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ATTITUDES TO IRAQ AND THE POSSIBILITY OF WAR
by G. Donald Ferree, Jr.

While there are divisions in the public as to the rationale for Bush Administration policy towards Iraq, and sentiment is by no means onesided, the public opinion climate surrounding the issue of possible war with Iraq continues, on balance, to favor the President's policies. This conclusion comes from analyzing results of the most recent Badger Poll™, which examined where Wisconsin residents stood on a number of matters related to Iraq. Results are based on 507 telephone interviews with randomly selected adult residents of the state from March 4 to 12, inclusive.

The public's rating of Bush's "dealing with Iraq" is neither particularly high nor low. Overall, half call it either "excellent" (18%) or "good" (31%). Another half label it as fair (26%) or poor (23%). As the detailed tables show, while men tend to be more upbeat in their perceptions of Bush's performance in this area, it is partisanship which really makes a difference. Fewer than three in ten Democrats call Bush good or higher, while seven in ten choose fair or lower. Independents tend to spread across the rating scale roughly like the population at large. But Republicans stand out. The largest single group here rates Bush excellent, and eight in ten rate him good or better, compared to fewer than one in five who go no higher than fair.

Two thirds (65%) of the public backs the basic strategy behind the present situation, feeling that "the United States did the right thing in threatening war if Saddam Hussein refuses to give up any weapons of mass destruction he may have". One in four (26%) demur. Men are more likely than women to support the basic strategy (backing it by 74%-22% as opposed to 57%-30% among women). This is also something of a partisan issue, with Democrats narrowly thinking this was the right thing to do, Independents looking rather like the population overall, and Republicans onesidedly (86%-10%) behind the strategy. As will be seen, this does not represent an unreserved endorsement, but it does mean that on balance the Wisconsin public thinks threatening war to gain Iraqi disarmament is appropriate.

Another crucial question is whether the choice will ultimately come down to fighting or yielding on these weapons. When respondents were asked, "do you think the United States will have to choose between letting Iraq have weapons of mass destruction or going to war with Iraq", more than three fourths (77%) believe it will come down to this, without getting into which alternative is favored. One in six (16%) do not believe this choice will be necessary. Both gender and partisan patterns here essentially evaporate so that feeling is not only widespread but consistent across key groups that the US will ultimately

have to choose one or the other alternative.

As noted, however, this does not necessarily translate into overwhelming endorsement of Bush's choices. When it comes to whether or not enough has been done to avoid war, the balance of opinion is supportive of the President, but the margin is rather closer to a split. Specifically, more than half (56%) believe that "the Bush administration has done everything it reasonably could to avoid war with Iraq", while somewhat more than one in three (36%) say there is "something else it should have tried".

Men are modestly more convinced than women that the administration has done enough, with women both less likely to say enough has been done and not to express an opinion. But partisanship makes clearer distinctions among residents. Democrats believe that not enough has been done by roughly the same three to two margin by which the population over takes the opposite stance. Independents narrowly think enough has been done. By almost three to one, self-described Republicans think the administration has done all it reasonably could.

Regardless of how they feel about war, most residents expect it. Two thirds (68%) say it is "very likely" that the United States will actually go to war with Iraq, while the three in ten (29%) calling this "somewhat likely", account for nearly all the remainder. On this question, men are more commonly of the opinion that war is very likely than are women, while partisan differences are relatively small.

What do people expect, if hostilities DO break out. The notion that any military campaign would be over swiftly does not seem to be widespread. Fewer than one in twenty (4%) asked about the likely duration with "if a war starts, how long do you think it will last", said "just a few days". The slightly longer "a matter of weeks" accounted for one in five (21%) of respondents. The most common view, held by some 38%, was that it would last "several months", while one in three (32%) felt a war would last "a year or more".

Neither gender nor partisan patterns were notably strong. There is some tendency for men to expect a shorter war than women, but clear majorities of each group think any war would last at least "several months". Similarly, the anticipated length of conflict drops modestly as one moves across the partisan spectrum from Democrat to Republican, all groups tend to see a war of several months or more duration.

