

2011

Louisiana Survey 2011

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THE PUBLIC POLICY RESEARCH LAB



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Reilly Center for Media & Public Affairs
Manship School of Mass Communication
Louisiana State University

2011 Louisiana Survey

Executive Summary

INTRODUCTION

The mission of the Louisiana Survey is to establish benchmarks and assess progress and regressions in residents' assessments of state government services. The Survey has been conducted annually since 2002, and was conducted twice in 2005 and 2006. Each survey includes core items designed to serve as barometers of public opinion including whether the state is moving in the right direction, identification of the most important issues, grades for various areas of government service, evaluations of state taxes, and identification of spending priorities. Each survey also includes items designed to better understand contemporary issues.

As part of an effort to assure that the Louisiana Survey fulfills its public service mission, input was solicited from a statewide Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee provided invaluable insight into the design of the questionnaire and in identifying the issues that most need to be addressed by the survey. While we are greatly indebted to the committee members for their time and contributions, they bear no responsibility for any mistakes in the questionnaire, analysis, or interpretation presented in this report.

We also thank the Reilly Family Foundation for their generous support and vision in helping to create the Louisiana Survey.

Questions regarding the content of this report should be directed to:

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Manship School Research Facility
Public Policy Research Lab
Media Effects Lab

The **Manship School's Research Facility** houses the **Public Policy Research Lab (PPRL)** and the **Media Effects Lab (MEL)**. The **Public Policy Research Lab** is dedicated to quality public policy research through state-of-the-art survey technologies. It helps advance scholarly and practical research while playing a leadership role in state and national public policy development. The lab serves other units on campus, government agencies, non-profits, business and industry. National surveys have resulted in publication in both practical and scholarly journals.

The **Public Policy Research Lab** has 35 computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) workstations, mail survey and web survey capability in addition to analytical services. The lab is dedicated to meeting the unique goals and objectives of each project by working closely with those seeking data, research expertise and analysis. The lab's projects benefit from the multiple disciplines and intellectual assets at LSU. One of the lab's core projects is the Reilly Center for Media & Public Affairs' **annual Louisiana Survey**, a longitudinal study of advancements and regressions of citizen views regarding state services and contemporary issues. Clients include: Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals; Louisiana Department of Labor; Louisiana Recovery Authority; Stephenson Entrepreneurial Institute; and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The **Media Effects Lab** is one of the largest and most sophisticated of its kind within a mass communication program in the country. It is a state-of-the-art experimental lab equipped with 16 computer stations and a living room area for research in a more natural environment. Researchers can measure audiences' physical responses (heart rate, blood pressure, eye movement and brain activity) to various media messages as well as gather their attitudes toward those messages. Experiments and projects track people's responses to particular media content: what stimulates them; what doesn't; what images they pay attention to; which ones don't resonate. Specific software measures user interactivity and responses to news Websites and social networking sites. Unconscious attitudes can also be measured. For example, one study looks at the effectiveness of product placement in television dramas by using the heart rate as a measure of attention. This enables researchers to connect the individual's involvement with the content, the product and the people using the product.

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Survey Methodology

About the Survey: The 2011 Louisiana Survey includes a traditional landline telephone survey combined with a survey of Louisiana cell phone users. Respondents are randomly selected and the data have been carefully weighted to account for the higher probability of selection of dual users, respondents with both a cell and landline telephone. The results presented in this report are from the combined weighted survey, however, not every question on the landline survey was asked on the cell survey. In those instances, only the results from the landline survey are presented with the sample size reported after the question wording. All the results presented here have been weighted to reflect current population demographics as reflected in the 2009 American Community Survey and estimates of telephone usage from the National Health Interview Survey. The combined survey includes 725 respondents including 510 respondents selected from landline telephone numbers via random digit dialing and 215 respondents selected from available cell phone blocks. Landline telephone interviews were conducted from January 18 to February 9, while the cell phone interviews were conducted from February 7 to March 1. The overall survey has a margin of error of +/- 3.6 percentage points and the landline survey has a margin of error of +/- 4.3 percentage points.

Sample Weighting and the Wireless-Only Population: Over the last several years, the number of wireless-only households has grown tremendously, and the wireless-only population is expected to continue to grow in the future. Until quite recently, the growing wireless-only population had not been included in the sampling frame for traditional telephone surveys based on random digit dialing. As a result, estimates from landline telephone surveys suffer from a potential coverage bias in their estimates of public opinion. Recent estimates from the National Health Interview Survey further indicate a growing wireless-mostly population, households with landline telephones that rely almost exclusively on their cell phones.

To date, studies of the biases in estimates from this coverage error indicate the problem can be mostly offset with population weights. National studies indicate that the wireless-only population is younger, poorer, and more likely to be racial minorities. As a result, applying appropriate post-stratification weights to the data tends to capture most of the differences between wireless-only and landline respondents. The potential for coverage bias, however, remains and the wireless-only population will only grow larger in the future.

To account for wireless-only and wireless-mostly populations, we employ a dual frame sampling strategy in the 2011 Louisiana Survey based on the methodology used by the Pew Center for the People & the Press. Our first sampling frame was based on random digit dialing of landline telephone numbers. The second sampling frame came from identifiable blocks of Louisiana cell phone numbers. Responses to this block of numbers include both wireless-only respondents and dual users, respondents with both a landline and cell phone number. Federal law excludes using automated dialers to call cell phones, so each cell phone number had to be dialed by hand, adding significantly to the cost and time required for data collection. The response rate for the landline survey was 24.3 percent while the response rate for the cell phone survey was 9.8 percent.

The final data are weighted to approximate population estimates of household income, race, education, age, and gender. In Table 1, we present the basic demographics for the population and the weighted sample.

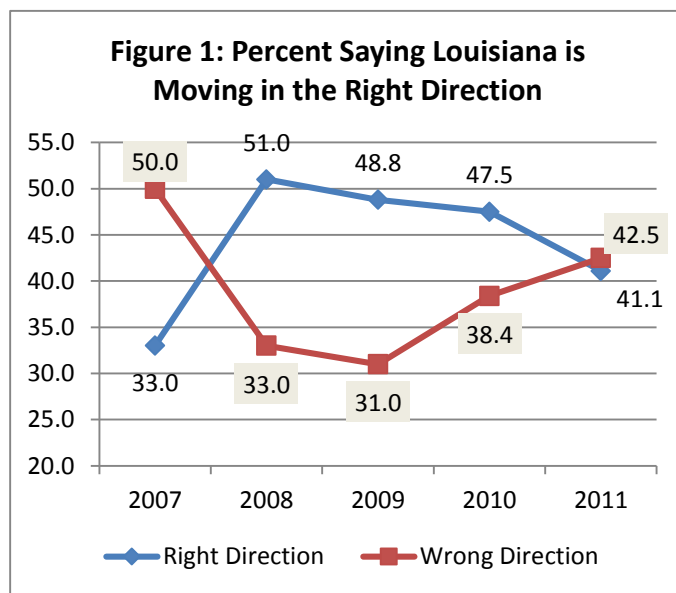
Table 1: Selected Demographics of Louisiana Population and Sample Estimates

Characteristic	Population Estimate	Weighted Survey Estimate
Gender		
Male	48.6	47.2
Female	51.4	52.8
Race		
White	64.1	64.1
Black	31.9	31.9
Other	4.0	4.0
Education		
Less than High School	19.5	15.7
High School	34.9	36.4
Some College	25.0	26.5
College	20.6	21.4
Income		
Less than \$10,000	9.7	9.9
\$10,000- \$19,999	13.6	12.4
\$20,000- \$29,999	12.6	11.9
\$30,000- \$39,999	10.8	15.0
\$40,000- \$49,999	9.8	11.3
\$50,000-\$74,999	17.2	14.6
\$75,000-\$99,999	10.6	13.0
\$100,000 or more	15.7	12.0
Age		
18-24	14.6	14.2
25-34	17.7	17.4
35-44	17.8	17.9
45-54	19.3	19.4
55-64	14.4	15.0
65 and over	16.2	16.2

CHAPTER ONE

THE STATE OF THE STATE

The Louisiana Survey was created as a barometer of statewide public opinion focused on tracking key indicators over time. Each year, the survey grows in value as events and conditions drive important changes in public perceptions, opinions, and behaviors. The 2006 Louisiana Survey captured the effects of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita on public perceptions and documented the remarkable efforts of Louisianans helping friends, families, and neighbors recover from the storms. Subsequent surveys reflected Katrina fatigue and the gradual decline of rebuilding-related concerns. The 2008 Louisiana Survey reflected the high expectations that accompanied Bobby Jindal into the Governor's mansion. The 2009 Louisiana Survey, conducted during the most serious national economic recession in over three decades, demonstrated the economic pressures on both individual and state conditions. In 2011, we capture public opinion as the state grapples with an ongoing budget crisis brought about by a national economic recession and subsequent declines in state tax revenues. This year's survey once again illustrates the importance of measuring and analyzing public opinion during times of change.



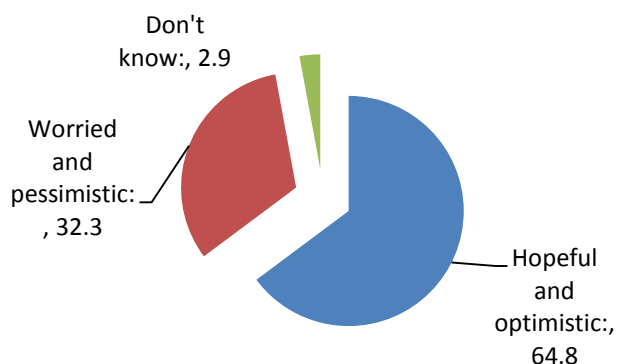
A Decline in the Right Direction:

One of the headlines out of The 2011 Louisiana Survey is the decline in residents saying the state is headed in the right direction. Since 2010, the percent of Louisianans saying the state is heading in the right direction declined by 7 percentage points from 47.5 percent to 41.1 percent. The percent saying the state is moving in the wrong direction increased from 38.4 percent to 42.5 percent and the percent saying they were unsure increased from 14.1 to 16.4 percent.

- The decline over the past year appears to have occurred mostly among white or Caucasian respondents. In 2010, 51 percent of white or Caucasian respondents said the state was heading in the right direction compared to 42 percent in 2011 survey. The percent of African-Americans saying the state was moving in the wrong direction stayed relatively flat declining from 41 percent in 2010 to 39 percent in 2011.
- Perceptions about the direction of the state are closely tied to personal income. Thirty-six percent of respondents making less than \$30,000 per year say the state is heading in the right direction compared to 49 percent of respondents making \$75,000 or more.
- Men are generally more positive about the direction of the state than women. Forty-eight percent of men compared to 35 percent of women say the state is headed in the right direction.

- Not surprisingly, Republicans are more positive about the direction of the state than Democrats. Fifty-three percent of Republicans compared to 36 percent of Democrats said the state was heading in the right direction.
- Notably, however, there have been declines in the right direction question among both Democrats and Republicans. The percent of Democrats saying the state was heading in the right declined from 43 percent in 2010 to 36 percent in 2011, while the percent of Republicans saying the state was heading in the right direction declined from 58 percent in 2010 to 53 percent in 2011.
- When it comes to region, North Louisiana residents are most positive about the direction of the state. Forty-seven percent of respondents from North Louisiana say the state is heading in the right direction.

Figure 1.2: Optimism About the Future of the State



Optimism about the Future: Despite growing concerns about the direction of the state, Louisiana residents are optimistic about the future. When asked which best describes their view of the future, nearly two-thirds (64.8 percent) report that they are “hopeful and optimistic” while roughly a third (32.3 percent) report that they are “worried and pessimistic.”

The Growing Importance of Economic Concerns: With the exception of the post-Katrina surveys in 2006, residents have consistently named the economy and education as the state’s most pressing problems. This year is no exception. In an open-ended question, thirty-six percent of residents identified the economy as the most pressing issue confronting the state while 24 percent identified education. The next most important problem, the state budget, was identified by 10.7 percent followed by health care (8.8 percent) and crime (6.4 percent).

Figure 1.3: Most Important Problem Confronting the State

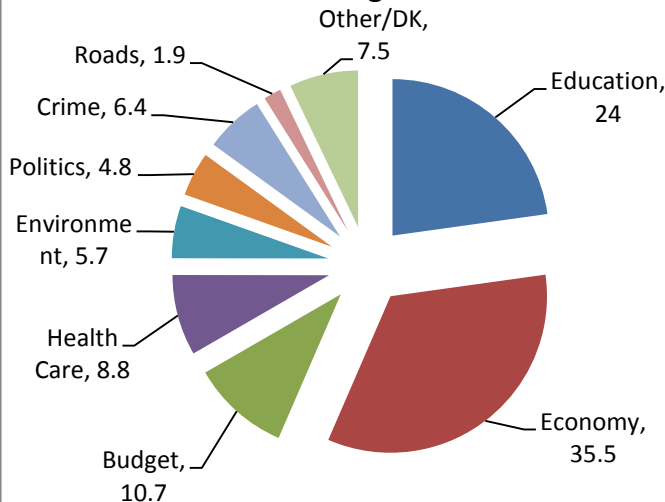
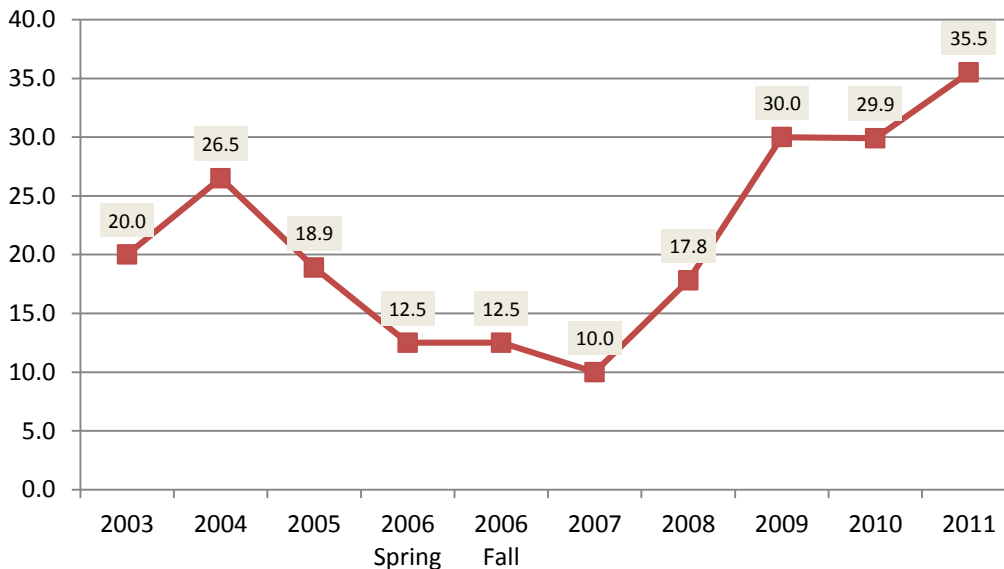


Figure 2: The Economy as the Most Important Problem



Over time we have seen the growing importance of the economy as the top public concern. Since 2010, the percent of residents identifying the economy as their top concern has increased by over 5 percentage points from 29.9 percent to 35.5 percent. Prior to the Wall Street collapse in 2008, the economy never topped education as the top concern in

the state. Since 2008, the economy is not only the top public concern but the gap between the economy and other concerns appears to be growing. And since 2007, there has been a nearly 26 percentage point increase in the percent of residents identifying the economy as their top concern. As a result, more people now identify the economy as the state's most important problems than at any time since we began collecting data in 2003.

