

Edwards's Iraq bill ad gets strong review from Dems

Contributed by Aaron Blake
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None of the presidential candidates are hitting it out of the park with their initial advertisements, but former Sen. John Edwards's (D-N.C.) most recent ad focusing on the Iraq war-funding bill played well to the base, according to a survey by Wilson Research Strategies.

Early ads from Edwards, New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson (D) and former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani (R) drew lukewarm reviews across the board, with the lone exception being Democrats' enthusiasm for Edwards's ad.

The ad features several actors pleading with Congress to be firm and keep sending President Bush the same Iraq supplemental budget, which he vetoed. The only mention of Edwards comes at the end, when he gives his required statement of approval.

While Republicans gave the ad very low marks, Democrats gave it a 7.8 out of 10 for its strength of message and a 7.5 for credibility. It scored 6.8 or above in all six categories measured, including appeal and as an ad the respondent would talk about.

Independents rated the ad as average.

Democrats also liked Richardson's ad, but to a lesser extent. Republicans and independents, on the other hand, weren't convinced by his message pushing bipartisanship and gave it subpar marks. In the ad, Richardson walks along a short wall and talks about reaching across it. "Being stubborn isn't a foreign policy," he says.

Democrats gave it a 7.1 for credibility but average marks for memorability and being an ad they would talk about. Giuliani's lengthier Internet ad features several clips of Giuliani speaking about his views on the issues confronting a president. Most Republicans marked it between 6.4 and 6.9, although, like Richardson's ad, it wasn't very memorable or buzz-worthy.

Democrats and independents rated Giuliani's ad below average across the board in the six categories.

Working with The Hill for its Air War feature, Wilson Research Strategies e-mails campaign or issue ads to survey participants who view the ads and rate their effectiveness on several criteria.