The outcome is a different story. Three in four (76%) say that it is very likely (a number volunteered certain) that the US and its allies would win the war. The one in seven (14%) calling it somewhat likely accounts for nine residents in ten, with those expressing lower likelihood eclipsed by those who had not opinion they were willing to state.

Optimism -- taking those who say American victory is very likely -- is higher among men (almost nine in ten) than women (two thirds). It grows from two thirds among Democrats to almost nine in ten among self-described Republicans as well.

Winning is one thing, getting out afterwards could be quite another matter. Indeed, three fourths (72%) believe that it is very likely "if there is a war and the US side wins" that "American soldiers will be tied up for a long time afterwards keeping order in Iraq". Almost one in four (23%) call this outcome "somewhat likely". Men and women differ little. Partisanship patterns are the reverse of what was noted above, with likelihood decreasing some (but only some) from Democrat to Republican.

Much controversy has centered on the role of the UN and its relationship to American use of force. Reminded that "the UN has passed a number of resolutions demanding Iraq get rid of weapons of mass destruction, and threatening serious consequences if it does not", just shy of four in ten (38%) say "the United States should try to get another resolution explicitly calling for war if Iraq does not comply". But just over half (53%) think the existing resolutions are enough.

Backing for another resolution amounts to about four in ten among both men and women, but the latter group are less likely than men to say existing resolutions are enough and more likely not to express an opinion. Democrats back an additional resolution by about a five to four margin, while Independents and Republicans feel what is already on the books is sufficient by around two to one.

What if, however, "such a resolution fails, or if it is blocked by France, China, or Russia" (referring to their right of veto). In those circumstances, the Wisconsin public feels, by a 61%-31% majority, that the "US and other willing countries" should "use force anyway".

Two thirds of men endorse war under these circumstances, but only half of women do. Opinion is split quite evenly (a slight plurality for war) among self-described Democrats, swings to three to two in favor among Independents, with eight in ten Republicans backing war even without explicit UN authorization. Specific reaction could well depend on exactly what did or did not happen at the UN, and there clearly is a substantial group opposed to war, but the balance of opinion here seems to be in President Bush's camp.

Looked at from the other side, earlier, it was noted that most state residents do believe it will ultimately come down to a choice between war and letting Iraq have weapons of mass destruction. What then, "if the US decides NOT (emphasis added) to go to war". How likely is it "that we will eventually be attacked with Iraqi weapons of mass destruction". One in three (34%) call this eventuality very likely, while roughly the same size group (33%) says it is somewhat so. Another one in three believes it either not very likely (23%) or not likely at all (8%).

Women are more concerned that this will come to pass than are men. The perceived likelihood rises as one moves from Democrat to Republican, but six in ten of the former and three in four of the latter calling it somewhat likely.

Expectations here also seem to be related to how one comes down on the issue of the US acting without the UN if it comes to that. Those who feel an eventual use of Iraqi weapons against the US is very likely without war back US use of force now by 81%-14%. This ratio declines to 63%-27% among those saying a use of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction is somewhat likely. It further declines (to 36%-53% and 34%-61%) respectively among those calling such an attack at some point either not very likely or not likely at all. (The number in the final category is so small, less than 10% of the population, that one should not rely too much on the precision of this number, but the overall pattern is clear.

Earlier it was noted that the public expects neither a superbrief war nor a speedy American exit afterwards if war does come. There also seems not to be much optimism that a US attack on Iraq will cut down on terrorism. "In the long run", if "the US forces attack Iraq", just over four in ten (42%) say this will increase the risk of terrorism in the world. This is the most common opinion, but it is counterbalanced to some extent by those (27%) who think terrorism will decrease. Another group of 28% expects no real impact one way or the other.

Men and women do not differ much, but Democrats are more pessimistic than Independents, though on balance, members of each group are more likely to think terrorism will increase than to think it will decrease. Republicans, on the other hand, on balance feel the other way, with roughly twice as many saying the risk of terror would go down as fear it would go up in the wake of a US attack.

