Marist Institute for Public Opinion

Marist College ● Poughkeepsie, N.Y. 12601 ● 845.575.5050

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Monday, December 9, 2002

Contact: Dr. Lee M. Miringoff
Dr. Barbara L. Carvalho
Marist College
845.575.5050

New Hampshire Democratic Presidential Primary: The Candidates and the Issues

This Marist College Institute for Public Opinion poll reports:

The Democratic Challengers: The Morning Line

- Former Vice President Al Gore and Massachusetts Senator John Kerry are the early leaders for the 2004 New Hampshire Democratic Presidential Primary. Among registered Democrats and non-enrolled voters who express an interest in voting in the Democratic primary,* Al Gore receives 31% and John Kerry receives 28%.
- Without Gore in the race, Kerry is the frontrunner among the potential Democratic presidential candidates.

Question Wording: If the next Democratic presidential primary were held today, whom would you support if the candidates are:

	Gore	Kerry	Leiberman	Dean	Gephardt	Daschle	Edwards	Sharpton	Und.
Total	31%	28%	10%	6%	5%	3%	2%	1%	14%
Democrats	33%	28%	10%	5%	4%	3%	1%	Less 1%	16%
Non-enrolled	27%	28%	10%	7%	7%	5%	3%	1%	12%
Not college	35%	28%	7%	5%	4%	3%	0%	1%	17%
College	28%	29%	13%	6%	5%	3%	3%	1%	12%
Less $50,000	33%	25%	9%	7%	4%	4%	2%	0%	16%
$50,000 & over	31%	28%	12%	5%	6%	3%	1%	1%	13%
Under 45	37%	25%	7%	4%	4%	4%	3%	Less 1%	16%
45 & older	27%	31%	12%	6%	6%	3%	1%	1%	13%
Men	32%	34%	7%	6%	5%	4%	3%	1%	8%
Women	31%	25%	12%	5%	5%	3%	1%	Less 1%	18%
Union HH	26%	34%	11%	4%	5%	1%	1%	0%	18%
Work in MA	24%	37%	11%	1%	8%	6%	0%	0%	13%
W/O Gore	n.a.	37%	16%	7%	10%	6%	3%	1%	20%

* The survey includes registered Democrats and also Independents who expressed an interest in the Democratic primary when asked, "If President George Bush has no major opponent in the next Republican presidential primary in New Hampshire and the Democrats have a serious contest, do you plan on voting in the Democratic primary, the Republican primary, or don't you plan to vote in the next New Hampshire Presidential Primary."

- Being honest and trustworthy is the number one quality potential Democratic primary voters value when thinking about whom to support for president. This is followed by a candidate who is intelligent and knowledgeable, a strong leader, someone who stands up for his beliefs, or has the best chance of beating George Bush.

Question Wording: When thinking about whom to support for president, which one of the following qualities is most important to you personally? A president who:

Most Important Presidential Quality	
Is honest & trustworthy	29%
Is intelligent & knowledgeable	16%
Is a strong leader	14%
Stands up for his beliefs	11%
Has the best chance of beating George Bush	10%
Can handle a crisis	7%
Cares about people like you	5%
Is not a typical politician	4%
Has experience	2%
Unsure	2%

- 50% of the potential electorate for the Democratic primary wants Al Gore to run for president in 2004. 68% of these voters do not want New York Senator Hillary Clinton to run for president in 2004.

Question Wording: Do you want Al Gore/Hillary Clinton to run for president in 2004 or not?

	Yes	No	Unsure
Al Gore	50%	44%	6%
Hillary Clinton	28%	68%	4%

- 37% of New Hampshire Democratic Primary voters are more likely to vote for a presidential candidate who is endorsed by former President Bill Clinton and 29% are less likely to do so.

Question Wording: Are you more or less likely to vote for a candidate for president who has been endorsed by former President Bill Clinton?

	More Likely	Less Likely	No Difference	Unsure
Bill Clinton Endorsement	37%	29%	31%	3%
Democrats	41%	25%	31%	3%
Non-enrolled	29%	37%	32%	2%

- 42% of New Hampshire Democrats and Democratic leaning Independents approve of the job President Bush is doing and 52% disapprove.

