

Mike Berman's

WASHINGTON POLITICAL WATCH

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STATE OF THE NATION

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BUSH IS STUCK

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2008

SEPTEMBER 1, 2007 - FEBRUARY 5, 2008

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THIS AND THAT

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GOBBLEDYGOOK

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LOOKING BACK AT 2006

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ABOUT THE COUNTRY

Less than 1/3 of Americans think the country is headed in the right direction and roughly the same number are satisfied with the way things are going.

	<u>Right Direction</u>	<u>Wrong Track</u>	
1/25/07	28%	57%	NBC/WSJ
1/18/07	26%	66%	AP/AOL
1/16/07	31%	61%	LATimes/Bloomberg
	<u>Satisfied</u>	<u>Dissatisfied</u>	
1/25/07	30%	61%	Newsweek
1/15/07	35%	63%	Gallup
1/15/07	32%	61%	Pew

WW has followed surveys about how people feel about the country's direction for many years. The last time there was a greater number sensing we are on the right track was two years ago, 2004. And it has been nearly three years (June 2003) since there was a greater number who expressed satisfaction with the way things are going than expressed dissatisfaction.
[NBC/WSJ;AP/AOL]

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Only 7% of Americans believe that the national economy is "very good" while another 51% think it is only "fairly good". 41% say it is "fairly or very bad." [CBS 1/18-21]

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20% believe that their personal household financial situation is excellent or very good. Another 50% said it was good. 28% said it was bad, very bad or terrible". [ARG 1/18-21]

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37% are very satisfied with the overall quality of life, while another 49% are somewhat satisfied.
[Gallup 1/15-18]

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In January 2001, 68% of Americans expressed their dissatisfaction with the availability of affordable healthcare. Now 73% share that sentiment. 17% say it is the most important financial problem facing their family today.

When it comes to the quality of medical care that is available, about 50% of those asked said they were dissatisfied in 2001, and the same number express that sentiment today.
[Gallup 1/07,11/06]

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The number of Americans without health insurance has reached an all-time high. As of 2005, 46.4 million, about 18% of the non-elderly population, are without insurance. This is an increase of 11.9 million people over the last 15 years.

The average annual insurance premium for individuals and families grew dramatically between 2000 and 2005. The increase in the overall premium for individuals grew by 71%, from \$2,471 to \$4,242, and for families by 78%, from \$6,438 to \$11,481.

In 2000 individuals paid 13.5% of the premium, while their employers paid the rest. In 2005 they paid 14.7%. Family coverage cost the workers 25% of the premium in 2000 and 35% in 2005. [Wash Post]

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Given all of the above, could it be that the healthcare system in this country is approaching a tipping point.

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82% now believe that global warming exists and 41% believe that it is caused by people's behavior, burning too much coal and oil. Another 38% believe it is a combination of people's behavior and normal climate patterns. [Fox News/OD 1/07]

75% believe that the government should put new restrictions on emissions from cars and industrial facilities. [CNN/ORC 1/07]

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In April 2003, 85% of the public thought things were going well in Iraq. A year later that number had dropped to 35%, and now it is 28%. The number who say things are going badly has risen from 12% in 2003 to 64%. [Gallup 1/07]

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The top 1% of taxpayers received 16.6% of national income in 2000. The highest percentage since 1936.

The top 0.1% of taxpayers received 7% of the total income, the highest share since the 1920s. [NYTimes]

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2,341 women ran for State legislatures in 2006, a new record. Governor Janet Napolitano of Arizona is the first woman Chair of the National Governors Association.

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Many States have made it easier to vote.

35 States now allow some form of early voting.

15 States allow no-excuse early voting.

16 States allow no-excuse, in-person absentee voting.

4 States and DC require an excuse for in-person absentee voting.

1 State is all vote-by-mail.

14 States do not allow early or in-person absentee voting.

29 States allow no-excuse absentee voting by mail. 21 States and the District of Columbia require an excuse to vote absentee by mail.

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51% of American women now live without a spouse. The single biggest reason seems to be that women live longer than men. Women who have a college education are more likely to marry than those who do not have a college education.

