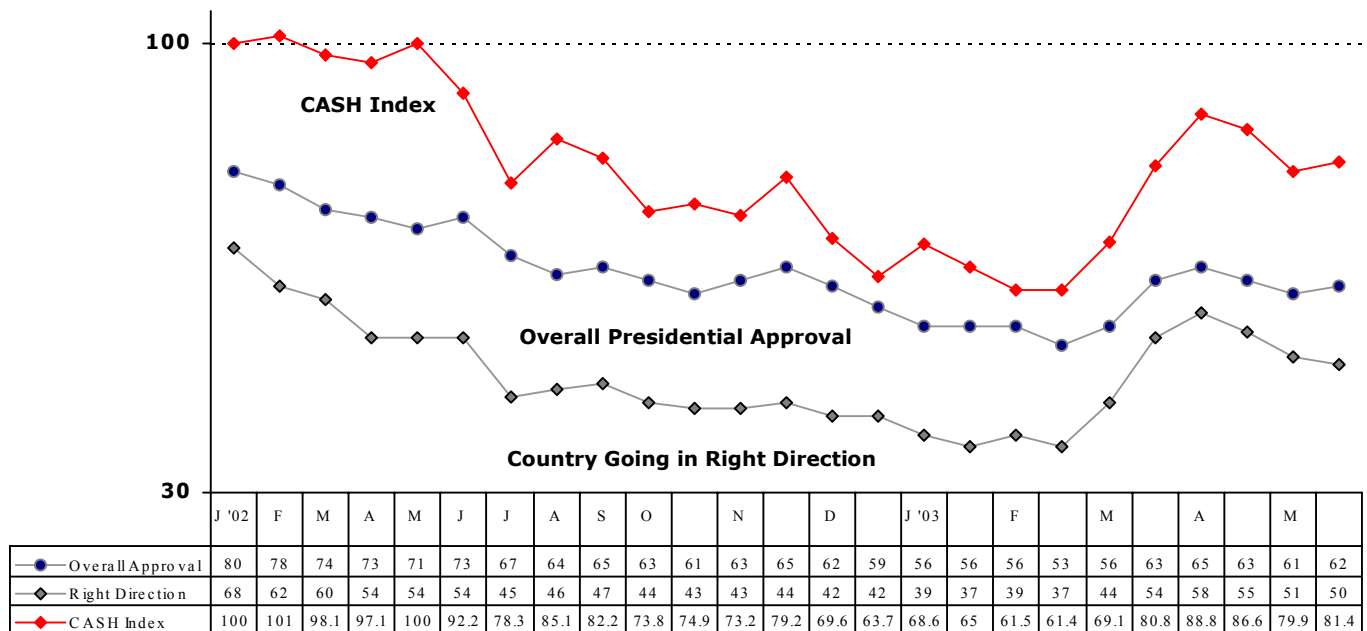
*Between May 20-22, 2003, and June 3-5, 2003, Ipsos-Public Affairs interviewed for the Cook Political Report a representative sample of 2,000 adult Americans nationwide, including 1,573 registered voters. The margin of error for the combined surveys is  $\pm 2.2\%$  for all adults,  $\pm 2.5\%$  for registered voters.*

**Washington, D.C., June 9, 2003** — In interviews with 1,573 registered voters conducted May 20-22, 2003, and June 3-5, 2003, the Ipsos-Public Affairs/*Cook Political Report* Poll finds Presidential approval moving back toward tracking consumer attitudes.

### Presidential Approval follows Consumer Sentiment

- Levels of Presidential approval regularly track direction of the country. However, tracking data from the Ipsos-Public Affairs/*Cook Political Report* and the Ipsos National CASH Index (Consumer Attitudes and Spending by Household) show that since 2002, consumer sentiment has been a more effective reference point when speaking about levels of Presidential approval.

# Consumer Attitudes and Political Measures



- From July, 2002, through early March, 2003, Presidential approval was closer to the calculated Ipsos National CASH Index than it was to the number of Americans who said the country was headed in the right direction.
- During this period, the average gap between Presidential approval and the Ipsos National CASH Index was 12.3 points; the gap between Presidential approval and direction of the country was 18.8 points.

	<b>Right Direction</b>	<b>Presidential Approval</b>	<b>National CASH Index</b>
Early July '02	49	70	82.9
Late July '02	45	67	78.3
Early August '02	46	66	84.4
Late August '02	46	64	85.1
Early September '02	44	63	79.9
Late September '02	47	65	82.2
Early October '02	47	64	79.2
Late October '02	44	63	73.8
Early November '02	43	61	74.9
Late November '02	43	63	73.2
Early December '02	44	65	79.2
Late December '02	42	62	69.6
Early January '03	42	59	63.7
Late January '03	39	56	68.6
Early February '03	37	56	65
Late February '03	39	56	61.5
Early March '03	37	53	61.4
Late March '03	44	56	69.1
Early April '03	54	63	80.8
Late April '03	58	65	88.8
Early May '03	55	63	86.6
Late May '03	51	61	79.9
Early June '03	50	62	81.4

- Note: Presidential approval is aligned toward the indicator it most closely tracked during the time period indicated.

#### When Economy is Not a Primary Concern, Approval Tracks Direction of the Country

- At times when the national economy is not seen as one of the most important issues in the country, Presidential approval follows the general direction of the country.
- From late March to early May (when Iraq was foremost on the minds of Americans), Presidential approval was much closer to direction of the country. The average gap between Presidential approval and direction of the country was 9.0 points; during the same period, the gap between Presidential approval and the Ipsos National CASH Index was 19.6 points.

## Approval Moving back Toward Consumer Sentiment

- Since the end of the shooting war in Iraq, Presidential approval has begun to shift back toward tracking consumer attitudes; the most recent Ipsos-Public Affairs/*Cook Political Report Report* and Ipsos National CASH Index find both Presidential approval and the National CASH Index increasing, while direction of the country fell.

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### **About Ipsos-Public Affairs**

*The survey was conducted by Ipsos-Public Affairs, a non-partisan, objective public affairs research organization made up of Democratic and Republican campaign and political polling veterans. It was established in August 2001 in Washington D.C., and is headed by veteran pollster Thomas Riehle, who has more than 15 years of experience as a political pollster in Washington. The division conducts strategic research initiatives for a diverse number of U.S. and international organizations. Typically, the division's studies are based on opinion research, not only public opinion, but often elite stakeholder, corporate and media opinion. Ipsos-Public Affairs is a member of the Ipsos Group, the second largest survey-based marketing research company in the world. To learn more, visit [www.ipsos-pa.com](http://www.ipsos-pa.com).*

*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.*