Education, identified by just under a quarter of residents (24 percent) as a top concern, remains an important public issue. Tying both of these issues together are concerns about the budget. Eleven percent of respondents cited the state budget as the most important problem reflecting concerns about the economy and its impact on the budget and potential cuts to health care and higher education.

- Less educated and lower income residents are less likely to identify education and more likely to identify the economy as their most pressing concern. For example, 10 percent of respondents with less than a high school education identified education as their top concern compared to 44 percent of respondents with a college degree. The numbers are reversed for the economy. Fifty percent of respondents with less than a high school education identified the economy as their top concern compared to 22 percent of respondents with a college degree.
- Women perceive education as more important than men. Twenty-nine percent of women compared to 17 percent of men identify education as the state's most important problem.
- The economy is identified as the most important problem throughout the state, but there is important regional variation. Forty-one percent of North Louisiana residents identify the economy as the state's most pressing problem compared to 24 percent in the Northshore and parishes surrounding New Orleans.
- The state budget is more likely to be identified as the state's most important problem among college educated respondents. Nineteen percent of college educated respondents identified the state budget as the most important issue compared to 4 percent of respondents with less than a high school education.

- Health care is a more pressing concern for respondents in the 55-64 age group, who are likely nearing retirement but not yet eligible for Medicare. Sixteen percent of 55-64 year olds identified health care as the most important problem.
- Concern about crime is heightened among younger, less educated, lower income, African-American, and New Orleans area residents. Twenty-two percent of New Orleans residents identify crime as the most important problem compared to 10 percent in Baton Rouge and 5 percent in North Louisiana.

An Ongoing Decline in

Confidence: One of the headlines from the 2010 Louisiana Survey was a notable 10.5-point decline in confidence that state government would effectively address the state's most important problem. In 2011, the decline is not nearly as sharp – 4 percentage points – but continues a long-term trend toward declining confidence.

In 2010, 54 percent of respondents said they were very or somewhat confident state government would effectively address their self-identified most important problem. This dropped to 50 percent in 2011. Looking at the long term trend, confidence has declined 14 percentage points since its peak in 2009.

Figure 3: Percent Very or Somewhat Confident Government Will Effectively Address Most Important Problem

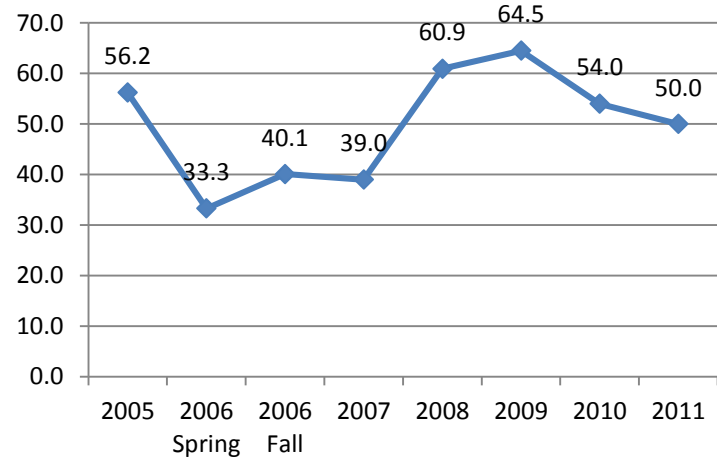
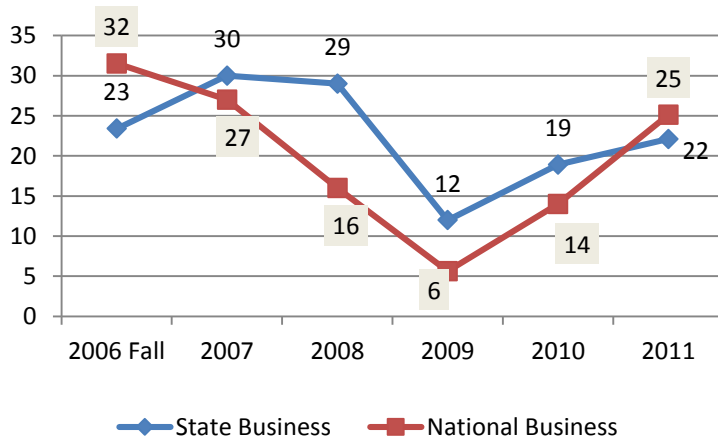


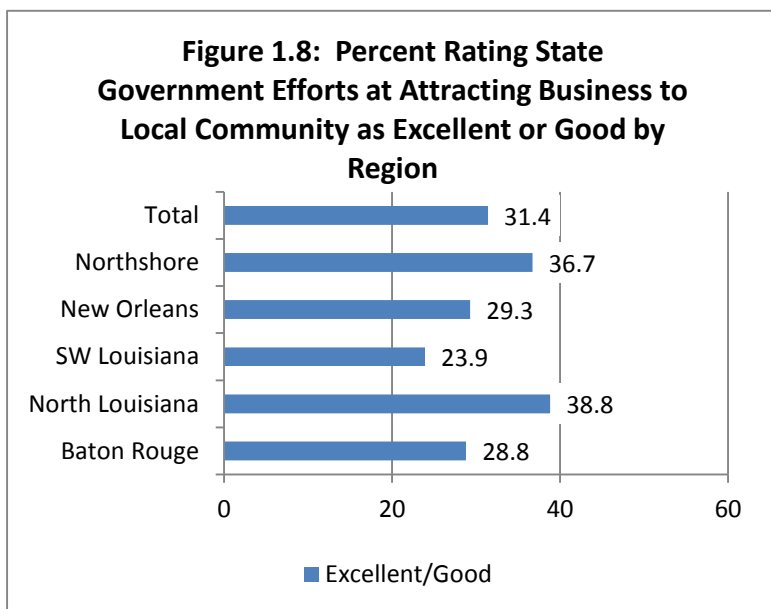
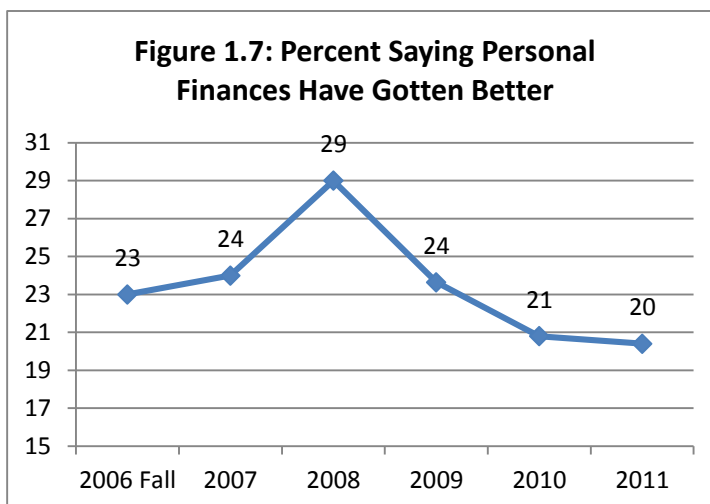
Figure 1.6: Percent Saying State and National Business Conditions Getting Better



National and State Economic Confidence Continues to Increase:

The 2011 Louisiana Survey shows increased signs of economic recovery as the percent of residents saying national business conditions were getting better improved from 14 percent in 2010 to 25 percent in 2011. Since 2009, the percent of residents saying national business conditions have improved has increased by nearly 20-points. Increased confidence in state business conditions is more slight, increasing from 19 to 22 percent, but continues an upward trend in economic confidence. Since 2009, the percent saying state business conditions have gotten better has increased by 10 percentage points.

Personal financial evaluations, in contrast, have remained relatively flat, declining only slightly from 21 percent in 2010 to 20 percent in 2011. Long-term the trend has been toward less positive assessments of personal finances. Since 2008, for example, the percent of respondents saying their personal finances have gotten better has declined by 9-percentage points.



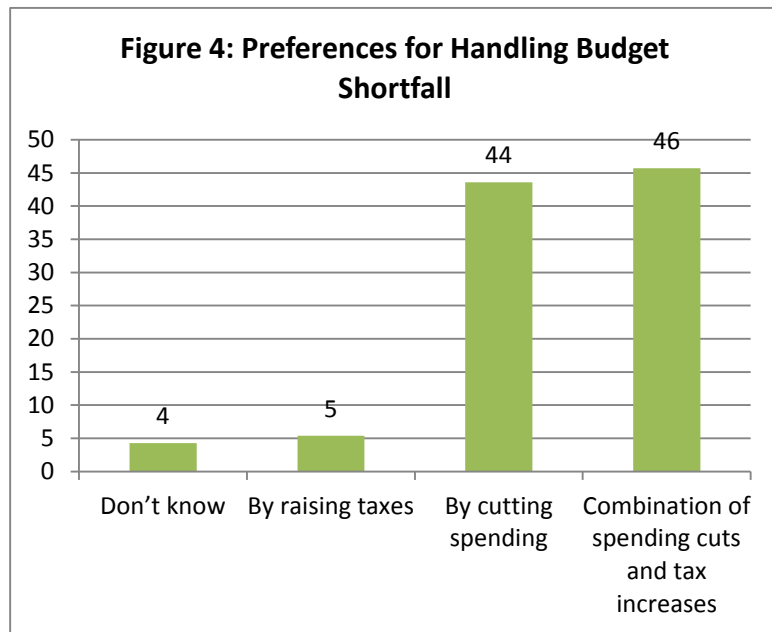
Low Marks for Efforts at Attracting Business and Jobs to Local Communities:

Overall, Louisianans give state government relatively low marks for attracting business and jobs to their local community. Six percent of respondents rate state efforts at attracting business as excellent, 26 percent rate state efforts as good, 40 percent as fair, and 29 percent as poor. As would be expected, there are significant differences across region. This is illustrated in Figure 1.8 which displays the percent of respondents rating state efforts at attracting business and jobs to the local community as excellent or good

by region. Respondents were most positive in North Louisiana where 39 percent of respondents rated state efforts as excellent or good and were most negative in Southwestern Louisiana where 24 percent rated state efforts as excellent or good. Interestingly, respondents were also most negative in North Louisiana (with more respondents rating state efforts as poor) and most neutral in Southwestern Louisiana. In North Louisiana, 35 percent of respondents rated state efforts at attracting business and jobs as “poor,” while in Southwestern Louisiana 53 percent of respondents rated state efforts as “fair.”

CHAPTER TWO

THE LOUISIANA STATE BUDGET



Raising Taxes, Cutting Spending, and the Politics of the Budget Shortfall: A plurality of Louisiana residents (46 percent) prefer dealing with budget shortfalls through some combination of spending cuts and tax increases while slightly fewer (44 percent) prefer addressing the shortfall through spending cuts alone. Only 5 percent of respondents prefer dealing with budget shortfalls by only raising taxes and 4 percent said they did not know or were unsure. Since 2010, there has been a 5-point decline in the number of respondents saying budget shortfalls should be dealt with through a combination of spending cuts and tax

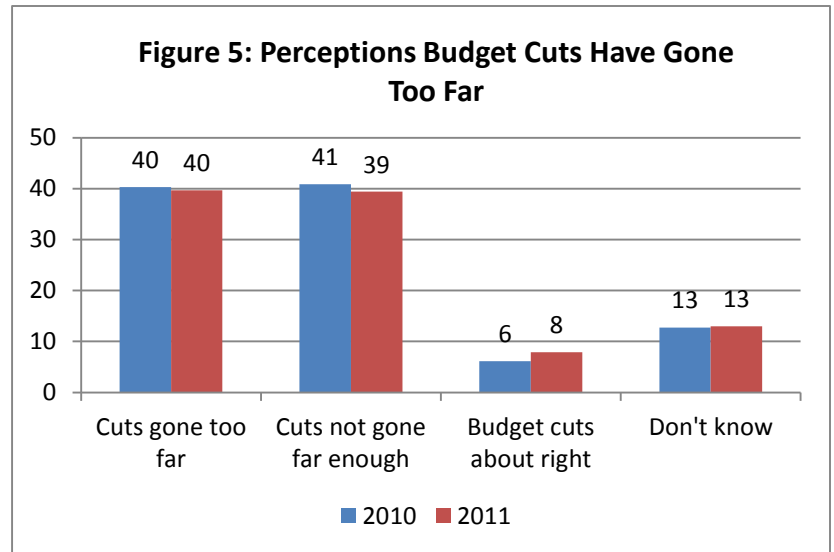
increases. Overall, opinion is fairly divided between respondents who prefer addressing the shortfall solely through spending cuts and those who prefer a more balanced approach.