As was the case with the previous question, the terror outlook seems to be related to views of a US attack without UN backing. Those who think the terror risk will increase split roughly evenly, 44% backing war and 50% opposing it. Those who think there would not be any real impact tended to back a US attack by 66%-25%. Finally, those who think the risk of terror will be reduced backed a US attack by an 84%-10% margin.

Many of these questions were asked on the Badger Poll™ of one month ago. Results are shown in the special table. One searches in vain for substantial movement, but the climate seems at least as supportive of Bush policy now as it was then.

The overall sentiment that the US did the right thing to threaten war is now virtually identical with what it was then. There is perhaps a modest increase (from 71%-20% to 77%-16%) in belief that the US will sooner or later have to choose between actually going to war or allowing Iraq to have weapons of mass destruction.

While the public continues to be divided, the balance of opinion is slightly more clear now than it was that the administration had done all it reasonably could to avoid war. The perceived likelihood of war is quite close to what it was, so that one can have only limited confidence there has been any real shift, but it seems at least as high now as it was.

Similarly, the differences in expected duration of a war are quite small, but if anything there is a bit more hope now for a relatively short conflict than was evident then. Optimism about a US victory is also little changed but there is a better chance it has increased than the opposite. Sentiment about the likelihood of a US presence in Iraq for some time is roughly what it was then.

Results on the question about an additional UN resolution (which has become more specific since February, even as it remains under flux) are quite similar. Most now feel as they did, that existing resolutions are sufficient, but a substantial minority wants and wanted to try for more. Finally, the balance of opinion for the US (and other countries) acting without UN backing is similar to, but if anything a bit clearer than it was then.

Iraq Questions from two Surveys

	MARCH	FEBRUARY
Bush's Dealing with Iraq		
EXCELLENT	18%	19%
GOOD	31	30
FAIR	26	25
POOR	23	24
Original threat of war		
YES, DID RIGHT THING	65%	65%
NO, HAS NOT	26	26
ONLY WITH OTHERS (VOL)	1	1
Necessary choice war/permit WMD		
YES, HAVE TO CHOOSE	77%	71%
NO, WILL NOT HAVE TO	16	20
IRAQ HAS NO WMD (VOL.)	*	1
Steps to avoid war		
DONE ALL REASONABLE	56%	51%
SHOULD HAVE TRIED	36	41
Likelihood US will go to war		
VERY LIKELY	68%	65%
SOMEWHAT LIKELY	29	31
NOT VERY LIKELY	1	3
NOT LIKELY AT ALL	*	1
Expected Duration		
JUST A FEW DAYS	4%	2%
A MATTER OF WEEKS	21	16
SEVERAL MONTHS	38	42
A YEAR OR MORE	32	33
US Victory if war starts		
VERY LIKELY	76%	73%
SOMEWHAT LIKELY	14	17
NOT TOO LIKELY	2	3
NOT AT ALL LIKELY	1	2
Longterm presence in Iraq		
VERY LIKELY	72%	73%
SOMEWHAT LIKELY	23	20
NOT VERY LIKELY	3	1
NOT LIKELY AT ALL	1	2
Seek additional resolution		
GET ANOTHER	38%	37%
EXISTING RES. ENOUGH	53	51
GOOD IDEA IF POSS. (V)	*	1
US go it alone if no UN backing		
YES	61%	58%
NO	31	32

Responses such as Don't Know or Refused omitted for space

Statewide Marginals and Percentages for Key Groups

What follows is the exact question wording for each of the items referred to in the release. All results shown are for the basic sample of state residents. The first column is the percentage of the entire sample giving each response. The second and third reports the percentages for men and women separately. The fourth, fifth, and sixth columns show self-described Democrats, Independents, and Republicans. Columns seven through ten group respondents by age. For completeness, although no major distinctions are found, the final two columns depict those reporting that either they or someone in their immediate family had served in the military at some point, and the smaller group which reported there was a member of their immediate family currently on active duty or in the reserve.

