

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:
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**But Many May Doubt Vote Count Accuracy
VOTERS SIDE WITH BUSH FOR NOW**

By the weekend, George W. Bush was further ahead of Al Gore in the battle for public opinion than he was in the vote recount in Florida. A strong majority of voters, including many Gore supporters, think he will have legitimately won the presidency if he prevails in the Florida recount. And a comparable majority rejects the idea of conducting a new election in Palm Beach County Fla., even though many voters there may have been confused by ballots.

A nationwide survey of 1,113 voters by the Pew Research Center gave Bush and the Republicans slightly higher grades than Gore and the Democrats for their handling of the uncertain outcome of the election. But the poll, conducted Friday through Sunday (Nov. 10-12) as the two sides wrangled over vote-count procedures, finds a wide political gulf on these and other questions relating to the election's aftermath.

Political Divide in Election's Aftermath			
	All	Gore	Bush
	<u>Voters</u>	<u>Voters</u>	<u>Voters</u>
<i>If recount favors Bush will he have legitimately won?</i>	%	%	%
Yes	68	41	95
No	27	51	3
Don't know	<u>5</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>2</u>
	100	100	100
<i>Do you think Palm Beach Co. should vote again or not?</i>			
Yes	36	64	7
No	59	30	90
Don't know	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>3</u>
	100	100	100
<i>Gore handling of outcome</i>			
Excellent	13	24	3
Good	33	48	17
Only fair	27	23	30
Poor	24	3	47
Don't know	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>
	100	100	100
<i>Bush handling of outcome</i>			
Excellent	13	5	23
Good	38	24	53
Only fair	28	37	18
Poor	17	29	3
Don't know	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>
	100	100	100
<i>Will we have an accurate count in Florida and other close states?</i>			
Yes	49	35	64
No	42	54	29
Don't know	<u>9</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>7</u>
	100	100	100

Overall, 51% of voters say Bush has done an excellent or good job of handling the electoral outcome, compared to 46% who say the same about Gore. Not surprisingly, supporters of each man strongly endorse their candidate's handling of the confusing situation; 76% of Bush supporters say the Texas governor has done an excellent or good job, while seven-in-ten Gore backers (72%) give the vice president top grades.

But a substantial minority of Gore voters (41%) say Bush will be the legitimate victor of the presidential contest if he wins in Florida and thus gains a narrow majority in the Electoral College; 51% of Gore supporters disagree. There is more unanimity on this point among Bush voters. Fully 95% of those who support the Texas governor say he will be the legitimate victor in the presidential contest if he wins in Florida.

Generally, voters who question the legitimacy of Bush's victory, should he win Florida, do so because of concerns over the accuracy of the vote count rather than because of Gore's lead in the popular vote. While 15% have doubts about the accuracy of the vote count, just 6% cite Gore's popular vote advantage (which remains unofficial) as a reason to question the legitimacy of a Bush victory in the Electoral College.

Most voters (67%) believe that if Bush does win in Florida, Gore should concede the election. Democrats are divided — 42% think the vice president should concede while 47% say he should fight the results in court because of the voting problems in Florida. Again, there is a consensus among Republicans, with 93% in favor of Gore conceding.

Silver Lining?

If there is an upside to these events, it may be the positive effect they have had on perceptions of the importance of voting. Nearly three-in-four voters (74%) say the election's razor-thin outcome has increased their belief that every vote counts, while only 23% say it has raised doubts in their minds about the importance of voting. Moreover, there is less of a partisan divide on this question — solid majorities of both Gore and Bush supporters feel more strongly about the relevance of their vote as a result of this process.

	All Voters	Gore Voters	Bush Voters
<i>Has the outcome of this election ...</i>	%	%	%
Increased belief that vote counts	74	68	83
Raised doubts about importance	23	29	14
Don't know	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>
	100	100	100

At the same time, many voters harbor doubts that the final tallies in Florida and other closely contested states will indeed be accurate. A 49% plurality is confident that the results will be accurate, while 42% disagree. Gore supporters are far more skeptical than Bush voters. Just 35% of the vice president's backers believe the final count will be accurate, compared to 64% of Bush supporters.

Whatever doubts voters have, however, only a minority (36%) supports a new election in Palm Beach County because of alleged ballot irregularities. Gore voters favor a new election by better than a two-to-one margin (64%-30%), while Bush supporters reject the idea, 90%-7%.

ABOUT THE SURVEY

The survey results are based on telephone re-interviews conducted November 10-12, 2000 among 1,113 voters under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates. ("Voters" are those respondents who said they voted in the 2000 election.) This sample was selected from those identified as registered voters in two previous nationwide surveys of adults 18 years of age or older, the first conducted September 2000 and the second in Early October 2000. For results based on the total sample of voters, one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling and other random effects is plus or minus 3 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.

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE AND THE PRESS
 NOVEMBER 2000 RE-INTERVIEW SURVEY
 -- FINAL TOPLINE --
 November 10-12, 2000
 N = 1,113 Voters**

On another subject...

E.1 As you may know, the Florida vote for president is still being counted awaiting absentee ballots. If the recount shows that George W. Bush won the state of Florida by a narrow margin giving him a majority in the Electoral College, do you think he will have legitimately won the election, or not?

IF "2" in E.1, ASK:

E.2 Why not? Because Al Gore actually won more of the popular vote, OR because you have doubts about whether the votes were counted fairly and accurately?

68	Yes
27	No
6	Al Gore won more of the popular vote
15	Have doubts about the votes being counted fairly and accurately
5	Both (VOL.)
1	Don't know/Refused
<u>5</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

E.3 If the recount shows that George W. Bush won the state of Florida by a narrow margin giving him a majority in the Electoral College, do you think Al Gore should concede the election to George W. Bush or should he contest this in the courts because of voting problems in Florida?

67 Gore should concede
26 Gore should contest
7 Don't know/Refused
100

ROTATE E.4 AND E.5

E.4 How good a job have Al Gore and the Democrats been doing in handling the uncertain outcome of the presidential election? Have they been doing an excellent job, a good job, only a fair job, or a poor job?

13 Excellent
33 Good
27 Only fair
24 Poor
3 Don't know/Refused
100

E.5 How good a job have George W. Bush and the Republicans been doing in handling the uncertain outcome of the presidential election? Have they been doing an excellent job, a good job, only a fair job, or a poor job?

13 Excellent
38 Good
28 Only fair
17 Poor
4 Don't know/Refused
100

E.6 Has the outcome of this election increased your belief that every vote counts, or has it raised doubts in your mind about the importance of your vote?

74 Increased belief
23 Raised doubts
3 Don't know/Refused
100

E.7 As you may know, questions have been raised about the ballot used in Palm Beach, Florida. Many voters say they were confused by it. Do you think the entire county should vote again or not?

36 Entire county should vote again
59 Should not vote again
5 Don't know/Refused
100

Q.42 As you may know, the outcome of this year's presidential election will be decided by a very narrow margin in Florida and several other states. All things considered, do you think we will have an accurate count of the votes in Florida and other close states, or not?

49 Accurate count
42 Not accurate count
9 Don't know/Refused
100