Preferences for addressing the budgetary shortfall through spending cuts differed by region, race, income and partisan affiliation.

- Respondents in the Northshore and the New Orleans suburban parishes were most likely to prefer spending cuts alone. Fifty-one percent of Northshore residents preferred spending cuts alone compared to 41 percent in New Orleans. In the remaining regions, support for spending cuts alone ranged from 42 to 44 percent.
- Forty-eight percent of Caucasian respondents compared to 36 percent of African-American respondents preferred addressing the budget shortfall solely through spending cuts.
- Fifty-four percent of Republicans compared to 38 percent of Democrats preferred addressing the budget shortfall through spending cuts alone. Interestingly, there is some evidence that the partisan gap may be increasing.

Louisianans also remain split on the question of whether state budget cuts have gone too far or have not gone far enough: 40 percent of respondents say budget cuts have gone too far compared to 39 percent who say budget cuts have not gone far enough. An additional 13 percent say they do not know or are not sure and 6 percent volunteered that state budget cuts are about right. These perceptions remained remarkably stable over the past year with only slight changes across the various categories.

Perspectives as to whether budget cuts have gone too far or not far enough differ by region, race, education, gender, income, and partisan affiliation.

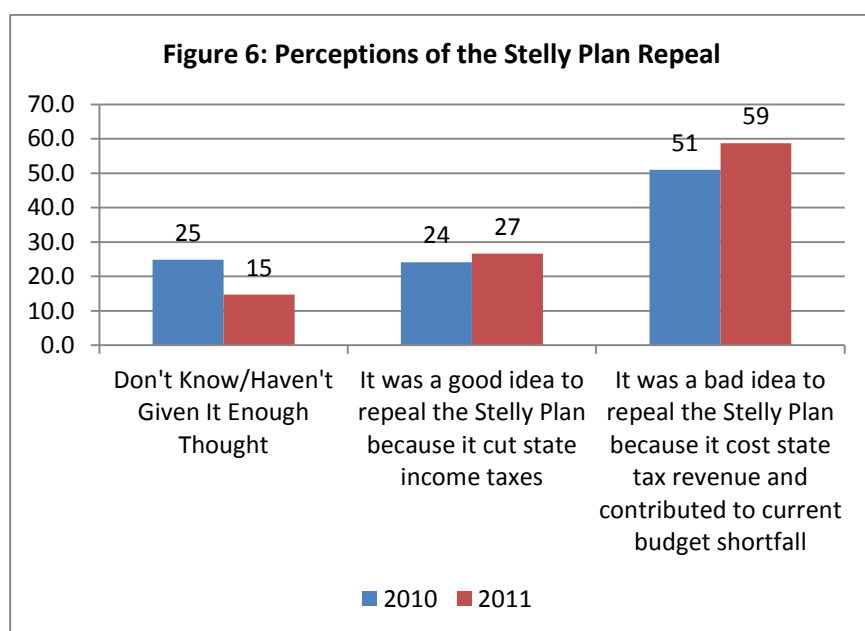


- Forty-seven percent of respondents in the Baton Rouge area compared to 35 percent in the Northshore and New Orleans suburban parishes and 36 percent in New Orleans said state budget cuts have not gone far enough.
- Fifty-five percent of African-American respondents compared to 32 percent of Caucasian respondents said budget cuts have gone too far.
- Forty-seven percent of respondents earning less than \$30,000 said budget cuts have gone too far compared to 30 percent of respondents earning \$75,000 or more.
- Forty-eight percent of women compared to 30 percent of men said budget cuts have gone too far.
- Fifty-seven percent of Democrats compared to 24 percent of Republicans said budget cuts have gone too far.

Reconsidering the Stelly Repeal. Respondents continue to express buyer’s remorse over the repeal of the Stelly Plan. The specific question wording is listed as follows:

In 2002, state voters approved the Stelly Plan cutting state sales taxes for everyone while increasing state income taxes on wealthier individuals and households. In 2008, the state legislature reversed a part of the Stelly Plan cutting state income taxes for wealthier individuals and households. Estimates are that this legislative action reduced annual state government revenues the 2010 budget year by \$649 million. Given current budget shortfalls, which of the following comes closest to your view:

- *It was a good idea to repeal the Stelly Plan because it cut state income taxes;*
- *It was a bad idea to repeal the Stelly Plan because it cost state tax revenue and contributed to current budget shortfalls.*
- *Don't know/haven't given it enough thought*

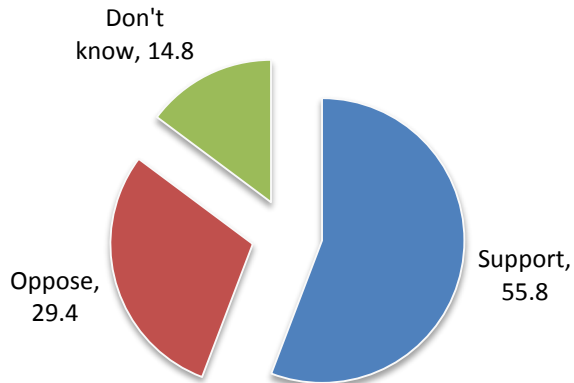


Given these choices and this particular context, a majority of respondents (59 percent) said the repeal of the Stelly Plan was a bad idea because it cost state revenue and contributed to the current budget shortfall. Twenty-six percent of respondents said it was a good idea to repeal the Stelly Plan and 15 percent said they did not know or had not given it enough thought. The percent of respondents saying repealing the Stelly Plan was a bad idea increased from 42 percent in 2009 to 51 percent

in 2010 and to 59 percent in 2011. Because the questions were not identical it is not clear if the increase is due to slight changes in question wording or an increase in the percent who believe the repeal was bad idea.¹

¹ The specific question wording from the 2009 survey follows: *In 2002, the Louisiana state legislature passed the Stelly Plan. Designed to be revenue neutral, the plan eliminated state sales taxes on food and utilities for home use and prescription drugs while increasing state income taxes on higher income households. This past year, the state legislature repealed the Stelly Plan to reduce state income taxes. Supporters argued state income taxes were too high and needed to be reduced. Critics argue the repeal made the state more reliant on oil and gas revenues and costs an estimated \$360 million in revenue. Which of the following comes closest to your opinion: It was a good idea to repeal the Stelly Plan because it cut state income taxes or it was a bad idea to repeal the Stelly Plan because it costs state revenue and contributed to current budget shortfalls.*

Figure 2.4: Support for Temporarily Reinstating Stelly Tax Provisions

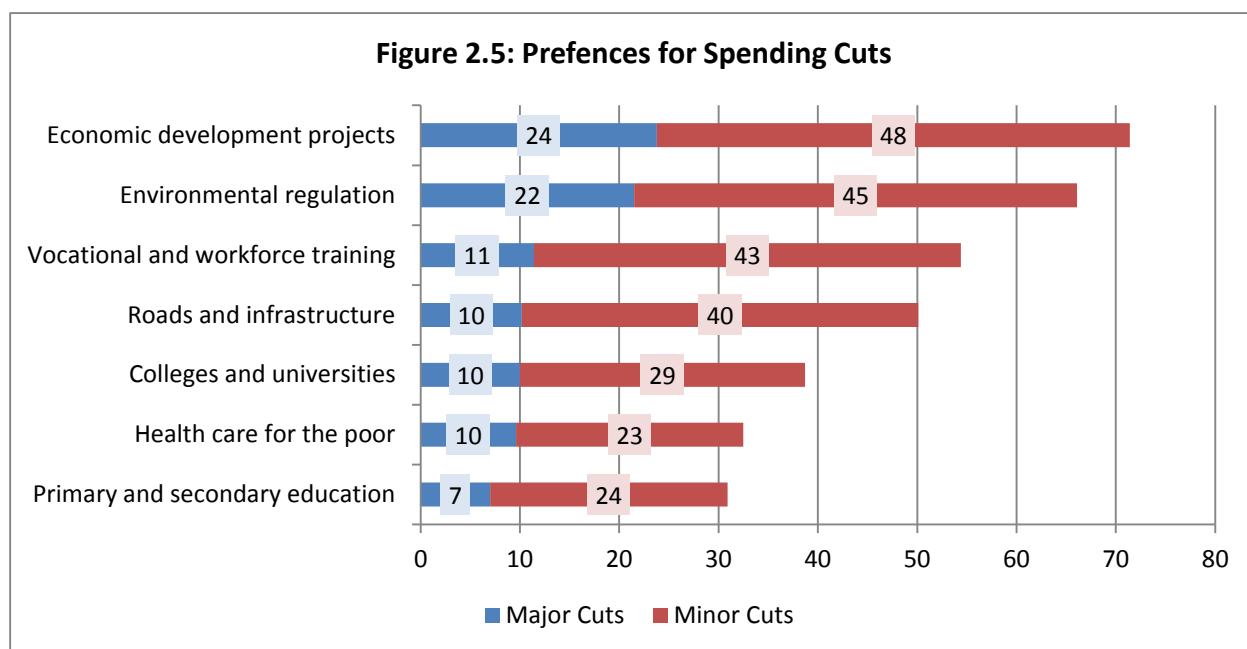


We also find public support for temporarily reinstating the Stelly income tax provisions as a mechanism for addressing contemporary budget shortfalls. The specific question wording is listed below:

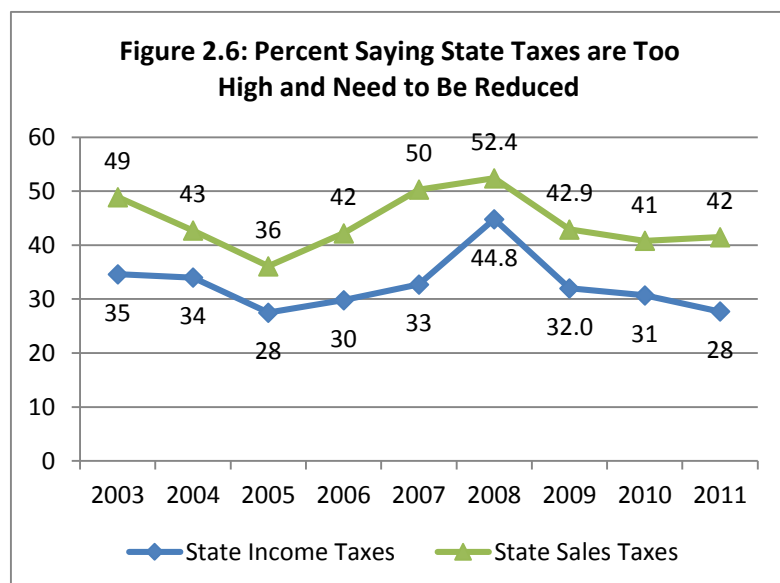
Would you support or oppose a proposal to temporarily reinstate the Stelly Plan income tax provisions to address current budget shortfalls?

As can be seen in Figure 2.4, nearly 56 percent of respondents said they would support such a proposal while 29 percent were opposed and 15 percent said they did not know or were unsure.

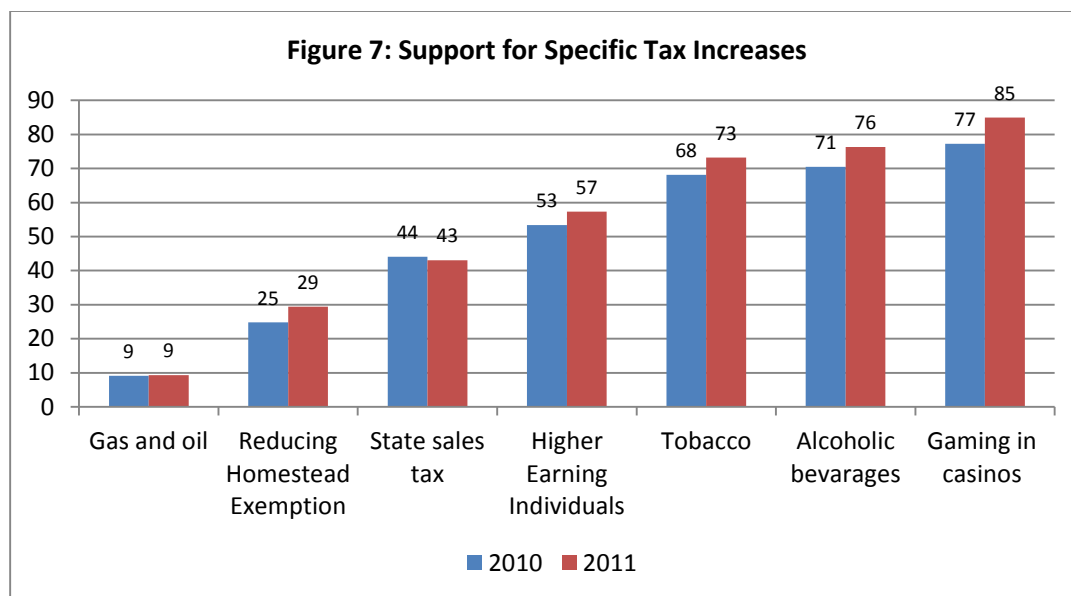
- Republicans are less supportive of temporarily reinstating the Stelly tax provisions. Forty-three percent of Republicans are opposed to temporarily reinstating Stelly compared to 24 percent of Democrats. Notably, a plurality of Republicans (45 percent) support temporarily reinstating Stelly.
- North Louisiana residents are most opposed to temporarily reinstating the Stelly tax provisions while residents in Southwestern Louisiana, Baton Rouge and New Orleans are most supportive. Sixty-six percent of residents in Southwestern Louisiana support reinstating Stelly compared to 64 percent in Baton Rouge and 60 percent in New Orleans. In North Louisiana, 44 percent support reinstating Stelly.