Q01. INTERVIEWER: (DO NOT ASK) Enter respondent's gender

	GENDER			PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				MILITARY	
	TOT	M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	FAM	ACT
MALE	49%	100%	--%	37%	61%	55%	55%	47%	47%	54%	50%	48%
FEMALE	51	--	100	63	39	45	46	53	53	47	50	52

GWB08. (How would you rate the job George W. Bush is doing) Dealing with Iraq?
(PROMPT FOR CATEGORIES AS NECESSARY)

	GENDER			PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				MILITARY	
	TOT	M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	FAM	ACT
EXCELLENT	18%	23%	13%	3%	15%	44%	15%	19%	21%	13%	20%	19%
GOOD	31	32	30	25	32	36	32	30	31	31	30	42
FAIR	26	23	29	36	25	12	26	29	23	29	26	20
POOR	23	20	26	35	26	6	27	21	24	24	22	20
DON'T KNOW	2	2	2	2	2	1	--	2	1	3	2	--
REFUSED	*	--	*	--	--	*	--	--	--	1	*	--

IRAQ01. Do you think the United States did the right thing in threatening war if Saddam Hussein refuses to give up any weapons of mass destruction he may have?

	GENDER			PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				MILITARY	
	TOT	M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	FAM	ACT
YES, DID RIGHT THING	65%	74%	57%	46%	68%	86%	66%	70%	64%	62%	67%	73%
NO, HAS NOT	26	22	30	39	28	10	33	22	27	26	25	23
ONLY WITH OTHERS (VOL)	1	*	1	1	*	--	2	*	*	1	1	1
DON'T KNOW	7	3	11	13	4	3	--	7	9	8	7	3
REFUSED	1	1	1	1	*	*	--	1	--	2	1	1

IRAQ02. Do you think the United States will have to choose between letting Iraq have weapons of mass destruction or going to war with Iraq?

	GENDER			PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				MILITARY	
	TOT	M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	FAM	ACT
YES, HAVE TO CHOOSE	77%	75%	79%	77%	75%	79%	83%	76%	76%	78%	76%	71%
NO, WILL NOT HAVE TO	16	19	13	14	17	16	12	18	16	16	17	19
IRAQ HAS NO WMD(VOL.)	*	*	*	--	1	--	--	--	1	1	*	--
DON'T KNOW	6	5	7	8	5	6	6	7	7	6	7	8
REFUSED	*	--	1	1	1	--	--	--	1	--	*	1

IRAQ03. Do you think the Bush administration has done everything it reasonably could to avoid war with Iraq, or is there something else it should have tried?

	GENDER			PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				MILITARY	
	TOT	M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	FAM	ACT
DONE ALL REASONABLE	56%	60%	52%	37%	53%	82%	50%	61%	57%	52%	57%	58%
SHOULD HAVE TRIED	36	36	37	53	42	14	45	31	35	41	35	32
DON'T KNOW	7	3	10	9	5	3	5	7	6	7	6	8
REFUSED	1	*	2	1	1	1	--	1	2	--	1	3

IRAQ04. How likely do you think it is that the United States will actually go to war against Iraq? Is it very likely, somewhat likely, not very likely, or not likely at all?

	GENDER			PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				MILITARY	
	TOT	M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	FAM	ACT
VERY LIKELY	68%	76%	61%	66%	74%	72%	59%	76%	68%	64%	71%	76%
SOMEWHAT LIKELY	29	22	36	31	24	26	38	22	30	33	25	22
NOT VERY LIKELY	1	2	1	2	--	1	2	1	*	2	2	2
NOT LIKELY AT ALL	*	--	1	1	--	--	2	--	--	1	*	1
DON'T KNOW	1	1	1	*	2	1	--	1	1	1	1	--
REFUSED	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

IRAQ05. If a war starts, how long do you think it will last? Just a few days, a matter of weeks, several months, or a year or more?

