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*NEWS Release*  
*1615 L Street, N.W., Suite 700*  
*Washington, D.C. 20036*  
*Tel (202) 419-4350*  
*Fax (202) 419-4399*

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**Emerging Priorities for '06 – Energy, Crime and Environment**  
**ECONOMY NOW SEEN THROUGH PARTISAN PRISM**

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**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Andrew Kohut, Director  
Carroll Doherty and Michael Dimock, Associate Directors  
Pew Research Center for The People & The Press  
202/419-4350  
<http://www.people-press.org>

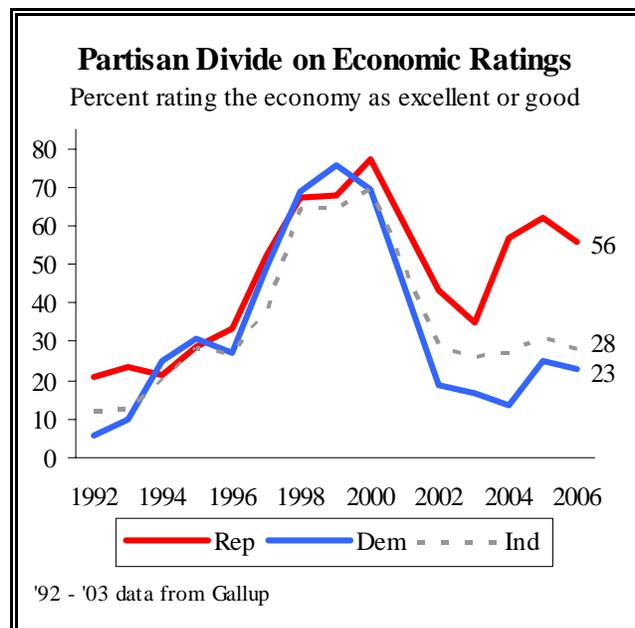
## Emerging Priorities for '06 – Energy, Crime and Environment **ECONOMY NOW SEEN THROUGH PARTISAN PRISM**

As President Bush prepares for his Jan. 31 State of the Union address, most Americans remain skeptical that the economy is improving, in spite of recent positive signals. Overall, about a third (34%) rate economic conditions as excellent or good, while nearly twice that number say conditions are only fair or poor (64%). Views of the economy are more favorable than in the fall, when economic attitudes were shaken by two major hurricanes and a spike in gas prices, but remain below where they were a year ago (39% positive in January 2005).

As has been the case through much of Bush's presidency – and in stark contrast to the Clinton years – public views of the economy are deeply split along political lines. Republicans generally see an economy that is thriving; 56% judge it as excellent or good. Democrats and independents see it much more negatively; just 28% of independents and 23% of Democrats say the economy is doing well.

Public perceptions of the economy were far less polarized during the Clinton administration. During Clinton's first term, positive views of the economy rose gradually, and at about the same rate, among both

Democrats and Republicans. During the boom of the late 1990s, optimism soared among members of both parties, while lagging a bit among independents.



Republicans have significantly higher household incomes than either independents or Democrats, but at every income level Republicans are much more likely to say that the economy is in good shape. Even among those with household incomes of at least \$75,000, more than twice as many Republicans as Democrats express a positive view of the economy (65% vs. 31%). Independents' opinions of the economy, again regardless of income, are much closer to those of Democrats than Republicans.

**Party Gap Over Economy –  
Regardless of Income**

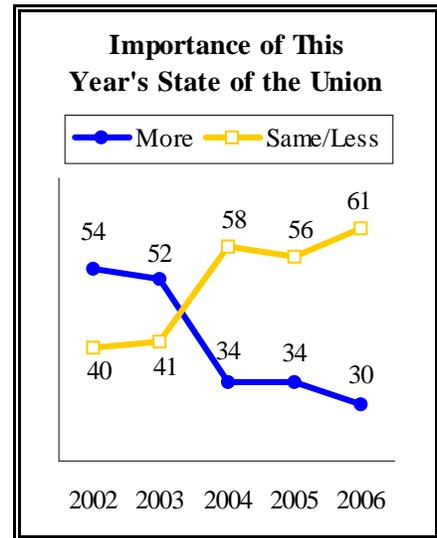
*Percent saying economy is  
in excellent/good shape*

<i>Household income</i>	<u>Total</u> %	<u>Rep</u> %	<u>Dem</u> %	<u>Ind</u> %
\$75,000 and over	45	65	31	37
\$50-\$75,000	38	62	29	21
Under \$50,000	25	48	17	22

Partisans differ in their view of nearly every aspect of the national economy. Most notably, just under half of Democrats (47%) and nearly as many independents (44%) think the affordability of health care is a very big problem for the nation's economy; just 28% of Republicans agree. Similar gaps exist with respect to energy and gas prices and the federal budget deficit, where Republicans are more sanguine than are Democrats and, to a lesser extent, independents.

Democrats are also far more concerned than Republicans about the job situation, a factor which weighs heavily in overall evaluations of the national economy. Three-in-ten Democrats say jobs are a very big problem for the country, compared with 17% of Republicans. Among Democrats who take this view, fully 88% say the economy is in only fair or poor shape.

The latest national survey by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, conducted Jan. 4-8 among 1,503 adults, finds only modest public expectations for this year's State of the Union address. Just 30% think Bush's speech will be more important than speeches in past years, down slightly compared with last year and 2004 (34% each); roughly half (47%) say Bush's address will be about as important as the speeches of recent years. In January 2002, a few months after the 9/11 attacks, 54% said Bush's speech that year would be more important. And the following year, as the war with Iraq loomed, nearly as many Americans (52%) felt Bush's address would carry greater importance.



As in recent years, the public gives highest priority to protecting the country against terrorism, along with dealing with a range of domestic issues including education, the economy and

jobs. Public sentiment in favor of a greater focus on domestic issues increased sharply in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, and it is still predominant, although not nearly to the extent it was in the fall. Currently, 57% say it is more important for President Bush to focus on domestic policy than foreign policy, down from 64% who expressed that view in October. The public is about evenly split over whether it is more important for Bush to focus on domestic policy (42%) or the war on terror (39%); in September and October, half or more said Bush should pay greater attention to domestic matters than the war on terror (56%, 50% respectively).

The survey also finds some specific domestic priorities of greater importance to the public in 2006. Compared with a year ago, significantly more people say that dealing with the nation’s energy problems (up 11 points), reducing crime (nine points) and protecting the environment (eight points) should rate as top policy priorities for President Bush and Congress. More people now rate these goals as major priorities than at the start of any year since 2001. In addition, regulating health maintenance organizations (HMOs) and dealing with the nation’s moral breakdown also has gained ground over the past year.

<b>Policy Priorities Growing in Importance</b>			
	Jan	Jan	
<i>% rating as top priority...</i>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>Change</u>
	%	%	
Dealing w/ energy	47	58	+11
Reducing crime	53	62	+9
Protecting environment	49	57	+8
Regulating HMOs	54	60	+6
Dealing w/ morality	41	47	+6

By contrast, there have been notable declines in the percentage who rate strengthening the economy and the military as major policy goals. While, two-thirds of Americans (66%) rate strengthening the economy as a top priority, this represents a decline from January 2005 (75%). And the percentage who rate strengthening the military as a top priority has declined 10 points, owing largely to a decrease among Democrats (14 points since January 2005).

**Modest Economic Expectations**

Positive ratings for the economy have risen since October, when just a quarter of Americans said the economy was good or excellent. But fewer Americans see the economy going well today (34%) than did so a year ago (39%), or two years ago (43%).

The public’s mixed views of the economy are reflected in the outlook for the coming year. One-in-five think things will be better a year from now, but a comparable number (22%) say things will be worse, while the majority see no changes on the horizon. This again marks an improvement from October, when many thought that the hurricanes and high gas prices signified trouble for the economy in the future. But a year ago there was significantly more optimism than pessimism as Bush started his second term.

**Biggest Problems: Energy, Health Costs**

Gasoline, home heating, and health care prices lead the public’s list of economic problems. Fully 82% of Americans cite gas prices as a very big (43%) or big (39%) problem for the nation’s economy and 87% say the same about home heating and energy prices (42% very big, 45% big).

The affordability of health care ranks just as high – nine-in-ten say this is either a very big (40%) or big (50%) problem for the nation’s economy.

Fewer Americans cite other concerns as serious problems for the nation’s economy. The federal budget deficit is rated as a very big problem by 32%, and 29% see the

<b>January Economic Ratings</b>				
<i>Economic conditions today...</i>				
	Excellent/ <u>Good</u> %	Only fair/ <u>Poor</u> %	<u>DK</u> %	
Jan 2006	34	64	2=100	
<i>Oct 2005</i>	25	74	1=100	
Jan 2005	39	60	1=100	
Jan 2004 <sup>1</sup>	43	57	*=100	
Jan 2003 <sup>1</sup>	22	78	*=100	
Jan 2002 <sup>1</sup>	29	70	1=100	
Feb 2001 <sup>1</sup>	51	49	*=100	
<i>Bush Low Point</i>				
<i>Feb 2003<sup>1</sup></i>	18	82	*=100	
<i>Expectations for the coming year...</i>				
	<u>Better</u> %	<u>Worse</u> %	<u>Same</u> %	<u>DK</u> %
Jan 2006	20	22	55	3=100
<i>Oct 2005</i>	20	32	45	3=100
Jan 2005	27	18	52	3=100
Feb 2004	39	12	41	8=100
Jan 2003	30	20	44	6=100
Jan 2002	44	17	36	3=100
Jan 2001 <sup>2</sup>	18	33	44	5=100
<sup>1</sup> Gallup Organization <sup>2</sup> Newsweek				

<b>Problems Facing the U.S. Economy</b>					
	<u>Very big</u> <u>problem</u> %	<u>Big</u> <u>problem</u> %	<u>Small</u> <u>problem</u> %	<u>Not a</u> <u>problem</u> %	<u>DK</u> %
Gas prices	43	39	13	3	2=100
Home heating prices	42	45	9	2	2=100
Health care affordability	40	50	7	1	2=100
The fed. budget deficit	32	45	13	3	7=100
Retirement affordability	29	46	16	4	5=100
The job situation	26	44	19	7	4=100
Housing prices	26	39	21	9	5=100
Inflation	20	41	25	10	4=100
Interest rates	13	35	30	16	6=100

affordability of retirement as equally serious. Roughly a quarter rate both the job situation and housing prices as very big concerns, and both inflation and interest rates fall significantly lower in the list of economic problems.

Democrats cite all of these issues as very big problems more frequently than Republicans do, but the partisan gap is particularly notable when it comes to health care and jobs. Nearly twice as many Democrats as Republicans rate the job situation as a very big problem (30% vs. 17%).