Cutting Spending: One of the more striking features of public opinion is strong anti-spending sentiments rarely translate into specific spending cuts. As we have noted in previous reports, Louisianans may be fiscal conservatives in the abstract but they are uncomfortable wielding the budgetary axe. Majorities are opposed to cutting primary and secondary education (68 percent), health care to the poor and elderly (65 percent) and state colleges and universities (59 percent). Moreover, 49 percent prefer not cutting state roads and transportation and 43 percent prefer not cutting vocational and workforce training. Even in areas where respondents express greater willingness to cut (i.e., economic development and environmental regulation), the preference is for minor as opposed to major spending cuts. Indeed, only 24 percent support making major cuts to economic development projects and only 22 percent support cutting environmental regulation. Preferences for spending cuts have remained relatively stable over the past year with only slight changes across categories.



Concerns About State Income and Sales Taxes Remain Flat: On the tax side of the revenue coin, there appears to be no signs of tax revolt in the making. Over the past several years, public concerns that state income and sales taxes are too high and need to be reduced have remained relatively flat. Long-term concerns over state taxes have declined significantly after the 2008 repeal of the Stelly Plan. Perceptions that state income taxes are too high and need to be reduced increased slightly from 41 to 42 percent while concern about state sales taxes decreased slightly from 31 percent to 28 percent.



Support for Tax Increases: Support for specific types of taxes is highly conditional with the public expressing strong support for sin taxes but much less support for broad based taxes or across the board increases in state income taxes. As in the 2010 survey, there is considerable support for sin taxes including taxes on gaming (85 percent), alcohol (76 percent), and tobacco (73 percent). Moreover, we continue to find majority support (57 percent) for increasing taxes on individuals earning more than \$100,000 and households earning more than \$150,000. There is more limited support for raising the state sales tax by one or two cents (43 percent) and little or no support for increasing state taxes on gasoline and oil (9 percent) or reducing or eliminating the homestead exemption (29 percent). As a general rule, the more broadly a tax reaches into the population, the less public support it generates.

Contingent Support for Tax Increases

Respondents are also more willing to consider tax increases when the tax is dedicated to a specific use or purpose. For example, while very few respondents support increasing taxes on gas and oil, a majority (52 percent) support increasing gas taxes if the money is specifically dedicated to improving state roads, highways, and other infrastructure. Similarly, 61 percent support increasing state income taxes if the additional revenue is dedicated specifically to either state colleges and universities or state health care, respectively. Support for taxes is clearly tied to perceptions of how the taxes will be used, whether they will be used to address an important public concern, and confidence that state government officials will use the money wisely.

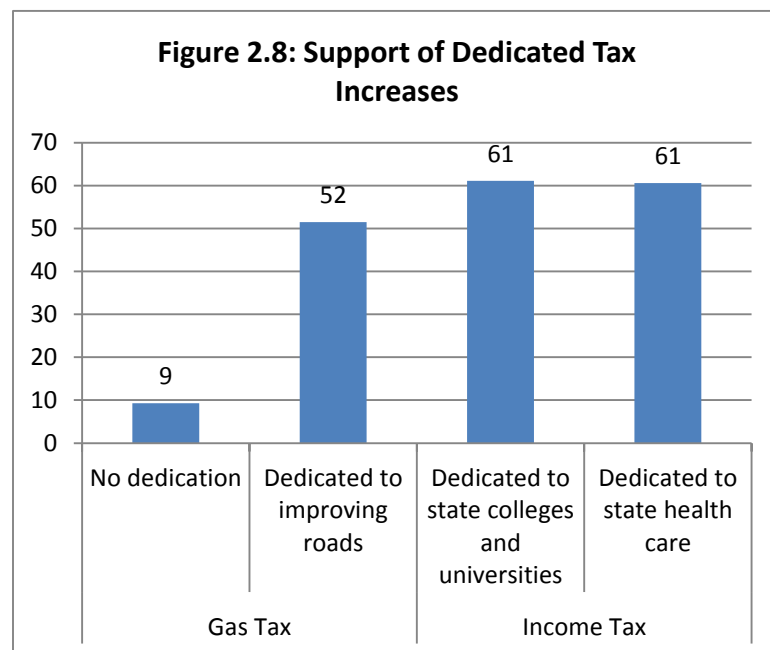
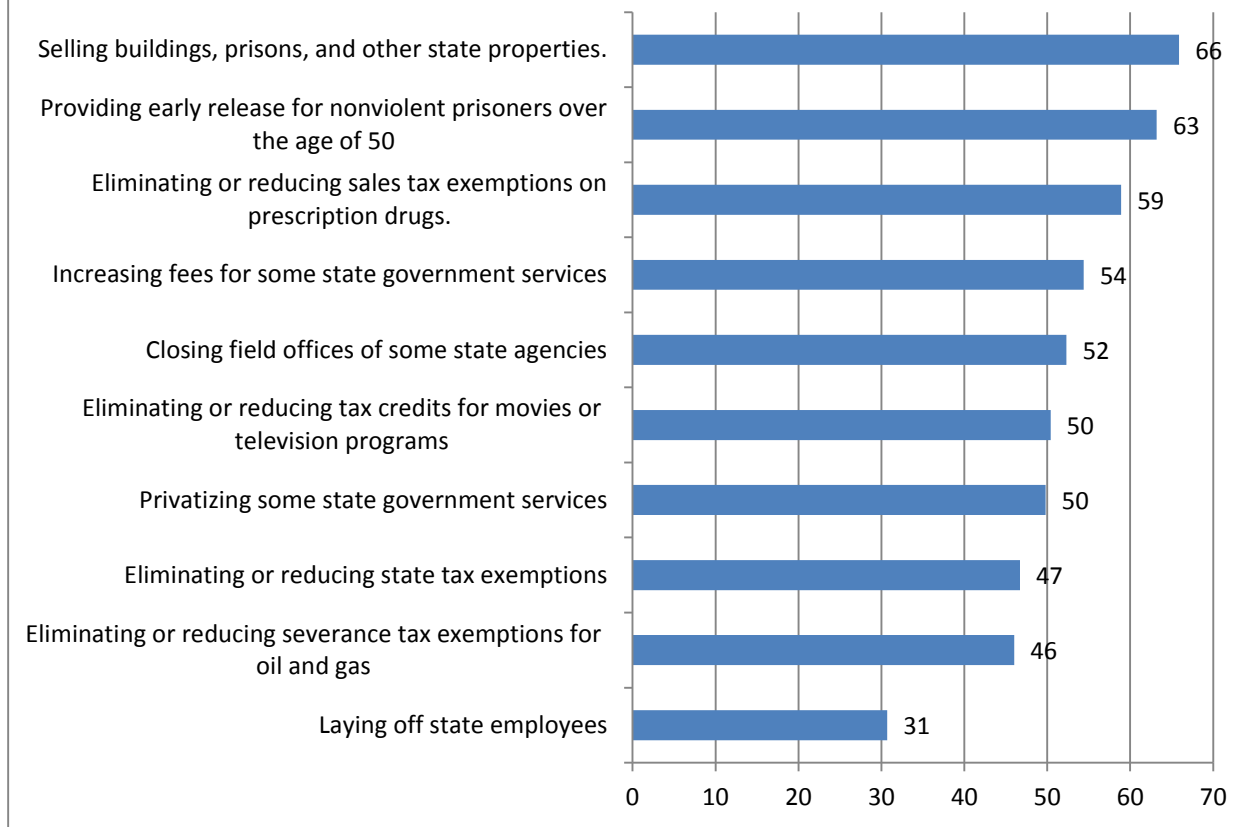


Figure 2.9 : Support for Proposals to Reduce Budget Shortfall



Proposals to Reduce Budget Shortfall: In addition to raising taxes or cutting state government spending, budget shortfalls could be addressed by eliminating state tax exemptions, privatizing services, laying off state workers, or any of a number of other proposals. In Figure 2.9, we present support for various options for reducing the budget shortfall. Selling state property, a proposal offered by the Jindal Administration garners the most support with 66 percent saying they support selling state properties. Perhaps surprisingly, 63 percent of state residents support early release for older (over 50) nonviolent prisoners, 59 percent support reducing or eliminating exemptions on prescription drugs, 54 percent support increasing fees for some state government services, and 52 percent support closing field offices of some state agencies. State residents are more divided on reducing state tax exemptions generally (47 percent support and 45 percent opposed) or eliminating exemptions specifically for oil and gas (46 percent support and 46 percent opposed). And, state residents are least supportive of laying off state government employees, only 31 percent support laying off state employees to address the budget shortfall while 63 percent are opposed.

Reading into the data broadly, public opinion on budget issues may best be described as “permissive,” meaning that the public recognizes the severity of the problem and is open to multiple policy options for addressing the shortfall. They are less anti-tax and show considerably more reluctance to making meaningful spending cuts than they are commonly portrayed.

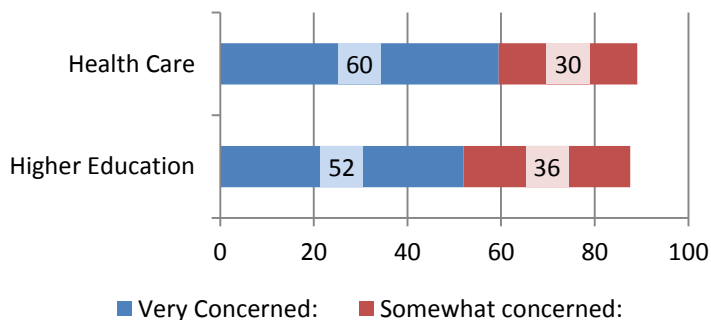
CHAPTER THREE

HIGHER EDUCATION, HEALTH CARE, GRADING LOUISIANA AND OTHER ISSUES

When it comes to issues on the public agenda, none loom larger than health care and higher education. This is mostly structural as health care and higher education bear the brunt of budget cuts during economic downturns but there are longer term considerations as well. While the \$1.6 billion budget shortfall makes changing the state system of higher education more urgent, it has long been argued that Louisiana has too many four-year colleges and universities and not enough two-year technical and community colleges. Similarly, report after report has been written on the delivery of public health care in Louisiana advocating that public dollars follow patients rather than institutions. The current context makes these issues more pressing.

Concern Cuts Will Affect Quality: Because of constitutional and legislative constraints, funding for health care and higher education are most vulnerable to economic downturns. As noted earlier, public opinion is generally not supportive of cuts in either of these areas. Only 10 percent of state residents believe there should be “major cuts” to state colleges and universities or health care for the poor and elderly, respectively. Sixty-seven percent prefer no cuts to public health care and 61 percent prefer that higher education be spared the budgetary axe. Moreover, 61 percent of residents are willing to support income tax increases provided any additional revenue goes to higher education or health care, respectively.

Figure 3.1: Concern Cuts Will Affect Quality of Health Care and Higher Education

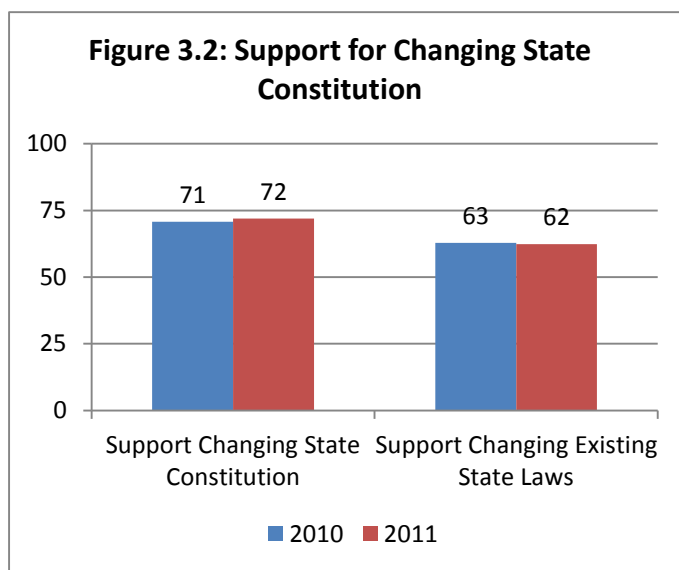


When asked how concerned they are that cuts will affect the quality of academic programs in higher education and the quality of care in health care, the response was overwhelming. Ninety percent of residents express at least some concern about the impact of cuts to health care, including 60 percent who say they are very concerned. Similarly, 88 percent express concern about the impact of cuts to higher education, including 52 percent who say they are very concerned.

While there are differences in levels of concern about the impact of cuts on higher education across respondents, most of these differences are differences of degree rather than kind. For example, 63 percent of Democrats say they are very concerned that cuts to higher education will affect the quality of academic programs compared to 38 percent of Republicans. However, 93 percent of Democrats compared to 84 percent of Republicans express at least some concern about the impact of cuts on academic programs.

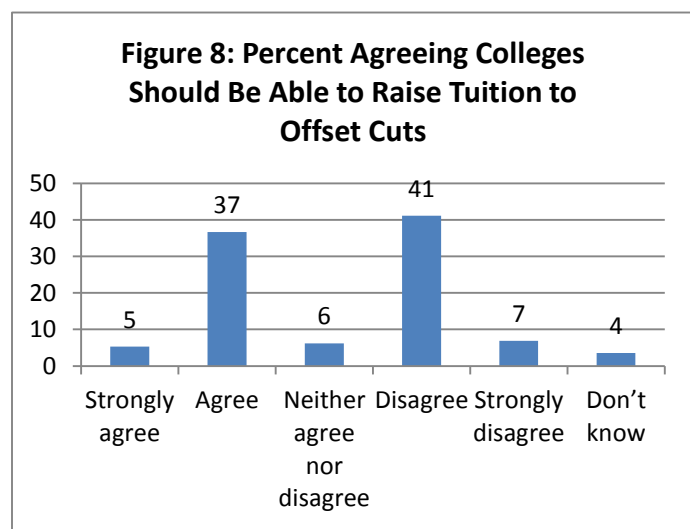
When it comes to concern about health care, demographic differences are more telling with the lower income, African-American, and less educated respondents expressing far greater concern. Even so, it is important to keep in mind that all groups express at least some concern over cuts.