The rate of marriage has dropped dramatically over the last 40 years. Among 35-44 year olds, 67% of the women are married, down from 87% in 1960, and among men 66% are currently married, down from 88% in 1960. [Current Population Survey, U.S. Census Bureau]

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39% of us would like to see religion have more influence in this nation, down from 47% in 2002. 32% think it should have less influence, down just one point from the previous high over the last 6 years.

It is no surprise that among folks who attend church most often, at least weekly, a plurality of 46% would like to see religion have more influence in America. Conversely, half of those who seldom or never go to church would like religion to have less influence in the country.

A larger percentage of Republicans (36%) than Democrats (24%) would like to see religion have a greater influence. [Gallup 1/07]

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When it comes to relative partisanship, 34% of Americans describe themselves as Democrats, 30% as Republicans, and 34% as Independent.

The 5 most Republican states are Utah, Idaho, Nebraska, Texas, and South Carolina, with an average Republican identification of 54.2%. The top 5 most Democratic states are Rhode Island, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Arkansas, with an average Democratic identification of 62.8%.

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The future of the two major political parties is up for grabs.

49% say that, over the past 10 years, their opinion of the Republican Party has fallen, while 33% say their opinion of the Democratic Party has dropped. [NPR 12/06]

The Democratic Party is seen more positively than the Republican Party -- at the moment. In the January NBC/WSJ poll, 42% rate the Democratic Party positively, while only 33% have that view of the Republican Party. The high point for the Democrats in this survey was in January 2000, when 50% had a positive view. The high point for the Republicans was in December 2001, when 57% stated positive views.

Conversely, the low point for the Democrats was in July 2006, when only 32% said positive things and 39% were negative. The equivalent moment for the Republicans was in October 1992, when their positive score was 31% and the negative was 47%.

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BUSH CAN'T SEEM TO BUY A BREAK

Is President Bush's presidency essentially over? Many commentators have taken that position in recent weeks. Nothing seems to be going right. Even if some things are in reasonable shape, like the economy for many Americans, the impact of the war in Iraq overcomes any positive news. But presidents have a way of rehabilitating themselves, so he shouldn't be counted out quite yet.

The last time President Bush had an approval rating of more than 40% in a national survey was in early December 2006, when he had a 42% approval rating in an LATimes /Bloomberg survey. During the last 6 weeks his disapproval rating hit 65% in one survey and 64% in several others. The 32% approval rating registered in the most recent Gallup Poll is within 1 point of his all-time low in that survey, and the disapproval mirrors the all-time low, both of which occurred in May 2006.

		<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>
Gallup	2/4	32%	65%
Fox/OD	1/31	38%	54%
Newsweek	1/25	30%	64%
Time	1/23	37%	59%
State of the Union Speech			
CNN/OR	1/21	34%	63%
CBS	1/21	28%	64%
NBC/WSJ	1/20	35%	60%
ABC/WP	1/19	33%	65%
Newsweek	1/18	31%	62%
AP/AOL	1/18	36%	61%
Gallup	1/18	36%	61%
Fox/OD	1/17	35%	58%
LAT/Blmbr	1/16	39%	59%
Pew	1/15	33%	59%
Hotline	1/14	35%	62%

President Bush's approval rating is lower than that of any President who got this far into his 2nd term in the last 48 years. Most recently, President Clinton had gone through the Democratic loss of control of the House and Senate and the effort to impeach him was coming close to an end at this same point in his tenure. His approval rating was 67%.

	<u>Approve</u>	<u>Disapprove</u>
Dwight Eisenhower	73	14
Bill Clinton	67	31
Ronald Reagan	48	43
Lyndon Johnson	46	37
George H.W. Bush	32	65

[Gallup]

Bush's approval rating on handling the economy is the same today as it was last September, but there have been significant drops in the approval ratings on his handling of foreign policy (fallen from 37% to 27%) and Iraq (38% to 28%).

Job approval rating on

	<u>Approval</u>		<u>Disapproval</u>	
	<u>1/07</u>	<u>9/06</u>	<u>1/07</u>	<u>9/06</u>
Handling the economy	40%	41%	53%	53%
Handling foreign policy	27%	37%	68%	57%
Handling Iraq	28%	38%	67%	57%

[NBC/WSJ 1/07]

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The NBC/WSJ poll has tracked the public view of a series of personal attributes since President Bush took office, and in couple of cases, since the end of 2003.

