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## Public Release of National Survey Results

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# Nearly 1 in 2 Voters Cite Media Bias in Campaign 2004

**ALEXANDRIA, VA** – A Fabrizio, McLaughlin & Associates election night telephone survey of 1000 actual voters in the 12 key battleground states tested, among other issues, several questions regarding voters’ perceptions of the media’s coverage of the 2004 Presidential contest.

As the following table illustrates, a plurality of voters (46%) stated that the media’s coverage of this year’s Presidential election was biased towards one candidate or party. GOP voters were most likely to cite media bias followed by Independents. Democrats were the least likely to cite bias.

“Generally speaking, would you say that the media’s coverage of this year’s Presidential election was biased towards one candidate or party or was it unbiased? (IF BIASED -- PROBE) Were they biased (ROTATE) in favor of President Bush and the Republicans or in favor of Sen. Kerry and the Democrats?”

1. Biased in favor of Bush and GOP
2. Biased in favor of Kerry and Democrats
3. Unbiased
4. DK/Refused”

	<b>Overall</b>	<b>Republicans</b>	<b>Democrats</b>	<b>Independents</b>
<b>Total Biased</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>32%</b>	<b>42%</b>
Biased in favor of Bush & GOP	14%	4%	25%	12%
Biased in favor of Kerry & Democrats	32%	58%	7%	30%
<b>Total Unbiased</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>45%</b>
DK/Refused	11%	8%	13%	13%

*“The media has a real credibility problem when almost 1 in 2 voters see their coverage as being biased. But in a year when the media reports and defends forged documents and tries to spring their own October “surprises,” they have no one to blame but themselves. Clearly, the media’s bias problem goes beyond just the GOP, as Independent voters, who have no partisan axe to grind, cite bias too. And both GOP and Independent voters saw the media as being biased towards Sen. Kerry,”* said GOP Pollster Tony Fabrizio, who served as chief pollster to Bob Dole’s 1996 Presidential campaign.

Not only did a plurality of voters believe there was a media bias in the coverage of the election, more than two in three (68%) citing the bias said there was more bias this year compared to past elections.

**ASKED ONLY TO THOSE WHO SAID BIASED**

"Would you say that there was MORE or LESS media bias in this year's Presidential election compared to past elections? If you think the media bias was about the same, just say so."

1. More bias
2. Same as past
3. Less bias
4. DK/Refused"

	<b>Overall</b>	<b>Republicans</b>	<b>Democrats</b>	<b>Independents</b>
More Bias	68%	71%	62%	65%
Same as Past	27%	23%	33%	32%
Less Bias	3%	4%	2%	1%
DK/Refused	2%	2%	2%	1%

*"Regardless of party loyalty, voters who believe there was a media bias in coverage this election thought that the bias existed at higher levels than it has been in the past. Despite the deep partisan splits we've seen on many issues, this appears to be one thing that most can agree on,"* Fabrizio continued.

All the voters also were asked if they thought the media's coverage of independent '527' committees engaging in campaign activities in support of President Bush or Senator Kerry was biased or unbiased. Again, a plurality of voters (39%) indicates the media had biased coverage of these groups.

"Now thinking about the media's coverage of independent, '527' committees that engaged in campaign activities in support of either President Bush or Sen. Kerry, generally speaking, would you say that the media was biased or unbiased in their coverage of these groups' activities?"

1. Biased
2. Unbiased
3. DK/Refused"

	<b>Overall</b>	<b>Republicans</b>	<b>Democrats</b>	<b>Independents</b>
Biased	39%	48%	34%	35%
Unbiased	32%	26%	38%	33%
DK/Refused	29%	26%	28%	31%

*"It is clear that voters' perception of media bias is not just limited to political candidates or parties, it is seen as covering independent campaign groups. This finding only underscores how far the perception of media bias has permeated media coverage of politics and the political process,"* Fabrizio concluded.

*About the Poll*

The telephone survey was conducted in the 12 key battleground states where the Bush and Kerry campaigns focused their visits and paid media efforts over much of the campaign. This sample of 1000 ACTUAL Presidential election voters was conducted on November 2, 2004, and has a margin of error of +/-3.1% at the 95% confidence interval. Respondent selection was at random within predetermined geographic units to reflect actual electoral vote allotment to each state. The battleground states used for the survey were CO, FL, IA, ME, MI, MN, NH, NM, NV, OH, PA, WI.

	Overall Reported Vote
Bush/Cheney	46%
Kerry/Edwards	45%
Nader/Camejo	--
Refused*	8%

Nader received less than 1% of the responses.

*\* = This number reflects actual voters who refused to divulge their specific vote choice due to polls still being open in several states.*