- Seventy-one percent of African-American respondents compared to 56 percent of Caucasian respondents say they are very concerned about the impact of cuts on the quality of health care.
- Seventy-two percent of respondents earning less than \$30,000 compared to 44 percent of respondents earning more than \$75,000 say they are very concerned cuts will affect quality of care.
- Eighty-one percent of respondents with less than a high school education say they are very concerned cuts will affect the quality of care compared to 45 percent of college graduates.
- Seventy-four percent of Democrats compared to 46 percent of Republicans say they are very concerned about the impact of cuts on health care.



Support for Budget Flexibility: Given this level of concern, it is perhaps not surprising that there is substantial support for removing the structural constraints that make higher education and health care the target of state budget cuts. Seventy-two percent of respondents support changing the state constitution so that budget cuts do not come primarily from health care and higher education and 62 percent support changing existing state laws so cuts do not come disproportionately from higher education and health care. Overall, there is little support for a budgetary framework that places the burden of budgetary shortfalls on higher education and health care.

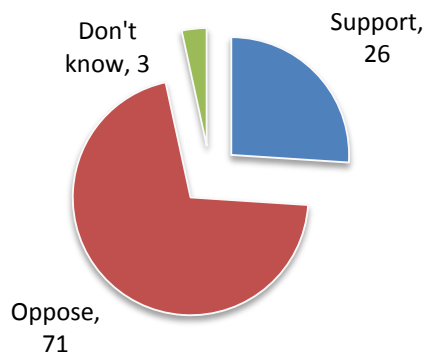
Opinion Divided on Tuition Increases. If the public is reluctant to cut spending to higher education, what options are they willing to support to reduce or pay the costs of higher education? As can be seen in Figure 3.3, Louisiana residents are reluctant to give colleges the flexibility to raise tuition and fees. A plurality (48 percent) disagrees or strongly disagrees that state colleges and universities should be able to raise tuition and fees to offset state budget cuts. Forty-two percent of respondents, alternatively, believe state colleges and universities should be able to raise tuition and fees.



Opposition to greater control over tuition is rooted in age, race and education with younger, African-American, and respondents with some college most likely to disagree with the idea that colleges and universities should raise tuition and fees to offset state budget cuts.

- Two-thirds of 18-34 year olds disagree or strongly disagree that colleges and universities should be able to raise tuition compared to 42 percent in 35-54 age group and 44 percent among respondents 55 and older.
- Sixty-three percent of African-Americans disagree or strongly disagree compared to 42 percent of Caucasian respondents.
- When it comes to education, residents with some college (including an associate's degree) are most likely to disagree with this statement. Sixty-one percent of respondents with some college compared to 38 percent of respondents with a college degree and 38 percent of respondents with less than a high school education disagreed or strongly disagreed that colleges should be able to raise tuition and fees to offset state budget cuts.

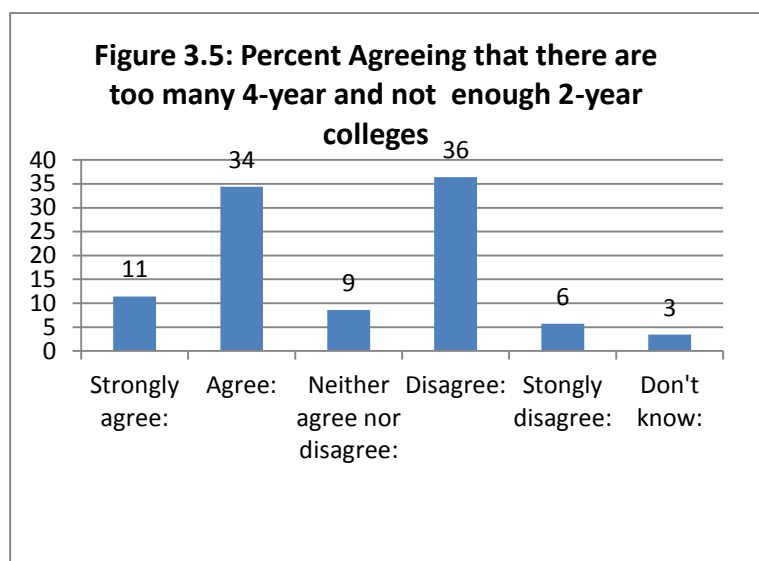
Figure 9: Support for Consolidating State Colleges and Universities



Opposition to Consolidating State Colleges: Likewise there is little support for closing or consolidating state colleges or universities. Seventy-one percent of Louisiana residents oppose closing or consolidating state colleges and universities, while just over a quarter of respondents (26 percent) support consolidation.

As was the case with tuition, opposition is rooted in age, income, education, and partisan affiliation. Younger, lower income, less-educated, and Democratic respondents are more likely to oppose consolidating or closing state colleges and universities. Across all these differences, however, opposition to consolidating or closing state colleges and universities was stronger than support.

- Fifteen percent of 18-34 year olds support closing or consolidating state colleges and universities compared to 37 percent of respondents 55 and older.
- Sixteen percent of individuals earning less than \$30,000 support closing or consolidating state colleges compared to 40 percent of respondents earning more than \$75,000.
- Twenty-one percent of respondents without a four-year college degree support consolidation compared to 45 percent with a college degree.
- Thirty-six percent of Republicans compared to 21 percent of Democrats support closing or consolidating state colleges and universities.

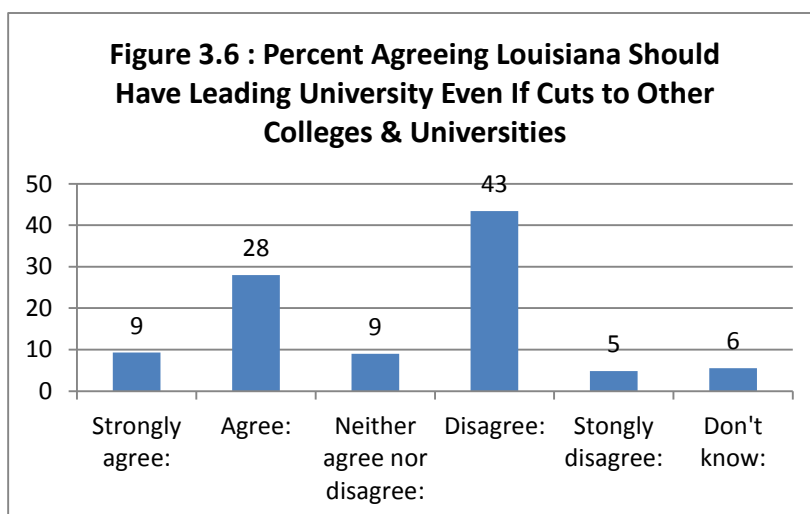


Too Many Four-Year Colleges? One of the long-term structural issues affecting the state system of higher education is the number of four-year institutions relative to two-year community colleges and technical schools. Indeed, it is often noted that Louisiana has more four-year colleges per capita than surrounding states. Public perception on the issue is perhaps best described as divided.

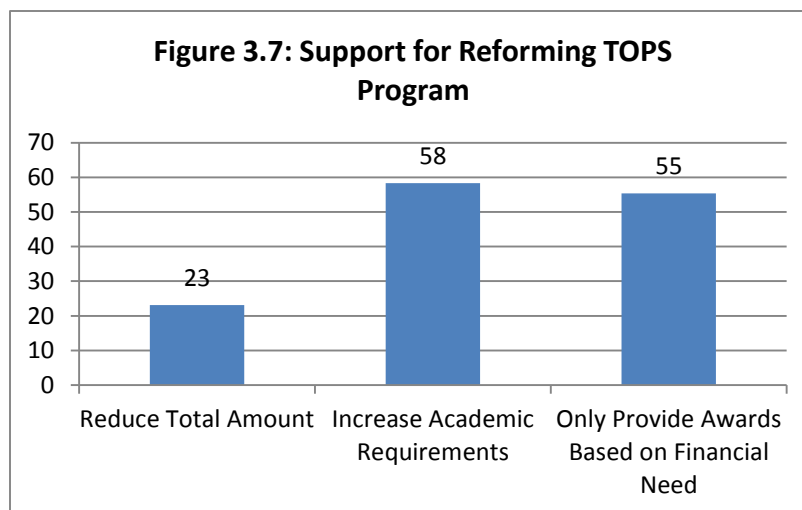
A plurality of Louisiana residents (45 percent) agree or strongly agree that there are too many four-year colleges in Louisiana and not enough two-year community and technical colleges. Forty-two percent of respondents,

however, disagree or strongly disagree with this statement. Younger respondents (18-34) are most likely to disagree. Sixty-seven percent of 18-34 year olds compared to 30 percent of respondents 55 and older disagree or strongly disagree that there are too many four-year colleges and universities and not enough two-year technical and community colleges.

More Colleges, Not Better Colleges: We also find significant disagreement to the statement that Louisiana should have a nationally ranked university even if it means cuts to other colleges and universities. Forty-eight percent strongly disagreed or disagreed that the state should opt for a nationally prominent university even if it meant cuts to other state colleges. Thirty-seven percent, in contrast, agreed or strongly agreed.



Support for Reforming TOPS: With widespread public support, the Taylor Opportunity Program for Students (TOPS) is often described as the third rail of Louisiana politics. The current budget climate, cuts to higher education, and the call for greater flexibility over tuition and fees among college leaders have led to questions over whether the program should be reformed. In the 2011 Louisiana Survey, we tested three options: (1) reducing the total amount of a TOPS award; (2) Increasing the academic requirements to qualify for a TOPS award; or (3) Provide TOPS based on financial need. The results, present in Table 3.7, show more openness to reform than many commonly believed. True to the conventional view, there is little support for reducing the total amount of a TOPS award. Only 23 percent of state residents supported this option. Moreover, opposition is consistent across demographic differences, partisan affiliation and region.



However, 58 percent of Louisiana residents supported increasing the academic requirements and 55 percent supported providing awards based on financial need. African-Americans and respondents with a high school education express less support for increasing academic standards, but generally there is support for increasing the academic standards to qualify for a TOPS award. Related, though more divisive, is support for basing the TOPS award on financial need. On this question, we see important and consistent differences across demographic and partisan groups. For example, 64 percent of respondents earning less than \$30,000 support basing awards on financial aid compared to 43 percent of respondents earning more than \$75,000. Similarly, 72 percent of respondents with less than a high school education support providing awards based on financial need compared to 43 percent of respondents with a college degree. Finally, while Republicans are fairly evenly divided on this issue – 48 percent support providing awards based on financial need while 49 percent are opposed – Democrats tilt heavily in favor with 60 percent in support and 39 percent opposed.

More broadly, it appears that there may be more support for reforming TOPS than is commonly believed but that the devil is in the details and some proposals will generate more support and be less divisive than others.

Reforming Health Care: Reforming health care is an equally difficult proposition. While there is considerable agreement on the diagnosis – Louisiana spends more on health care than other states and has relatively poor health outcomes - there is less agreement on the solution. An idea advocated by the Jindal Administration is to increase the role of insurance companies in managing public care (Medicaid). To test support, we asked respondents the following question:

Medicaid is a government program, funded by state and federal governments, that pays for health care services for low income individuals and families. Currently, Louisiana is considering a health reform that would allow private insurance companies to manage care provided through the Medicaid program.

Overall, do you think it is a good idea or a bad idea to allow insurance companies to manage care through the Medicaid program?

The results are presented in Figure 3.8. As can be seen, a majority of respondents (52 percent) say this is a bad idea while 36 percent say it is a good idea and 12 percent don't know or are unsure. Those most directly affected by the proposal are most likely to say it is a bad idea. Sixty-one percent of respondents earning less than \$30,000 say allowing insurance companies to manage Medicaid is a bad compared to 48 percent of respondents earning \$75,000 or more.