Question Wording: Do you approve or disapprove of the job George Bush is doing as president?

	Approve	Disapprove	Unsure
Total	42%	52%	6%
Democrats	39%	54%	7%
Non-enrolled	47%	48%	5%

The Democratic Primary Electorate: The Issues

- Most of the New Hampshire Democratic Primary electorate is concerned with the direction the nation is headed. 61% of these voters think the country is going in the wrong direction.

Question Wording: In general, thinking about the way things are going in the country, do you feel things are going in the right direction or that things are going in the wrong direction?

	Right Direction	Wrong Direction	Unsure
Total	36%	61%	3%

- Making health care more affordable is the number one issue for the potential Democratic primary electorate. Protecting social security, strengthening the economy, and protecting the environment follow as major concerns.

Issue Ranking: The New Hampshire Democratic Primary electorate rated each issue on a scale of 0 through 10.† The ratings for each issue were averaged to obtain an overall mean score for the issue. The rank is based on this average.

Priority for the Country	Rank
Make health care more affordable	1
Protect social security	2
Strengthen the economy	3
Protect the environment	4
Reduce corporate corruption	5
Improve the public schools	6
Reduce the cost of prescription drugs	7
Increase security to prevent terrorism	8
Create more jobs	9
Balance the federal budget	10
Reduce crime	11
Handle the situation in Iraq	12
Reduce taxes	13

† **Question Wording**: Now I want to ask you about several issues facing the country. Using the numbers zero through ten with 10 being a top priority for the next president and 0 being not a priority at all, please tell me how you would rate each of the following issues.

- 14% of the potential Democratic primary electorate currently has someone in the household who is not covered by health insurance. An additional 10% have experienced a time within the past year when an adult or child in their household did not have any health insurance.

  Question Wording: Is every member of your household, adults and children, covered by health insurance or a health plan right now? Was there ever a time in the past 12 months when an adult or child in your household did not have any health insurance or a health plan? (Follow-up asked of those currently with health insurance)

	Total w/o Continuous Health Insurance Coverage	Currently w/o Health Insurance	Did Not Have Health Insurance at Some Point in Past Year
Total	24%	14%	10%

- When thinking about the future, 59% of the New Hampshire Democratic Primary electorate is more concerned about jobs and the economy compared with 39% who is more concerned about the war on terrorism.

  Question Wording: Thinking about the future, are you more concerned about the war on terrorism, or more concerned about jobs and the economy?

	War on Terrorism	Jobs and Economy	Unsure
Total	39%	59%	2%

- 44% of potential Democratic primary voters think the national economy is getting worse and 12% think it is getting better. 44% think it is staying the same.

  Question Wording: Do you think the U.S. economy is getting better, getting worse, or staying the same?

	Getting Better	Getting Worse	Staying the Same
Total	12%	44%	44%

- With respect to the New Hampshire economy, 51% of registered Democrats and Democratic leaning Independents think the state is currently in a recession. 46% do not think so.

  Question Wording: Do you think that New Hampshire is currently in a recession, or not?

	Yes	No	Unsure
Total	51%	46%	3%

- 61% of New Hampshire Democratic Primary voters always or sometimes worry their total family income will not be enough to meet their family's expenses and bills.

Question Wording: How often do you worry that your total family income will not be enough to meet your family's expenses and bills: always, sometimes, seldom, or never?

	Always	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
Total	25%	36%	25%	14%

Nature of the Sample: 425 Potential New Hampshire Democratic Presidential Primary Voters

This survey was conducted from December 2nd through December 4th, 2002. 425 registered Democrats and Independent voters who expressed an interest in voting in the Democratic presidential primary in 2004 were interviewed. The sample was selected in proportion to the voter registration in each county in New Hampshire and adjusted for turnout in comparable elections. All interviews were conducted by telephone. The results are statistically significant at ±5% for the entire sample. The error margin increases for cross-tabulations.