At the onset of his 1st term at least a plurality of Americans viewed him more positively than negatively on each of these attributes. Now there are only 3 of the 10 attributes on which he is viewed more positively than negatively.

The two attributes on which he has fallen the farthest are "being honest and straight forward" B 16 points, and "being a world leader in dealing with other countries" B 19 points.

[In the chart below "Good" combines "very good and good"; "Poor combines "poor and very poor."]

	<u>Good</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>Very good</u>	<u>Very poor</u>
Having high personal standards that set the proper moral tone for the country				
1/2007	49	30	32	18
1/2001	58	19	33	8
Being easygoing and Likable				
1/2007	45	30	26	19
1/2001	59	19	36	10
Representing traditional American values				
1/2007	44	31	25	19
1/2001	59	15	30	8
Having the strong leadership qualities needed to be president				
1/2007	39	39	24	27
1/2001	50	24	26	11
Having a vision for the country's future				
1/2007	36	43	18	30
11/2003	45	33	27	22
Being honest and Straightforward				
1/2007	34	44	21	33
1/2001	50	24	28	13
Being compassionate enough to understand average people				
1/2007	33	47	16	32
1/2001	42	30	21	16
Being a world leader in dealing with other countries				
1/2007	30	46	14	31
1/2003	49	28	25	17
Willing to work with people whose viewpoints are different from his own				
1/2007	25	50	9	37
1/2005	33	38	17	25
Working effectively with Congress to get results				
1/2007	24	46	8	25
1/2001	46	16	19	8

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2008 ELECTION - PRESIDENTIAL

There are so many folks playing around with running for President that you really do need a score card to keep track of the players. WW has created the following chart. Everyone who is mentioned that he or she might run, or whom others talk about running, is included.

Setting up an Exploratory Committee means the candidate has filed with the Federal Election Commission. This is the only committee that needs to be filed. If a candidate titles his or her initial filing as exploratory then, when and if that person decides to run, the name of the committee is simply changed.

Announcement simply means that the candidate has made a public declaration of his or her candidacy.

Out of the game means just that, the quest is over.

Senator Clinton filed a committee and declared her candidacy at the same time. Senator Obama first filed an Exploratory Committee, and intends to announce on February 10th.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Talks About Running</u>	<u>Set up Explore Committee</u>	<u>Announces Presidential Bid</u>	<u>Out of the game</u>
<u>Republican</u>				
Allen	X	---	---	Did not start
Brownback	X	12/4/06	12/20/07	
Frist	X	---	---	11/29/06
Gilmore	X	1/9/07	1/9/07	
Gingrich	X			
Guilliani	X	11/20/06		
Hagel	X			
Keating	X	---	---	1/18/07
Huckabee	X	1/27/07	1/28/07	
Hunter	X	1/12/01	1/25/07	
McCain	X	11/15/06	11/15/06	
Pataki	X			
Santorum	X	---	---	Did not start
Tancredo	X	1/16/07		
Romney	X	1/3/07	1/3/07	
Thompson	X	12/15/06	1/11/07	
<u>Independent</u>				
Bloomberg	X			
<u>Green Party</u>				
Nader	X			

<u>Name</u>	<u>Talks About Running</u>	<u>Set up Explore Committee</u>	<u>Announces Presidential Bid</u>	<u>Out of the game</u>
<u>Democrats</u>				
Bayh	X	12/3/06	---	12/16/06
Biden	X	---	1/7/07	
Clark	X			
Clinton	X	1/20/07	1/22/07	
Daschle	X	---	---	Did not start
Dodd	X	---	1/10/07	
Edwards	X	1/3/07		
Feingold	X	---	---	11/12/06
Gore	X			
Gravel	X	---	4/4/06	
Kerry	X			1/24/07
Kucinich	X	---	12/29/06	
Obama	X	1/16/07		
Richardson	X	1/22/07	1/22/07	
Sharpton	X			
Vilsack	X	---	11/9/06	
Warner	X	---	---	10/12/06

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It is hard to see how the relevant primary season goes beyond February 5, 2008.