Figure 3.8: Support for Allowing Insurance Companies to Manage Medicaid

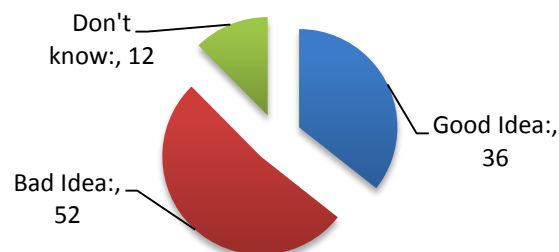
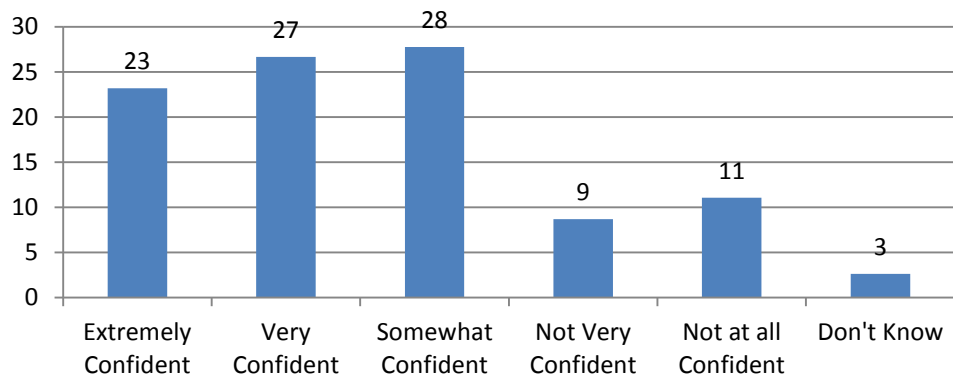


Figure 3.9: Confidence in the Safety of Seafood Caught in Areas Affected by Gulf Oil Spill



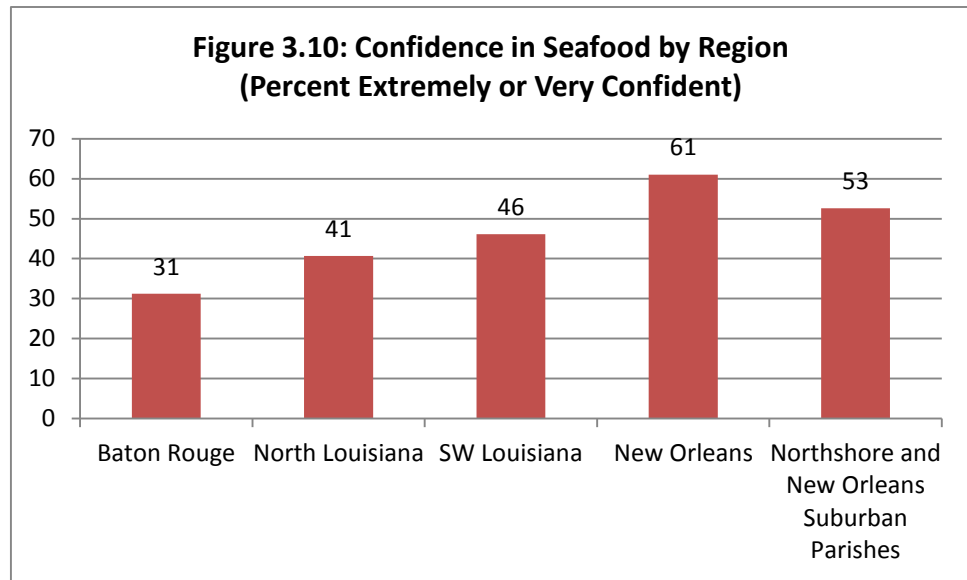
Confidence in Louisiana Seafood:

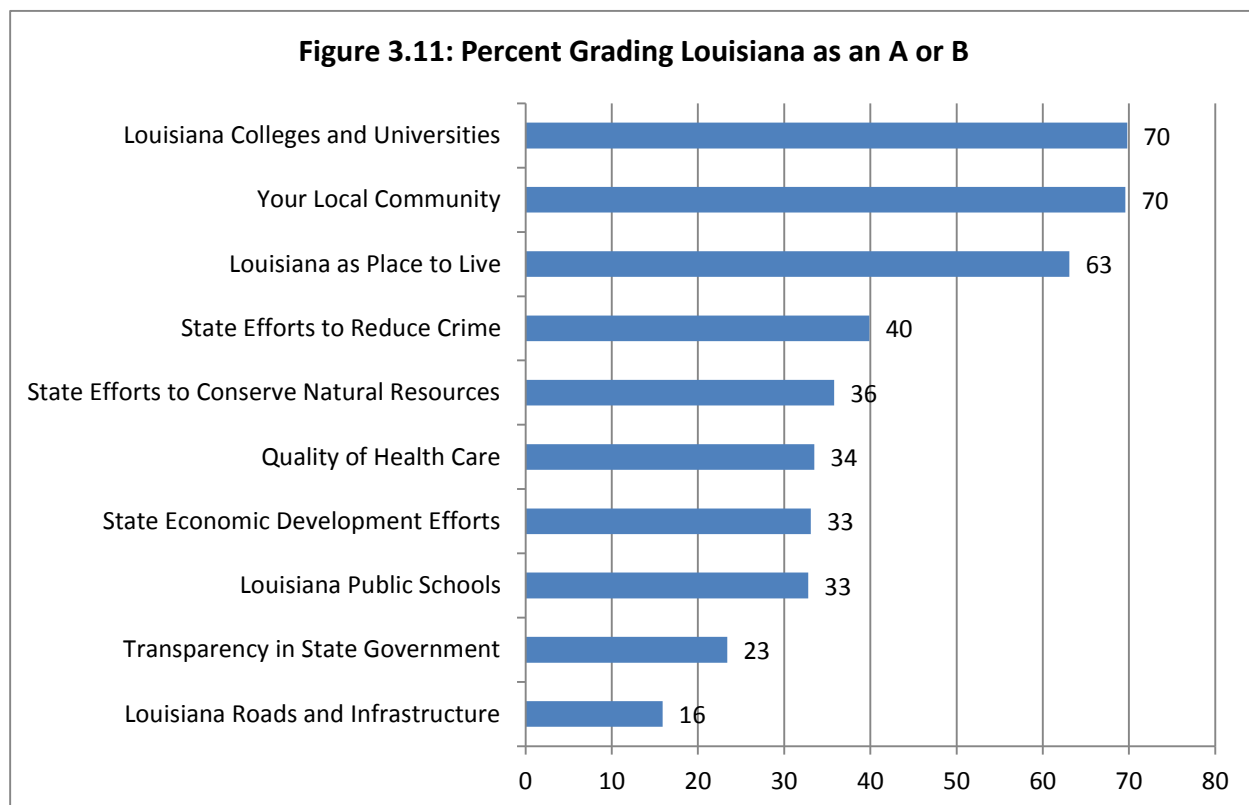
Louisiana residents express confidence in the safety of seafood caught in areas affected by the Gulf oil spill. Twenty-three percent of respondents say they are extremely confident, 27 percent are very confident, and 28 percent are somewhat confident. Only 20 percent of respondents say they are not very confident or not at all confident.

Less educated, lower income and African-American respondents all express greater concern over the safety of Gulf Coast seafood.

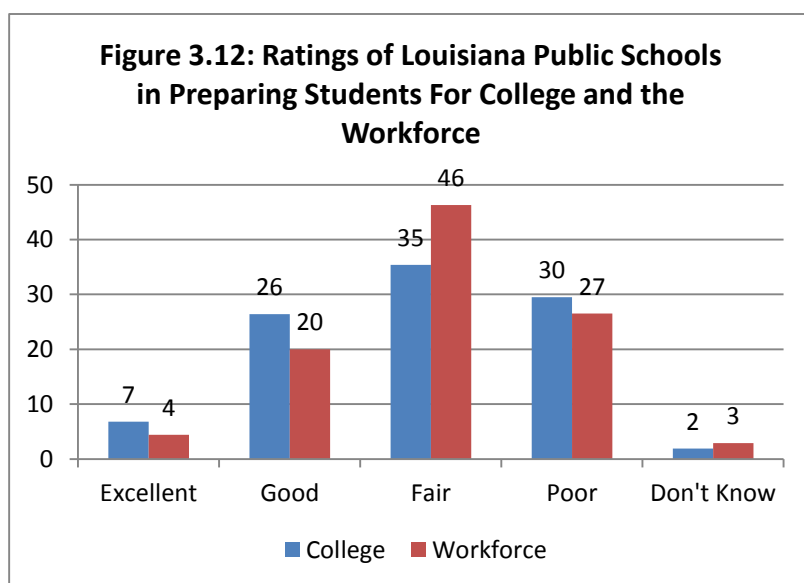
- Thirty-four percent of African-Americans say they are extremely or very confident in the safety of Gulf seafood compared to 51 percent of Caucasian respondents.
- Thirty-six percent of individuals earning less than \$30,000 are extremely or very confident in the safety of Gulf seafood compared to 61 percent of individuals earning \$75,000 or more.
- Thirty-eight percent of respondents with less than a high school education are extremely or very confident in the safety of Gulf seafood compared to 58 percent of respondents with a college degree.

We also see important regional differences with those areas most directly affected – New Orleans and the surrounding parishes – expressing the greatest confidence in the safety of seafood caught in those areas affected by the Gulf oil spill. Sixty-one percent of respondents in the New Orleans region and 53 percent in the Northshore and New Orleans suburban parishes are extremely or very confident in the safety of seafood caught in areas affected by the spill. In contrast, Baton Rouge and North Louisiana display the greatest skepticism about the safety of local seafood.





Grading the State: When it comes to grading various areas of Louisiana, residents give the most positive grades to state colleges and universities and their local communities as a place to live. Seventy percent of respondents gave state colleges and universities an A or B and 70 percent gave their local community as a place to live an A or B. Residents also give positive marks to Louisiana as place to live with 63 percent grading Louisiana as an A or B.



Other areas of state government performance hover around a C or below, including state efforts to reduce crime, protect and conserve natural resources, the overall quality of health care, public schools, state economic development efforts, transparency in state government and roads and infrastructure. *This presents an interesting paradox: Louisiana residents rate their state positively as a place to live but rate most quality of life indicators fairly low.*

Grading Public Schools: Louisiana public schools fare poorly in public perception. Only 9 percent of Louisiana residents give public schools an A grade and only a third give schools a B or better. In

contrast, 36 percent of Louisiana residents give public schools a D or below. Not surprisingly, respondents give public schools relatively low grades for preparing students for the workforce and college. Seventy-three percent rate public schools as fair or poor in preparing students for the workforce and 65 percent rate schools as fair or poor in preparing students for college. Respondents are slightly more positive about how well public schools prepare for college with 33 percent rating the schools as good or excellent, though these are low marks overall.

Rating of Colleges and Universities for Meeting Local Workforce Needs:

Respondents are more positive about the role of colleges and universities in meeting local workforce needs. Fifty-four percent rate colleges and universities as good or excellent while 40 percent rate them as fair or poor. Residents in the Baton Rouge area and Southwestern Louisiana rate state colleges and universities most positively for meeting workforce needs while North Louisiana residents rate state colleges and universities less favorably. Sixty-two percent of respondents in Southwestern Louisiana rate state colleges as excellent or good in meeting local workforce needs while 60 percent in Baton Rouge rated state colleges as excellent or good. In contrast, 41 percent of North Louisiana residents rated colleges and universities as excellent or good in meeting local workforce needs while 51 percent of respondents in New Orleans and 52 percent of respondents in the Northshore rated colleges as excellent or good.

Figure 3.13: Rating of Colleges and Universities for Meeting Local Workforce Needs

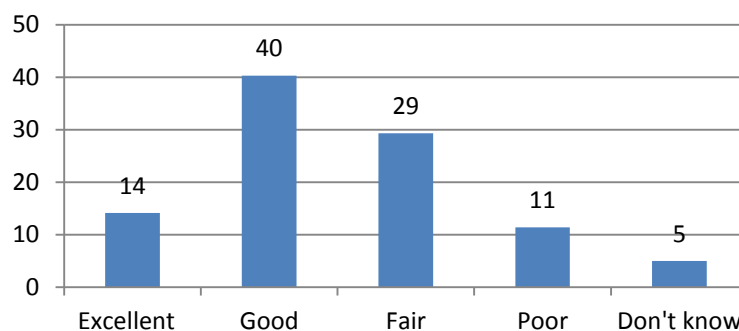
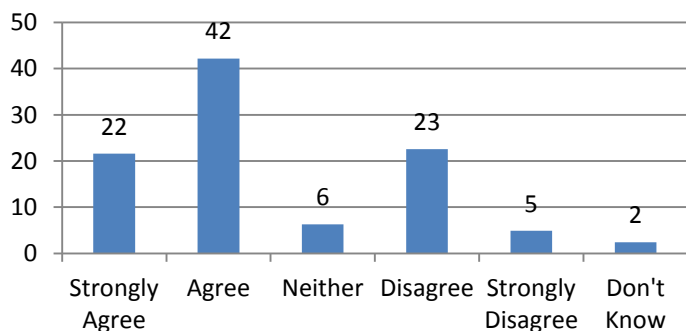


Figure 3.14: Percent Agreeing State Should Provide Funding For Pre-K Programs



Pre-K Education: Improving access to publicly funded pre-k education is routinely recommended as a mechanism for improving educational outcomes in Louisiana. There is little question that the public supports providing public funding for pre-k programs. In the 2011 survey, 64 percent of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that “Louisiana state government should provide funding so that all 4-year olds can attend a high quality pre-kindergarten program if their parents want them to.” Only 28 percent of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed. While substantial differences exist in support for

pre-k across demographic groups, support is consistent across all groups. For example, 81 percent of Democrats support funding pre-k programs compared to 55 percent of Republicans. Similarly, 84 percent of African Americans support public funding for pre-k programs compared to 57 percent of Caucasian respondents.

Looking at support for pre-k funding over time, we do see some variance. In 2009, 69 percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that public funding should be provided so parents could send their children to pre-k programs. Last year, this increased to 72 percent while this year it declined to 64 percent. Despite the variation, support is generally quite strong – 64 percent or better – and remains high even in relatively tight budget years.

Fifty-two percent of Louisiana residents say the state is doing too little to assure that children enter kindergarten “with the knowledge and skills they need to do their best in school” while 37 percent of Louisiana residents say the state is doing about the right amount. Only 4 percent say the state is doing too much. This is similar to last year’s survey when 55 percent of respondents said state government was not doing enough to assure children enter kindergarten with the skills necessary to succeed.

