

DEMOCRACY CORPS
GREENBERG QUINLAN ROSNER RESEARCH

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Date: October 30, 2006
To: Friends of Democracy Corps and Greenberg Quinlan Rosner
From: Stan Greenberg and Ana Iparraguirre
James Carville

RE: IRAQ WEAKENS REPUBLICAN HOLD
Survey of the 50 Competitive Republican Districts 10 Days Out

This latest 1,200 sample survey of 50 Republican competitive congressional seats conducted October 25-29th, shows the Democrats continuing to hold a 3-point lead (48 to 45 percent) in the named congressional ballot, but the Republicans are weakening on many fronts, particularly Iraq.¹ The changes on Iraq are major, with disillusionment greatest in the more Republican districts, which is expanding the playing field in the least competitive districts.

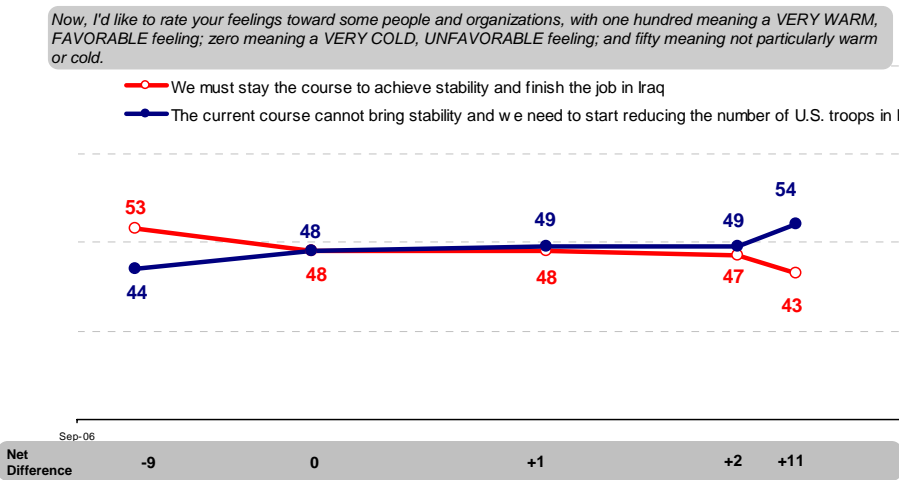
The country has been divided for two years on whether to stay the course or start reducing troop levels. Whatever the events of the day, withdrawal has evenly split the electorate, as it was a week ago in these Republican districts. With large majorities now thinking we are losing ground and the president wavering on his stance, a sudden majority has emerged (54 to 43 percent) for reducing troop levels. That has increased the importance of Iraq as a voting issue and shaken the lowest tier.

The vote is stable about 10 days before the election because the Republicans have tightened the race marginally in tier one to a 4-point margin, but that is where the advertising battle has been most intense and where there are a fair number of Republican districts catapulted up by scandal.

But the vote has shifted against the Republicans in tier three, where the race is now even in the named congressional ballot (47 to 47 percent). These more Republican competitive districts have been particularly shaken by the news this week from Iraq.

¹ Republican-held district survey conducted October 25-29, 2006 of 1,200 likely voters.