Low-income Americans are particularly concerned about such issues as gas prices, jobs, and housing. Fully 54% of people in households earning less than \$30,000 say gas prices are a very big national problem, compared with 36% of people in households earning \$75,000 or more. Similarly, lower income respondents are twice as likely to rate the job situation and housing prices as very big problems. Inflation and interest rates, while rated lower by all groups, are also felt more by low-income Americans than those with high incomes.

	<i>Household income</i>		<i>diff</i>
	<i>Under \$30k</i>	<i>Over \$75k</i>	
<i>Rated as 'very big problem'</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	
Gas prices	54	36	+18
Home heating prices	45	37	+8
Health care affordability	42	41	+1
The fed. budget deficit	33	40	-7
Retirement affordability	32	33	-1
The job situation	33	17	+16
Housing prices	37	17	+20
Inflation	27	11	+16
Interest rates	21	6	+15

But other issues span across the economic spectrum. In particular, people in both high- and low-income households are equally likely to rate the affordability of health care as a very big national problem, and the same is true for concerns about the affordability of retirement. And people in high-income households are, if anything, slightly more likely than their low-income counterparts to rate the federal budget deficit as a very big problem.

Not surprisingly, people in different parts of the country see different problems as more important as well. Residents of the Northeast and Midwest are the most likely to rate home heating and energy prices as a very big problem, while those living in the West are far less likely

	<i>North- Mid-</i>			
	<i>east</i>	<i>west</i>	<i>South</i>	<i>West</i>
<i>Rated as 'very big problem'</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>
<b>Gas prices</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>43</b>	33
<b>Home heating prices</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>46</b>	41	34
<b>Health care affordability</b>	<b>51</b>	41	36	34
The fed. budget deficit	28	38	32	29
Retirement affordability	25	33	29	28
The job situation	26	25	27	23
<b>Housing prices</b>	20	19	28	<b>38</b>
Inflation	16	23	22	17
Interest rates	9	12	14	16

Statistically higher figures in **bold**.

to rate either home energy or gas prices as a major economic concern. Residents of the Northeast also are substantially more likely to rate the affordability of health care as a very big national problem than those in other parts of the country.

By contrast, residents of Western states are much more likely to rate housing prices as a very big problem. Fully 38% in the West say affordable housing is a very big problem, compared with just 19% in the Midwest and 20% in the Northeast.

***The Market: Fewer Bears***

By a 46% to 34% margin, more Americans are bullish than bearish on the stock market today, as the percentage saying it is a “bad time” to invest has dropped six points from May of last year. Men, college graduates and people in households with incomes of at least \$75,000 annually are the most optimistic about the stock market, with income being perhaps the most decisive factor shaping a person’s market outlook. By a 66% to 20% margin, people in high-income households think it is a good time to invest, while those in households with less than \$30,000 in annual income tend to be gloomy (44% bad, 30% good, 26% don’t know).

As with virtually all economic evaluations, Republicans are significantly more upbeat than Democrats. By more than two-to-one (58% to 26%) Republicans say now is a good time to invest, while Democrats are divided (39% good time, 41% bad time). Again, this partisan difference of opinion persists even when income is taken into account with the exception of those earning \$75,000 or more, where Democrats are just as upbeat as Republicans.

<b>Is It a Good Time to Invest in the Stock Market?</b>			
	<u>Good</u>	<u>Bad</u>	<u>DK</u>
	%	%	%
Total	46	34	20=100
May 2005	45	40	15=100
Men	55	31	14=100
Women	38	37	25=100
18-29	41	37	22=100
30-49	55	31	14=100
50-64	47	37	16=100
65+	34	33	33=100
College grad	63	23	14=100
Some college	47	36	17=100
H.S. or less	37	39	24=100
\$75k or more	66	20	14=100
\$50-\$75k	53	29	18=100
\$30-\$50k	45	41	14=100
under \$30k	30	44	26=100
Republican	58	26	16=100
Democrat	39	41	20=100
Independent	47	36	17=100

### ***Job Availability***

One-in-three Americans say that there are plenty of jobs available in their community, while 56% say jobs are difficult to find. This is largely unchanged from a year ago, and represents some improvement from a low point in 2003 when fully two-thirds said jobs were difficult to find in their community.

But when a separate group of respondents is asked whether there are plenty of *good* jobs available, the outlook is slightly more negative. By a 64% to 28% margin Americans say it is hard to find a good job where they live.

Younger people and those with less education and income are the most skeptical about job availability, as are people living in rural areas of the country. When asked about jobs generally, people over age 50 are somewhat more optimistic about employment opportunities than those who are younger. But when the question is about good jobs, this age difference largely disappears, particularly when looking at Americans age 50-64, 70% of whom say good jobs are hard to find in their community.

The difference between finding a job and finding a good job is also more noticeable to people with more education. People who have attended college are significantly more likely to say that good jobs are hard to find than they are to say that jobs generally are difficult to find. Only among those who did not attend college is this distinction largely irrelevant; however, under either form of the question those who lack a college education are the most concerned about job availability.

Similarly, seven-in-ten people living in rural areas say jobs, whether good or not, are difficult to find, while people in urban and suburban areas think more jobs are available. Suburbanites see the general employment situation more favorably, but express as much doubt about the availability of good jobs as their urban counterparts.

Democrats are far more critical of the job situation than are Republicans – 62% of

<b>Is It Hard to Find...</b>			
	A	A	
	<u>job</u>	<u>good job</u>	<u>diff</u>
	%	%	
Total	56	64	+8
Men	53	60	+7
Women	59	68	+9
18-29	61	68	+7
30-49	59	63	+4
50-64	55	70	+15
65+	47	58	+11
College grad	43	56	+13
Some college	48	62	+14
H.S. or less	67	71	+4
Urban	59	62	+3
Suburban	48	62	+14
Rural	70	74	+4
Republican	38	55	+17
Democrat	62	73	+11
Independent	67	67	0

Half of survey respondents were asked about the difficulty of finding jobs in their community, the other half about the difficulty of finding good jobs.

Democrats say jobs are hard to find in their community compared with 38% of Republicans. This difference shrinks somewhat when the question focuses on good jobs, however, as Republicans are far more likely to say these jobs are hard to find. Independents make no distinction between jobs and good jobs; two-thirds (67%) say either is hard to find.

**Priorities: Little Change at the Top**

As in recent years, defending the nation against terrorism remains the public’s leading priority for the president and Congress. Eight-in-ten rate terrorism defense as a top policy priority, which is largely unchanged from past years.

As was the case a year ago, improving education and strengthening the economy rate behind protecting the country against terrorism. However, the number rating the economy as a top priority has declined significantly over the past year (from 75% to 66%). Roughly as many now view improving the job situation as a top priority as say that about improving the overall economy.

Several domestic priorities have moved up on the public’s agenda since January 2005. More than six-in-ten (62%) rate reducing crime as a top priority, up from 53% last year. That is the highest number citing crime prevention as a leading priority since January 2001 (76%).

Dealing with the nation’s energy problem and protecting the environment have both become

<b>Top Domestic Priorities for Bush and Congress</b>						
<i>Percent considering each as a “top priority”</i>	<u>Jan 2001</u>	<u>Jan 2002</u>	<u>Jan 2003</u>	<u>Jan 2004</u>	<u>Jan 2005</u>	<b>Jan 2006</b>
Defending US against terrorism	--	83	81	78	75	<b>80</b>
Improving educational system	78	66	62	71	70	<b>67</b>
Strengthening nation’s economy	81	71	73	79	75	<b>66</b>
Improving the job situation	60	67	62	67	68	<b>65</b>
Securing Social Security	74	62	59	65	70	<b>64</b>
Securing Medicare	71	55	56	62	67	<b>62</b>
Reducing crime	76	53	47	53	53	<b>62</b>
Regulating HMOs	66	50	48	50	54	<b>60</b>
Providing insurance to uninsured	61	43	45	54	60	<b>59</b>
Dealing with energy problems	46*	42	40	46	47	<b>58</b>
Protecting the environment	63	44	39	49	49	<b>57</b>
Dealing with problems of poor	63	44	48	50	59	<b>55</b>
Reducing budget deficit	--	35	40	51	56	<b>55</b>
Reducing middle class taxes	66	43	--	44	48	<b>51</b>
Stopping illegal immigrants	--	--	--	--	--	<b>51</b>
Increasing minimum wage	40*	--	--	38	43	<b>47</b>
Dealing with moral breakdown	51	45	39	45	41	<b>47</b>
Strengthening the military	48	52	48	48	52	<b>42</b>
Tax simplification	--	--	--	--	39	<b>40</b>
Dealing with global trade	37	25	--	32	32	<b>30</b>
Making investment tax cuts permanent	--	--	--	--	--	<b>22</b>
Immigrant guest worker program	--	--	--	--	--	<b>17</b>

\* Asked in early September 2001 -- Not asked

more important priorities in the public's view. A solid majority (58%) now says dealing with energy is a top priority, up 11 points from January 2005. About as many (57%) rate protecting the environment as a top priority; a year ago, 49% rated environmental protection as a top policy priority.

By contrast, fewer Americans now view strengthening the military as a top priority than in recent years. Overall, 42% rate strengthening the military as a leading policy priority. From 2001 through 2005, about half of the public consistently rated this objective as a top priority (52% in 2005).

***Crime's Comeback***

Government statistics show that crime rates have fallen dramatically since the 1990s, but crime concerns are making a comeback with the public. Crime is emerging as a more important priority particularly among college graduates, young people and women. A year ago, about twice as many of those with a high school education as college graduates cited reducing crime as a top national priority. But that gap has narrowed considerably as the number of college graduates who rate this as a top priority has risen by 19 points (from 32% to 51%).

Fully seven-in-ten women (69%) view reducing crime as a top priority. That represents a 13-point increase over the past year and is by far the largest percentage of women expressing this view since January 2001 (78%). Crime concern among young people also has risen sharply; 68% of those under age 30 say reducing crime should be a top priority, up from just 50% last year.

<b>Crime Concern Growing</b>			
	Jan 2005	Jan 2006	Change
<i>Reducing crime a top priority...</i>	%	%	
Total	53	62	+9
Men	50	54	+4
Women	56	69	+13
College grad+	32	51	+19
Some college	48	59	+11
HS or less	68	70	+2
Northeast	51	58	+7
Midwest	47	60	+13
South	60	66	+6
West	49	62	+13
18-29	50	68	+18
30-49	52	58	+6
50-64	54	58	+4
65+	59	70	+11
Republican	48	62	+14
Independent	54	56	+2
Democrat	54	67	+13

***Party Divides Persist***

Republicans and Democrats are deeply divided over the nation's policy priorities for the coming year. As in past years, the largest gaps are over expanding government assistance for the needy and protecting the environment.

