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To: Interested Parties
From: Celinda Lake and Joshua Ulibarri
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Subject: Poll Findings in Idaho's United States Senate Race¹

A recent survey conducted by Andrew Myers of Myers Research & Strategic Services shows that Republican hopes of holding onto Idaho's open-U.S. Senate seat are in jeopardy. Idahoans, like most Americans, are looking for change and they believe the country is off on the wrong track. More importantly, a plurality of likely voters prefer a generic Democrat to a generic Republican. Over the last two cycles Idahoans on the local level have moved toward Democrats and 2008 is the ideal year to strike at a Senate seat while the iron is still hot. Republican Lieutenant Governor Jim Risch is vulnerable in this race because:

1. **Idahoans are in the mood for change.** Fifty-nine percent of voters believe that things in the United States are pretty seriously off on the wrong track. Only a quarter (26%) believe things are going in the right direction.
2. **The Republican brand is in decline and a generic Democrat defeats a generic Republican.** Forty-two percent of voters would vote for the Democrat in a hypothetical Senate race, compared to 36% who would support the Republican (21% are undecided). The Democrat leads by six points despite a 12-point Republican advantage in partisanship (40% Republican to 28% Democrat, 31% independent). Notably, voters criticize the job performance of President George Bush and Senator Larry Craig. Sixty-six percent of voters say Bush is doing either a just fair or poor job as President and only 33% say he is doing an excellent or good job. Craig is similarly critiqued: 56% just fair or poor, 37% excellent or good.
3. **Jim Risch is not as strong as conventional wisdom dictates** and Democrat Larry LaRocco is rated as popular. Asked to rate their feelings toward some people and organizations using a scale from 0-100, voters rate Risch a "56," compared to LaRocco who scores a "57." Despite his years as State Senate President Pro Tempore, and five years as Lt. Governor (including six months as Governor), the supposed Republican frontrunner has no advantage.
4. The data follows on the heels of **two consecutive strong elections for Democrats in Idaho where voters have trended away from Republicans.** In the 2006 State Legislative contests, Democrats managed to flip 6 State House seats from the Republican column. Additionally, Boise's Democratic Mayor, Dave Bieter, won reelection this past November with 64% of the vote.

In sum, Idaho is not as "red" as the Republicans would like you to believe. A generic Democrat beats a Republican. Voters want change. The leading Republican candidate (along with other elected Republicans) is weak. This state is trending purple. Now is the time to target this open Senate seat.

¹ **Methodology:** Myers Research & Strategic Services designed and administered a survey, which was conducted by phone using professional interviewers. The survey was conducted among 600 registered voters in Idaho who are likely to vote in the 2008 General Election. The survey was conducted November 13-19, 2007. The margin of error for the full sample is +/-4.0 percentage points.