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DATE: April 23, 2004

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**Most of Public Wants the Assault Weapons Ban Extended;
So Do Half of NRA Households, Annenberg Data Shows**

Most Americans, including those who have guns in their homes, want to see the ten-year-old ban on assault weapons extended. And even though the National Rifle Association's leadership is intensely opposed to renewal, about half of those with an NRA member in their household support continuing the ban, the University of Pennsylvania's National Annenberg Election Survey shows.

The ban expires on September 13, and Republican leaders in Congress do not plan to bring an extension up for a vote. But 71 percent of the public and 64 percent of those with a gun in their home want it extended. Among respondents with an NRA member in their household, 46 percent favored extending the ban and 49 percent were opposed. The difference between 46 and 49 percent was within the survey's margin of sampling error.

The results came from interviewing of 28,446 adults from October 7, 2003, through April 19, 2004. Results on questions about guns did not change significantly over that period. The assault ban question was asked of half the sample. The margins of sampling error for the public as a whole and for those with guns in their home were plus or minus one percentage point. For those with an NRA member in their home, it was plus or minus three percentage points.

Similar patterns appeared on another, more general question about gun control which was asked of those who were not asked the question about assault weapons. Fifty-eight percent of the public said the federal government should do more to restrict "the kind of guns that people can buy." Twenty-one percent said it should do as much as it is now doing, and 19 percent said it should do less or nothing at all about restricting gun purchases.

In gun-owning households, 38 percent wanted more done, 28 percent wanted the same done, and 32 percent wanted the federal government to do less or nothing at all about gun purchases.

In the NRA households, 23 percent wanted more done and 27 percent wanted restrictions kept at the current level. Forty-eight percent wanted the government to do less or nothing at all about gun purchases.

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In 2000, Al Gore's stance in favor of the assault weapons ban and closing loopholes in regulations of sales at gun shows was widely believed to have hurt his candidacy, and this year's presumptive Democratic nominee, Senator John F. Kerry of Massachusetts, shares those positions on gun control. President Bush has also said he would sign an extension of the assault weapons ban, but legislation is almost certain not to reach his desk for signature.

Despite Bush's stated support of the extending the ban, Republican leaders are using the issue against Kerry. Last weekend, as the audience shouted "four more years," Vice President Dick Cheney sought to capitalize on the gun issue by telling the NRA's national convention "John Kerry's approach to the Second Amendment has been to regulate, regulate and then regulate some more." Wayne LaPierre, the chief executive officer of the 4 million member organization, said "Gun owners know if John Kerry was elected, he'd try to ban every type of gun, destroy the Second Amendment, and drive a convention like this out of business."

Respondents from NRA households clearly think better of Bush than of Kerry, and better of Bush and worse of Kerry than does the nation as a whole. In interviewing from March 1, when Kerry had become well known, through April 19, fully 67 percent had a favorable opinion of Bush and 24 percent an unfavorable view. Only 28 percent had a favorable opinion of Kerry while 44 percent had an unfavorable opinion.

In the general public, however, the ratings were lower for Bush and higher for Kerry. Among the public 49 percent had a favorable opinion of Bush and 37 percent an unfavorable view; for Kerry, 40 percent were favorable and 27 percent unfavorable.

People in gun-owning households, nearly two-fifth of all respondents, fell somewhere in between the public and the NRA households in the March 1-April 19 period. Fifty-eight percent had a favorable opinion of Bush and 30 percent an unfavorable opinion. For Kerry, it was 33 percent favorable and 37 percent unfavorable.

In all interviewing since October, 44 percent of people in NRA households call themselves Republicans and 22 percent say they are Democrats. In all gun households, 37 percent said they were Republicans and 26 percent Democrats. But in the public at large 28 percent were Republicans and 33 percent Democrats.

That National Annenberg Election Survey, the largest academic election poll, is a project of the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania (www.AnnenbergPublicPolicyCenter.org). It has been tracking the presidential campaign since October 7, and interviewing will continue until after Election Day. Dr. Kathleen Hall Jamieson is the director of the survey. Ken Winneg is the managing director of the survey. Adam Clymer is the political director of the survey.

