

**WISCONSIN PUBLIC RADIO/ST. NORBERT COLLEGE
THE WISCONSIN SURVEY
FALL 1999**

TOPIC: ELECTED OFFICIALS JOB PERFORMANCE RATINGS

RELEASE DATE: NOVEMBER 5, 1999

SAMPLE SIZE: 403 WISCONSIN RESIDENTS OVER THE AGE OF 18

MARGIN OF ERROR: +/-4.8

INTERVIEW DATES: OCTOBER 11-24

* The October 1988, 1992, 1996, and 1998 results are based on Likely Voters Only

WISCONSIN OFFICIALS AND REPRESENTATIVES

Job Performance Governor Tommy Thompson

	4/89	11/89	4/90	9/90	4/91	10/91	4/92	10/92	3/93	11/93	4/94	9/94	4/95	10/95
Excellent	5%	7%	11%	13%	6%	8%	6%	10%	7%	11%	11%	13%	18%	9%
Good	67	62	63	66	57	50	59	63	61	62	60	64	63	54
Not So Good	17	22	21	14	26	28	23	19	19	18	19	15	12	20
Poor	6	5	4	5	7	11	9	4	9	7	6	7	6	15
No Opinion	5	4	1	2	4	3	3	4	5	3	3	1	2	3

	3/96	10/96	4/97	10/97	4/98	10/98	4/99	Current
Excellent	15%	19%	7%	11%	12%	22%	17%	22%
Good	58	60	62	63	65	57	61	56
Not So Good	15	14	17	17	12	11	14	12
Poor	9	7	11	7	8	9	6	8
No Opinion	4	1	3	2	3	1	2	3

Job Performance Senator Herb Kohl

	11/89	9/90	4/91	10/91	4/92	10/92	3/93	11/93	3/94	9/94	10/94*	4/95	10/95	3/96
Excellent	5%	7%	4%	9%	6%	6%	6%	6%	7%	11%	10%	16%	9%	9%
Good	50	52	57	56	55	48	54	54	55	64	66	61	68	63
Not So Good	18	17	15	19	16	15	16	21	21	14	15	11	13	14
Poor	3	3	4	6	6	4	4	6	8	6	4	4	2	3
No Opinion	23	22	20	10	18	27	20	14	10	5	5	8	8	11

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	10/96	4/97	10/97	4/98	10/98	4/99	Current
Excellent	10%	9%	5%	11%	10%	11%	10%
Good	57	57	65	60	63	60	64
Not So Good	14	14	10	11	11	14	10
Poor	6	5	5	3	4	5	5
No Opinion	13	16	15	14	11	12	11

Job Performance of Senator Russ Feingold

	3/93	11/93	3/94	9/94	4/95	10/96	3/96	10/96*	4/97	10/97
Excellent	6%	7%	8%	6%	7%	5%	7%	9%	7%	6%
Good	44	45	50	46	48	51	49	46	48	54
Not So Good	10	20	14	19	17	14	15	16	17	12
Poor	6	7	8	8	7	5	4	7	5	7
Don't Know	34	22	20	22	20	26	26	22	23	21

	4/98	10/98	4/99	Current
Excellent	12%	9%	8%	10%
Good	55	51	50	57
Not So Good	14	18	14	14
Poor	3	12	8	6
Don't Know	17	11	20	13

Wisconsin State Legislature

	11/89	4/90	4/91	10/91	4/92	3/93	11/93	3/94	9/94	4/95	10/94	4/96	4/97	10/97	4/98	10/98	4/99	10/99
Excellent	3%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	3%	3%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%	5%	6%	5%	3%
Good	71	67	59	52	55	67	64	60	55	69	59	64	65	60	66	72	71	65
Not So Good	20	25	30	34	33	18	28	25	26	18	27	19	19	21	17	12	13	26
Poor	2	4	7	6	8	7	3	5	5	4	6	5	7	7	3	3	4	6
No Opinion	4	2	4	6	3	7	5	7	11	6	6	--	7	10	9	7	7	4

