

Republican Governors Laud Nixon on

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MEMPHIS, Nov. 19—Republican Governors issued a welcome to President Nixon today in a unanimous resolution commending "his outstanding accomplishments in international and domestic affairs."

The resolution, based on a draft by Governor Rockefeller of New York continued: "We applaud the determination of the President to make full disclosure to the public concerning Watergate, and we look forward to his visit to this conference tomorrow as a part of that effort."

The careful phrasing of the sentence on Watergate was more cautious than the wording the Republican Governors adopted last May. At that early stage of the Watergate crisis they had said: "We deplore Watergate. We support the President. We believe the President."

Yet the adoption of a broadly supportive statement was viewed as a clear victory for the President over the uneasiness the same Governors have expressed about embracing the party's leader. Gov. Tom McCall of Oregon has said he would not join in any "partisan piece of adulation" of Mr. Nixon, and Gov. Daniel J. Evans of Washington said he had wanted to avoid resolutions al-

together. But both men voted for this afternoon's statement and Governor Evans was said to have moved to strengthen the language of endorsement on Watergate.

Govs. Francis W. Sargeant of Massachusetts, William T. Cahill of New Jersey and Stanley K. Hathaway of Wyoming were the only absentees from the association. It now has 19 members, including lame ducks from Virginia and New Jersey and Mills Godwin Jr., the governor-elect of Virginia.

Earlier today George Gallup, the pollster, told the Governors that it was "wishful thinking" to suppose that Watergate will not do broad damage to their party. And though most of the Governors continue to insist publicly that Watergate will not hurt them, the Republican Party's professional staff seems to agree more with Mr. Gallup's ominous reading.

But Dr. Gallup said there was "not a great deal" the Governors can do about Watergate except work harder at rebuilding their party at the grassroots and urge Mr. Nixon to proceed immediately with reforms that would shorten campaigns and shift campaign funding to the Federal Government.

"If anyone doubts the impact of Watergate on state and local elections," Dr. Gallup said, "he should study the returns of

two weeks ago. If you analyze the figures, particularly in New Jersey," he said, referring to the landslide for Brendan T. Byrne, the Democratic candidate for Governor, and the Democratic near-sweep of the Legislative races, "you find a

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very discouraging picture. Even in areas with 2-to-1 and 3-to-1 Republican registration, Democrats swept the boards."

Nationally, he said, the popular preference for Democrats over Republicans as candidates for Congress is sharper today

than the Gallup organization has found since it began polling in 1935. And if Congressional elections were being held today, Dr. Gallup said, the Republican membership in both House and Senate could fall below the one-third necessary to sustain Presidential vetoes.