After Iowa (January 14) and Nevada (January 19 - Democrats) hold caucuses, and New Hampshire (January 22) and South Carolina (January 29 - Democrats) hold primaries, it really hits the fan on February 5th, the first day of the window for all other Democratic primaries and caucuses.

It is possible that on February 5th the following primaries and caucuses will be scheduled. (The final calendars will not be available until later this year. A number of the States listed below have not formally selected the 5th, and inevitably a few will not pick that date.)

Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Kansas, Idaho, Illinois, Michigan, Missouri, Montana, New Jersey, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Texas, Utah, Wyoming

(In a couple of instances the Democrats and the Republicans have separate primary/caucus dates. For example, while South Carolina Democrats will hold their primary on January 29th, the Republican primary will be held on February 2nd.)

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THE MONEY CHASE BEGINS

The following reflects the net cash available to each of the people who seem to be running for President as of December 31, 2006. (Some of these funds are in Senate election accounts and are eligible to be transferred to Presidential election accounts; others are in accounts designated for the Presidential election. Funds may not be transferred from candidates= political action committees to Presidential accounts.)

Hillary Clinton lapped the field.

Democrats

Clinton	\$10,927,724
Dodd	4,925,913
Biden	3,598,479
Obama	516,553
Vilsack	395,963
Clark	129,902
Gravel	(65,931)
Kucinich	(218,342)
Edwards	(329,825)

Republicans

Giuliani	\$ 1,014,532
McCain	492,487
Tancredo	189,092
Hagel	141,441
Hunter	53,379
Romney	????
Thompson	(2,170)

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No serious candidate for President will participate in the Federal primary matching fund system in 2008.

The reason is simple. Participation in the primary matching fund system limits primary spending in a way that all but assures that a candidate will not have enough money to compete fully in the nominating process, let alone in the balance of the period leading up to the conventions and eligibility for the Federal grant.

The reality of 2008 is that, as early as February 5th, but certainly no later than March 1st, the nominations of both Parties will have been decided. And on that date the "general election" contest will effectively begin.

However, between then and the Parties' respective conventions (August 25th - Democrats and September 1st - Republicans), the contest between the nominees of the two Parties can be effectively waged with funds raised for the primary election.

It is quite possible that the nominees of neither of the two major Parties will participate in the Federal grant system in the general election.

The Federal grant available to each of the major Parties for the two-month general election period will be somewhat north of \$85,000,000. Even given the cost of fundraising and additional compliance costs, each of the nominees of the major Parties may feel compelled to try and raise more than that amount in order to mount the most fulsome general election campaign.

At least one candidate for the Democratic nomination has made clear her intention, if nominated. Hillary Clinton's Presidential election campaign provided an opportunity for donors to make the maximum permissible contribution to both the primary and general elections from the day it opened its doors.

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GALLUP POLLS A YEAR BEFORE THE QUADRENNIAL CONVENTIONS

If history is any indicator, we will know the name of the ultimate Republican Presidential nominee by September 1, 2007.

In the 13 Presidential elections beginning with 1956, the Republican who leads in the Gallup poll that is taken closest to one year before the Republican convention, will be the Republican nominee. That was the case in each of those 13 elections. In 6 of those 13 elections the nominee was also the incumbent office holder.

The history of the selection of the Democratic nominee is a bit more complicated.

In 5 of the 13 elections -- 1956, 1964, 1984, 1996, and 2000 -- the Democratic candidate leading in the Gallup poll a year before the Democratic convention was the ultimate nominee. 2 of those candidates were incumbents.

In 1 election, 1960, 2 candidates shared the lead in the poll one year before the convention, John Kennedy and Adlai Stevenson. Kennedy won.

In 7 of the 13 elections -- 1968 (RKennedy, Johnson), 1972 (TKennedy), 1976 (TKennedy), 1980 (TKennedy), 1988 (Simon), 1992 (Cuomo), and 2004 (Lieberman) -- the candidate holding 1st place in the relevant poll, was not the ultimate nominee. 1 candidate who was trailing in the relevant 1980 survey, Carter, was the incumbent office holder.

