



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:
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More Dems Look Forward to Elections
THE PUBLIC'S NOT-SO-HAPPY NEW YEAR

The American public begins the new year with a highly negative view of national conditions and tempered expectations for 2008. Half of Americans say that as far as they are concerned, 2008 will be a better year than 2007, while 34% say it will be worse. In December 2006, and in several end-of-year surveys during the 1990s, there was greater optimism about the coming year.

Public views of the state of the nation are even less positive than people's personal expectations for the coming year. Just 27% say they are satisfied with national conditions,

while 66% are dissatisfied. Positive views of the state of the nation have been mired at about 30% for most of the past two years; in December 2006, 28% said they were satisfied with the way things were going in the country, while 65% were dissatisfied.

President Bush's approval rating also remains at a low point at the start of his final year in office. Just 31% approve of the president's job performance, while 60% disapprove. Bush's approval rating has been below 40% since February 2006.

The latest national survey by the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press, conducted Dec. 19-30 among 1,430 adults, finds that the public is looking forward to the presidential election much more than several other major events on the 2008 calendar. Fully 70% say they are especially looking forward to the November election, which is comparable to the proportion in January 1988 that said they were highly anticipating the presidential contest (74%).

	Dec 1994	Dec 1998	Dec 1999	Dec 2006	Dec 2007
<i>Will coming year be better or worse?</i>	%	%	%	%	%
Better	59	59	66	57	50
Worse	28	25	19	28	34
Don't know	13	16	15	15	16
	100	100	100	100	100

A smaller majority (54%) says they are looking forward to the presidential primaries. Still, this is slightly more than say they are looking forward to the Olympics (52%) or the Super Bowl (49%), and far more than are anticipating the World Series and the Academy Awards. The World Series, in particular, is less highly anticipated than it was two decades ago, when 51% said they were especially looking forward to the baseball championship.

Far more Democrats than Republicans say they are looking forward to the 2008 election, especially the primary contests. Roughly three-quarters of Democrats (74%) say they are especially looking forward to the primaries, compared with only about half of Republicans (49%). This is consistent with previous Pew surveys showing higher levels of political enthusiasm and satisfaction with the presidential candidates among Democrats than among Republicans.

**Looking Ahead
To Coming Events**

<i>Especially looking forward to...</i>	Jan	Dec
	1988	2007
	%	%
Presidential election	74	70
Presidential primaries	55	54
Olympics*	71	52
Super Bowl	55	49
World Series	51	38
Academy Awards	43	34

* This year, only the Summer Olympics will be held; in 1988, both the Winter and Summer Olympics were held.

More Democrats Looking Forward to 2008 Elections

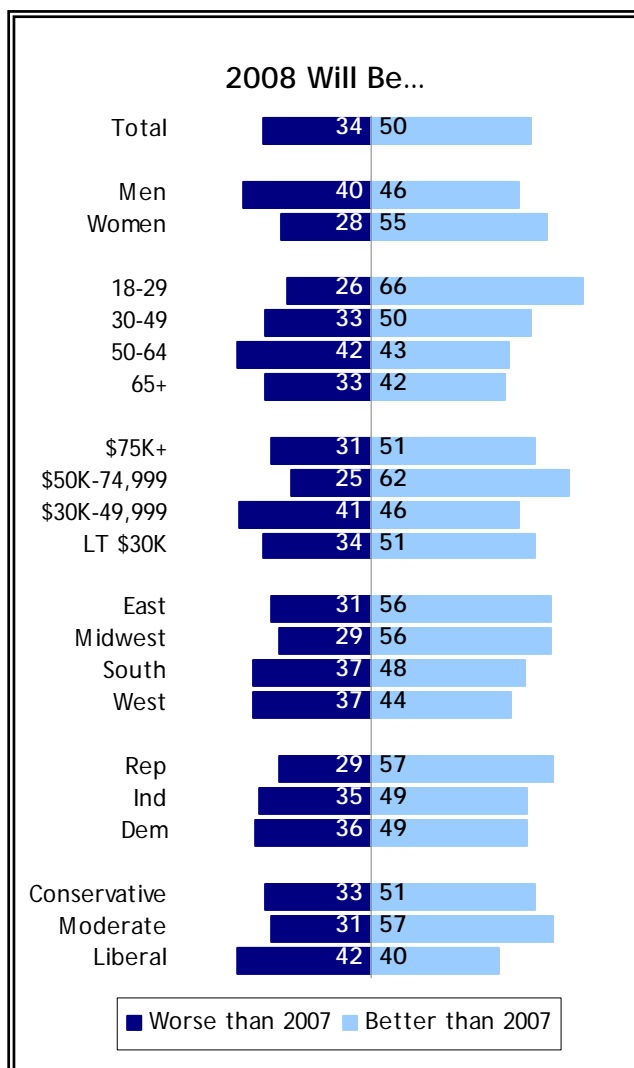
<i>Especially looking forward to?</i>	Rep	Dem	Ind
	%	%	%
Presidential election			
Yes	66	82	69
No	31	18	29
Don't know	<u>3</u>	*	<u>2</u>
	100	100	100
Presidential primaries			
Yes	49	74	47
No	49	25	51
Don't know	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>
	100	100	100