Republican districts showing more support for withdrawal

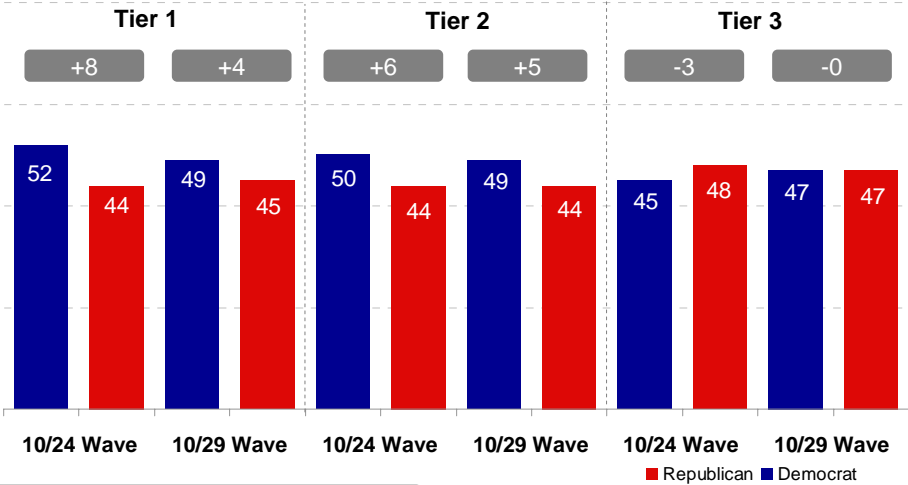


That the Republicans are weakening in these Republican districts are reflected in the following trends:

- Bush’s job approval has dropped to 40 percent, matching his lowest point in these Republican districts.
- Congress approval has dropped 4 points to 28 percent.
- For the first time, disapproval of the Republican incumbent, asked by name, exceeds approval. While in tier one races, the incumbent has fought to raise their approval from 39 to 42 percent, approval has dropped sharply in the least competitive congressional races. With 41 percent approval, the named incumbent in tier three races is no higher than in the most competitive races.
- The thermometer rating of the “Republican Congress” has fallen sharply this week (with 33 percent “warm” and 51 percent “cool”) in these Republican districts.
- The generic congressional vote margin for Democrats has increased from 5 to 8 points in these Republican districts.

Democrats lead in congressional vote – have leveled field in tier 3

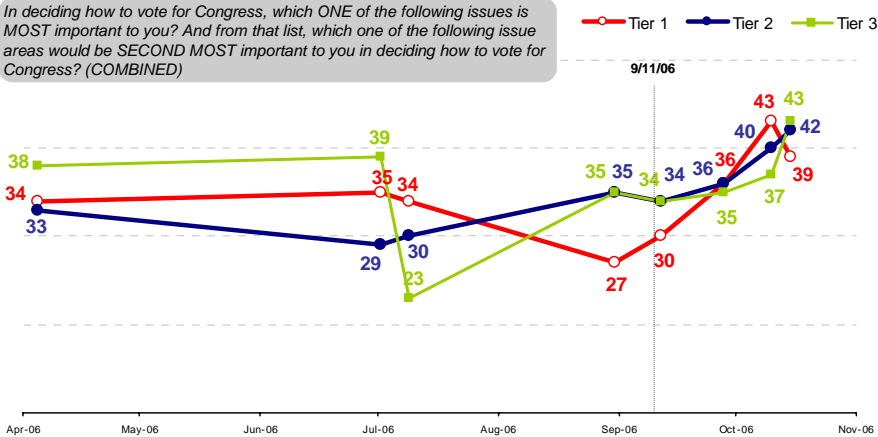
Now thinking about the election for U.S. Congress this November, if the election for U.S. Congress were held today, would you be voting for*...



Iraq

- Against all odds, Iraq continues to grow and crowd out all other issues in people’s vote – now mentioned by 27 percent as the most important issue in their vote and 41 percent mention it either as the 1st or 2nd issue. Terrorism and national security continues to drop. The surge in Iraq voting at this late point in the election is most marked in the third tier races, where 43 percent now say it is one of the top two issues and where a majority now wants to start reducing troops. In both tier two and tier three, voters prefer the Democrats to handle the Iraq issue.
- Bush’s approval on Iraq in these Republican districts is only 38 percent; indeed, it is only 50 percent on the war on terrorism.

War in Iraq as main concern: all three tiers



Turnout and Mood

There remains a lot of uncertainty, as we do not show a rising engagement as the election nears. The high interest (rank interest as “10” on a “1-to-10” scale) has fallen from 62 to 59 percent, with the biggest drop in tier one, where the biggest battle has been waged. That is why we urged Democrats earlier to close, running against the partisan polarization and changing Washington to address issues that matter. Democratic voters still show higher interest (63 versus 56 percent on highest interest) and higher enthusiasm (63 versus 53 percent), and those gaps have been stable over the last week.

While 48 percent give Bush a positive rating on handling the economy, that has not impacted the mood in the districts: 60 percent say the country is on the wrong track, double the number saying right.