Nearly twice as many Democrats as Republicans say that dealing with the problems of the poor should be a top priority for the president and Congress (69% vs. 36%). The differences are only

somewhat smaller over providing health insurance for the uninsured and protecting the environment.

The environment is emerging as a bigger concern among members of both parties, though differences over the importance of this issue have not narrowed. Four-in-ten Republicans (41%) now rate protecting the environment a top priority, up from 32% in January 2005. About two-thirds of Democrats (68%) believe protecting the environment should rate as a top priority, up 10 points from a year ago.

Similarly, there has been a comparable rise in the percentages of Republicans and Democrats who rate dealing with the nation's energy problem as a top priority (nine points among Republicans, seven points among Democrats). There also has been a sharp increase in the number of independents who view this as a major priority (from 45% in 2005 to 60% this year).

As in past years, more Republicans than Democrats view security issues as top priorities. The differences are particularly notable – and growing – when it comes to strengthening the military.

A solid majority of Republicans (56%) rate strengthening the military as a top policy priority, compared with just 34% of Democrats. While fewer of those in both parties see this as a top priority than did so last year, the decline has been larger among Democrats (14 points vs. six points among Republicans). The percentage of Democrats rating a stronger military as a top priority is now at its lowest point in a measure dating to 2001.

<b>Partisan Gaps Over Priorities</b>			
<i>Percent considering each as a "top priority"</i>	Repub- <u>licans</u>	Demo- <u>crats</u>	<i>R-D <u>diff.</u></i>
Dealing with problems of poor	36	69	-33
Providing insurance to uninsured	41	71	-30
Protecting the environment	41	68	-27
Increasing minimum wage	33	55	-22
Securing Medicare	53	71	-18
Reducing budget deficit	45	62	-17
Improving educational system	55	72	-17
Regulating HMOs	52	67	-15
Improving job situation	58	72	-14
Dealing with energy	52	61	-9
Strengthening nation's economy	61	69	-8
Dealing with global trade	27	34	-7
Reducing crime	62	67	-5
Reducing middle class taxes	49	54	-5
Securing Social Security	59	64	-5
Making tax cuts permanent	24	21	-3
Simplifying tax code	42	38	+4
Guest worker program	18	14	+4
Reducing illegal immigration	56	51	+5
Dealing with moral breakdown	54	48	+6
Defending US against terrorism	86	76	+10
Strengthening the military	56	34	+22

<b>Stronger Military a Declining Priority for Democrats</b>				
	<i>Strengthening military a top priority</i>			<i>R-D <u>Diff</u></i>
	<u>All</u> %	<u>Rep</u> %	<u>Dem</u> %	
Jan 2006	42	56	34	+22
Jan 2005	52	62	48	+14
Jan 2004	48	61	43	+18
Jan 2003	48	59	42	+17
Jan 2002	52	68	50	+18
Jan 2001	48	63	45	+18

### **Deficit Politics**

A solid majority of Democrats (62%) rate reducing the budget deficit as a top policy priority, compared with just 45% of Republicans. The partisan gap on this issue has not narrowed in recent years, and represents a major shift from the 1990s. In 1997, for instance, two-thirds of Republicans (66%) viewed deficit reduction as a major priority, versus 54% of Democrats.

Conservative Republicans, in particular, do not view deficit reduction as an important goal. Just 36% of conservative Republicans rate this as a top priority; far more conservative Republicans rate cutting middle-class taxes (48%) and simplifying the tax code (46%) as top policy priorities.

#### **Trading Places on the Deficit**

	<i>Reducing deficit a top priority</i>			<i>R-D Diff</i>
	<u>All</u> %	<u>Rep</u> %	<u>Dem</u> %	
Jan 2006	55	45	62	-17
Jan 2005	56	48	64	-16
Jan 2004	51	44	57	-13
Jan 2003	40	38	48	-10
Jan 2002	35	27	41	-14
Jan 1997	60	66	54	+12

### **Half View Tougher Immigration Controls as Top Priority**

Roughly half of the public (51%) views tighter restrictions on illegal immigration as a top priority. By contrast, only a third as many (17%) say the same about a proposal to allow immigrants to enter legally and work in the U.S. temporarily before returning home. The public is divided over the merits of such a “guest worker” program – 47% are in favor while about the same number (46%) are opposed.

The modest five-point partisan gap over restricting illegal immigration obscures other significant differences over this issue. For instance, two-thirds of those ages 65 and older (67%) rate tougher immigration restrictions as a top priority. Far fewer younger people – including just 39% of those under age 30 – view this goal as important. In addition, a solid majority of high school graduates (59%) believe tougher immigration restrictions should be a top priority, while fewer than four-in-ten college graduates agree (36%).

There also is a deep ideological divide over the importance of cracking down on illegal immigration. A solid majority of self-described conservatives (63%) view this as a top priority compared with about half of moderates (48%) and just 39% of liberals.

#### **Make it Tougher for Illegal Immigrants to Enter U.S.**

	<u>Top priority</u> %
Total	51
18-29	39
30-49	51
50-64	50
65+	67
College grad	36
Some college	51
HS or less	59
Protestant	56
White evangelical	64
White mainline	46
Catholic	47
White non-Hisp.	52
Conservative	63
Moderate	48
Liberal	39

***Divided Over ‘Guest Workers’***

The goal of making it easier for immigrants to legally work in the U.S. for limited time periods rates as a relatively low priority among all demographic and political groups. Fewer than a quarter in every group rate this as a major priority for the president and Congress.

As previous Pew studies have shown, the underlying proposal of allowing immigrants to work legally in the U.S. draws support from both liberal Democrats (56% favor) and conservative Republicans (55%). By contrast, groups in the middle of the political spectrum – especially conservative and moderate Democrats – are more skeptical of this idea.

Nearly six-in-ten college graduates (59%) favor letting immigrants work in the U.S. temporarily, compared with 39% of those with a high school education. There also are regional differences in opinions about this policy. Westerners favor this proposal by 52%-39%, while Midwesterners on balance are opposed (by 52%-44%).

<b>Allow Immigrants to Work in U.S. Temporarily</b>			
	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>DK</u>
	%	%	%
Total	47	46	7=100
Cons Rep	55	41	4=100
Mod/Lib Rep	52	46	2=100
Independent	47	47	6=100
Mod/Cons Dem	42	52	6=100
Liberal Dem	56	36	8=100
College Grad	59	36	5=100
HS or less	39	53	8=100
Northeast	48	42	10=100
Midwest	44	52	4=100
South	47	47	6=100
West	52	39	9=100

***Extending Bush’s Tax Cuts***

Half of Americans approve of the major cuts in federal income tax rates passed by President Bush and Congress in recent years, while 38% disapprove and 12% have no opinion one way or the other. There has been no significant shift in public backing of these tax cuts over the past three years.

Focusing the question specifically on the tax reductions on capital gains and stock dividends has no impact on public reactions. Half of Americans support extending reductions in taxes on investment income such as capital gains and profits from stock dividends, while 35% believe these tax cuts should not be extended.

Extending the tax cuts on dividends and capital gains is more popular among high income Americans – 61% of

<b>Half Support Extending Tax Cuts</b>			
<i>Recent major cuts in federal income tax rates</i>			
	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Dis-approve</u>	<u>DK</u>
	%	%	%
<b>Jan 2006</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>12=100</b>
Jan 2005	51	41	8=100
Mar 2004	53	38	9=100
Aug 2003	54	37	9=100
<i>Extend tax cuts on capital gains and stock dividends into the future?</i>			
	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>DK</u>
	%	%	%
<b>Jan 2006</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>15=100</b>

people in households bringing in \$50,000 or more annually favor the extension, compared with 48% of those between \$30,000 and \$50,000 and just 42% of those whose household income is below \$30,000. And there also is a stark partisan divide. Republicans favor extending these tax cuts by a 73% to 18% margin, while Democrats oppose the extension by a 53% to 32% margin. Independents tend to support extending the tax cuts on investment income (54% favor, 35% oppose). In all cases, reactions to extending the dividend and capital gains tax cuts are indistinguishable from overall support and opposition to the tax cuts more generally.

***Drilling in ANWR***

Public support for allowing oil and gas drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska, which rose in September as gas prices surged, has declined. Currently, 47% are opposed to opening the refuge to drilling while 44% favor that action. In September, 50% supported oil and gas drilling in ANWR, while 42% were opposed.

Opinion among Democrats has fluctuated significantly on this issue over the past year. In March 2005, just 29% of Democrats favored opening the reserve to drilling, a figure which jumped to 42% following Katrina, and has dropped back to 33% today. By comparison, roughly two-thirds of Republicans have consistently favored allowing drilling in ANWR.

	March <u>2005</u>	Sept <u>2005</u>	Jan <u>2006</u>
<i>Allow oil/gas drilling in Alaska...</i>	%	%	%
Total	42	50	44
Republican	63	64	67
Democrat	29	42	33
Independent	38	45	39

There is a sizable generation gap over the question of drilling in ANWR; people under age 30 oppose the idea by two-to-one (61% to 30%), while people ages 65 and older favor it by two-to-one (56% to 27%). Those between ages 30 and 64 are divided evenly.

Education and income have little to do with peoples' views on this issue. College graduates are no more prone to support or oppose the policy than are people who never attended college. Household income is not much of a factor in views on ANWR drilling, although those with low incomes (under \$30,000 annually) are less supportive than others.

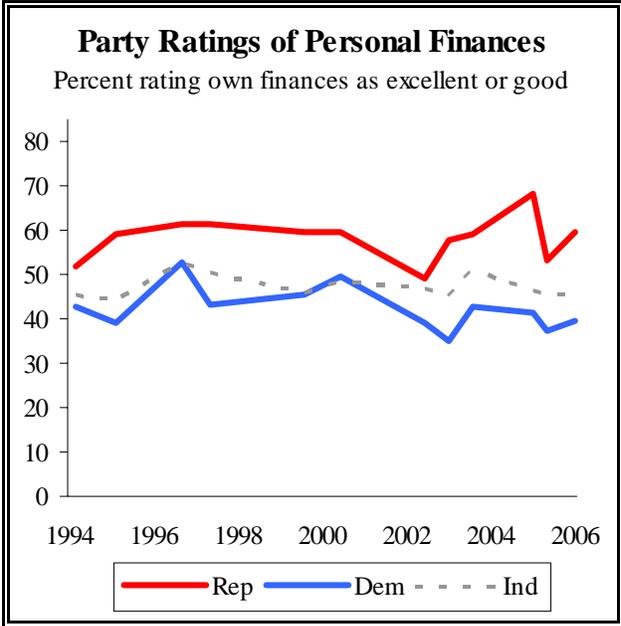
Public views on ANWR are closely related to the overall priority they place on protecting the environment – those who say environmental protection should be a top priority for the president and Congress in the coming year mostly oppose allowing drilling, while those who rate the environment as a lower priority generally favor the idea. But public views on ANWR are not linked to how much emphasis people place on dealing with the nation’s energy problems. Those who rate this as a top policy priority have about the same views of opening ANWR to drilling as those who do not.