Looking Ahead

Women are personally more optimistic about the year ahead than are men. More than half of women (55%) say that 2008 will be a better year than 2007, while just 28% expect the coming year to be worse. Fewer than half of men (46%) are personally upbeat about 2008, while 40% expect it to be a worse year than 2007.

Young people consistently express more personal optimism than do older Americans, and this is reflected in their upbeat outlook for 2008. Two-thirds (66%) of those younger than 30 say this year will be better than last, compared with 50% of those ages 30 to 49 and slightly more than 40% for 50 and older.

Republicans are more positive than either Democrats or independents about the year ahead; 57% of Republicans say 2008 will be better than 2007, compared with 49% of Democrats and the same percentage of independents. Late last year, two-thirds of Republicans (67%) said 2007 would be better than 2006. Democrats and independents also are less optimistic about the coming year than they were in December 2006, though the declines are smaller than among Republicans (four points among Democrats, five points among independents).



Most Important Event of '07

A plurality of Americans (23%) cite Iraq as the single most important news event of 2007, but significantly fewer named Iraq as the year's top event than did so in 2006 (34%). Pew surveys have shown that public attentiveness to the war, which was extensive early in 2007, declined later in the year.

Aside from Iraq, no single event stood out in the public's view as the most important in 2007. Overall, 4% volunteered natural disasters and the weather and 3% cited the home mortgage crisis, with smaller numbers naming other stories. In 2006, the midterm election was

mentioned by 12% as the most important news event, by far the highest percentage for any other story except Iraq.

The public’s retrospective view of the year’s most important news event differs from news interest, which the Pew Research Center for the People & the Press tracks on a weekly basis. By that measure, the rising price of gasoline and the Virginia Tech University shootings were the top stories of 2007. See [“Gas Prices, Disasters Top Public’s News Interests in 2007.”](#)

Year’s Most Important News Event	
	<u>2007</u>
	%
Iraq	23
Natural disasters/weather	4
Mortgage crisis/housing mkt	3
Gas/oil prices	2
Presidential elections	2
Bhutto’s death	2
Economy	1
Global warming	1
Terrorism/war on terror	1
Katrina aftermath	1
Virginia Tech	1
Steroids in baseball	1
Immigration	1
Iran	1
Minnesota bridge collapse	1
Other/Don’t know	59
	<u>2006</u>
Iraq	34
Midterm election	12
Hurricane Katrina recovery	3
Iran/Iranian nuclear	1
North Korea/ nuclear test	1
Terrorism/war on terror	1
Gas/oil prices	1
Economy	1
Natural disasters/weather	1
Government corruption	1
Immigration/border sec	1
Rumsfeld resignation	1
School shootings	*
Other/Don’t know	47
<p>Figures add to more than 100% because multiple answers were allowed.</p>	

ABOUT THIS SURVEY

Results for this survey are based on telephone interviews conducted under the direction of Princeton Survey Research Associates International among a nationwide sample of 1,430 adults, 18 years of age or older, from December 19-30, 2007 (1,089 respondents were interviewed on a landline telephone, and 341 were interviewed on a cell phone, including 113 who had no landline telephone). Both the landline and cell phone samples were designed by Survey Sampling, Inc.

