

DEMOCRACY CORPS
GREENBERG QUINLAN ROSNER RESEARCH

Founders
James Carville
Stanley Greenberg
Robert Shrum

Executive Director
Jim Gerstein

Senior Advisor
Karl Agne

Research Conducted by:
Greenberg Quinlan Rosner

Date: April 5, 2007
To: Friends of Democracy Corps and Greenberg Quinlan Rosner
From: Stan Greenberg, James Carville and Ana Iparraguirre

RE: Iraq Update

The Impact of the Debate over the Iraq Supplemental Appropriations Bill

Democracy Corps recently conducted a survey capturing voters' responses to the congressional battle over the Iraq Supplemental Appropriations Bill. The survey was conducted after the House passed the Iraq Supplemental Spending Bill, but before the Senate passed its own version that sets a goal for departure in March 2008.

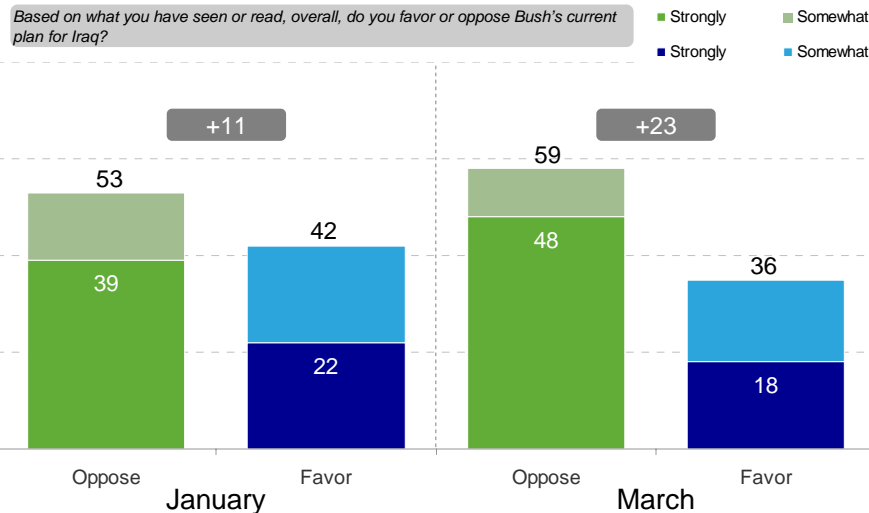
In the current phase of the debate over the Iraq Supplemental Bill, our research shows that opinions on the war, the new Iraq policy and the President have grown more negative, with support for troop reductions reaching its highest level yet.¹ The Democrats' image improved on key security measures, and on electoral issues congressional Democrats (in a named ballot) reached their largest margin yet. With this first major confrontation on the public's highest priority, the voters are drawing initial conclusions that have further weakened the President and the Republicans.

The Opportunity of the Iraq Debate

During the congressional debate over the Iraq Supplemental Appropriations Bill, net favorable feelings toward the war reached the lowest point in 2007 with six-in-ten voters reporting cool feelings. Virtually the same proportion (59 percent) opposes the President's current plan in Iraq and opinions have intensified in the past two months as nearly half strongly oppose the President's plan, up from 39 percent two months ago.

¹ Democracy Corps survey of 1,526 likely voters conducted March 20-25, 2007.

Opposition to Bush's Iraq plan has grown



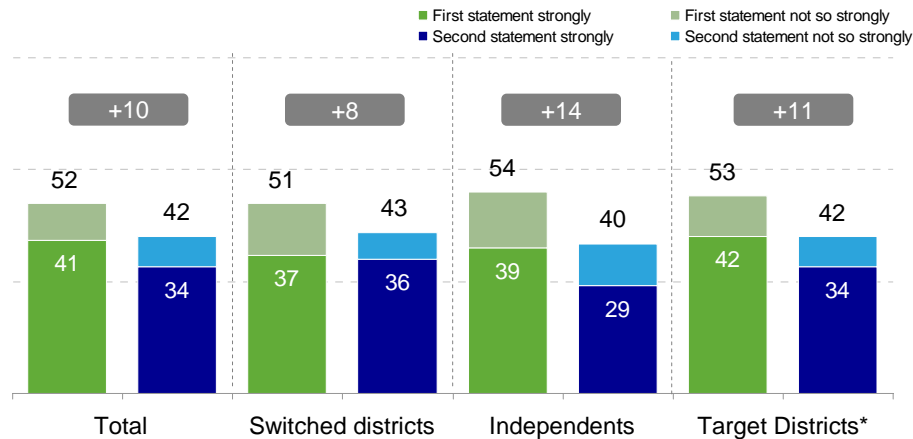
Voters' disapproval of Bush's handling of Iraq is not rhetorical as voters are ready to support a new course of action. Indeed, a solid majority of 56 percent favor reducing the number of troops in Iraq over staying the course. This is the biggest margin we have recorded for starting troop reductions overall and also among independent voters, who favor reducing the troops by a 14-point margin, up from a 5-point edge just a month ago.

