

## Pat's Uphill Battle

As Pat Buchanan fights to secure the Reform Party nomination this week, an even bigger battle lies ahead: winning over the public.

Only 17 percent of Americans say they'd seriously consider voting for Buchanan – and that's more a cap on his support than a base, since just considering a candidate is a far cry from supporting him. Buchanan's actual support for president is only four percent.

In addition, just 17 percent want to see Buchanan nominated in the first place. And even fewer, 10 percent, classify themselves as supporters of the Reform Party – down from a high of 18 percent in 1996.

Infighting may have contributed to the party's decline in popularity. Party leaders are meeting this week to mediate between Buchanan supporters and opponents, who include members loyal to party founder Ross Perot. The party's convention starts Thursday in California to announce the nominee.

	Yes	No
Support the Reform Party?	10%	84
Seriously consider Buchanan?	17	73
Want to see him nominated?	17	63

Support for Buchanan against George W. Bush, Al Gore and Ralph Nader hasn't exceeded six percent of registered voters in ABC News/Washington Post polls since May. It was four percent in the latest survey, completed Sunday, and even that's tenuous: Half of Buchanan's supporters say there's a "good chance" they'll change their minds.

THE BASE - Buchanan's prospects are better, but hardly overwhelming, among the 10 percent who say they're Reform Party supporters. Forty percent of this nominal base say they'd like to see him nominated – which translates neatly to his four percent support.

Reform supporters represent Buchanan's high-water mark in this poll. No other demographic or political group gives him anywhere near this level of support. Even independents, the key swing group with diminished ties to the traditional parties, aren't especially fertile ground.

	Seriously consider Buchanan	Want to see him nominated
Reform party supporter	46%	40
Not a supporter	13	15
Democrats	18	17
Republicans	16	21
Independents	20	16

METHODOLOGY - This ABC News.com survey was conducted by telephone August 2-6, 2000, among a random national sample of 1,014 adults. The results have a three-point error margin. Field work by ICR- International Communications Research of Media, Pa.

Analysis by Daniel Merkle.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com on the Internet at:

<http://www.abcnews.com/sections/us/PollVault/PollVault.html>

65. Do you consider yourself a supporter of the political party known as the Reform Party, or not?

	Yes	No	No opin.
8/6/00	10	84	6
10/99*	16	76	8
6/96**	18	77	5
5/96	17	77	6
4/96	16	80	5

\*Gallup, 10/99: Do you consider yourself a supporter of the Reform Party, or not?

\*\*Gallup, 6/96 and prior: Do you consider yourself a supporter of Ross Perot's political party called the Reform Party, or not?

66. Pat Buchanan is seeking the Reform Party's nomination for president this year. Would you like to see the Reform Party nominate Buchanan, or not?

	Yes	No	No opin.
8/6/00	17	63	19

67. If Buchanan is the Reform Party candidate for president this year, would you seriously consider voting for him, or not?

	Would consider	Would not consider	No opin.
8/6/00	17	73	10
10/10/99*	15	72	14
9/19/99**	19	76	5
8/9/95*	15	76	8

\*as a third-party candidate

\*\*as a third-party candidate vs Gore and Bush