The combined landline and cell phone data were weighted using demographic weighting parameters derived from the March 2006 Census Bureau's Current Population Survey, along with an estimate of current patterns of telephone status in the U.S. derived from the 2006 National Health Interview Survey, using an iterative technique that simultaneously balances the distributions of all weighting parameters. The weighting procedure also accounted for the fact that respondents with both landline and cell phones had a greater probability of being included in the sample.

The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press will be releasing a detailed analysis of the landline and cell phone samples in the coming weeks.

For results Republican and Republican-leaning registered voters (N=471), one can say with 95% confidence that the error attributable to sampling is plus or minus 5 percentage points. For Democratic and Democratic-leaning registered voters (N=556) the margin of error is plus or minus 5 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.

ABOUT THE CENTER

The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press is an independent opinion research group that studies attitudes toward the press, politics and public policy issues. We are sponsored by The Pew Charitable Trusts and are one of eight projects that make up the Pew Research Center, a nonpartisan "fact tank" that provides information on the issues, attitudes and trends shaping America and the world.

The Center's purpose is to serve as a forum for ideas on the media and public policy through public opinion research. In this role it serves as an important information resource for political leaders, journalists, scholars, and public interest organizations. All of our current survey results are made available free of charge.

All of the Center's research and reports are collaborative products based on the input and analysis of the entire Center staff consisting of:

Andrew Kohut, Director
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PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
LATE DECEMBER, 2007 POLITICAL COMMUNICATIONS STUDY
FINAL TOPLINE
December 19- December 30, 2007
N=1430

Q.1 All in all, are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way things are going in this country today?

	<u>Satis- fied</u>	<u>Dis- satisfied</u>	<u>No Opinion</u>		<u>Satis- fied</u>	<u>Dis- satisfied</u>	<u>No Opinion</u>
Late December, 2007	27	66	7=100	January, 1999	53	41	6=100
October, 2007	28	66	6=100	November, 1998	46	44	10=100
February, 2007	30	61	9=100	Early September, 1998	54	42	4=100
Mid-January, 2007	32	61	7=100	Late August, 1998	55	41	4=100
Early January, 2007	30	63	7=100	Early August, 1998	50	44	6=100
December, 2006	28	65	7=100	February, 1998	59	37	4=100
Mid-November, 2006	28	64	8=100	January, 1998	46	50	4=100
Early October, 2006	30	63	7=100	September, 1997	45	49	6=100
July, 2006	30	65	5=100	August, 1997	49	46	5=100
May, 2006	29	65	6=100	January, 1997	38	58	4=100
March, 2006	32	63	5=100	July, 1996	29	67	4=100
January, 2006	34	61	5=100	March, 1996	28	70	2=100
Late November, 2005	34	59	7=100	October, 1995	23	73	4=100
Early October, 2005	29	65	6=100	June, 1995	25	73	2=100
July, 2005	35	58	7=100	April, 1995	23	74	3=100
Late May, 2005	39	57	4=100	July, 1994	24	73	3=100
February, 2005	38	56	6=100	March, 1994	24	71	5=100
January, 2005	40	54	6=100	October, 1993	22	73	5=100
December, 2004	39	54	7=100	September, 1993	20	75	5=100
Mid-October, 2004	36	58	6=100	May, 1993	22	71	7=100
July, 2004	38	55	7=100	January, 1993	39	50	11=100
May, 2004	33	61	6=100	January, 1992	28	68	4=100
Late February, 2004	39	55	6=100	November, 1991	34	61	5=100
Early January, 2004	45	48	7=100	Late February, 1991 (<i>Gallup</i>)	66	31	3=100
December, 2003	44	47	9=100	August, 1990	47	48	5=100
October, 2003	38	56	6=100	May, 1990	41	54	5=100
August, 2003	40	53	7=100	January, 1989	45	50	5=100
<i>April 8, 2003</i>	<i>50</i>	<i>41</i>	<i>9=100</i>	September, 1988 (<i>RVs</i>)	50	45	5=100
January, 2003	44	50	6=100	May, 1988	41	54	5=100
November, 2002	41	48	11=100	January, 1988	39	55	6=100
September, 2002	41	55	4=100				
Late August, 2002	47	44	9=100				
May, 2002	44	44	12=100				
March, 2002	50	40	10=100				
Late September, 2001	57	34	9=100				
Early September, 2001	41	53	6=100				
June, 2001	43	52	5=100				
March, 2001	47	45	8=100				
February, 2001	46	43	11=100				
January, 2001	55	41	4=100				
October, 2000 (<i>RVs</i>)	54	39	7=100				
September, 2000	51	41	8=100				
June, 2000	47	45	8=100				
April, 2000	48	43	9=100				
August, 1999	56	39	5=100				

