



Badger Poll™ #26, Release #6
University of Wisconsin Survey Center
University of Wisconsin Madison
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NOTE: When using material from this release please cite the Badger Poll™ conducted by the University of Wisconsin Survey Center. Poll results compiled by Chad J. Kniss, Project Director, UW Survey Center. ckniss@ssc.wisc.edu (office phone: 608.262.4157)

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WISCONSINITES' SATISFACTION WITH STATE AND NATIONAL POLITICS

The most recent Badger Poll found that approximately two-thirds of Wisconsinites are dissatisfied with the way things are going in the United States today. That compares to a majority of state residents who are satisfied with the way things are going in Wisconsin.

- **68%** of Badger State residents disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president – only 29% approve.
- **62%** of state residents disapprove of the way the U.S. Congress is handling its job.
- When it comes to Wisconsin's two U.S. Senators large majorities of state residents approve of the way that both Russ Feingold (66%) and Herb Kohl (68%) are handling their jobs.
- **55%** of residents approve of the way that Jim Doyle is handling his job as Governor of Wisconsin while 36% disapprove.
- **54%** of Wisconsinites approve of the way that the State Legislature is handling its job – a 14 percentage point increase since December 2007 following more than a three month long delay in finalizing the state budget.
- More Wisconsin residents say that they trust the Democratic Party to do a better job of running the State Government than Republicans (44% for Democrats to 34% for Republicans). However, 13% of residents said they do not trust either party to do a better job running the state.

The tables on the following pages show more details about Wisconsinites' satisfaction with state and national political leaders. Results from the same questions included in previous Badger Polls are included where applicable. See the appendix for exact wording of the questions.

Table 1. Satisfaction with the Way Things are Going in the United States Today, with Comparisons to Wisconsin and Personally (April 2008)

	Satisfied	Mixed (Vol.)	Dissatisfied	Don't Know	Refused	(N)
United States	23%	9%	67%	<1%	<1%	(521)
Wisconsin	54%	4%	41%	1%	<1%	(521)
Personally	80%	3%	17%	--	<1%	(521)

Table 2. Trend in Personal Satisfaction

	Satisfied	Mixed (vol.)	Dissatisfied	Don't Know	Refused	(N)
April '08	80%	3%	17%	--	<1%	(521)
Dec. '07	76%	2%	22%	<1%	<1%	(507)
June '07	86%	1%	12%	1%	1%	(502)

Table 3. Trend in Satisfaction with the Way Things are Going in Wisconsin

	Satisfied	Mixed (vol.)	Dissatisfied	Don't Know	Refused	(N)
April '08	54%	4%	41%	1%	<1%	(521)
Dec. '07	48%	6%	45%	<1%	--	(507)
June '07	60%	2%	37%	1%	--	(502)
Oct. '06	51%	5%	41%	3%	<1%	(508)

Table 4. Approval Rating for Governor Jim Doyle

	Approve	Neither (vol.)	Disapprove	Don't Know	Refused	(N)
April '08	55%	4%	36%	4%	<1%	(521)
Dec. '07	52%	3%	41%	3%	1%	(507)
June '07	52%	2%	41%	4%	1%	(502)

Table 5. Approval for the Wisconsin State Legislature

	Approve	Neither (vol.)	Disapprove	Don't Know	Refused	(N)
April '08	54%	3%	35%	7%	<1%	(521)
Dec. '07	40%	2%	53%	5%	<1%	(507)
June '07	57%	2%	36%	4%	1%	(502)

Table 6. Most Important Problem Facing Wisconsin (April 2008)*Issue Areas (as coded from open-end question)*

The economy and jobs	23%
Taxes	19%
Gas and Oil Prices	12%
Health Care (Costs and Coverage)	11%
State Budget Issues	6%
Education	4%
Cost of Living / Rising Prices	3%
Crime, Drugs, Violence	2%
Environmental Issues	2%
Financial / Money concerns (in general)	2%
Governor Doyle	1%
Politics and Politicians	1%
Energy Issues	1%
Intolerance and Prejudice	1%
Other (less than 1%)	5%
No problems/none	2%
Don't Know/Not Sure	4%
Refused	1%
(N = 521)	

Table 7. Which Political Party do You Trust to do a Better Job Running the State of Wisconsin?

