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Pataki's popularity soaring

ALBANY — Gov. Pataki enjoys an all-time-high 65 percent job-approval rating and would easily beat either of his likely Democratic opponents, a new poll shows.

The Marist College survey of 788 registered voters found Republican Pataki easily defeating either state Comptroller Carl McCall (59 percent to 29 percent) or former federal Housing Secretary Andrew Cuomo (59 percent to 31 percent).

Pataki was seen favorably throughout the state, including New York City.

Fifty-six percent of city voters approved of Pataki's job performance, as did 70 percent of suburban and 69 percent of upstate voters. — *Fredric U. Dicker*

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