**Little Change in Personal Concerns**

Thinking about their own personal economic situation, Americans feel that they face many problems but are optimistic about the future. About as many say their own financial situation is excellent or good (46%) as say they are in only fair or poor shape (52%). However, 61% think their situation will improve over the next year, while just 19% expect their situation to get worse. Saving for both retirement and health care expenses loom large on people’s minds, as do college expenses for those with children or grandchildren.

<b>Allow Drilling in ANWR?</b>			
	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>DK</u>
	%	%	%
Total	44	47	9=100
Men	48	45	7=100
Women	40	49	11=100
18-29	30	61	9=100
30-49	45	47	8=100
50-64	46	48	6=100
65+	56	27	17=100
College grad	45	50	5=100
Some college	45	50	5=100
H.S. or less	42	44	14=100
\$75k or more	45	48	7=100
\$50-\$75k	51	42	7=100
\$30-\$50k	42	53	5=100
Under \$30k	39	49	12=100
<i>Protecting the environment...</i>			
Top priority	35	57	8=100
Not top priority	59	32	9=100
<i>Nation’s energy supply</i>			
Top priority	43	50	7=100
Not top priority	43	45	12=100

In many respects, these evaluations have not changed in recent years, reflecting the fact that views of personal finances are considerably more stable than perceptions of national economic conditions. The partisan gap in personal financial evaluations is much more modest than differences over national economic conditions. Republicans, who have higher household incomes than Democrats, consistently take more positive views of their own finances than do independents or Democrats. These differences have remained fairly stable for more than a decade.



Currently, 60% of Republicans rate their personal financial situation as good or excellent, compared with 45% of independents and 40% of Democrats. Majorities in all three groups feel their finances will improve over the next year; 70% of Republicans expect their personal finance to improve a lot or some over the next year, compared with 61% of independents and 59% of Democrats.

**Specific Concerns**

In several areas, Americans are feeling less personal economic stress today than was the case five years ago. The percent saying they are very concerned about being unable to afford necessary health care when a family member gets sick has dropped from 60% to 50% since February 2001, and the proportion very

	<u>2/01</u>	<u>6/02</u>	<u>2/03</u>	<u>1/04</u>	<u>5/05</u>	<u>1/06</u>	<u>01-06</u> <u>change</u>
<i>Very concerned about...</i>	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Health care	60	61	59	53	49	50	-10
Retirement	55	54	56	50	47	46	-9
Job loss	34	40	41	35	30	29	-5

worried about not having enough money for their retirement is also down from 55% to 46% over the same time period. Similarly, the share of Americans very concerned about losing a job or taking a cut in pay peaked at 41% in 2003, but stands at just 29% today.

The drop in these concerns has occurred across the political and economic spectrum. While poorer people are far more worried about these types of problems in their lives than high-income individuals, both groups feel better today than they did in 2001. And similarly, Republicans continue to feel more confident about their finances than Democrats, with both expressing less concern today than five years ago.

	<i>Very concerned about affording retirement</i>			<i>Very concerned about affording health costs</i>		
	<u>2001</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>change</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>change</u>
	%	%		%	%	
Total	55	46	-9	60	50	-10
18-29	51	47	-4	56	55	-1
30-49	55	52	-3	56	49	-7
50-64	55	48	-7	64	49	-15
65+	46	29	-17	58	46	-12
\$75k or more	38	28	-10	37	25	-12
\$50-\$75k	51	47	-4	55	44	-11
\$30-\$50k	54	56	+2	65	58	-7
under \$30k	66	59	-7	74	68	-6
Republican	42	32	-10	50	38	-12
Democrat	64	55	-9	72	59	-13
Independent	56	52	-4	54	50	-4

Increased financial security over the past five years does not span all generations, however. Younger people today, for the most part, feel just as

economically unstable today as they did in 2001. But older Americans, particularly those age 65 and older, feel considerably more secure. For example, in 2001 46% of seniors were very concerned

about having enough money to last through retirement – just 29% express this same concern today.

**Personal Debt**

About a quarter of Americans say they owe either a lot (8%) or a little (15%) more than they can afford on credit cards and other loans – not including home mortgages. Most say the personal debt they carry is manageable, while 21% say they have no debt at all. These figures are largely unchanged from recent years, as is the way debt is distributed. Roughly three-in-ten lower income Americans say they owe more than they can afford, twice the rate as among people in households earning \$75,000 or more annually (16%). People under age 50 are also more likely to feel they are overextended (28%) when compared with people age 50-64 (21%) and especially seniors, only 9% of whom say they owe more in personal debt than they can afford (fully 45% of seniors say they have no debt outside of a mortgage).

**Afghanistan Not Forgotten**

More than four years after the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, the vast majority of Americans (77%) are aware that the U.S. still has forces deployed there. There also is strong support for the use of military force in Afghanistan, in contrast to the divided opinion over using force in Iraq. Nearly seven-in-ten (69%) say using military force in Afghanistan was the right thing to do, while just 20% disagree.

There are partisan differences in opinions of the war in Afghanistan, but they are much smaller than the differences over Iraq. Nearly all Republicans (91%) feel the decision to use force in Afghanistan was right, compared with smaller majorities of independents (70%) and Democrats (56%). By contrast, more than three times as many Republicans as Democrats support the decision to use force in Iraq (80% vs. 23%).

<b>Americans Support Afghanistan War, Divide Over Iraq</b>				
<i>Military action in...</i>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Rep</u>	<u>Dem</u>	<u>Ind</u>
	%	%	%	%
<i>Afghanistan</i>				
Right decision	69	91	56	70
Wrong decision	20	4	31	20
Don't know	<u>11</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>10</u>
	100	100	100	100
<i>Iraq</i>				
Right decision	45	80	23	41
Wrong decision	47	15	71	52
Don't know	<u>8</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>7</u>
	100	100	100	100
<i>Difference in "Right"</i>	-24	-11	-33	-29

While most Americans favor the use of force in Afghanistan, there are significant divisions over whether the mission has been successful. A narrow majority (52%) feels the war against terrorist organizations in Afghanistan has been mostly successful, while 30% believe it has mostly been a failure. There is a similar balance of opinion regarding views of whether U.S. efforts to establish a stable democratic government in Afghanistan have been successful.

By nearly seven-to-one (72%-11%), Republicans feel war against terrorists in Afghanistan has been mostly successful; Democrats are evenly divided (41% mostly successful/40% mostly a failure). In several demographic groups – notably senior citizens, those with a high school education and women – relatively large percentages express no opinion on this issue. This suggests that while the public is still aware that U.S. forces remain in Afghanistan, many Americans are not closely following developments in the country.

	<b>War Against Terrorists in Afghanistan...</b>		
	Mostly a <u>Success</u>	Mostly a <u>Failure</u>	<u>DK</u>
	%	%	%
Total	52	30	18=100
Men	61	29	10=100
Women	44	31	25=100
White	56	25	19=100
Black	34	45	21=100
Republican	72	11	17=100
Democrat	41	40	19=100
Independent	52	35	13=100
College grad	60	28	12=100
Some college	60	24	16=100
H.S. or less	44	33	23=100
18-29	55	31	14=100
30-49	55	32	13=100
50-64	50	29	21=100
65+	46	25	29=100

## ABOUT THIS SURVEY

Results for this survey are based on telephone interviews conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International among a nationwide sample of 1,503 adults, 18 years of age or older, from January 4-8, 2006. For results based on the total sample, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling is plus or minus 3 percentage points. For results based on form 1 (N=748) and form 2 (N=755) the sampling error is plus or minus 4 percentage points.

In addition to sampling error, one should bear in mind that question wording and practical difficulties in conducting surveys can introduce error or bias into the findings of opinion polls.

### Survey Methodology in Detail

The sample for this survey is a random digit sample of telephone numbers selected from telephone exchanges in the continental United States. The random digit aspect of the sample is used to avoid "listing" bias and provides representation of both listed and unlisted numbers (including not-yet-listed). The design of the sample ensures this representation by random generation of the last two digits of telephone numbers selected on the basis of their area code, telephone exchange, and bank number.

The telephone exchanges were selected with probabilities proportional to their size. The first eight digits of the sampled telephone numbers (area code, telephone exchange, bank number) were selected to be proportionally stratified by county and by telephone exchange within county. That is, the number of telephone numbers randomly sampled from within a given county is proportional to that county's share of telephone numbers in the U.S. Only working banks of telephone numbers are selected. A working bank is defined as 100 contiguous telephone numbers containing one or more residential listings.

The sample was released for interviewing in replicates. Using replicates to control the release of sample to the field ensures that the complete call procedures are followed for the entire sample. The use of replicates also ensures that the regional distribution of numbers called is appropriate. Again, this works to increase the representativeness of the sample.

As many as 10 attempts were made to complete an interview at every sampled telephone number. The calls were staggered over times of day and days of the week to maximize the chances of making a contact with a potential respondent. All interview breakoffs and refusals were re-contacted at least once in order to attempt to convert them to completed interviews. In each contacted household, interviewers asked to speak with the "youngest male, 18 years of age or older, who is now at home." If there is no eligible man at home, interviewers asked to speak with "the youngest female, 18 years of age or older, who is now at home." This systematic respondent selection technique has been shown empirically to produce samples that closely mirror the population in terms of age and gender.

Non-response in telephone interview surveys produces some known biases in survey-derived estimates because participation tends to vary for different subgroups of the population, and these subgroups are likely to vary also on questions of substantive interest. In order to compensate for these known biases, the sample data are weighted in analysis.

The demographic weighting parameters are derived from a special analysis of the most recently available Census Bureau's Current Population Survey (March 2005). This analysis produced population parameters for the demographic characteristics of households with adults 18 or older, which are then compared with the sample characteristics to construct sample weights. The analysis only included households in the continental United States that contain a telephone.

The weights are derived using an iterative technique that simultaneously balances the distributions of all weighting parameters.

## ABOUT THE CENTER

The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press is an independent opinion research group that studies attitudes toward the press, politics and public policy issues. We are sponsored by The Pew Charitable Trusts and are one of six projects that make up the Pew Research Center, a nonpartisan "fact tank" that provides information on the issues, attitudes and trends shaping America and the world.

The Center's purpose is to serve as a forum for ideas on the media and public policy through public opinion research. In this role it serves as an important information resource for political leaders, journalists, scholars, and public interest organizations. All of our current survey results are made available free of charge.