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The Republicans

Republicans and Independents were asked to rate Rudy Guiliani and John McCain on a series of characteristics.

Of the 15 characteristics, Guiliani was ranked 1st on 10 of them, McCain on 3, and they split 2.

The range was pretty broad. For example, 74% think Guiliani "is more likeable" than McCain (21%); that he would be "better in a crisis" than McCain B 68%-28%; and that Guiliani would "do more to unite the country" by 65% - 28%. 50% think McCain has "higher ethical standards" than Guiliani (35%); "would work better with Congress" by 52%-41%; and is "more qualified to be President" than Guiliani by 50%-41%.

The two men are rated about equally on the question of who "has the better chance of winning the Republican presidential nomination," and on who "would be respected more by leaders of other countries." [Gallup 1/07]

Guiliani leads the Republican Pack in most national surveys. McCain runs second, anywhere from 4 to a 12 points behind. Running 3rd is Gingrich, who does not plan to decide whether he is running until sometime this fall. Mitt Romney runs a very poor 4th. Even given this currently weak national showing, keep an eye on Romney. He is well spoken, "looks" like a President, and had a pretty good run as Governor of one of the most liberal States in the Union.

The Democrats

Democrats and Independents were asked to rate Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama, and John Edwards on the same characteristics. Clinton was ranked 1st on nine characteristics, while Obama had the top score on six.

Clinton is seen as "most qualified to be President" (61%); and having the "best chance to be nominated" (58%). Obama is seen as "the best public speaker" (44%); is "the most likeable (41%); and would "do most to unite the country" (41%). [Gallup 1/07]

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Hillary Clinton is the clear leader in national Democratic trial heats. She leads Barack Obama by anywhere from 16-28 points. John Edwards runs 3rd, trailing Obama by anywhere from 3 to 12 points.

Edwards has clearly decided to take on his Democratic opponents from the outset. He regularly takes thinly veiled shots at Clinton and Obama. So far, the others in the race are focusing on their positive message rather than shooting at their opponents.

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Already, there is a never-ending stream of State surveys, assessing choices in both Parties' nomination contests. It is hard to imagine how many surveys will be taken when the actual elections are in range.

This early in the process State surveys just don't mean very much.

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The General Election

While 49% say they would rather see a Democrat elected in 2008, and only 28% said Republican, when it comes down to actual candidate choices, the race is a lot closer. In the same survey, Clinton leads McCain 48%-47%, Obama leads McCain 46%-44%, and Edwards leads McCain 48% -43%. Guiliani leads Clinton by 1 point, Obama by 2 points, and loses to Edwards by 3 points. [Newsweek 1/07]

In November 2006, when respondents were asked to volunteer the name of the person that they would like to see elected President, 38% said they did not know. Clinton led the volunteered list with 15%, followed by McCain (11%), Obama (6%), and Guiliani (5%). Everyone else registered 3% or less. [Gallup]

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If nomination contest surveys don't mean much now, general election contest surveys mean even less.

In a late January Newsweek poll Clinton, Obama and Edwards all best McCain by a few points. Clinton and Obama top Guiliani by a few, but Edwards trails him by one.

In a Time magazine survey taken at the same time, McCain and Clinton tie, and McCain beat Obama and Edwards by a half dozen points.

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Peter Hart reports that, since 1912, whoever carries the majority of the ten States along the Mississippi River has won the Presidency. Six of those States had gubernatorial elections in 2006 and Democrats won 5 of them.

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Gingrich and Gore

Newt Gingrich, when asked whether he is running for President, says that he is not running at the moment, but that, if there is not a clear Republican leader by the Fall, he might get in. He further says that, in that circumstance, there will be plenty of time to raise money and mount a campaign.

Al Gore, when asked whether he is going to run for President, says that he has "no intention" to run. It appears that he is exactly where Gingrich is without saying it. He is not running now, but if, in late Summer or early Fall, there is not a clear leader among the Democrats, well....

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Will he or won't he? Will Mike Bloomberg decide to enter the Presidential contest as an Independent? There are hints that he will or at least that he wants to avoid anything that might interfere with his options.

Since he does not have to worry about raising money, he can keep his options open for quite a while.

