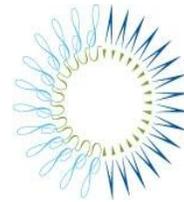




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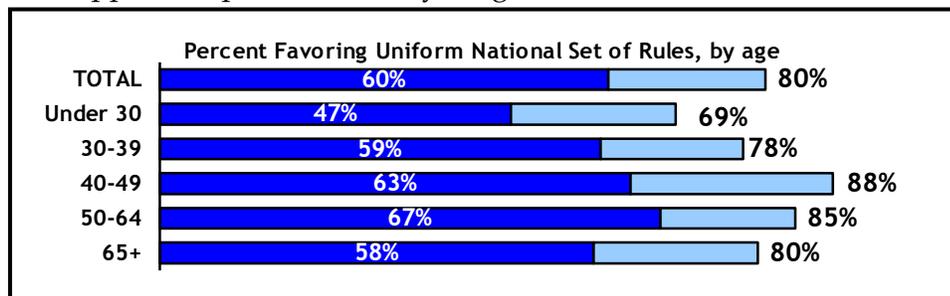
Alan C. Wolf
Chief Operating Officer

MEMORANDUM

To: Michael Caudell-Feagan, Make Voting Work
From: Celinda Lake, Lake Research Partners and Brian Nienaber, The Tarrance Group
Subject: Support for Military and Overseas Voting
Date: September 11, 2008

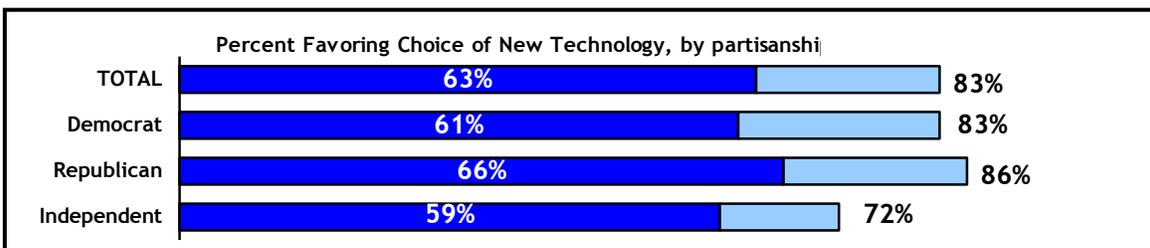
Military and overseas voters having a chance to participate in elections back home touches on a core value for all Americans and has strong universal support. This issue transcends simply solving a problem, and crosses across age, regional, and party lines.

- As a way to help achieve this democratic ideal, the vast majority of Americans support having a uniform, national set of rules for military and overseas voters.
- When made aware that different states have a wide variety of different rules and procedures for voting, 81% of Americans say they favor having a uniform set of rules for these voters, with 60% favoring this strongly¹.
- There is little to no variation by region of the country and by party affiliation.
- Because this is a core value, proposals to correct the voting problems don't compete against other policy proposals such as healthcare, the economy, or other pressing issues.
- Voters of all age groups overwhelmingly support the proposal though support drops a little with younger voters.



¹ Different states have different procedures for voting from abroad. Active military and overseas voters face a wide variety of different rules for casting their ballot. Knowing this, do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose creating a uniform national set of rules for military and overseas voters?

- Eighty-three percent of Americans favor allowing military and other overseas voters to use new technologies like the internet and fax to receive ballots as an alternative to the postal system.²
- This solution has the most support from younger voters under age 30, who are near universal in their support. However this kind of broad support transcends all age groups.
- There is little variation in support by region.
- There is strong bipartisan support (83% Democrats, 86% Republicans) for giving an option for military and overseas voters.
- Independents are slightly less likely to support new technology options, but again, the vast majority of this group support having options (74%). This underscores the wide bi-partisan support for a solution like this to helping achieve the core value of helping overseas and military voters participate in elections.



- Most Americans agree the system for military voting has problems and we need to change it even when presented with the counter argument that American elections are fine.³
- When asked to choose which statement is closer to their view, nearly two-thirds (63%) of Americans say that the system has problems, while less than one-quarter (23%) say the system is fine.

² Active military and overseas voters rely on the international postal mail system to receive and send their ballot to their correct address in time for them to vote. Do you strongly favor, somewhat favor, somewhat oppose, or strongly oppose these voters having the choice to use either the postal mail system or new technological tools such as the internet or fax to receive their ballot?

³ Now I'd like to read you a pair of statements. Of the two, please tell me which statement is closer to your own view. **[ROTATE STATEMENTS]** (Some/Other people say) far too few military votes get cast and counted because of a confusing set of voting processes that differ in every state. Requesting and casting an absentee ballot is not as simple as it should be. Differing state laws, reliance on slow mail, and having to sort through inadequate assistance make it too difficult for Americans abroad, particularly the 1.4 million active-duty service members, to exercise their right to vote. The system has problems and we need to change it. (Some/Other people say) the Department of Defense is doing right by its service members and all overseas U.S. citizens by ensuring easy access to the information and resources they need to vote. They set up websites to guide military and overseas voters through the steps of requesting Voter Registration and Absentee Ballot forms. Even though it requires some lead time in order to register and receive an absentee ballot, overseas voting has never been easier. The system is fine and we should keep it as it is.

- Support for change increases with youth. Older voters are slightly more cautious but still support reform 2-1.
- Again there is bipartisan support for change with Democrats (67%) and Republicans (60%) who are even more likely to opt for change than independents who are more undecided.

	1st Statement Agree: System has problems	2nd Statement Agree: System is fine
Under 30	77%	16%
30-39	62%	22%
40-49	65%	22%
50-64	66%	21%
65+	53%	28%
Republicans	60%	24%
Democrats	67%	23%
Independents	52%	20%
Northeast	61%	25%
Midwest	61%	24%
South	65%	23%
West	64%	19%

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For information regarding the survey, contact Celinda Lake at Lake Research Partners (202.776.9066), or Brian Nienaber at The Tarrance Group (703.604.6688).