All of the Center's research and reports are collaborative products based on the input and analysis of the entire Center staff consisting of:

Andrew Kohut, Director

Jodie Allen, Senior Editor

Scott Keeter, Director of Survey Research

Carroll Doherty and Michael Dimock, Associate Directors

Carolyn Funk and Richard Wike, Senior Project Director

Nilanthi Samaranayake, Peyton Craighill, Nicole Speulda and Courtney Kennedy, Project Directors

Kate DeLuca Staff Assistant

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS**  
**JANUARY 2006 NEWS INTEREST INDEX**  
**FINAL TOPLINE**  
**January 4-8, 2006**  
**N= 1,503**

**QUESTION 1 IN PREVIOUS RELEASE**

Q.2 All in all, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way things are going in this country today?

	<u>Satisfied</u>	<u>Dissatisfied</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
January, 2006	34	61	5=100
Late November, 2005	34	59	7=100
Early October, 2005	29	65	6=100
July, 2005	35	58	7=100
Late May, 2005	39	57	4=100
February, 2005	38	56	6=100
January, 2005	40	54	6=100
December, 2004	39	54	7=100
Mid-October, 2004	36	58	6=100
July, 2004	38	55	7=100
May, 2004	33	61	6=100
Late February, 2004	39	55	6=100
Early January, 2004	45	48	7=100
December, 2003	44	47	9=100
October, 2003	38	56	6=100
August, 2003	40	53	7=100
April, 2003 <sup>1</sup>	50	41	9=100
January, 2003	44	50	6=100
November, 2002	41	48	11=100
September, 2002 <sup>2</sup>	41	55	4=100
Late August, 2002	47	44	9=100
May, 2002	44	44	12=100
March, 2002	50	40	10=100
Late September, 2001	57	34	9=100
Early September, 2001	41	53	6=100
June, 2001	43	52	5=100
March, 2001	47	45	8=100
February, 2001	46	43	11=100
January, 2001	55	41	4=100
October, 2000 (RVs)	54	39	7=100
September, 2000	51	41	8=100
June, 2000	47	45	8=100
April, 2000	48	43	9=100
August, 1999	56	39	5=100
January, 1999	53	41	6=100

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1 Asked April 8, 2003 only; N=395.

2 The September 2002 trend is from a Pew Global Attitudes Project survey, fielded August 19 to September 8, 2002 and released December 4, 2002.

**Q.2 CONTINUED...**

	<u>Satisfied</u>	<u>Dissatisfied</u>	<u>No opinion</u>
November, 1998	46	44	10=100
Early September, 1998	54	42	4=100
Late August, 1998	55	41	4=100
Early August, 1998	50	44	6=100
February, 1998	59	37	4=100
January, 1998	46	50	4=100
September, 1997	45	49	6=100
August, 1997	49	46	5=100
January, 1997	38	58	4=100
July, 1996	29	67	4=100
March, 1996	28	70	2=100
October, 1995	23	73	4=100
June, 1995	25	73	2=100
April, 1995	23	74	3=100
July, 1994	24	73	3=100
March, 1994	24	71	5=100
October, 1993	22	73	5=100
September, 1993	20	75	5=100
May, 1993	22	71	7=100
January, 1993	39	50	11=100
January, 1992	28	68	4=100
November, 1991	34	61	5=100
Late February, 1991 ( <i>Gallup</i> )	66	31	3=100
August, 1990	47	48	5=100
May, 1990	41	54	5=100
January, 1989	45	50	5=100
September, 1988 ( <i>RVs</i> )	50	45	5=100
May, 1988	41	54	5=100
January, 1988	39	55	6=100

**QUESTION 3 IN PREVIOUS RELEASE**

Q.4 Now thinking about George W. Bush's upcoming State of the Union address... Do you consider this year's State of the Union address to be MORE important than past years', LESS important, or about as important as past years'?

		Mid				--- Clinton ---	
		Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan
		<u>2005</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>1999</u>
30	More important	34	34	52	54	16	27
14	Less important	9	9	6	4	22	16
47	Same	47	49	35	36	53	51
<u>9</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>10</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>6</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100

**ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=748]:**

Q.5F1 Right now, which is more important for President Bush to focus on... domestic policy or foreign policy?

		Early			----- Clinton -----			
		Oct	Jan	Jan	Early Sept	Jan	Dec	Oct
		<u>2005</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1994</u>	<u>1993</u>
57	Domestic policy	64	53	52	56	86	85	76
25	Foreign policy	20	27	34	30	7	7	13
1	Neither (VOL)	1	1	*	0	*	2	*
13	Both (VOL)	12	16	11	11	5	4	7
<u>4</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100

**ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=755]:**

Q.6F2 Right now, which is more important for President Bush to focus on... domestic policy or the war on terrorism?

		Early				
		Oct	Sept	Jan	Aug	Jan
		<u>2005</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2002</u>
42	Domestic policy	50	56	40	29	33
39	War on terrorism	33	25	44	43	52
1	Neither (VOL.)	1	1	1	1	*
14	Both (VOL.)	13	12	13	22	13
<u>4</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>3</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>2</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100

**QUESTIONS 7 THROUGH 12 IN PREVIOUS RELEASE**

**NO QUESTIONS 13-24**

**ASK ALL:**

Q.25 I'd like to ask you some questions about priorities for President Bush and Congress this year. As I read from a list, tell me if you think the item that I read should be a top priority, important but lower priority, not too important or should it not be done? (First,) should **(INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE; OBSERVE FORM DIFFERENCES)** be a top priority, important but lower priority, not too important, or should it not be done? (What about **(INSERT ITEM)?**)

<b><u>RANK ORDERED SUMMARY TABLE</u></b>		Top	Important	Not too	Should not	<u>DK/Ref</u>
		<u>priority</u>	but lower <u>priority</u>	<u>important</u>	<u>be done</u>	
i.F1	Defending the country from future terrorist attacks	80	18	1	*	1=100
l.F2	Improving the educational system	67	26	4	2	1=100
s.F2	Strengthening the nation's economy	66	26	5	1	2=100
a.F1	Improving the job situation	65	28	4	1	2=100
m.F2	Taking steps to make the Social Security system financially sound	64	28	4	2	2=100
n.F2	Taking steps to make the Medicare system financially sound	62	30	4	2	2=100
c.F1	Reducing crime	62	29	6	1	2=100
f.F1	Regulating health maintenance organizations (HMOs) and managed health care plans	60	28	6	3	3=100
q.F2	Providing health insurance to the uninsured	59	30	6	2	3=100
t.F2	Dealing with the nation's energy problem	58	33	6	1	2=100
e.F1	Protecting the environment	57	35	6	1	1=100
o.F2	Dealing with the problems of poor and needy people	55	36	6	1	2=100
b.F1	Reducing the budget deficit	55	35	5	1	4=100
d.F1	Reducing federal income taxes for the middle class	51	32	8	5	4=100
v.F2	Making it tougher for illegal immigrants to enter the U.S.	51	26	14	6	3=100
g.F1	Increasing the minimum wage	47	34	10	6	3=100
p.F2	Dealing with the moral breakdown in the country	47	26	14	9	4=100
r.F2	Strengthening the U.S. military	42	36	13	6	3=100
u.F2	Changing the federal income tax system to make it simpler	40	35	16	6	3=100
j.F1	Dealing with global trade issues	30	46	11	5	8=100
h.F1	Making recent tax cuts on investment income permanent	22	36	17	15	10=100
k.F1	Making it easier for immigrants to legally work in the U.S. for a limited period of time	17	32	21	27	3=100

**Q.25 FULL ITEM TRENDS**

**ASK ITEMS a THRU k OF FORM 1 ONLY [N=748]:**

	<u>Top</u>	<u>Important</u>	<u>Not too</u>	<u>Should not</u>	<u>DK/</u>
	<u>priority</u>	<u>but lower</u>	<u>important</u>	<u>be done</u>	<u>Ref</u>
a.F1 Improving the job situation	65	28	4	1	2=100
January, 2005	68	28	2	1	1=100
Mid-January, 2004	67	28	3	1	1=100
January, 2003	62	32	4	1	1=100
January, 2002	67	27	4	1	1=100
January, 2001	60	30	6	2	2=100
January, 2000	41	35	16	4	4=100
July, 1999	54	30	10	3	3=100
January, 1999	50	34	10	2	4=100
January, 1998	54	32	10	3	1=100
January, 1997	66	26	5	2	1=100
December, 1994	64	27	5	2	2=100
b.F1 Reducing the budget deficit	55	35	5	1	4=100
January, 2005	56	34	5	2	3=100
Mid-January, 2004	51	38	6	3	2=100
January, 2003	40	44	11	2	3=100
January, 2002	35	44	13	3	5=100
January, 1997	60	30	5	2	3=100
December, 1994	65	26	5	1	3=100
c.F1 Reducing crime	62	29	6	1	2=100
January, 2005	53	39	5	2	1=100
Mid-January, 2004	53	34	9	2	2=100
January, 2003	47	42	8	2	2=100
January, 2002	53	39	6	*	2=100
January, 2001	76	19	3	2	*=100
January, 2000	69	24	4	1	2=100
July, 1999	76	20	2	1	1=100
January, 1999	70	24	3	1	2=100
January, 1998	71	25	2	1	1=100
January, 1997	70	25	3	2	*=100
December, 1994	78	17	2	1	2=100
d.F1 Reducing federal income taxes for the middle class	51	32	8	5	4=100
January, 2005	48	35	8	6	3=100
Mid-January, 2004	44	37	12	6	1=100
January, 2002	43	37	11	6	3=100
January, 2001	66	26	4	3	1=100
January, 2000	54	34	7	3	2=100
July, 1999	57	30	8	4	1=100
January, 1999	52	33	8	3	4=100
January, 1998	54	33	8	3	2=100
January, 1997	42	38	10	8	2=100
December, 1994	53	32	9	3	3=100