Figure 3.15: Support for Pre-K Funding Over Time

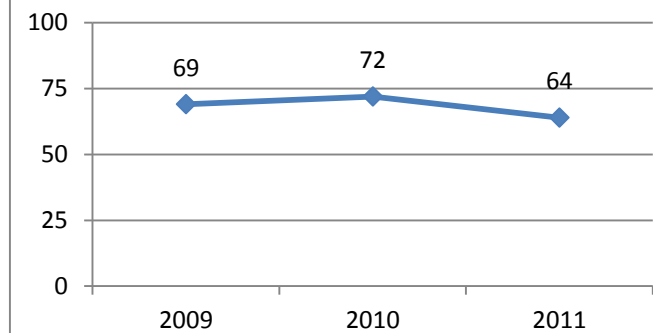
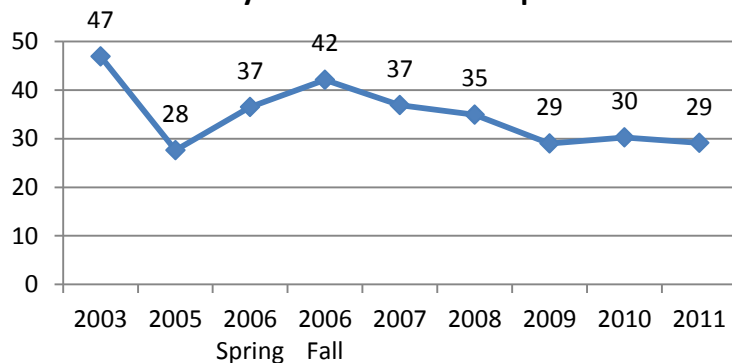


Figure 3.16: Percent of Louisiana Residents Say State is More Corrupt



Ethics Reform and Perceptions of Corruption:

In 2008 during the first special session of the state legislature, a comprehensive package of ethics reforms was passed and signed into law. The immediate effect on public attitudes about corruption was striking – a 6-point decrease in the percent of respondents saying the state had become more corrupt. Since the passage of ethics reform, however, there has been little or no subsequent movement in public attitudes toward corruption. Twenty

percent of residents say the state is more corrupt, 40 percent that the state is just as corrupt and 31 percent that the state is less corrupt. Overall, perceptions of corruption appear to have stabilized.

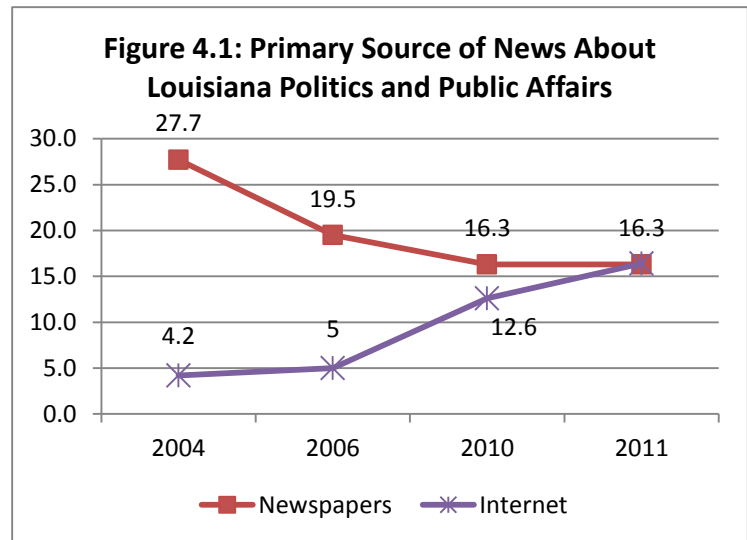
Chapter Four

The Evolving Media Landscape

Over the past decade, the overwhelming transformation of the media landscape has been remarkable. Cell phones are gradually replacing landlines, print media already challenged by websites and blogs now confronts an additional challenge in IPADs and other digital readers like the Kindle and the Nook. We see clear evidence of these transformations in the Louisiana Survey.

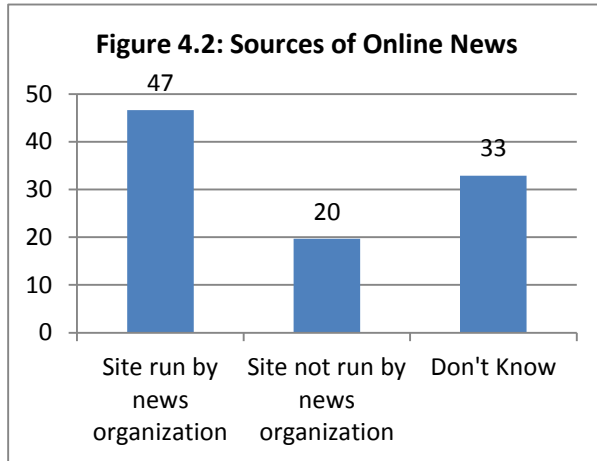
When asked about their primary source of news and information about Louisiana politics and public affairs, television remains the frequently cited source. Indeed, television news has held ground as a source of news about politics and public affairs. In the 2011 survey, 61 percent of respondents cited television. Seven years earlier in 2004, an identical 61 percent cited television as their primary source of news.

The more notable change has been the movement toward the internet and away from newspapers. In 2004, 27 percent of respondents cited newspapers as their primary source of information about Louisiana politics and public affairs. In 2011, only 16 percent identified newspapers as their primary source. Internet use, in contrast has grown significantly. In 2004, only 4 percent of respondents cited the internet as their primary source of news about Louisiana politics and public affairs. By 2011, 16 percent cited the internet as their primary source of news.



- Television is the primary source of information about state politics and public affairs with one exception – 18-24 year olds. Forty-three percent of 18-24 year olds report the internet as their primary source of news about state politics and public affairs while 36 percent identify television and 15 percent identify newspapers. Among the 65 and older age group, 74 percent identify television as their primary source of news while only 4 percent identify the internet or online sources.
- The digital divide, defined in as the gap between those with the resources and skills to use digital technology and those without, is also evident in the data. Only 2 percent of respondents with less than high school education identify the internet as their primary source of news compared to 90 percent who identify television.

- College graduates are most likely to rely on the newspaper and online sources. Twenty-six percent of college graduates identify online sources as the primary source of news about state politics and public affairs while 21 percent identify newspapers.



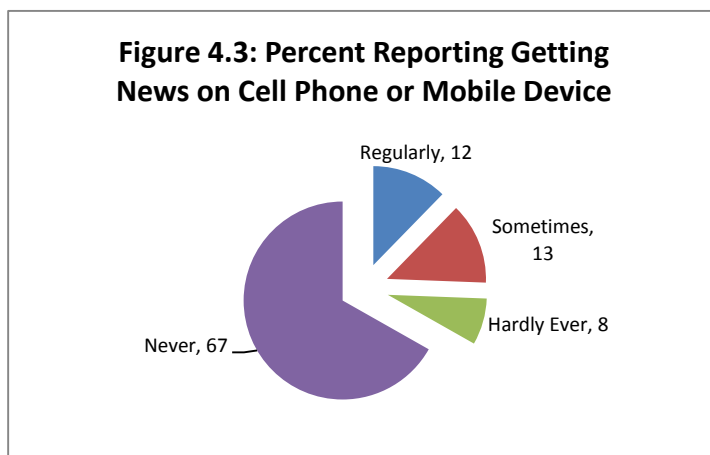
In many ways, this division is artificial. Newspapers remain an important source of information even if there has been a significant decline in reading the print editions. Among respondents who reported reading a newspaper at least once a week, 16 percent reported they read the paper online.

And, when asked about their online news sources, nearly half of respondents (47 percent) reported going to websites run by traditional news organizations. Perhaps more astounding, a third of respondents (33 percent) don't know whether the website they use for news content is run by a traditional news organization.

Younger respondents (18-24) are notably least likely to use websites run by traditional news organizations, while older respondents (65 and older) are least likely to know if the source is run by a traditional news organization.

- Thirty-seven percent of 18-24 year olds reported going to websites run by traditional news organizations compared to 57 percent in the 35-44 age group.
- Fifty-five percent of older respondents (65 and older) reported not knowing if a site was run by a traditional news organizations.

In addition, 21 percent of respondents reported having gone online to read a blog about politics and public affairs. Reading blogs is more common among better educated respondents. Thirty percent of respondents with a college degree compared to 12 percent with less than a high school education reported having read an online blog about politics.



Perhaps even more interestingly, a quarter of Louisiana residents report getting news at least some of the time on their cell phone or some other mobile device and 12 percent report getting news on their cell phone "regularly." This includes 39 percent of younger adults (18-24) and 32 percent of college graduates. Thirteen percent of respondents report they would be willing to pay a small fee for the news they receive on their cell phone, including 36 percent of those respondents who say they regularly get news on their mobile device.

Figure 4.4: Ever Created a Social Networking Profile

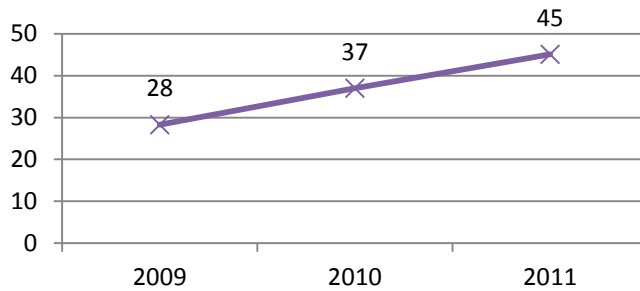
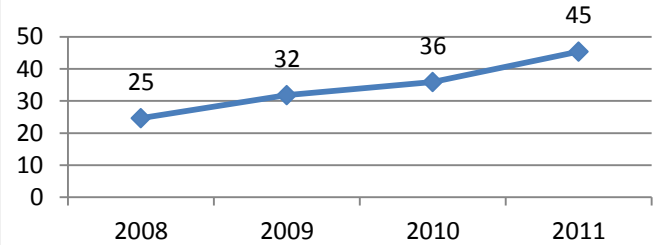
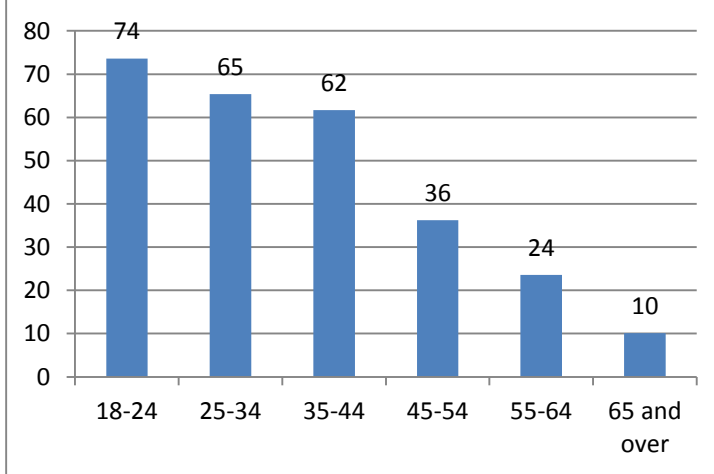


Figure 4.5: Spent At Least One Day in the Past Week on Social Networking Site



The Growth of Social Media: The 2011 Louisiana Survey presents ample evidence of the growth of social media. Since we began tracking the data, the number of Louisiana residents who have gone on a social networking site at least once in the past week has grown from 25 percent in 2008 to 45 percent in 2011. Remarkably, nearly 23 percent of respondents report checking a social networking site every day. This is only slightly below the 24 percent who report reading a newspaper every day. Similarly, the percent of respondents who report having created a social profile has grown from 28 percent in 2009 to 45 percent in 2011.

Figure 4.6: Created Social Profile by Age

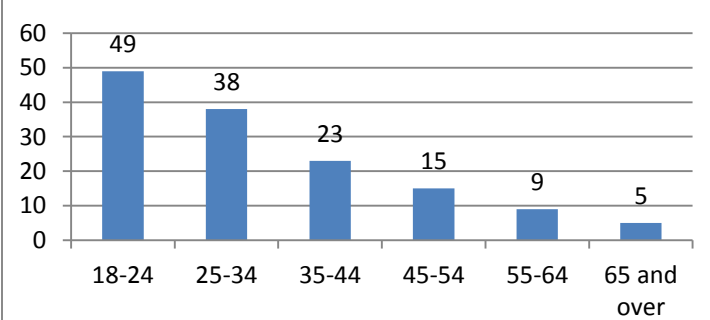


The growth of social media has been widely noted and it is no surprise to learn that younger adults are increasingly relying on Facebook or some other social networking site for news and information. What may be surprising is how far up in age the spread of social networking has reached. Sixty-two percent of respondents between 35 and 44 have created a social profile and more than 1 in 3 Louisiana residents between 45-54 have created a profile. We see similar distinctions based on education reflecting the digital divide. Thirty-percent of respondents with less than a high school education have created a social profile compared to 61 percent of

respondents with a college degree.

Its reliance as a source of information is also notable. Nearly half (49 percent) of 18-24 years olds check a social networking site every day as do 38 percent of 24-34 year olds and 23 percent of 35-44 year olds.

Figure 4.7: Went to Social Networking Site Every Day in the Past Week



Louisiana Survey

Questionnaire and Frequencies

About the Survey: The 2011 Louisiana Survey includes a traditional landline telephone survey combined with a survey of Louisiana cell phone users. All respondents – cell phone and landline - are randomly selected. The results presented here are from the combined weighted survey, however, not every question on the landline survey was asked on the cell survey. In those instances, only the results from the landline survey are presented. All the results presented here have been weighted to reflect current population demographics as reflected in the U.S. Census estimates and telephone usage patterns. The combined survey includes 724 respondents including 510 respondents selected from the landline telephone survey and 224 respondents selected from available cell phone blocks. The overall survey has a margin of error of +/- 3.6 percentage points and the landline survey has a margin of error of +/- 4.3 percentage points.

Q.1 To begin with, would you say things are generally going in the right direction, or do you think things are going in the wrong direction here in Louisiana?

Right direction:	41.1%
Wrong direction:	42.5%
Not sure:	16.4%

Q.2 What do you think is the SINGLE most important problem facing the state of Louisiana?

Education:	24.0%
Economy:	35.5%
Budget:	10.7%
Health Care:	8.8%
Environment:	5.7%
Politics/Corruption	4.8%
Crime	6.4%
Roads/Transportation	1.9%
Other/DK	7.5%

Q.3 How much confidence would you say you have in state government to effectively address this problem? Would you say you are very confident, somewhat confident, not very confident, or not at all confident?

Very confident:	9.9%
Somewhat confident:	40.1%
Not very confident:	27.9%
Not at all confident:	19.9%
Don't know:	2.1%

Q.4 When you think about the future of Louisiana would you say are mainly hopeful and optimistic, or would you say you are mainly worried and pessimistic?