NATIONAL JOB PERFORMANCE**President Bill Clinton**

	3/93	11/93	3/94	9/94	4/95	10/95	4/96	10/96	4/97	10/97	4/98	10/98	4/99	10/99
Excellent	8%	5%	3%	3%	3%	4%	7%	8%	8%	7%	17%	14%	8%	11%
Good	57	52	55	40	42	55	59	63	61	62	65	57	54	56
Not So Good	19	29	23	33	35	22	24	19	19	19	10	14	16	16
Poor	8	13	13	23	20	18	11	12	12	12	7	16	20	17
No Opinion	8	2	1	2	0	2	1	<1	0	0	<1	<1	2	<1

Vice-President Al Gore

	3/93	11/93	3/94	9/94	4/95	10/95	4/96	4/97	10/97	4/98	10/98	4/99	10/99
Excellent	4%	6%	6%	8%	9%	3%	6%	7%	3%	9%	7%	6%	7%
Good	51	52	55	48	45	46	49	62	48	48	54	56	53
Not So Good	16	22	17	21	30	23	20	16	27	24	19	16	25
Poor	7	10	10	13	10	12	12	9	12	7	12	14	13
Don't Know	22	11	12	11	6	16	12	6	10	13	9	8	4

United States Congress

	9/94	4/95	10/95	3/96	10/96	4/97	10/97	4/98	10/98	4/99	10/99
Excellent	1%	4%	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%	3%	3%	2%	2%
Good	33	44	37	36	49	41	39	47	47	47	38
Not So Good	34	38	42	37	39	40	38	36	33	36	43
Poor	29	11	15	23	7	16	16	8	15	12	14
Don't Know	3	3	4	4	3	2	5	7	3	3	3

SUMMARY

The results of the latest Wisconsin Public Radio/St. Norbert College "Wisconsin Survey" indicate generally high levels of public support for the job performance of individual elected officials at both the state and national level, but decreasing approval for legislative bodies in Washington and Madison.

WISCONSIN ELECTED OFFICIALS

Wisconsin residents indicate near record high approval of the job performance of Governor Tommy Thompson and Senators Herb Kohl and Russ Feingold. According to the results of the statewide survey

of 403 Wisconsinites, 78% of state residents gave 4 term Governor Tommy Thompson a positive rating of his performance as the state's chief executive. This rating is just under the 79% job approval rating that the governor received in the fall of 1998. Two term Democratic Senator Herb Kohl received positive job performance ratings from 3 out of 4 residents of Wisconsin. This rating is statistically unchanged from the rating given to the Senator in last fall's poll. Senator Russ Feingold experienced the largest increase in job approval from the spring of this year, with 67% of state residents supporting his performance as the state's junior Senator, marking a 9 percentage point increase over the results from April 1999.

THE WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

The Wisconsin Legislature continues to receive high job approval ratings from a substantial majority of state citizens, but experienced the largest increase in negative ratings in the past ten years. While almost 7 in 10 Wisconsinites rated the performance of the legislature as excellent or good, 32% gave a negative rating to the work of this legislative body. This 32% negative appraisal marks a near doubling of the 17% negative response rate which was established in the spring of this year, and is the worst job performance rating the legislature has received since the Spring of 1992. While there are numerous factors that could explain this drop in job performance approval, the ongoing budget conflict that has taken place this fall in Madison may be a significant factor.

NATIONAL ELECTED OFFICIALS

Both President Clinton and Vice President Al Gore continue to receive positive job approval ratings from a majority of Wisconsin residents, with no major changes occurring from last year. The survey results indicate that Clinton's job performance is positively received by over 2 out of 3 Wisconsinites, with Gore's work rated positively by 6 out of 10 state residents. The president's marks are nearly identical to those he received last fall during the early stages of the impeachment proceedings in the House. Gore's positive job performance rating was recorded even though 48% of state residents reported that they have an unfavorable view of the nation's second in command.

THE UNITED STATES CONGRESS

The United States Congress was the only institution or official that did not receive a positive job approval rating from a majority of respondents in the survey. Fifty-seven percent of Wisconsin residents rated the performance of Congress as "not so good" or "poor," with only 40% indicating a positive appraisal of the job that Congress is doing. This finding marks a 9% increase in negative responses from the spring of this year, and the highest negative rating since a 60% negative job performance mark in the spring of 1996.