**Q.25 CONTINUED**

		Top <u>priority</u>	Important but lower <u>priority</u>	Not too <u>important</u>	Should not <u>be done</u>	DK/ <u>Ref</u>
e.F1	Protecting the environment	57	35	6	1	1=100
	January, 2005	49	42	8	1	*=100
	Mid-January, 2004	49	40	10	1	*=100
	January, 2003	39	50	9	1	1=100
	January, 2002	44	42	12	1	1=100
	January, 2001	63	30	3	3	1=100
	January, 2000	54	37	6	2	1=100
	July, 1999	59	32	7	1	1=100
	January, 1999	52	39	7	1	1=100
	January, 1998	53	37	8	1	1=100
	January, 1997	54	35	8	2	1=100
f.F1	Regulating health maintenance organizations (HMOs) and managed health care plans	60	28	6	3	3=100
	January, 2005	54	33	7	4	2=100
	Mid-January, 2004	50	35	8	4	3=100
	January, 2003	48	38	7	3	4=100
	January, 2002	50	37	7	4	2=100
	Early September, 2001	54	34	5	5	2=100
	January, 2001	66	22	4	5	3=100
	January, 2000	56	30	7	3	4=100
	July, 1999	57	29	7	4	3=100
g.F1	Increasing the minimum wage	47	34	10	6	3=100
	January, 2005	43	39	11	6	1=100
	Mid-January, 2004	38	39	17	5	1=100
	Early September, 2001	40	40	13	6	1=100
	January, 2000	34	41	16	6	3=100
h.F1	Making recent tax cuts on investment income permanent	22	36	17	15	10=100
i.F1	Defending the country from future terrorist attacks	80	18	1	*	1=100
	January, 2005	75	21	2	1	1=100
	Mid-January, 2004	78	18	2	1	1=100
	January, 2003	81	16	2	1	0=100
	January, 2002	83	15	1	*	1=100
j.F1	Dealing with global trade issues	30	46	11	5	8=100
	January, 2005	32	47	13	2	6=100
	Mid-January, 2004	32	47	14	3	4=100
	January, 2002	25	55	13	2	5=100
	January, 2001	37	46	8	3	6=100
	January, 2000	30	48	14	1	7=100
k.F1	Making it easier for immigrants to legally work in the U.S. for a limited period of time	17	32	21	27	3=100

**Q.25 CONTINUED**

		Top	Important	Not too	Should not	DK/
		priority	but lower	important	be done	Ref
<b>ASK ITEMS 1 THRU v OF FORM 2 ONLY [N=755]:</b>		<u>priority</u>	<u>priority</u>	<u>important</u>	<u>be done</u>	<u>Ref</u>
l.F2	Improving the educational system	67	26	4	2	1=100
	January, 2005	70	25	2	2	1=100
	Mid-January, 2004	71	23	4	1	1=100
	January, 2003	62	31	4	1	2=100
	January, 2002	66	27	4	1	2=100
	Early September, 2001	76	19	3	1	1=100
	January, 2001	78	17	1	3	1=100
	January, 2000	77	18	3	1	1=100
	July, 1999	74	19	4	1	2=100
	January, 1999	74	22	2	1	1=100
	January, 1998	78	17	3	2	*=100
	January, 1997	75	20	3	2	*=100
m.F2	Taking steps to make the Social Security system financially sound	64	28	4	2	2=100
	January, 2005	70	25	2	2	1=100
	Mid-January, 2004	65	28	4	2	1=100
	January, 2003	59	34	4	1	2=100
	January, 2002	62	32	3	1	2=100
	Early September, 2001	74	22	2	1	1=100
	January, 2001	74	21	1	2	2=100
	January, 2000	69	27	2	1	1=100
	July, 1999	73	23	3	*	1=100
	January, 1999	71	24	3	1	1=100
	January, 1998	71	24	4	1	*=100
	January, 1997	75	20	2	2	1=100
n.F2	Taking steps to make the Medicare system financially sound	62	30	4	2	2=100
	January, 2005	67	29	3	1	*=100
	Mid-January, 2004	62	32	4	1	1=100
	January, 2003	56	39	4	*	1=100
	January, 2002	55	38	5	1	1=100
	January, 2001	71	24	2	1	2=100
	January, 2000	64	30	3	1	2=100
	July, 1999	71	24	3	1	1=100
	January, 1999	62	33	2	1	2=100
	January, 1998	64	31	3	1	1=100
	January, 1997	64	31	3	1	1=100
o.F2	Dealing with the problems of poor and needy people	55	36	6	1	2=100
	January, 2005	59	34	5	1	1=100
	Mid-January, 2004	50	42	6	1	1=100
	January, 2003	48	45	5	1	1=100
	January, 2002	44	46	7	2	1=100
	January, 2001	63	28	6	1	2=100
	January, 2000	55	38	4	1	2=100
	July, 1999	60	33	5	1	1=100
	January, 1999	57	37	4	1	1=100
	January, 1998	57	34	6	2	1=100
	January, 1997	57	35	6	2	*=100

**Q.25 CONTINUED**

		Top <u>priority</u>	Important but lower <u>priority</u>	Not too <u>important</u>	Should not <u>be done</u>	DK/ <u>Ref</u>
p.F2	Dealing with the moral breakdown in the country	47	26	14	9	4=100
	January, 2005	41	32	14	10	3=100
	Mid-January, 2004	45	31	13	9	2=100
	January, 2003	39	34	16	7	4=100
	January, 2002	45	32	12	7	4=100
	January, 2001	51	27	10	7	5=100
	January, 2000	48	34	9	6	3=100
	July, 1999	55	28	8	5	4=100
	January, 1999	50	31	10	5	4=100
	January, 1998	48	31	13	6	2=100
	January, 1997	52	29	10	6	3=100
q.F2	Providing health insurance to the uninsured	59	30	6	2	3=100
	January, 2005	60	30	7	2	1=100
	Mid-January, 2004	54	34	8	3	1=100
	January, 2003	45	41	10	2	2=100
	January, 2002	43	45	7	3	2=100
	January, 2001	61	31	4	2	2=100
	January, 2000	55	32	8	2	3=100
r.F2	Strengthening the U.S. military	42	36	13	6	3=100
	January, 2005	52	35	8	3	2=100
	Mid-January, 2004	48	31	15	5	1=100
	January, 2003	48	34	11	4	3=100
	January, 2002	52	37	7	2	2=100
	January, 2001	48	37	8	5	2=100
s.F2	Strengthening the nation's economy	66	26	5	1	2=100
	January, 2005	75	22	2	*	1=100
	Mid-January, 2004	79	16	2	1	2=100
	January, 2003	73	23	2	1	1=100
	January, 2002	71	26	2	*	1=100
	Early September, 2001 <sup>3</sup>	80	18	1	*	1=100
	January, 2001	81	15	2	1	1=100
	January, 2000	70	25	3	1	1=100
t.F2	Dealing with the nation's energy problem	58	33	6	1	2=100
	January, 2005	47	42	7	1	3=100
	Mid-January, 2004	46	41	10	1	2=100
	January, 2003	40	46	10	1	3=100
	January, 2002	42	46	7	2	3=100
	Early September, 2001 <sup>4</sup>	46	41	6	2	5=100

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3 In Early September 2001, January 2001 and January 2000 the item was worded: "Keeping the economy strong."

4 In Early September 2001 the item was worded: "Passing a comprehensive energy plan."

**Q.25 CONTINUED**

	<u>Top priority</u>	<u>Important but lower priority</u>	<u>Not too important</u>	<u>Should not be done</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
u.F2 Changing the federal income tax system to make it simpler	40	35	16	6	3=100
January, 2005	39	36	15	6	4=100
v.F2 Making it tougher for illegal immigrants to enter the U.S.	51	26	14	6	3=100

**QUESTIONS 26 THROUGH 27 IN PREVIOUS RELEASE**

**ASK ALL:**

**ROTATE Q.28/Q.29 BLOCK WITH Q.30/Q.31 BLOCK**

Thinking about the nation's economy...

Q.28 How would you rate economic conditions in this country today... as excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Only Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't Know Refused</u>
January, 2006	4	30	45	19	2=100
Early October, 2005	2	23	45	29	1=100
Mid-September, 2005	3	28	44	24	1=100
Mid-May, 2005	3	29	47	20	1=100
January, 2005	3	36	45	15	1=100
December, 2004	3	33	43	20	1=100
Early November, 2004 (RVs)	5	31	37	26	1=100
Mid-September, 2004	4	34	40	20	2=100
August, 2004	3	30	45	21	1=100
Late April, 2004	4	34	38	22	2=100
Late February, 2004	2	29	42	26	1=100
February 9-12, 2004 (Gallup)	2	31	46	21	0=100
January 12-15, 2004 (Gallup)	3	34	42	21	0=100
January 2-5, 2004 (Gallup)	3	40	41	16	*=100
December 11-14, 2003 (Gallup)	3	34	44	19	*=100
November 3-5, 2003 (Gallup)	2	28	49	21	*=100
October 24-26, 2003 (Gallup)	2	24	44	30	*=100
October 6-8, 2003 (Gallup)	2	20	50	27	1=100
September 8-10, 2003 (Gallup)	1	20	49	30	*=100
August 4-6, 2003 (Gallup)	1	24	52	23	*=100
February 17-19, 2003 (Gallup)	1	17	48	34	*=100
February 4-6, 2002 (Gallup)	2	26	55	16	1=100
March 5-7, 2001 (Gallup)	3	43	43	10	1=100
January 7-10, 2000 (Gallup)	19	52	23	5	1=100
January 15-17, 1999 (Gallup)	14	55	27	4	*=100
March 20-22, 1998 (Gallup)	20	46	27	7	*=100
Jan 31 - Feb 2, 1997 (Gallup)	4	38	43	15	*=100
March 15-17, 1996 (Gallup)	2	31	48	18	1=100
May 11-14, 1995 (Gallup)	2	27	50	20	1=100
January 15-17, 1994 (Gallup)	*	22	54	24	*=100
February 12-14, 1993 (Gallup)	*	14	46	39	1=100
January 3-6, 1992 (Gallup)	*	12	46	41	1=100

Q.29 A year from now, do you expect that economic conditions in the country as a whole will be better than they are at present, or worse, or just about the same as now?

	<u>Better</u>	<u>Worse</u>	<u>Same</u>	<u>Don't Know/</u> <u>Refused</u>
January, 2006	20	22	55	3=100
Early October, 2005	20	32	45	3=100
Mid-September, 2005	18	37	43	2=100
Mid-May, 2005	18	24	55	3=100
January, 2005	27	18	52	3=100
August, 2004	36	9	47	8=100
Late February, 2004	39	12	41	8=100
September, 2003	37	17	43	3=100
May, 2003	43	19	35	3=100
Late March, 2003	33	23	37	7=100
January, 2003	30	20	44	6=100
Early October, 2002	34	18	42	6=100
June, 2002	30	20	46	4=100
January, 2002	44	17	36	3=100
January, 2001 <i>Newsweek</i>	18	33	44	5=100
June, 2000	15	24	55	6=100
Early October, 1998 (RVs)	16	22	57	5=100
Early September, 1998	18	17	61	4=100
May, 1990	18	31	45	6=100
February, 1989	25	22	49	4=100
September, 1988 (RVs)	24	16	51	9=100
May, 1988	24	20	46	10=100
January, 1988	22	26	45	7=100
January, 1984 <i>Newsweek</i> (RVs)	35	13	49	3=100

Thinking about your own personal finances...

Q.30 How would you rate your own personal financial situation? Would you say you are in excellent shape, good shape, only fair shape or poor shape financially?

