

Contact: Kathryn Morris
KMorrisPR
845-635-9828
kathryn@kmorrispr.com

For Immediate Release

Is Dean Just What the Doctor Ordered?

- Muhlenberg-HCD National Physicians Poll Reveals Docs' Views on 2004 Election

Allentown, PA, January 19, 2004 -- Results of a new national survey of physicians revealed that nearly three times as many physicians think Governor Howard Dean is more electable referring to himself as Governor Dean (54%) than Dr. Dean (19%). Roughly one-fourth of physicians (27%) responding to the poll are undecided.

“We conducted the survey to gauge physicians’ views on Governor Dean’s status as a governor and physician, and the change in political strategy through which he is being recast as ‘Doctor’ Dean,” said Christopher P. Borick, Ph.D., Assistant Professor of Political Science and Director of the Muhlenberg College Institute of Public Opinion (MCIPO). “We also wanted to solicit their thoughts on how Governor Dean’s medical background would influence their voting behavior, as well as poll their opinions of the other presidential candidates,” Borick continued.

The national e-survey – “Physicians’ Views On The Election” (P-VOTE) – was conducted by Muhlenberg College and HCD Research between January 14 and 16. The Muhlenberg-HCD National Physicians poll was conducted among a nationally representative sample of more than 500 physicians. Among the findings:

- More than half of physicians (52%) report that Governor Dean’s medical background has no effect on their likelihood to vote for him for president.
- Nearly four in 10 physicians (38%) report that Governor Dean’s medical background makes them more likely to vote for him, while few (7%) are less likely to do so, and 3% are unsure.
- Despite reporting that it has no effect on their vote, nearly half of physicians (47%) think that emphasizing his medical background is the right thing to do for a physician running for political office; nearly one-third of physicians (31%) disagree, and nearly one-fourth (22%) are unsure.

Physicians gave low approval ratings to all of the major candidates about whom they were polled through being asked to rate the candidates on a scale of 1-7, where 1 equals “disapprove greatly” and 7 equals “approve greatly.” The approval ratings are based on a rating of 5 or higher.

Among the findings:

- While Governor Dean received the highest approval rating among democratic candidates (40 %), President George Bush received a much higher rating (60%) from physicians, with almost four out of 10 strongly approving his candidacy for reelection.

- Among democratic candidates, Retired General Wesley Clark received an approval rating of 38%, marking a statistical dead heat with Governor Dean, followed by Senator John Kerry and Senator Joe Lieberman (tie 30%); Congressman Dick Gephardt (29%); and Senator John Edwards (23%)

Founded in 2001, the Muhlenberg College Institute of Public Opinion (MCIPO) has become a respected source of public opinion data on local, statewide and national issues. Headquartered in Flemington, NJ, HCD Research, Inc. is a pioneer in Internet health care marketing and advertising research.

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