Some folks think that the City of New York's rather odd behavior in the run-up to the Democratic Party's selection of a convention site was driven by Bloomberg not wanting to be committed to make sure that the city was ready for the convention.

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1928 vs. 1952

Some folks say that the 2007 election will be the first election since 1952 in which there is no President or Vice President running for that office. Others say that the relevant election is 1928.

The answer has to do with the precision of the statement of the premise.

1952 is the last election in which a sitting President or his Vice President was not on the general election ballot. 1928 is the last election in which no President or Vice President is competing in the primary process. In 1952 Alvin Barkley, Harry Truman's Vice President, did compete at some point during the primary season, but he was obviously not successful.

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ELECTION 2008 - CONGRESSIONAL

The Democrats have taken over the Congress, but so far they have not convinced the public that something different is going on.

In 8 national surveys by major organizations taken during the last 3 weeks of January Americans disapprove of the job being done by Congress by an average of 51%, while an average of 34% approve. That is the bench mark going forward.

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It is a little early to make a detailed assessment of a large number of the 2008 U.S. Senate races.

Wayne Allard (R-Colo) has announced that he will not seek re-election, and while that puts Colorado in the Toss-up column, prospects for a Democratic takeover of that seat are pretty good. Congressman Mark Udall is the current favorite for the Democratic nomination.

Tim Johnson's (D-SD) seat, which was already in the Leaning Democratic column, signifying the likelihood of another tough race, has to been seen as slightly more marginal, given Johnson's recent illness. All reports are that Johnson is progressing well, and fundraising has begun for his re-election bid.

It seems likely that Mary Landrieu (D-LA) will face a tough race, given everything that State has been through in recent times.

8 of the 33 senators whose terms end in 2008 are in their 70s or 80. 3/4ths of them are Republicans.

80s - 2 (1D/1R)

70s - 6 (1D/5R)

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THE U.S. SENATE

Democrats	49
Republicans	49
Independents	2 (caucus Dem)

Here is how the 33 Senate elections (12 Democratic incumbents, 21 Republican incumbents) look to me at this time (underlining reflects retirement). (D=Dem incumbent in office, R=GOP incumbent in office, I=Ind. incumbent in office)

Safe <u>Democratic(7)</u>	Leaning <u>Democratic(5)</u>	<u>Toss-Up(1)</u>	Leaning <u>Republican(5)</u>	Safe <u>Republican(15)</u>
Delaware	Arkansas	<u>Colorado</u>	Maine	Alabama
Illinois	Iowa		Minnesota	Alaska
Massachusetts	Louisiana		New Hampshire	Georgia
Michigan	Montana		North Carolina	Idaho
New Jersey	South Dakota		Oklahoma	Kansas
Rhode Island				Kentucky
West Virginia				Mississippi
				Nebraska
				New Mexico
				Oregon
				South Carolina
				Tennessee
				Texas
				Virginia
				Wyoming

	<u>Democrats</u>	<u>Republicans</u>	<u>Ind</u>
Seats not up in 2006	37	28	2
Safe in 2006	7	15	0
Leaning in 2006	5	5	0
Total	49	48	2
Toss-ups	1 (1R)		

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There are 49 former House members now serving in the Senate.

Currently there are 13 States that have one or more women serving in the Senate, and 3 of those states are represented by 2 women. 28 States have never elected a woman to the Senate.

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THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Democrats	232
Republicans	203

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63 House members were elected to Congress last November with less than 55% of the vote, including 24 of the 30 newly-elected Democrats.

While Democrats captured 54% of the votes cast for the U.S. House in 2006, the Republicans had a 0.3% edge over the Democrats, when House votes cast for Democrats and Republicans in 2000, 2002, 2004, and 2006 are added together.

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2006 ELECTION - THE RESULTS

Since the 1918 election, every time that the House switched controlling Party, the Senate also switched.

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The Hotline set out to determine which of the national surveys most closely predicted the results of the 2006 election through use of a generic ballot question in their last survey before the election.