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Only Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Don't Know/</u> <u>Refused</u>
January, 2006	7	39	37	15	2=100
Mid- May, 2005	7	37	39	16	1=100
January, 2005	10	41	34	14	1=100
August, 2004	9	42	34	14	1=100
September, 2003	10	38	36	15	1=100
Late March, 2003	10	43	31	12	4=100
January, 2003	7	38	39	15	1=100
Early October, 2002	7	39	37	16	1=100
June, 2002	5	40	37	16	2=100
Late September, 2001	7	40	37	14	2=100
June, 2001	6	38	39	16	1=100
June, 2000	9	43	35	11	2=100
August, 1999	6	43	41	9	1=100
May, 1997	7	43	38	11	1=100
September, 1996 (RVs)	8	47	34	10	1=100
February, 1995	8	39	38	14	1=100
March, 1994	5	41	40	13	1=100
December, 1993	5	34	45	15	1=100

**Q.30 CONTINUED**

		<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Only Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	Don't Know/ <u>Refused</u>
January, 1993	<i>U.S. News &amp; World Report</i>	4	33	46	16	1=100
October, 1992	<i>U.S. News &amp; World Report</i>	6	34	40	19	1=100
August, 1992	<i>U.S. News &amp; World Report</i>	5	30	47	17	1=100
May, 1992	<i>U.S. News &amp; World Report</i>	4	35	45	15	1=100
January, 1992	<i>U.S. News &amp; World Report</i>	4	32	45	18	1=100

Q.31 Over the course of the next year, do you think the financial situation of you and your family will improve a lot, improve some, get a little worse or get a lot worse?

	<u>Improve A lot</u>	<u>Improve Some</u>	<u>Get a Little Worse</u>	<u>Get a lot Worse</u>	Stay the Same <u>(VOL.)</u>	Don't Know/ <u>Refused</u>	
January, 2006	10	51	14	5	16	4=100	
Mid-May, 2005	10	51	15	5	15	4=100	
January, 2005	10	54	14	4	15	3=100	
August, 2004	13	57	9	3	12	6=100	
September, 2003	11	53	15	4	14	3=100	
Late March, 2003	12	51	15	4	11	7=100	
January, 2003	9	51	18	5	13	4=100	
Early October, 2002	10	54	13	5	12	6=100	
June, 2002	11	55	15	4	11	4=100	
January, 2002	12	53	15	5	11	4=100	
Late September, 2001	9	46	16	4	17	8=100	
June, 2001	11	52	15	4	14	4=100	
January, 2001	11	46	18	9	12	4=100	
January, 1999	17	55	7	3	14	4=100	
May, 1997	12	56	10	2	17	3=100	
February, 1995	11	53	13	3	17	3=100	
March, 1994	10	57	11	3	16	3=100	
October, 1992	<i>U.S. News &amp; W. Report</i>	9	51	14	3	15	8=100
August, 1992	<i>U.S. News &amp; W. Report</i>	6	50	20	5	14	5=100
May, 1992	<i>U.S. News &amp; W. Report</i>	8	49	22	4	13	4=100
January, 1992	<i>U.S. News &amp; W. Report</i>	9	46	19	5	16	5=100

Q.32 Thinking about some areas of the U.S. economy for a moment... do you think **[INSERT ITEM; RANDOMIZE]** is/are a very big problem, a big problem, a small problem, or not a problem for the nation's economy today? **[HOW ABOUT...]**

		Very big <u>problem</u>	Big <u>problem</u>	Small <u>problem</u>	Not a <u>problem</u>	DK/ <u>Ref</u>
a.	The job situation	26	44	19	7	4=100
	Mid-May, 2005	25	46	21	5	3=100

**ASK ITEMS b THRU e OF FORM 1 ONLY [N=748]:**

b.F1.	Inflation	20	41	25	10	4=100
	Mid-May, 2005	17	43	26	9	5=100
c.F1	Interest rates	13	35	30	16	6=100
	Mid-May, 2005	12	31	31	20	6=100
d.F1	Housing prices	26	39	21	9	5=100
e.F1	Home heating and energy prices	42	45	9	2	2=100

**ASK ITEM f THRU i OF FORM 2 ONLY [N=755]:**

f.F2	The federal budget deficit	32	45	13	3	7=100
	Mid-May, 2005	31	47	13	3	6=100
g.F2	Gasoline prices	43	39	13	3	2=100
	Mid-May, 2005	44	41	11	3	1=100
h.F2	The affordability of health care	40	50	7	1	2=100
i.F2	The affordability of retirement	29	46	16	4	5=100

**ASK ALL:**

Q.33 Do you think now is a very good, good, bad, or very bad time to invest in the stock market?

		Mid-May <u>2005</u>
5	Very good	3
41	Good	42
27	Bad	32
7	Very bad	8
<u>20</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>15</u>
100		100

**ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=748]:**

Q.34F1 Thinking now about job opportunities where you live, would you say there are plenty of jobs available in your community or are jobs difficult to find?

	Plenty of jobs available	Jobs are difficult to find	Lots of some jobs, few of others	(VOL) DK/Refused
January, 2006	33	56	6	5=100
Early October, 2005	36	56	4	4=100
May, 2005	30	60	6	4=100
January, 2005	32	58	5	5=100
Mid-September, 2004	31	52	6	11=100
August, 2004	34	55	4	7=100
Late April, 2004	30	57	4	9=100
Late February, 2004	31	59	5	6=100
Mid-January, 2004	27	60	6	7=100
October, 2003	24	66	5	5=100
June, 2002	31	59	4	6=100
June, 2001	42	44	8	6=100
August, 1992 <i>U.S. News &amp; W. Report</i>	15	76	6	3=100
May, 1992 <i>U.S. News &amp; W. Report</i>	16	77	4	3=100
January, 1992 <i>U.S. News &amp; W. Report</i>	12	79	6	3=100

**ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=755]:**

Q.35F2 Thinking now about job opportunities where you live, would you say there are plenty of good jobs available or are good jobs difficult to find?

28	Plenty of GOOD jobs available
64	GOOD jobs are difficult to find
3	Lots of some jobs, few of others (VOL.)
<u>5</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

**ASK ALL:**

EMPLOY Are you now employed full-time, part-time or not employed?

50	Full-time
12	Part-time
38	Not employed
<u>*</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

**IF "NOT EMPLOYED" (3 IN EMPLOY) ASK [N=592]:**

EMPLOY2 Is that because you are a student, because you are retired, because you choose not to work, or because you've lost or quit a job?

	Mid-May 2005	Feb 2005	June 2002	June 2001	
4	Student	3	3	2	n/a
19	Retired	19	17	19	17
4	Choose not to work	5	6	4	4
4	Lost or quit a job	3	2	4	4
7	Other reason (VOL)	7	7	6	10
<u>*</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>*</u>	<u>*</u>
38%		37%	35%	35%	35%

**ASK IF 1 OR 2 “EMPLOYED FULL OR PART TIME” IN EMPLOY [N=908]:**

Q.36 Do you now earn enough money to lead the kind of life you want, or not?

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
January, 2006	46	53	1=100
Mid-May, 2005	40	59	1=100
May, 2004	51	48	1=100
Late February, 2004	53	46	1=100
June, 2002	43	56	1=100
January, 2001	43	56	1=100
Late September, 1999	42	58	*=100
August, 1999	39	60	1=100
Early September, 1998	43	57	*=100
November, 1997	41	59	*=100
May, 1997	46	54	*=100
June, 1996	44	56	*=100
February, 1995	41	58	1=100
July, 1994	40	60	*=100
March, 1994	44	56	*=100
October, 1992 <i>U.S. News &amp; W. Report</i>	36	63	1=100
August, 1992 <i>U.S. News &amp; W. Report</i>	33	66	1=100
May, 1992 <i>U.S. News &amp; W. Report</i>	34	65	1=100
January, 1992 <i>U.S. News &amp; W. Report</i>	39	61	*=100

**ASK IF 2 ‘NO’ IN Q.36:**

Q.36a Do you think you will be able to earn enough money in the future to lead the kind of life you want, or not?

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>DK/Ref</u>
January, 2006	28	23	2=53%
Mid-May, 2005	35	22	2=59%
May, 2004	25	19	4=48%
Late February, 2004	26	19	1=46%
June, 2002	30	23	3=56%
January, 2001	33	21	2=56%
Late September, 1999	33	23	2=58%
August, 1999	38	19	3=60%
Early September, 1998	36	20	1=57%
November, 1997	33	24	2=59%
May, 1997	34	18	2=54%
June, 1996	34	20	2=56%
February, 1995	35	20	3=58%
July, 1994	34	24	2=60%
March, 1994	33	20	3=56%
October, 1992 <i>U.S. News &amp; W. Report</i>	35	36	5=63%
August, 1992 <i>U.S. News &amp; W. Report</i>	36	25	5=66%
May, 1992 <i>U.S. News &amp; W. Report</i>	34	28	3=65%
January, 1992 <i>U.S. News &amp; W. Report</i>	34	22	5=61%

**IF NOT EMPLOYED OR DK/REF (3,9 IN EMPLOY) ASK [N=595]:**

Q.37 Do you now have enough income to lead the kind of life you want, or not?

		May <u>2004</u>	Late Feb <u>2004</u>
45	Yes	50	48
52	No	47	50
<u>3</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>
100		100	100

**IF 'NO' (2 IN Q.37) ASK:**

Q.37a Do you think you will have enough income in the future to lead the kind of life you want, or not?

		May <u>2004</u>	Late Feb <u>2004</u>
19	Yes	18	21
29	No	25	23
<u>4</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>4</u>	<u>6</u>
52%		47%	50%

**ASK ALL:**

Q.38 I'd like you to think about some concerns that people may have. How concerned are you, if at all, about [INSERT ITEM: RANDOMIZE]? Are you very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned about this? What about [NEXT ITEM]...?

		Very <u>Concerned</u>	Somewhat <u>Concerned</u>	Not too <u>Concerned</u>	Not at all <u>Concerned</u>	Does Not Apply <u>(VOL)</u>	Don't <u>Know</u>
a.	Not having enough money for your retirement	46	25	12	13	3	1=100
	Mid-May, 2005	47	25	11	14	2	1=100
	January, 2004	50	24	10	12	3	1=100
	February, 2003	56	20	9	11	3	*=100
	June, 2002	54	25	10	10	1	*=100
	February, 2001	55	24	10	9	1	1=100
	September, 2000 (RVs)	55	24	11	8	1	1=100
	October, 1999	51	27	13	8	1	*=100
	May, 1997	42	26	15	13	3	1=100
	October, 1996 (RVs)	56	24	11	7	1	1=100
	March, 1996	59	23	9	7	2	*=100
	October, 1995	48	29	10	8	4	1=100
	March, 1994 <sup>5</sup>	42	29	14	12	3	1=100
	May, 1988	34	35	15	8	4	4=100

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5 In March 1994 the question started with, "Now I'd like you to think about the future. As I read some different things that might affect your personal future, please tell me how concerned you are about each one happening to you."

