behavior research center's
Rocky Mountain Poll

NEWS RELEASE
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EDUCATION NEEDS TOP LIST OF VOTER QUESTIONS
FOR GUBERNATORIAL CANDIDATES

Phoenix, Arizona, June 7, 2002.   When asked to identify the top two issues they want to hear gubernatorial candidates discuss this year, over 40 percent of Arizona voters point to education, and the need to improve its quality in Arizona.   As might be expected, however, opinions on what exactly needs to be done vary greatly, but the most common recommendations are (a) raise the quality of instructors and the student-teacher ratio, (b) improve language training in public schools, and (c) raise teachers' pay.   Despite all the folderol surrounding the AIMS testing program in Arizona schools, only two percent insist it should be eliminated.

The second major topic reveals continued and considerable voter focus on the cost of state government – with one of every four voters calling for additional tax cuts, spending cuts and, in general, balancing the state budget.

Only two other issues attract the attention of more than ten percent of voters – achieving affordable healthcare and reducing crime, primarily through strengthening law enforcement agencies.

Issues such as the job market, transportation and urban sprawl register between eight and ten percent, while voters' interest in candidates' views on the Cardinal Stadium or Indian gaming register at less than five percent.

The findings outlined in this report are based on a survey of 600 adult heads of household throughout Maricopa County conducted between May 16th and 25th, 2002, by the Behavior Research Center of Arizona as part of the Center's independent and non-partisan Rocky Mountain Poll series. The public is welcome to visit www.brcpolls.com to read this and other recent polls.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: This Rocky Mountain Poll Arizona (2002-II-14) is based on telephone interviews conducted from May 16th through May 25th 2002, with 600 adult heads of household throughout Maricopa County, including 436 registered voters: 211 Republicans, 160 Democrats and 65 Independents. In the overall voter sample, one may say with 95 percent certainty that the results have a statistical precision of plus or minus 4.6 percent of what they would have been had the entire adult population been surveyed. The margin of error for the GOP sample is estimated at +/-6.8 percent and the Democratic sample at +/- 7.9 percent. The Rocky Mountain Poll is conducted by the Behavior Research Center of Arizona and is an independent and non-partisan research program.

This statement conforms to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

BELOW: Statistical data

For this and other polls, see www.brcpolls.com/results

STATISTICAL DATA	Behavior Research Center
	Rocky Mountain Poll - Arizona
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"As you know, Arizona will elect a new governor this November. What would you say are the two most important issues the candidates for Governor should be discussing this year?"

	Total	Republican	Democrat	Independent
EDUCATION	43%	47%	45%	41%
Raise quality of schools	19	21	20	13
More language instruction	16	19	13	18
Raise teachers' pay	9	9	11	11
Reduce dropout rate	2	1	7	2
End AIMS testing	2	2	3	0
COST OF GOVERNMENT	27%	34%	30%	27%
Balance budget/Get out of debt	11	14	12	15
More tax reductions	10	11	13	8
Shrink government further	8	12	5	5
OTHER ISSUES				
Affordable healthcare	14	11	13	16
Crime/Law enforcement	13	10	13	14
Strengthen economy/Job market	10	9	16	9
Improve transportation system	8	10	6	9
Urban sprawl/Environmental protection	9	13	13	5
MISCELLANEOUS ISSUES				
Cardinals' Stadium	3	1	5	1
Indian gaming	3	2	7	8
Other	6	5	2	6

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