The Democrats bested the Republicans by 8 points. Pew nailed the spread on the nose. The Cook Report/RT Strategies missed it by 14 points. Here is the list:

Pew	0	Diageo/Hotline	10
USAToday/Gallup	1	CBS/NYT	10
ABC/WP	2	AP/Ipsos	11
Zogby	3	CNN/OR	12
Fox News/OD	5	Cook Report/RT Strat	14
Newsweek	8		

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The underlying story of the election is told in the national exit polls.

Issues that voters found "extremely important"

Corruption	41%
Terrorism	39%
Economy	39%
Iraq	36%
Values issues	36%
Immigration	30%

Feelings about the war in Iraq

56% disapproved of the war
59% did not feel that this war improved US security
55% thought troop withdrawal should begin

The election provided an opportunity for many people to express their views about President Bush. His job approval rating among voters was 42% approval and 57% disapproval.

But a relatively small incident may have lit the fuse that resulted in ultimate rejection of Republican control, particularly in the House. That fuse was the way in which the Republican House leadership did not deal with Congressman Mark Foley.

(See the summary of the results of the election at the end of the newsletter.)

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THIS AND THAT

It was a family affair. The winner of the Watch's Election Day quiz is none other than Jon Leibowitz, who scored 51 of a possible 85 points. Second place went to Ruth Marcus who scored a 49. The judges have been assured that they did not collaborate.

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Baseball may be the national pastime, but it is far from being America's favorite sport to watch.

43% of those surveyed picked football as their favorite vicarious athletic activity, while 12% chose basketball, and 11% baseball. Over the last dozen years baseball has dropped by nearly 1/3, basketball has held steady, and football has grown by about 1/6th.

Football is substantially more popular among men than women, although 36% of women still pick it as number 1. It turns out that basketball is more popular among women than men, and baseball is selected by equal number of the two genders. [Gallup 12/06]

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60% of us disagree when confronted with the statement, "You would be happier if you were rich," and 63% do not dream about getting rich. [Gallup 12/06]

* * * * *

100 years ago

- * Average life expectancy in the U.S. was 47 years
- * Only 14% of U.S. homes had a bathtub
- * Only 8% of the homes had a telephone
- * A 3-minute call from Denver to New York City cost \$11
- * Average wage in the U.S. was 22 cents per hour

* * * * *

GOBBLEDYGOOK

TO GIVE SOMEONE THE PICTURE	A long, confused, and inaccurate statement to a newcomer
SPEARHEAD THE ISSUE	You be the goat
POINT UP THE ISSUE	To expand one page to 15 pages
THE ISSUE IS CLOSED	I'm tired of the whole affair
REFERRED FOR APPROPRIATE ACTION	Maybe your office knows what to do with this
INFORMED SOURCE	The guy who told the guy you just met
UPON COMPLETION RETURN THROUGH THIS OFFICE	Look what I did

* * * * *

RESTAURANTS

For a variety of reasons, there are no restaurant reviews in this edition of the Washington Watch. To those of you who turn first to that section WW, apologizes.

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(Be sure to see the summary of the results of the 2006 election, starting on the next page.)

2006 Elections

83,700,000 votes cast- 40.4% of eligible voters

2002- 39.3% of eligible voters voted

1998- 37.6% of eligible voters voted

1994- 40.5% of eligible voters voted

The United States Senate

49 Democrats

2 Independents

49 Republicans

- There are 10 new Members of the Senate
 - 1 Republican
 - 8 Democrats
 - 1 Independent
- Of the 33 seats that were up in this election
 - 19 were held by Democrats
 - 14 were held by Republicans
- The number of States in which both Senators are Republican decreased, while the number of States in which both Senators are Democrats increased.
- 6 Senate seats shifted as a result of the election
 - Democrats won 6 Republican seats
 - Rhode Island
 - Ohio
 - Pennsylvania
 - Missouri
 - Montana
 - Virginia
 - Republicans won 0 Democratic seats
- Women in the Senate- 16 (Previously 14)
- Native-Americans in the Senate- 0 (Previously 0)
- African- Americans in the Senate- 1 (Previously 1)
- Hispanics in the Senate- 3 (Previously 3)
- Asian-Americans in the Senate-2 (Previously 2)