Q.2 Do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president? [IF DK ENTER AS DK. IF DEPENDS PROBE ONCE WITH: Overall do you approve or disapprove of the way George W. Bush is handling his job as president? IF STILL DEPENDS ENTER AS DK]

	App- rove	Dis- approve	Don't know		App- rove	Dis- approve	Don't know
Late December, 2007	31	60	9=100	February, 2004	48	44	8=100
November, 2007	30	59	11=100	Mid-January, 2004	56	34	10=100
October, 2007	30	63	7=100	Early January, 2004	58	35	7=100
September, 2007	31	59	10=100	December, 2003	57	34	9=100
August, 2007	31	59	10=100	November, 2003	50	40	10=100
July, 2007	29	61	10=100	October, 2003	50	42	8=100
June, 2007	29	61	10=100	September, 2003	55	36	9=100
April, 2007	35	57	8=100	Mid-August, 2003	56	32	12=100
March, 2007	33	58	9=100	Early August, 2003	53	37	10=100
February, 2007	33	56	11=100	Mid-July, 2003	58	32	10=100
Mid-January, 2007	33	59	8=100	Early July, 2003	60	29	11=100
Early January, 2007	33	57	10=100	June, 2003	62	27	11=100
December, 2006	32	57	11=100	May, 2003	65	27	8=100
Mid-November, 2006	32	58	10=100	<i>April 10-16, 2003</i>	72	22	6=100
Early October, 2006	37	53	10=100	<i>April 9, 2003</i>	74	20	6=100
September, 2006	37	53	10=100	<i>April 2-7, 2003</i>	69	25	6=100
August, 2006	37	54	9=100	<i>March 28-April 1, 2003</i>	71	23	6=100
July, 2006	36	57	7=100	<i>March 25-27, 2003</i>	70	24	6=100
June, 2006	36	54	10=100	<i>March 20-24, 2003</i>	67	26	7=100
April, 2006	33	56	11=100	March 13-16, 2003	55	34	11=100
Early April, 2006	35	55	10=100	February, 2003	54	36	10=100
March, 2006	33	57	10=100	January, 2003	58	32	10=100
February, 2006	40	52	8=100	December, 2002	61	28	11=100
January, 2006	38	54	8=100	Late October, 2002	59	29	12=100
December, 2005	38	54	8=100	Early October, 2002	61	30	9=100
Early November, 2005	36	55	9=100	Mid-September, 2002	67	22	11=100
Late October, 2005	40	52	8=100	Early September, 2002	63	26	11=100
Early October, 2005	38	56	6=100	Late August, 2002	60	27	13=100
September 8-11, 2005	40	52	8=100	August, 2002	67	21	12=100
September 6-7, 2005	40	52	8=100	Late July, 2002	65	25	10=100
July, 2005	44	48	8=100	July, 2002	67	21	12=100
June, 2005	42	49	9=100	June, 2002	70	20	10=100
Late May, 2005	42	48	10=100	April, 2002	69	18	13=100
Mid-May, 2005	43	50	7=100	Early April, 2002	74	16	10=100
Late March, 2005	49	46	5=100	February, 2002	78	13	9=100
Mid-March, 2005	45	46	9=100	January, 2002	80	11	9=100
February, 2005	46	47	7=100	Mid-November, 2001	84	9	7=100
January, 2005	50	43	7=100	Early October, 2001	84	8	8=100
December, 2004	48	44	8=100	Late September, 2001	86	7	7=100
Mid-October, 2004	44	48	8=100	Mid-September, 2001	80	9	11=100
August, 2004	46	45	9=100	Early September, 2001	51	34	15=100
July, 2004	46	46	8=100	August, 2001	50	32	18=100
June, 2004	48	43	9=100	July, 2001	51	32	17=100
May, 2004	44	48	8=100	June, 2001	50	33	17=100
Late April, 2004	48	43	9=100	May, 2001	53	32	15=100
Early April, 2004	43	47	10=100	April, 2001	56	27	17=100
Late March, 2004	47	44	9=100	March, 2001	55	25	20=100
Mid-March, 2004	46	47	7=100	February, 2001	53	21	26=100