Perhaps most important, after hearing the debate and the President, voters by a 10-point margin wanted their member of Congress to vote 'for measures that will force the President to change policies and reduce troop levels in Iraq' rather than 'against measures that could undermine the President's policies in Iraq'. Members of Congress representing competitive 2008 districts clearly benefit from voting to oppose the President's policies in Iraq. A majority of voters in competitive districts, districts that switched parties in 2006, as well as 54 percent of independents, favor these measures.²

² MoveOn survey of 1,137 likely voters in the top 50 target Congressional Districts for 2008 conducted February 27-March 1, 2007.

Voters across districts and party lines want their member to vote to change Bush’s Iraq policy

I want my member of Congress to vote for measures that will force the President to change policies and reduce troop levels in Iraq.
OR
I want my member of Congress to vote against measures that could undermine the President’s policies in Iraq.

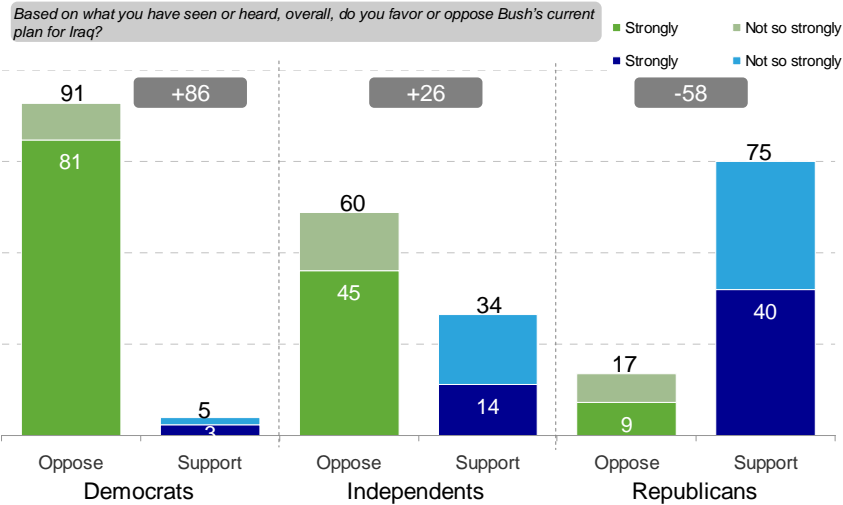


Note: MoveOn Targets data from MoveOn CD survey conducted February 27-March 1, 2007 of 1,137 likely voters

Voters support a new course in Iraq, but want it done in a responsible way. They are fairly divided over the best pace for withdrawal with 49 percent more concerned that the Republicans will ‘wait too long to withdraw our troops from Iraq’ and 45 percent more concerned that ‘Democrats will leave Iraq too quickly’. While Republicans do not seem to be the beneficiary, favorability toward Congress has dropped 4 points in the past month and voters are less ‘hopeful,’ compared to after the ‘100 hours agenda.’

Opposition to Bush’s current plan in Iraq is high among Democrats and independents. Indeed, nine-in-ten Democrats and 60 percent of independents oppose the President’s plan while three-quarters of Republican voters favor the plan. It is worth noting that independents’ opposition to the plan is much weaker than Democratic opposition, as just 45 percent of independents strongly oppose the plan, compared to 81 percent of Democrats.