United States House of Representatives

109th Congress

202 Democrats

232 Republicans

1 Independent

110th Congress

233 Democrats

202 Republicans

- of the 34 open seats going into this election
 - 11 were held by the Democrats
 - 0 were won by the Republicans
 - 22 were held by the Republicans
 - 8 were won by the Democrats
 - 1 was held by an independent
- There were 39 designated Toss-up Races in the Charlie Cook Final Pre-Election Report:
 - 38 were Republican
 - 1 was Democrat
 - 21 Democrats won
 - 18 Republicans won
 - Of the Republican seats, 22 were won by Democrats, 16 by Republicans
 - Of the Democratic seats, 1 was won by Democrats, 0 by Republicans
- 30 seats switched from Republican to Democratic.
- 2 Incumbents lost in Primaries
 - 1 Republican
 - 1 Democrat
- 17 Incumbents lost in General Election
 - 17 Republicans
 - 0 Democrats
- Women in the House- 71 (previously 70)
- Native-Americans in the House- 1 (previously 1)
- African- Americans in the House- 42 (previously 42)
- Asian-Americans in the House- 6 (previously 5)
- Hispanics in the House – 25 (previously 26)

House Turnover 1980-2006

<u>Year</u>	Retired or Ran for Other Office	Lost in Primary	Defeated in General Election	Total Turnover*
1980	34	6	31	74
1982	40	10	29	81
1984	22	3	16	43
1986	40	3	6	50
1988	23	1	6	33
1990	27	1	15	45
1992	65	19	24	110
1994	48	4	34	86
1996	50	2	21	74
1998	33	1	6	40
2000	30	3	6	44
2002	35	8	8	62
2004	29	2	7	44
2006	28	2	17	47

*Includes open seats due to deaths, resignations, and expulsions

Note: totals do not include non-voting delegates

Governors

- Before 2006 Elections
 - 28 Republican Governors
 - 22 Democratic Governors
- After 2006 Elections
 - 22 Republican Governors
 - 28 Democratic Governors
- 36 Governors were elected in 2006 elections
 - 16 Republicans
 - 20 Democrats
- 10 Women ran for Governor in 10 states
 - 6 Women won, 4 women lost

State Legislatures

Control of individual legislative chambers after 2006 elections

- Democrats control both houses of legislature in 23 states
- Republicans control both houses of legislature in 15 states
- 11 houses of legislature are split
- 1 is nonpartisan

Post-Elections

Total legislators: 7,382
 Democrats: 3,989
 Republicans: 3,320
 Independents: 67
 Vacant: 6
 Undecided: 0

Pre-Elections

Total legislators: 7,393
 Prior to the election: 3,650
 Prior to the election: 3,635
 Prior to the election: 71
 Prior to election: 27
 Prior to election: 10

Ballot Referenda

Increase Minimum Wage:

Arizona	Yes
Colorado	Yes
Missouri	Yes
Montana	Yes
Nevada	Yes
Ohio	Yes

Ban Same-Sex Marriage:

Arizona	No
Colorado	Yes
Idaho	Yes
South Carolina	Yes
South Dakota	Yes
Tennessee	Yes
Virginia	Yes
Wisconsin	Yes

Taxes and Spending:

* TABOR stands for "Taxpayers' Bill of Rights."
It limits revenue growth for state and local governments. It also require that any tax increase in any state or local government (counties, cities, towns, school districts and special districts) must be approved by the voters of the affected government

Idaho	Yes
Maine (tabor)	No
Nebraska (tabor)	No
Oregon (tabor)	No
Washington (Repeal Real Estate tax)	No

Ban Abortion:

California	No
Oregon	No
South Dakota	No

Eminent Domain: restricting governments from taking private property and giving it to private entities

California	No
Florida	Yes
Georgia	Yes
Idaho	No
Michigan	Yes
Nevada	Yes
North Dakota	Yes
New Hampshire	Yes
Oregon	Yes
South Carolina	Yes
Washington	No

Smoking:

Arizona (smoke free)	Yes
California (tobacco tax)	No
Florida (Tobacco scheme)	Yes
Idaho (smoke free)	Yes
Nevada (competing smoke free)	No
Ohio (smoke free)	Yes
South Dakota (tobacco tax)	Yes