	GENDER			PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				MILITARY	
	TOT	M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	FAM	ACT
JUST A FEW DAYS	4%	5%	3%	5%	3%	3%	5%	3%	5%	4%	3%	4%
A MATTER OF WEEKS	21	29	13	18	20	26	13	17	27	24	21	18
SEVERAL MONTHS	38	38	37	40	34	39	43	41	31	36	36	34
A YEAR OR MORE	32	25	39	33	34	28	39	35	31	28	35	41
DON'T KNOW	5	3	6	4	8	4	--	3	5	9	5	4
REFUSED	1	*	1	1	2	--	--	1	1	--	1	1

IRAQ06. Ultimately, how likely is it that the United States and its allies will win the war? (IF "CERTAINLY" CODE AS "VERY LIKELY")

	GENDER			PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				MILITARY	
	TOT	M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	FAM	ACT
VERY LIKELY	76%	88%	65%	68%	78%	87%	66%	75%	78%	79%	78%	81%
SOMEWHAT LIKELY	14	6	22	21	10	10	25	13	12	13	12	10
NOT TOO LIKELY	2	1	3	4	3	*	2	3	2	3	3	1
NOT AT ALL LIKELY	1	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	1
DON'T KNOW	5	2	8	7	6	--	3	6	5	5	5	4
REFUSED	1	2	1	--	2	2	2	1	2	1	2	3

IRAQ07. If there is a war and the US side wins, how likely do you think it is that American soldiers will be tied up for a long time afterwards keeping order in Iraq? Very likely, somewhat likely, not very likely, or not likely at all?

	GENDER			PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				MILITARY	
	TOT	M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	FAM	ACT
VERY LIKELY	72%	72%	73%	80%	72%	62%	66%	76%	69%	76%	74%	78%
SOMEWHAT LIKELY	23	20	25	18	19	33	25	21	27	20	21	13
NOT VERY LIKELY	3	6	1	2	5	3	9	2	1	4	4	6
NOT LIKELY AT ALL	1	1	--	--	1	1	--	1	1	--	1	1
DON'T KNOW	1	1	1	--	3	--	--	1	1	1	1	3
REFUSED	*	--	*	*	--	--	--	--	--	--	*	--

IRAQ08. The UN has passed a number of resolutions demanding Iraq get rid of weapons of mass destruction, and threatening serious consequences if it did not. Do you think the United States should try to get another resolution explicitly calling for war if Iraq does not comply, or are the existing resolutions enough?

	GENDER			PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				MILITARY	
	TOT	M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	FAM	ACT
GET ANOTHER	38%	37%	39%	51%	32%	29%	45%	39%	34%	41%	37%	39%
EXISTING RES. ENOUGH	53	59	47	38	61	68	51	52	58	48	55	54
GOOD IDEA IF POSS. (V)	*	*	1	*	--	--	--	1	--	1	1	--
DON'T KNOW	7	4	10	9	6	3	4	7	8	8	7	8
REFUSED	1	--	2	2	1	--	--	1	*	2	1	--

IRAQ09. If such a resolution fails, or if it is blocked by France, China, or Russia, should the US and other willing countries use force anyway?

	GENDER			PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				MILITARY	
	TOT	M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	FAM	ACT
YES	61%	69%	52%	47%	58%	80%	58%	64%	64%	55%	64%	67%
NO	31	28	35	41	36	14	40	31	26	32	29	28
DON'T KNOW	8	3	12	11	6	5	2	4	10	12	7	5
REFUSED	1	--	1	1	--	1	--	1	--	1	*	--

IRAQ10A. If the US decides not to go to war, how likely do you think it is that we will eventually be attacked with Iraqi weapons of mass destruction? Very likely, somewhat likely, not very likely, or not likely at all?