Independents closer to democrats in opposition to Bush's policy

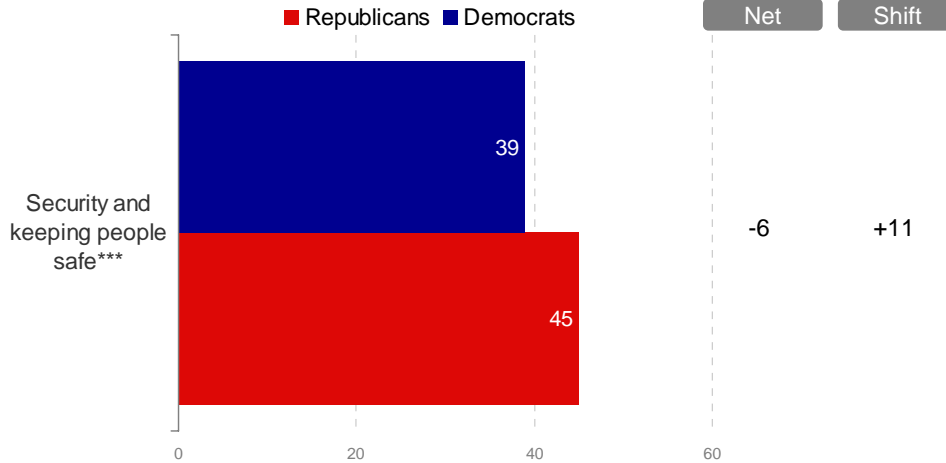


Democrats Strengthen Their Position on Security Issues

Democrats managed to strengthen their position by engaging in the Iraq debate during the past week and presenting voters with an alternative plan that addresses their concerns. Democrats' favorability improved 3 points since February and is 8 points higher than warm feelings towards Republicans. Indeed, Democrats made significant improvements on 'security and keeping people safe', moving from a 17-point disadvantage to a 6-point difference and reducing the gap with Republicans by over half.

Democrats improve standing on 'keeping people safe'

Now I'd like to ask you which party you associate more with these terms, the Democrats or the Republicans.

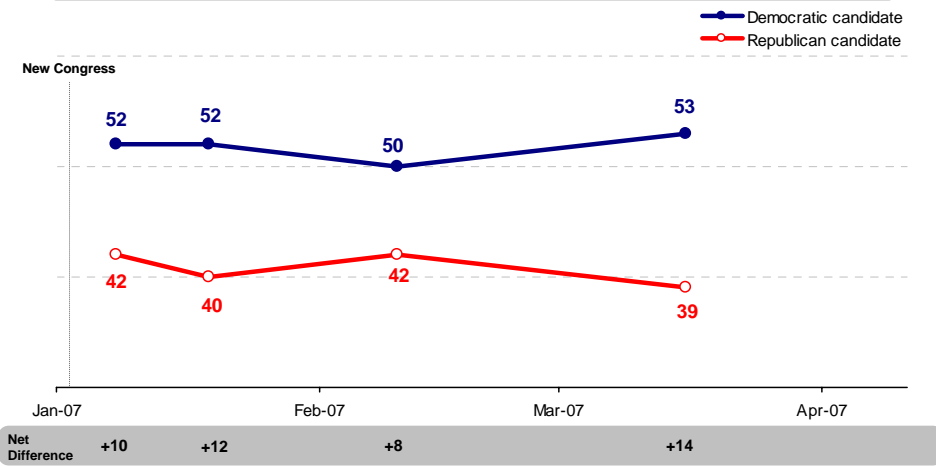


*Note: Shift from Democracy Corps National survey conducted in January, 2006 of 1,005 likely voters.

As the party improves its standing overall and on key attributes, support for Democrats in the congressional race has reached its highest point since the November election. Democrats now lead the race by a 14-point edge, 53 to 39 percent – twice the margin reported in the 2006 recall. In fact, Democrats’ margin in districts that switched parties in 2006 (63 to 28 percent) is more than twice as large as their current overall lead.

Democrats hold steady lead in named congressional vote

Thinking about the election for Congress in 2008, if the election for U.S. Congress were held today, would you be voting for the Democratic candidate or the Republican candidate?



*Note: Actual names of incumbents inserted, and a generic candidate was inserted for the opposing party

The battle over the Iraq Supplemental Appropriations Bill that began two weeks ago will likely intensify. For the moment, the debate has tilted opinion in favor of the Democrats' proposals for a new course in Iraq and has improved the standing of Democrats with the American people. Still, voters want to do this in a responsible way and prefer unity to division. Democrats enter this debate with a clear advantage on the merits of the debate, which will be tested as the Congress moves to pass this Supplemental Appropriations Bill to send to the President and join the debate over the veto.