	Democrats	Both (vol.)	Republicans	Neither (vol.)	Don't Know	Refused	(N)
April '08	44%	2%	34%	13%	5%	2%	(521)
Oct. '06	43%	1%	35%	12%	9%	<1%	(508)
June '06	38%	2%	37%	12%	11%	<1%	(508)

Table 8. Trend in Wisconsin's Satisfaction with the Way Things are Going in the United States

	Satisfied	Mixed (vol.)	Dissatisfied	Don't Know	Refused	(N)
April '08	23%	9%	67%	<1%	<1%	(521)
Dec. '07	29%	6%	65%	<1%	1%	(507)
June '07	33%	4%	63%	<1%	--	(502)
Oct. '06	32%	5%	61%	2%	--	(508)

Table 9. Approval Rating for President George W. Bush

	Approve	Neither (vol.)	Disapprove	Don't Know	Refused	(N)
April '08	29%	2%	68%	1%	<1%	(521)
Dec. '07	23%	3%	73%	1%	<1%	(507)
June '07	30%	1%	69%	<1%	--	(502)
Oct. '06	36%	2%	61%	<1%	1%	(508)

Table 10. Approval Rating for the U.S. Congress

	Approve	Neither (vol.)	Disapprove	Don't Know	Refused	(N)
April '08	33%	<1%	62%	4%	1%	(521)
Dec. '07	33%	2%	61%	4%	<1%	(507)
June '07	41%	3%	54%	2%	--	(502)

The tables on the following page show the job approval ratings for Wisconsin's two U.S. Senators. The most recent Badger Poll is the first time that the job approval question has been asked about both Senator Russ Feingold and Senator Herb Kohl. Previous Badger Polls have asked Wisconsinites to rate the job both U.S. Senators do on a four point scale of excellent to poor. The past results from the old job rating questions are also displayed on the next page.

Table 11. Approval Rating for U.S. Senator Russ Feingold

Strongly Approve	21%
Somewhat Approve	45%
Neither (vol.)	2%
Somewhat Disapprove	12%
Strongly Disapprove	11%
Don't Know	8%
Refused	1%
(N = 521)	

Table 12. Approval Rating for U.S. Senator Herb Kohl

Strongly Approve	21%
Somewhat Approve	47%
Neither (vol.)	2%
Somewhat Disapprove	14%
Strongly Disapprove	8%
Don't Know	7%
Refused	1%
(N = 521)	

Table 13. Previous Job Ratings for U.S. Senator Russ Feingold

	2006		2004				
	Oct.	Jun.	Sept.	Jun.	Apr.	Mar.	Jan.
Excellent	18%	19%	16%	11%	8%	12%	10%
Good	30%	28%	33%	34%	40%	36%	36%
Fair	27%	22%	24%	31%	27%	27%	31%
Poor	19%	20%	14%	12%	9%	11%	7%
Don't Know	5%	10%	13%	12%	15%	14%	15%
Refused	1%	1%	--	--	--	--	--

(Job rating for U.S. Senators from WI was not asked in 2005 or 2007)

Table 14. Previous Job Ratings for U.S. Senator Herb Kohl

	2006		2004				
	Oct.	Jun.	Sept.	Jun.	Apr.	Mar.	Jan.
Excellent	13%	12%	8%	4%	5%	7%	7%
Good	38%	42%	39%	39%	42%	43%	42%
Fair	31%	26%	30%	36%	28%	32%	32%
Poor	9%	7%	6%	8%	10%	7%	7%
Don't Know	9%	12%	15%	13%	12%	11%	11%
Refused	<1%	1%	--	--	1%	--	--

(Job rating for U.S. Senators from WI was not asked in 2005 or 2007)

APPENDIX:

