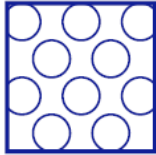


THE Cook Political Report

AND



National
Omnibus
Poll



RT Strategies

Thomas Riehle, *Partner*

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Washington, DC.-November 17, 2005- The Cook Political Report and RT Strategies announce the launch of the Cook Political Report/RT Strategies Poll, a telephone survey of 1,000 American adults on issues, the current political climate, President Bush and Congress, as well as the 2006 midterms and the 2008 presidential election. The inaugural poll was conducted November 17 to November 20, 2005, and has a margin of error +/- 3.1%.

Subscribers of the Cook Political Report and clients of RT Strategies will have the combined best thinking of a leading Republican and Democratic pollster, on a bi-partisan poll directed in a non-partisan fashion.

The Cook Political Report/RT Strategies Poll

- Because 2008 is wide open (the first time since 1928 in which neither a sitting president nor vice president will be on the general election ballot), the political parties and those who follow politics know the 2006-2008 cycle is largely uncharted territory. The Cook Political Report/RT Strategies Poll is designed to track the constantly changing terrain as the race proceeds, with monthly polls for now, more often as events warrant.

- In this inaugural edition of the poll, Americans describe their positive and negative perceptions of each Party's presumptive frontrunner, Sens. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-NY) and John McCain (R-AZ). McCain begins with an impressive level of election potential, specifically among those with higher educational levels and those living in the Northeast and West. Clinton shows great support within her party, but only tepid support from independent and frequently intense opposition from Republicans.

- "For Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, Democrats and Democratic primary voters nationwide seem highly receptive to her strengths and downplay her weaknesses. However, independents have a much more tepid view of her and Republicans views approach the freezing mark, raising real questions of electability. Numbers for Sen. John McCain indicate a much different story. When his strengths and weaknesses are laid out to respondents, he is well regarded among independents and Republicans, but is favored much less among

Republicans and GOP primary voters, indicating another tough road for 2008 Republican nomination.” --Charlie Cook

- A focus on the views of hard-core 2008 Presidential primary and caucus participants monthly, starting now. In this poll, assessments were broken down to those registered voters, as well as primary voters, leading to interesting results. For example, the poll indicates that Sen. McCain faces larger problems within his own party, with 44% of Republican primary voters stating that he does not reflect Republican views.

- An innovative approach to measuring party “brand loyalty” and the changing images of the parties. In marketing, word-of-mouth endorsements are highly desirable. Riehle and Tarrance tested the “brand loyalty” for each party by asking respondents how likely they were to recommend that a friend or neighbor vote for the Democratic Party or the Republican Party.

- Analysis that goes beyond the familiar breakdown by Republicans and Democrats and Independents, focusing attention on the two-step process of communications, looking at differences between the current attitudes of the aware and involved elite on the one hand and voters who are not yet engaged with the issues and candidates on the other.

About The Cook Political Report

Founded in 1984, *The Cook Political Report* provides independent, non-partisan analysis of U.S. Senate, House, gubernatorial and presidential elections and political trends. With a Washington, D.C.-based staff of five, *The Cook Political Report* offers its subscribers detailed analyses of all U.S. Senate and gubernatorial races and of every competitive and open House seat in the country. *The Cook Political Report* staff rates each Senate, gubernatorial and House race on a seven-point scale based on its level of competitiveness. *The Cook Political Report* can be found at www.cookpolitical.com.

About RT Strategies

RT Strategies, a bipartisan polling and strategic consulting firm was founded in 2005 by veteran pollsters Thomas Riehle, a Democrat, and Lance Tarrance, a Republican. The firm will produce a weekly national omnibus poll with varying participation by outside groups, including political party organizations and lobbying firms. Riehle was recently head of Ipsos Public Affairs, where he began the Ipsos/Associated Press poll. Prior to working for Ipsos, Riehle worked at Peter D. Hart Research Associates. Tarrance founded the Houston-based polling firm Tarrance & Associates in 1977, which he ran until 1992. He was on the Board of Directors of the Gallup Organization, and later was president of Gallup China in Beijing.

For more press information

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