**Q.38 CONTINUED...**

	Very <u>Concerned</u>	Somewhat <u>Concerned</u>	Not too <u>Concerned</u>	Not at all <u>Concerned</u>	Does Not Apply <b>(VOL)</b>	Don't Know
<b>BASED ON THOSE WHO GIVE AN ANSWER [N=1,162]:</b>						
b.	Being unable to save enough money					
	to put a child through college					
	47	20	11	22=100	-	-
	Mid-May, 2005					
	46	20	11	23=100	-	-
	January, 2004					
	46	23	13	18=100	-	-
	February, 2003					
	55	19	9	17=100	-	-
	June, 2002					
	52	19	10	19=100	-	-
	September, 2000 (RVs)					
	52	25	10	13=100	-	-
	October, 1999					
	50	24	12	14=100	-	-
	May, 1997					
	48	22	12	18=100	-	-
	October, 1996 (RVs)					
	53	21	11	15=100	-	-
	October, 1995					
	52	22	11	15=100	-	-
	March, 1994					
	51	22	11	16=100	-	-
	May, 1988					
	34	34	16	16=100	-	-
c.	Being unable to afford necessary health care when a family member gets sick					
	50	18	14	15	2	1=100
	Mid-May, 2005					
	49	18	13	18	1	1=100
	January, 2004					
	53	18	15	12	1	1=100
	February, 2003					
	59	17	10	12	2	1=100
	June, 2002					
	61	18	10	10	1	*=100
	February, 2001					
	60	18	9	11	1	1=100
	September, 2000 (RVs)					
	63	19	8	8	2	*=100
	October, 1999					
	60	19	13	7	1	*=100
	May, 1997					
	50	20	16	13	1	*=100
	October, 1996 (RVs)					
	61	18	12	7	1	1=100
	March, 1996					
	68	16	10	6	*	*=100
	October, 1995					
	66	17	9	7	1	*=100
	March, 1994					
	50	22	15	11	1	1=100
d.	Losing your job or taking a cut in pay					
	29	15	14	22	19	1=100
	Mid-May, 2005					
	30	14	14	25	17	*=100
	January, 2004					
	35	15	15	19	16	*=100
	February, 2003					
	41	12	13	18	16	*=100
	June, 2002					
	40	15	15	19	11	*=100
	February, 2001					
	34	14	15	27	9	1=100
	May, 1997					
	30	15	19	20	16	*=100
	March, 1996					
	47	16	14	15	8	*=100
	October, 1995					
	34	17	16	17	16	*=100
	March, 1994					
	28	16	14	21	21	*=100
	May, 1988 <sup>6</sup>					
	18	16	23	18	22	3=100
e.	Going too deeply into debt					
	38	19	17	23	2	1=100
	Mid-May, 2005					
	39	19	16	25	1	*=100
	January, 2004					
	41	20	17	19	2	1=100

6

In May 1988 the item was worded: "Losing your job."

Q.39 Thinking about the money you owe on credit cards and installment loans excluding your mortgage, would you say you... **(READ)**

		Mid-May <u>2005</u>	Late Feb <u>2004</u>	<u>June 2001</u>	<i>U.S. News &amp; World Report</i> <u>Jan 1992</u>	
8	Owe a lot more than you can afford		10	9	13	7
15	Owe a little more than you can afford	15	13	15	14	
30	Owe about what you can afford	33	29	31	32	
24	OR owe less than you can afford?	22	23	18	19	
15	Do not have any debts <b>(VOL)</b>	13	20	12	16	
6	No credit cards or loans <b>(VOL)</b>	5	5	10	11	
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	
100		100	100	100	100	

Q.40 Do you think your family's income is going up faster than the cost of living, staying about even with the cost of living, or falling behind the cost of living?

		<i>NBC/WSJ</i> <u>June 1996</u>
9	Going up faster	9
41	Staying about even	38
47	Falling behind	50
<u>3</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>3</u>
100		100

**NO QUESTION 41**

**QUESTION 42 IN PREVIOUS RELEASE**

**ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=748]:**

Q.43F1 In recent years, President Bush and Congress have made major cuts in federal income tax rates. Do you approve or disapprove of these tax cuts?

		Jan <u>2005</u>	March <u>2004</u> <sup>7</sup>	Aug <u>2003</u>
50	Approve		51	5354
38	Disapprove	41	38	37
<u>12</u>	Don't know/Refused <b>(VOL.)</b>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>9</u>
100		100	100	100

**ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=755]:**

Q.44F2 As you may know, in 2001 President Bush and Congress significantly reduced taxes on investment income such as capital gains and profits from stock dividends. In your view, should these tax cuts be extended into the future, or not?

50	Should be extended
35	Should not be extended
<u>15</u>	Don't know/Refused <b>(VOL.)</b>
100	

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7 In March 2004 and before the question was worded: "...President Bush and Congress have made two major cuts in federal income tax rates".

**ASK ALL:**

Q.45 Would you favor or oppose allowing oil and gas drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska?

		Mid- <u>Sept 2005</u> <sup>8</sup>	Late <u>March 2005</u>	Mid- <u>March 2005</u>
44	Favor	50	46	42
47	Oppose	42	49	46
<u>9</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>8</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>12</u>
100		100	100	100

Q.46 Would you favor or oppose a policy allowing immigrants to enter the U.S. legally and work here for a limited period of time, but then they would have to go home?

		Late <u>March 2005</u>
47	Favor	50
46	Oppose	44
<u>7</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>6</u>
100		100

**QUESTIONS 47 THROUGH 71 IN PREVIOUS RELEASE**

And just two last questions about U.S. policies...

**ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=748]:**

Q.72F1 As far as you know, is the U.S. military still involved in Afghanistan, or has the U.S. pulled out of Afghanistan?

77	Still involved
8	Pulled out
<u>15</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	

**ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=755]:**

Q.73F2 Do you think the U.S. made the right decision or the wrong decision in using military force in Afghanistan?

69	Right decision
20	Wrong decision
<u>11</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	

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8 In Mid-September 2005 and earlier the question was worded "... drilling in the Alaskan Arctic National Wildlife Refuge."

**ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=748]:**

Q.74F1 Do you think the war against terrorist organizations in Afghanistan has been mostly a success or mostly a failure?

52	Mostly a success
30	Mostly a failure
<u>18</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	

**TREND FOR COMPARISON:**

*Do you think the war against terrorist organizations in Afghanistan so far has been a success, a failure, or is it too early to tell?*

<i>Aug</i>	
<u>2002</u>	
15	<i>A success</i>
12	<i>A failure</i>
70	<i>Too early to tell</i>
<u>3</u>	<i>Don't know/Refused</i>
100	

**ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=755]:**

Q.75F2 Do you think U.S. efforts to establish a stable democratic government in Afghanistan have been mostly a success or mostly a failure?

51	Mostly a success
30	Mostly a failure
<u>19</u>	Don't know/Refused (VOL.)
100	

**ASK ALL:**

**PARTY** In politics TODAY, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or Independent?

	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>	(VOL) No <u>Preference</u>	(VOL) Other <u>Party</u>	Don't <u>know</u>
January, 2006	28	32	32	5	*	3=100
December, 2005	29	34	31	4	*	2=100
Late November, 2005	27	34	29	5	1	4=100
Early November, 2005	28	34	31	5	*	2=100
Late October, 2005	29	33	31	5	*	2=100
Early October, 2005	26	34	34	4	*	2=100
September 8-11, 2005	31	32	33	3	*	1=100
September 6-7, 2005	27	33	33	4	*	3=100
July, 2005	31	34	29	4	*	2=100
June, 2005	30	32	32	4	*	2=100
Mid-May, 2005	30	34	29	4	*	3=100
Late March, 2005	29	32	36	2	*	1=100
Mid-March, 2005	30	34	29	4	*	3=100
February, 2005	31	32	30	4	1	2=100
January, 2005	32	33	30	4	*	1=100
<b>Yearly Totals</b>						
2005	30	33	31	4	*	2=100
2004	30	33	30	4	*	3=100
2003	30	31	31	5	*	3=100
2002	30	31	30	5	1	3=100
2001	29	34	29	5	*	3=100
2001 Post-Sept 11	31	32	28	5	1	3=100
2001 Pre-Sept 11	28	35	30	5	*	2=100
2000	28	33	29	6	*	4=100
1999	27	33	34	4	*	2=100
1998	28	33	32	5	*	2=100
1997	28	33	32	4	1	2=100
				No Preference/ <u>Other/DK</u>		
1996	29	33	33	5=100		
1995	32	30	34	4=100		
1994	30	32	34	4=100		
1993	27	34	34	5=100		
1992	28	33	35	4=100		
1991	31	32	33	4=100		
1990	31	33	30	6=100		
			Independent/ <u>No Pref/Oth/DK</u>			
1989	33	33	34=100			
1987	26	35	39=100			

**IF ANSWERED 3, 4, 5 OR 9 IN PARTY [N=562] ASK:**

PARTYLN

As of today do you lean more to the Republican Party or more to the Democratic Party?

	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Refused to lean</u>
January, 2006	10	16	14=40%
December, 2005	10	16	11=37%
Late November, 2005	9	13	17=39%
Early November, 2005	11	14	13=38%
Late October, 2005	11	15	12=38%
Early October, 2005	11	18	11=40%
September 8-11, 2005	10	18	9=37%
September 6-7, 2005	10	15	15=40%
July, 2005	9	15	11=35%
June, 2005	10	16	12=38%
Mid-May, 2005	9	13	14=36%
Late March, 2005	13	17	9=39%
December, 2004	14	12	9=35%
August, 2003	12	16	14=42%
August, 2002	12	13	13=38%
September, 2000	11	13	15=39%
Late September, 1999	14	15	16=45%
August, 1999	15	15	12=42%

CLASS Which of the following labels best describes your household **[READ ITEMS, IN ORDER]:**

**BASED ON GENERAL PUBLIC [N=1503]:**

	Mid- Oct <u>2004</u>	Late Feb <u>2004</u>	June <u>2003</u>	June <u>2002</u>	Feb <u>2002</u>	June <u>2001</u>
32 Professional or business class	32	32	31	31	32	29
46 Working class	45	47	43	47	46	47
14 OR a struggling family or household?	15	15	14	14	14	15
1 More than one apply (VOL)	1	2	3	2	2	2
3 None apply (VOL)	4	2	7	3	4	4
4 DK/Refused	3	2	2	3	2	3
100	100	100	100	100	100	100