SURVEY QUESTION WORDING

- GNS01A In general, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way things are going in the United States today?
- GNS01B [#NOTE: only asked if 'GNS01A' is satisfied or dissatisfied] Would you say you are very [satisfied/dissatisfied] or are you only somewhat [satisfied/dissatisfied]?
- GWS01A In general, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way things are going in the state of Wisconsin today?
- GWS01B [#NOTE: only asked if 'GWS01A' is satisfied or dissatisfied] Would you say you are very [satisfied/dissatisfied] or are you only somewhat [satisfied/dissatisfied]?
- GNS04_A Overall, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way things are going for you **personally**?
- GNS04_B [#NOTE: only asked if 'GNS04_A' is satisfied or dissatisfied] Would you say you are very [satisfied/dissatisfied] or are you only somewhat [satisfied/dissatisfied]?
- MIPWI What would you say, if anything, is the **most** important problem facing Wisconsin today? [INTERVIEWER: RECORD VERBATIM RESPONSE, READ BACK TO R AND VERIFY]
- APP_02 Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way Jim Doyle is handling his job as Governor of Wisconsin?
- APP_02A [#NOTE: only asked if 'APP_02' is approve or disapprove] Would you say you strongly [approve/disapprove] or do you only somewhat [approve/disapprove] of the way Jim Doyle is handling his job as Governor?
- APP_04 Generally speaking, do you approve or disapprove of the way that the Wisconsin Legislature is handling its job -- that is the Wisconsin State Assembly and the Wisconsin State Senate?
- APP_04A [#NOTE: only asked if 'APP_04' is approve or disapprove] Would you say you strongly [approve/disapprove] or do you only somewhat [approve/disapprove] of the way Jim Doyle is handling his job as Governor?
- P20_9 [#NOTE: party names presented in random order] Which political party, the [Democrats/Republicans] or the [Republicans/Democrats] do you trust to do a better job running the state of Wisconsin?
- APP_01 Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president?
- APP_01A [#NOTE: only asked if 'APP_01' is approve or disapprove] Would you say you strongly [approve/disapprove] or do you only somewhat [approve/disapprove] of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president?
- APP_03 Generally speaking, do you approve or disapprove of the way the U.S. Congress is handling its job -- that is the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate?

- APP_03A [#NOTE: only asked if 'APP_03' is approve or disapprove] Would you say you strongly [approve/disapprove] or do you only somewhat [approve/disapprove] of the way the U.S. Congress is handling its job?
- APP_05 Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Russ Feingold is handling his job as U.S. Senator from Wisconsin?
- APP_05A [#NOTE: only asked if 'APP_05' is approve or disapprove] Would you say you strongly [approve/disapprove] or do you only somewhat [approve/disapprove] of the that Russ Feingold is handling his job as U.S. Senator?
- APP_06 Overall, do you approve or disapprove of the way that Herb Kohl is handling his job as U.S. Senator from Wisconsin?
- APP_06A [#NOTE: only asked if 'APP_06' is approve or disapprove]Would you say you strongly [approve/disapprove] or do you only somewhat [approve/disapprove] of the that Herb Kohl is handling his job as U.S. Senator?

HOW THE POLL WAS DONE

This BADGER POLL™ was conducted by the University of Wisconsin Survey Center as part of its ongoing program of research designed to benefit the research community and the people of Wisconsin. The Director of the poll operations is Chad J. Kniss, UW Survey Center. The Faculty Director of the Poll content is Professor Katherine Cramer Walsh, Department of Political Science, UW-Madison. The BADGER POLL™ is intended to be a "poll of record" for the state, investigating matters of concern to Wisconsinites including politics, culture, and their daily lives, adhering to the highest standards of polling methodology and rigorous independence.

Results shown here are based on 521 persons who were randomly chosen within households with working landline telephone numbers and interviewed between April 15 and April 24, 2008, inclusive. During this time period, the UWSC made just under 12,900 phone calls to 2,860 telephone numbers. Calls were made between 9AM and 9PM Monday through Friday and between 10AM and 5PM on Saturday and from 12 noon to 9PM on Sunday. All telephone numbers were randomly generated by computer. The UWSC made up to 10 attempts on each number in order to confirm if it was a residential number, select an eligible respondent and/or to convert first time refusals. Approximately 66% of the 521 interviews were completed in the first five days of calling.

Theoretically, results from this survey have a "margin of error" of a little over +/- 4%. This means that, had we asked every resident in Wisconsin, exactly these questions at the time the survey was conducted, there is only a one in twenty chance that the answers would differ by more than that in either direction from what we report here. There could be differences because of changes in question wording, events occurring in the meantime, or any of the practical difficulties involved in taking a scientific survey. Results based on subgroups are subject to a larger "margin of error". Results reported here are based on weighted data (weighted to reflect statewide gender and age groups).