GREENBERG QUINLAN ROSNER RESEARCH

THE TARRANCE GROUP

Date: April 17, 2002

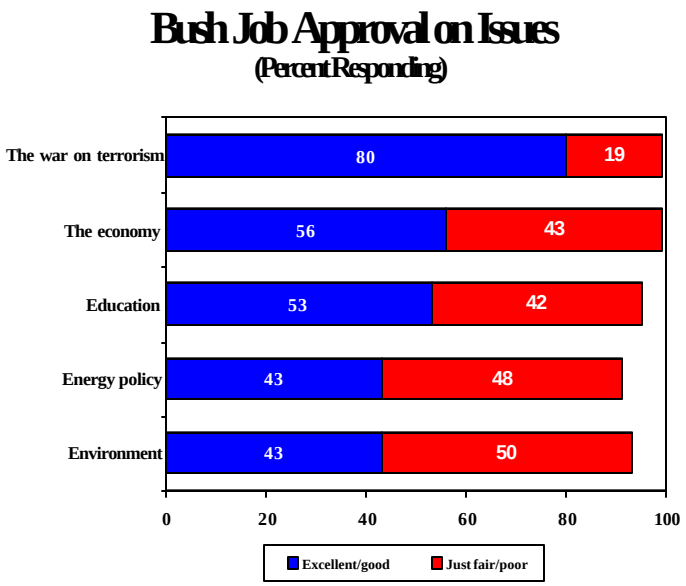
To: Interested Parties

From: Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research, Inc. and The Tarrance Group, Inc.

RE: ENVIRONMENTAL POLLING DATA

As the 2002 election year gets under way, it is clear the public has growing concerns about the environment. By a 22-point margin, voters believe the environment is getting worse. Forty-one percent of voters believe the environment is getting worse, compared to only 19 percent who think it is getting better. The electorate is clearly receptive to information about the environment and the positions elected officials take on important environmental measures.

The following are key results from a survey conducted for the League of Conservation Voters Education Fund. [1]



President Bush's approval ratings are strong (81 percent approve), but he still fails to instill voter confidence on the environment and energy policy. His overall popularity doesn't translate into support for energy (43 percent good job) and the environment (43 percent good job). As expected, Democrats give the President the most dismal ratings on the environment (64 percent bad job) and energy policy (62 percent bad job). Importantly, independents also give him fairly low marks on the environment (59 percent bad job) and energy (57 percent bad job).

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[1] This survey was prepared and supervised by Greenberg Quinlan Rosner Research, Inc and The Tarrance Group, Inc. Calling took place on March 13-19, 2002. These findings, based on a sample size of 1,000 registered and likely voters, are subject to a sampling error of 3.1 percent.

- Importantly, nearly half of voters (47 percent) say the environment is a very important factor in deciding how to vote and another 34 percent indicate it is somewhat important in their voting decision. Clearly, the environment is an issue that will be part of the debate in 2002, and for voters it continues to grow in importance. Among Democrats, 89 percent indicate it is very or somewhat important in their voting decision. Additionally, 83 percent of independents and 73 percent of Republicans indicate that it is a very or somewhat important factor in their voting decision.

- In an electoral context, voters are more pro-environment. Even in a period of heightened economic worry, when you put environmental positions into a real world scenario and assign specific positions to candidates – the candidate who maintains the environmental position emerges as the strongest candidate by 39 points (64 – 25 percent). Importantly, 74 percent of Democrats and 67 percent of independents chose the pro-environment candidate. Additionally, by a 13-point margin (50 – 37 percent) Republicans choose the pro-environment candidate. The following statements were presented to voters.

  Candidate A believes we must protect the environment, and supports strong laws and enforcement of those laws to protect our air, land, and water. Candidate A has been endorsed by and taken campaign contributions from national environmental groups.

  Candidate B believes we must protect the environment but says that voluntary action by business and less government bureaucracy are the ways to protect our air, land, and water. Candidate B has taken campaign contributions from developers and corporations.

- Despite current economic concerns, 81 percent of voters support either stronger environmental regulations or stricter enforcement of existing environmental laws. Importantly, this perspective is broad – 87 percent of Democrats and 86 percent of independents hold this belief, along with nearly three-quarters of Republicans (70 percent).

- The public strongly supports a proposal to require power plants to meet new pollution standards. The environmental position carries the argument by a 64-point margin (77 – 13 percent). President Bush lends no credibility here – when his name is attached to the argument, the environmental position still carries the argument by a 56-point margin (75 – 19 percent).

- The public strongly supports reauthorization of the Superfund Trust Fund (71 – 14 percent). While association with Bush narrows the margin (61 – 27 percent), support for reauthorization of the trust fund still carries the debate by more then a two to one margin.