ASK FORM 1 ONLY [N=727]:

Q.3F1 I am going to read you a list of events that will occur in the coming year. As I read each one, please tell me whether or not this is an event you are especially looking forward to. The first one is...

		Don't know/		
		<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Refused</u>
a.	The presidential election	70	28	2=100
	January, 1988	74	23	3=100
b.	The Olympics	52	46	2=100
	January, 1988	71	25	4=100
c.	The Presidential Primaries	54	44	2=100
	January, 1988	55	40	5=100
d.	The Super Bowl	49	50	1=100
	January, 1988	55	42	3=100
e.	The World Series	38	61	1=100
	January, 1988	51	45	4=100
f.	The Academy Awards	34	65	1=100
	January, 1988	43	53	4=100

ASK FORM 2 ONLY [N=703]:

Q.4F2 Looking ahead, so far as you are concerned, do you think that 2008 will be better or worse than 2007?

[PROMPT IF NECESSARY: "Just in general...]

		----- Gallup End of Year -----												
		Dec	Dec	Dec	Dec	Dec	Dec	Dec	Dec	Dec	Dec	Dec	Dec	Dec
		<u>2006</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1994</u>	<u>1993</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1984</u>	<u>1982</u>	<u>1981</u>
50	Better	57	66	59	59	64	61	61	48	53	64	61	50	41
34	Worse	28	19	25	28	20	11	31	42	25	20	20	32	44
<u>16</u>	DK/Refused	<u>15</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>13</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>22</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>19</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>15</u>
100		100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Q.5F2 What do you think was the single most important news event that happened in the nation or in the world in 2007? (**ACCEPT MULTIPLE RESPONSES; PROBE FOR SPECIFICITY.**)

NOTE: Totals may exceed 100% because of multiple responses. Categories mentioned by fewer than 1 percent of respondents combined into "Other-Domestic" or "Other-Foreign Affairs."

		<i>TREND FOR COMPARISON</i>
		<u>December 2006</u>
23	Iraq	34 Iraq
4	Natural Disasters/Weather	12 Midterm Elections/Democratic Victory
3	Mortgage Crisis/Housing Market	3 Katrina/New Orleans Recovery
2	Gas/Oil Prices	1 Iran/Iranian Nuclear Development
2	Presidential Election	1 North Korea/Nuclear Bomb Test
2	Benazir Bhutto's Death	1 Terrorism//War on Terrorism
1	Economy	1 Gas/Oil Prices
1	Global Warming	1 Economy
1	Terrorism/War on Terrorism	1 Natural Disasters/Weather
1	Aftermath of Katrina	1 Government Corruption/Dishonesty/Scandal
1	Virginia Tech Shootings	1 Immigration/Border Security
1	Steroids in Baseball	1 Rumsfeld Resignation
1	Immigration	* School Shootings
1	Iran	10 Other
1	Minnesota Bridge Collapse	37 Don't Know/Refused
8	Other – Domestic	
3	Other – Foreign Affairs	
48	Don't know/Refused	

QUESTIONS 6-57 HELD FOR FUTURE RELEASE, EXCEPT QUESTIONS 13 AND 16 WHICH WERE RELEASED JAN. 2.