

- 3) *If a prescription drug benefit does not pass Congress this year, Republicans are more likely to be blamed than Democrats.* Sure, a majority of voters 55 and older will blame both equally, but 23% will specifically blame Congressional Republicans, 16% will hold Congressional Democrats responsible, and 5% will fault the Bush White House. That's a combined 28% who will blame Republicans compared to only 16% for the Democrats. This is a very dangerous credibility gap.

But if House Republicans pass a prescription drug benefit that President Bush endorses and the Senate then refuses to act, the blame will pass to Senate Democrats by a 35% to 13% margin over House Republicans, with 6% holding Bush responsible. Even among self-described Democrat voters, if the House acts and the Senate doesn't, one-out-of-five (19%) would blame the Democrats. In all my time in polling, I have never seen an issue that has the potential to flip this much. But the best approach that would earn the greatest support is for Senate Republicans to vote yes. **In plain English, Senate Republicans must individually go on record in favor of a drug benefit.**



Making Life Livable

Who would you SUPPORT?

CANDIDATE SAYS THAT WE NEED A PRESCRIPTION DRUG BENEFIT NOW AND SPENDING \$350 BILLION WILL MAKE MEDICINE AVAILABLE AND AFFORDABLE FOR ALL SENIORS. IT IS BETTER TO PASS A SMALLER PLAN NOW THAN WAIT FOR A BIGGER PLAN LATER.

57%

CANDIDATE SAYS THAT \$700 BILLION IS NECESSARY FOR A TRULY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND IT IS BETTER TO VOTE NO AGAINST THE CHEAPER PLAN AND WAIT UNTIL IT IS POSSIBLE TO PASS A PLAN WITH MORE BENEFITS.

19%

The Luntz Research Companies

- 4) *Don't be intimidated by an opponent who wants to spend a lot more than you.* We asked two questions to gage the public reaction to the likely Democrat approach. The response is clear. If one candidate votes for a \$300 to \$400 benefit, while the opponent promises a benefit of \$700 or \$800 billion, only 19% will find the higher amount "responsible," while 59% would find that approach either "irresponsible" or "politically motivated." Even among oldest voters, Democrats and those who pay the most for their medications, a clear majority believes that \$700 billion is too much for a prescription drug program.

We then asked whether older Americans would be more likely to vote for a candidate that supports a \$350 billion drug benefit because "it is better to pass a smaller plan now than wait for a bigger plan later" or whether they would back a candidate that supports a \$700 billion drug benefit and says "it is better to vote no against the cheaper plan and wait until it is possible to pass a plan with more benefits." The result is overwhelming. A majority from every single subgroup, including Democrats, would prefer the immediate but cheaper benefit.