Another major election project of the Annenberg Public Policy Center is FactCheck.org a project that tries to hold politicians accountable by exposing false or misleading campaign statements. It is available online at www.FactCheck.Org.

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Questions

Table A

	Everybody	Gun Households (See table B)	NRA Households (See table C)
The current federal law banning assault weapons is about to expire. Do you think the U.S. Congress should pass this law again, or not?			
Yes	71%	64%	46%
No	23%	31%	49%
How much effort do you think the federal government should put into Restricting the kinds of guns that people can buy? Do you think the federal government in Washington should do more about it, do the same as now, do less about it, or do nothing at all?			
More	58%	38%	23%
Same	21%	28%	27%
Less	9%	15%	22%
Nothing	10%	17%	26%
Please tell me if your opinion is favorable or unfavorable about George W. Bush.			
Favorable	49%	58%	67%
Unfavorable	37%	30%	24%
Please tell me if your opinion is favorable or unfavorable about John Kerry.			
Favorable	40%	33%	28%
Unfavorable	27%	37%	44%
Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as:			
Republican	28%	37%	44%
Democrat	33%	26%	22%
Independent	26%	26%	25%
Generally speaking, would you describe your political views as:			
Conservative	37%	44%	51%
Moderate	37%	37%	33%
Liberal	23%	16%	14%

Those with no opinion are not shown.

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B. Do you or does anyone living in your house or apartment own a handgun, rifle, or other type of firearm?

	Yes	No
Total	38%	60%
18-29 years old	31%	68%
30-44	37%	62%
45-64	44%	54%
65 and over	38%	60%
Whites	43%	55%
African-Americans	18%	81%
Hispanic	13%	87%
High School graduate or less	38%	61%
Some college	42%	57%
College degree or more	35%	63%
Household income below \$35,000	30%	69%
\$35,000 to \$75,000	46%	54%
\$75,000 and over	44%	55%
Republican	49%	49%
Democrat	31%	68%
Independent	38%	61%
Conservatives	46%	52%
Moderates	38%	61%
Liberals	27%	72%

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C. Is the gun-owner living in your house or apartment a member of the National Rifle Association, also known as the NRA?

(Percentage of all respondents)

	Yes	No
Total	8%	92%
18-29 years old	8%	92%
30-44	9%	91%
45-64	10%	90%
65 and over	6%	94%
Whites	10%	90%
African-Americans	3%	97%
Hispanic	3%	97%
High School graduate or less	9%	91%
Some college	10%	90%
College degree or more	7%	93%
Household income below \$35,000	6%	94%
\$35,000 to \$75,000	11%	89%
\$75,000 and over	10%	90%
Republican	13%	87%
Democrat	5%	95%
Independent	8%	92%
Conservatives	12%	88%
Moderates	7%	93%
Liberals	5%	95%

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Survey Methodology

The National Annenberg Election Survey (NAES) is a survey conducted each presidential election by the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania.

The 2004 National Annenberg Election Survey is based on telephone interviews which began October 7, 2003 and will continue past Election Day.

The sample of telephone exchanges called was randomly selected by a computer from a complete list of thousands of active residential exchanges across the country. Within each exchange, random digits were added to form a complete telephone number, thus permitting access to both listed and unlisted numbers. Within each household, one adult was designated by a random procedure to be the respondent for the survey. The interviewing is conducted by Schulman, Ronca, Bucuvalas, Inc.

The results have been weighted to take account of household size and number of telephone lines into the residence and to adjust for variation in the sample relating to geographic region, sex, race, age and education.

This report deals with interviewing conducted from Oct. 7, 2003, through April 19, 2004. In that period 28,446 adults were interviewed.

In theory, in 19 cases out of 20 the results for these interviews will differ by no more than one percentage points, up or down, from what would have been obtained by interviewing all American adults. For smaller subgroups, the margin of sampling error would be higher. For example, for respondents from households with a National Rifle Association member, the margin of sampling error would be plus or minus three percentage points.

In addition to sampling error, the practical difficulties of conducting any survey of public opinion may introduce other sources of error into the poll. Variations in the wording and order of questions, for example, may lead to somewhat different results.

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