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Moore Insight: President's Image Not Impacting GOPs or Incumbents in Washington State Today

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While President Bush currently has a net negative image in Washington State today, it does not appear to be hurting GOP candidates. Nor is there majority sentiment to toss out incumbents. These are findings from a statewide survey of 500 likely voters in Washington State conducted by Moore Information, Inc. June 12-14, 2006.

President Bush's image in Washington State today is 40% favorable/57% unfavorable, which is very similar to the most recent polling figures nationally (40/55% according to a 5/16-18 FOX News/Opinion Dynamics poll of 900 voters nationwide).

Regionally, it is no surprise that Bush's image scores are lowest in Seattle (13% favorable/85% unfavorable), although majorities elsewhere in Western Washington are also negative. East of the mountains, sentiment about the President is divided (50/46%). By party, Democrats with an opinion are almost universally negative (6/91%), and majorities of Independents are also negative 33/64%. Loyal Republicans are widely favorable (83/13%) and "soft" Republicans are positive, but by a somewhat narrower margin (65/31%).

Bush's lackluster image does not appear to have far reaching implications for Republican candidates in the state today.

- On the generic ballot test for Congress, 37% of Washington voters favor a Republican candidate for Congress and 41% a Democrat. The remaining 21% have no opinion. Preference on the generic ballot test was statistically identical in Washington State in August 2003 (36/42%). By comparison, nationally, a Democratic candidate has a 13-point edge, with 46% favoring a Democrat candidate for Congress and 33% a Republican (FOX/Opinion Dynamics poll conducted June 13-14, 2006). Importantly, Washington Republicans and Democrats are showing similar levels of loyalty to their candidates today, while Independents largely lack a partisan preference.

Additionally, there does not seem to be a bias against incumbents today.

- When voters are asked if they are more likely to vote for an incumbent or a challenger for Congress or the U.S. Senate this year, 30% favor an incumbent, 32% a challenger and 38% have no opinion. By party, GOP voters prefer a challenger, 50-17%, while Democrats favor the incumbent, 47-16%. Among Independent voters, 27% prefer a challenger, 20% the incumbent and 53% have no preference.

George W. Bush Image

	% Favorable	% Unfavorable	% Net favorable
USA*	40	55	-15
Washington State	40	57	-17
Region			
Seattle	13	85	-72
Non-Seattle King Co.	37	59	-22
Kitsap/Pierce/Snohomish Co.	38	58	-20
Other West	44	52	-8
East	50	46	+4
Party			
Loyal Republicans	83	13	+70
Soft Republicans	65	31	+34
Independents	33	64	-31
Democrats	6	91	-85

*FOX News/Opinion Dynamics, N=900 registered voters nationwide, 5/16-18/2006

Generic Congressional Ballot

	% Republican	% Democrat	% Net Republican
USA*	33	46	-13
Washington State			
2003	36	42	-6
2006	37	41	-4
Region			
Seattle	11	67	-56
Non-Seattle King Co.	38	49	-11
Kitsap/Pierce/Snohomish Co.	33	39	-6
Other West	41	35	+6
East	49	32	+17
Party			
Loyal Republicans	85	4	+81
Soft Republicans	69	12	+57
Independents	21	18	+3
Democrats	3	85	-82

*FOX News/Opinion Dynamics, N=900 registered voters nationwide, 6/13-14/2006

Incumbent vs. Challenger

	% Incumbent	% Challenger	% Net Challenger
Washington State	30	32	+2
Region			
Seattle	57	7	-50
Non-Seattle King Co.	30	36	+6
Kitsap/Pierce/Snohomish Co.	27	33	+6
Other West	28	31	+3
East	24	40	+16
Party			
Loyal Republicans	15	50	+35
Soft Republicans	19	51	+32
Independents	20	27	+7
Democrats	47	16	-31

This telephone survey of Washington voters was conducted June 12-14, 2006 by Moore Information, Inc. among a representative sample of 500 likely voters statewide. Potential sampling error is plus or minus 4% at the 95% confidence level.

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