	GENDER			PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				MILITARY	
	TOT	M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	FAM	ACT
VERY LIKELY	34%	31%	37%	21%	35%	44%	27%	43%	29%	34%	37%	41%
SOMEWHAT LIKELY	33	32	35	39	25	33	42	30	36	29	31	29
NOT VERY LIKELY	23	25	20	30	25	15	20	20	27	24	22	24
NOT LIKELY AT ALL	8	12	5	8	11	6	11	6	6	12	7	5
DON'T KNOW	1	*	2	1	3	1	--	1	2	1	2	--
REFUSED	*	--	1	*	1	--	--	--	1	--	*	1

IRAQ10B. In the long run, if the US forces attack Iraq, will that increase the risk of terrorism in the world, reduce it, or not make that much difference one way or the other?

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				MILITARY	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	FAM	ACT
INCREASE	42%	42%	43%	55%	43%	27%	41%	40%	41%	47%	41%	32%
DECREASE	27	29	25	16	24	53	24	33	27	22	28	33
NOT MUCH DIFFERENCE	28	28	28	28	30	18	33	27	27	27	27	32
DON'T KNOW	2	1	4	2	3	1	--	--	4	4	3	2
REFUSED	1	1	*	--	1	--	2	--	1	--	1	1

IRAQ13. Have you ever served in the US military yourself?

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				MILITARY	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	FAM	ACT
YES	18%	35%	1%	13%	28%	17%	4%	9%	16%	39%	24%	26%
NO	82	65	99	87	72	83	96	89	84	61	75	72
DON'T KNOW	*	--	*	*	--	--	--	--	--	1	*	--
REFUSED	*	1	--	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	1	3

IRAQ14. Has any member of your immediate family such as a parent, child, brother or sister, ever served in the US military?

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				MILITARY	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	FAM	ACT
YES	69%	67%	71%	64%	77%	71%	44%	66%	80%	73%	94%	99%
NO	31	33	29	37	23	29	57	34	20	27	6	1
DON'T KNOW	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
REFUSED	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

IRAQ15. Is any member of your immediate family still in the active service or reserves?

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				MILITARY	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	FAM	ACT
YES	21%	20%	22%	20%	26%	18%	22%	22%	26%	15%	21%	100%
NO	79	80	78	80	74	82	78	78	74	85	79	--
DON'T KNOW	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
REFUSED	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

QD05. Generally speaking, do you consider yourself a Democrat, a Republican, an Independent, or something else?

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				MILITARY	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	FAM	ACT
DEMOCRAT	34%	26%	41%	100%	--%	--%	39%	31%	32%	34%	31%	29%
REPUBLICAN	26	29	23	--	--	100	29	28	24	25	27	23
INDEPENDENT	26	33	20	--	100	--	16	23	29	33	30	36
OTHER	8	8	9	--	--	--	7	13	8	4	7	5
NONE	4	4	5	--	--	--	4	5	3	4	4	4
DON'T KNOW	1	*	1	--	--	--	3	--	1	--	*	1
REFUSED	1	1	1	--	--	--	2	*	1	1	1	2

QD11. In what year were you born? (ENTER FOUR-DIGIT YEAR) (Calculated and grouped as below)

	TOT	GENDER		PARTISANSHIP			AGE IN YEARS				MILITARY	
		M	F	DEM	IND	REP	<30	<45	<60	60+	FAM	ACT
18-29	13%	15%	12%	16%	8%	15%	100%	--%	--%	--%	8%	8%
30-44	30	29	31	28	26	33	--	100	--	--	28	29
45-59	31	30	31	30	34	28	--	--	100	--	35	42
60 and over	24	26	21	24	29	23	--	--	--	100	27	20
DK/REFUSED	3	1	5	3	3	2	--	--	--	--	2	1

* denotes less than .5%

-- denotes 0%

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, under the direction of G. Donald Ferree, Jr., Associate Director for Public Opinion Research of the Center. The media sponsors of the survey are the (Madison) Capital Times, and the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel. 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.

A total of 507 randomly chosen state residents were interviewed for this survey by telephone between March 4 and 12, inclusive. Telephone numbers were generated by computer in proportion to the number of adults living in each area of the state. Theoretically, results from this survey have a "margin of error" of a little over +/- 4%. This means that, had we asked every eligible 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".