Hopeful and optimistic:	64.8%
Worried and pessimistic:	32.3%
Don't know:	2.9%

Q.5 We are also interested in how people are getting along financially these days.. would you say that you are better off financially, worse off, or about the same as you were a year ago?

Better:	20.4%
Same:	50.1%
Worse:	29.2%
Don't know:	0.4%

Q.6 What about business conditions in the state of Louisiana -- do you think that at the present time business conditions in Louisiana are better, worse, or about the same as they were a year ago?

Better:	20.8%
Same:	33.7%
Worse:	39.7%
Don't know:	5.7%

Q.7 What about business conditions in the nation -- do you think that at the present time business conditions in the country as a whole are better, worse, or about the same as they were a year ago?

Better:	23.4%
Same:	22.0%
Worse:	47.7%
Don't know:	6.9%

Q.8 How effective would you say Louisiana state government has been in terms of attracting business and creating jobs in your local community - excellent, good, only fair, or poor?

Excellent:	5.6%
Good:	24.5%
Only Fair:	38.2%
Poor:	27.3%
Don't Know:	4.5%

Q.9 Currently, the state of Louisiana is projecting a \$1.6 billion shortfall in the budget for the 2010/2011 fiscal year. How do you think the state should handle budget shortfalls - by raising taxes, cutting state government spending, or through some combination of spending cuts and tax increases?

By raising taxes:	5.4%
By cutting spending:	43.6%
By combination of both:	45.7%
Don't know:	5.3%

Q.10 Because various areas of government spending are protected by the Louisiana Constitution, budget cuts during economic downturns come primarily from higher education and health care. Would you support or oppose a proposal to change the state constitution so that budget cuts would not necessarily come primarily from higher education and health care?

Support:	71.9%
Oppose:	20.7%
Don't know:	7.4%

Q.11 Would you support or oppose repealing existing state laws that protect certain areas of government spending from budget cuts?

Support:	62.4%
Oppose:	21.2%
Don't know:	16.3%

Q.12 Do you think the state budget cuts to date have gone too far in cutting state government services or would you say state budget cuts have not gone far enough?

Cuts gone too far:	39.7%
Cuts not gone far enough:	39.4%
Budget cuts about right:	7.9%
Don't know:	13.0%

Q.13 Now I am going to read several areas of state government service that may need to be cut to balance next year's budget. As I read through each one, please tell me whether you would favor making major spending cuts, minor spending cuts, or whether you would prefer no spending cuts?

Spending on state roads, bridges and other infrastructure

Major cuts:	10.2%
Minor cuts:	39.9%
No spending cuts:	49.0%
Don't Know:	1.0%

Spending on state colleges and universities

Major cuts:	10.0%
Minor cuts:	28.7%
No spending cuts:	59.0%
Don't know:	2.3%

Spending on primary and secondary education.

Major cuts:	7.0%
Minor cuts:	23.9%
No spending cuts:	68.3%
Don't know:	0.8%

Spending on health care for the poor, elderly, and disabled.

Major cuts:	9.6%
Minor cuts:	22.9%
No spending cuts:	65.3%
Don't know:	2.2%

Spending on vocational and workforce training.

Major cuts:	11.4%
Minor cuts:	43.0%
No spending cuts:	43.2%

Don't know:	2.3%
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Spending on incentives for economic development projects.

Major cuts:	23.8%
Minor cuts:	47.6%
No spending cuts:	23.1%
Don't know:	5.5%

Spending on environmental regulation and enforcement

Major cuts:	21.5%
Minor cuts:	44.6%
No spending cuts:	30.0%
Don't know:	3.8%

Q.14 Now I am going to read different types of taxes that might be raised to help balance the state budget. As I read through each one, please tell me whether you would support or oppose raising taxes in this area. To begin, would you favor or oppose.

Increasing state taxes on tobacco

Favor:	73.2%
Oppose:	24.9%
Don't Know:	1.9%

Increasing state taxes on beer, wine and other alcoholic beverages.

Favor:	76.3%
Oppose:	22.3%
Don't know:	1.4%

Increasing state taxes on gasoline and oil

Favor:	9.3%
Oppose:	89.5%
Don't know:	1.1%

Increasing state income taxes on individuals earning more than \$100,000 and households earning more than \$150,000.

Favor:	57.3%
Oppose:	39.4%
Don't know:	3.3%

Reducing or eliminating the homestead exemption which provides deductions for up to \$75,000 on local property taxes.

Favor:	29.4%
Oppose:	65.2%
Don't know:	5.4%

Increasing state taxes on gaming in casinos and video poker.

Favor:	85.0%
Oppose:	13.0%
Don't know:	2.0%

Increasing the state sales tax by one or two cents.

Favor:	43.1%
Oppose:	55.1%
Don't know:	1.8%

Would you favor or oppose an increase in the state gasoline tax if the money were dedicated to improving highways, bridges, and other infrastructure?

Favor:	51.5%
Oppose:	47.1%
Don't know:	1.4%

Would you support or oppose a proposal to increase state income taxes if the additional revenue was used to offset state budget cuts to state colleges and universities?

Support:	61.1%
Oppose:	36.1%
Don't know:	2.8%

Would you support or oppose a proposal to increase state income taxes if the additional revenue was used to offset state budget cuts to state health care?

Support:	60.6%
Oppose:	35.0%
Don't know:	4.5%

Q.15 In 2002, state voters approved the Stelly Plan cutting state sales taxes for everyone while increasing state income taxes on wealthier individuals and households. In 2008, the state legislature reversed a part of the Stelly Plan cutting state income taxes for wealthier individuals and households. Estimates are that this legislative action reduced annual state government revenues the 2010 budget year by \$649 million. Given current budget shortfalls, which of the following comes closest to your view:

It was a good idea to repeal the Stelly Plan because it cut state income taxes:	26.6%
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It was a bad idea to repeal the Stelly Plan because it cost state tax revenue and contributed to shortfalls:	58.7%
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Don't know:	14.7%
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Q.16 Would you support or oppose a proposal to temporarily reinstate the Stelly Plan income tax provisions to address current budget shortfalls?

Support:	55.8%
Oppose:	29.4%
Don't know	14.8%

Q.17 Now I am going to read through several other proposals that have been offered for addressing projected budget shortfalls.

Please tell me whether you support or oppose each proposal.

Eliminating or reducing state tax exemptions, that is, tax breaks given to specific industries, individuals or groups

Support:	46.7%
Oppose:	45.2%
Don't know:	8.1%

Laying off state employees

Support:	30.7%
Oppose:	63.4%
Don't know:	5.9%

Closing field offices of some state agencies

Support:	52.3%
Oppose:	38.6%
Don't know:	9.1%

Increasing fees for some state government services

Support:	54.4%
Oppose:	39.9%
Don't know:	5.7%

Privatizing some state government services

Support:	49.8%
Oppose:	41.9%
Don't know:	8.3%

Providing early release for nonviolent prisoners over the age of 50

Support:	63.2%
Oppose:	32.2%
Don't know:	4.7%

Eliminating or reducing tax credits for movies or television programs filmed in Louisiana

Support:	50.4%
Oppose:	44.1%
Don't know:	5.5%

Eliminating or reducing severance tax exemptions for oil and gas companies to encourage drilling of horizontal oil and natural gas wells.

Support:	46.0%
Oppose:	46.1%
Don't know:	7.9%

Eliminating or reducing sales tax exemptions on prescription drugs.

Support:	58.9%
Oppose:	39.1%
Don't know:	2.0%

Selling buildings, prisons, and other state properties.

Support:	65.9%
Oppose:	26.3%
Don't know:	7.8%

Q.18 Now thinking specifically about higher education, how well would you say that state colleges and universities are meeting workforce needs in your local community? Would you say state colleges and universities are doing an excellent, good, fair, or poor job in meeting local workforce needs?

Excellent:	14.1%
Good:	40.3%
Fair:	29.3%
Poor:	11.4%
Don't know:	5.0%

Q.19 Would you support or oppose a proposal to close or consolidate state colleges and universities?

Support:	26.0%
Oppose:	70.5%
Don't know:	3.4%

Q.20 Would you support or oppose closing or consolidating those state colleges and universities in your region of the state?

Support:	28.7%
Oppose:	68.7%
Don't know:	2.5%

Q.21 Would you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements:

There are too many four-year colleges and universities in Louisiana and not enough technical and community colleges.

Strongly agree:	11.4%
Agree:	34.4%
Neither agree nor disagree:	8.6%

Disagree:	36.4%
Stongly disagree:	5.7%
Don't know:	3.4%

Louisiana should have one of the nation's leading research universities, even if it means cutting funding to other state colleges and universities.

Strongly agree:	9.3%
Agree:	28.0%
Neither agree nor disagree:	9.0%
Disagree:	43.4%
Stongly disagree:	4.8%
Don't know:	5.5%

Q.22 As you may be aware, TOPS is a scholarship program funded by the state of Louisiana that provides financial support for Louisiana high school students to attend Louisiana state colleges and universities. Currently students must have a 2.5 grade point average and a 20 on their ACT to qualify for an Award. Some state leaders have proposed reducing the number or amount of TOPS awards as a way of addressing current budget shortfalls. What about you? Would you support or oppose the following proposals:

Reducing the total amount of money qualified students receive from the TOPS program?

Support:	23.1%
Oppose:	72.9%
Don't know:	0.3%

Increasing the academic requirements to qualify for an award - for example requiring a higher grade point average or ACT?

Support:	58.3%
Oppose:	39.4%
Don't know:	2.3%

Only providing TOPS awards to students in financial need?

Support:	55.4%
Oppose:	41.8%
Don't know:	2.8%

Q.23 Overall, how well do you think Louisiana's public schools prepare students for college? Would you say they do an excellent, good, fair or poor job?

Excellent:	6.8%
Good:	26.4%
Fair:	35.4%
Poor:	29.5%
Don't know:	1.9%

Q.24 How well do you think Louisiana's public schools prepare students for the workforce?

Excellent:	4.3%
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Good:	20.0%
Fair:	46.3%
Poor:	26.5%
Don't know:	2.9%

Q.25 As you know students are often given a grade A through F. Please indicate what grade you would give the following items:

Louisiana as a place to live

A:	31.0%
B:	32.1%
C:	27.1%
D:	5.9%
F:	3.3%
Don't know:	0.7%

Your local community as a place to live

A:	37.4%
B:	32.2%
C:	20.2%
D:	5.5%
F:	4.6%
Don't know:	0.1%

Louisiana public schools

A:	9.1%
B:	23.7%
C:	37.8%
D:	16.4%
F:	10.3%
Don't know:	2.7%

Louisiana's colleges and universities

A:	22.7%
B:	47.1%
C:	24.9%
D:	2.3%
F:	0.5%
Don't know:	2.6%

State economic development efforts to attract, recruit, and create jobs.

A:	12.4%
B:	20.7%
C:	43.7%
D:	11.2%
F:	10.0%
Don't know:	2.1%

Louisiana roads and infrastructure

A:	3.0%
B:	12.9%
C:	37.0%
D:	27.3%
F:	19.2%
Don't know:	0.7%

The overall quality of health care in Louisiana

A:	8.0%
B:	25.5%
C:	37.7%
D:	20.2%
F:	6.8%
Don't know:	1.8%

State government efforts to reduce crime and ensure public safety

A:	11.8%
B:	28.1%
C:	34.7%
D:	14.3%
F:	10.1%
Don't know:	0.9%

State government efforts to protect and conserve natural resources, such as coastal wetlands.

A:	12.8%
B:	23.0%
C:	36.9%
D:	14.4%
F:	7.9%
Don't know:	5.0%

The level of transparency in state government, that is the amount and thoroughness of information about state government activities, policies and leaders that is easily and readily accessible to the public and news media?

A:	7.3%
B:	16.1%
C:	39.9%
D:	21.7%
F:	10.1%
Don't know	5.0%

Q.26 Overall, do you think that state government in Louisiana is doing too much, about the right amount, or too little to ensure that children in the state enter kindergarten with the knowledge and skills they need to do their best in school?

Too much:	3.4%
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About the right amount:	36.8%
Not enough:	51.9%
Don't know:	7.9%

Q.27 Please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with the following statements:

Louisiana state government should provide funding so that all 4-year olds can attend a high quality pre-kindergarten program if their parents want them to.

Strongly agree:	21.6%
Agree:	42.2%
Neither agree nor disagree:	6.3%
Disagree:	22.6%
Strongly disagree:	4.9%
Don't know:	2.4%

State colleges and universities should be able to raise tuition and fees to offset state budget cuts.

Strongly agree:	5.3%
Agree:	36.7%
Neither agree nor disagree:	6.2%
Disagree:	41.1%
Strongly disagree:	6.9%
Don't know:	3.6%

Q.28 As you may know, in an effort to close the gap between state spending and revenues, the governor and legislature have made cuts in various areas of government spending, including higher education and health care. First, in terms of higher education, how concerned are you that these cuts will affect the overall quality of academic programs in state colleges and universities?

Very Concerned:	52.0%
Somewhat concerned:	35.6%
Not very concerned:	7.7%
Not at all concerned:	3.6%
Don't know:	1.1%

Q.29 How concerned are you that these cuts will affect the overall quality of public health care in Louisiana?

Very Concerned:	59.5%
Somewhat concerned:	29.6%
Not very concerned:	7.8%
Not at all concerned:	2.6%
Don't know:	0.5%

Q.30 Medicaid is a government program, funded by state and federal governments, that pays for health care services for low income individuals and families. Currently, Louisiana is considering a health reform that would allow private insurance companies to manage care provided through the Medicaid program.

Overall, do you think it is a good idea or a bad idea to allow insurance companies to manage care through the Medicaid program?

Good Idea:	35.6%
Bad Idea:	51.9%
Don't know:	12.4%

Q.31 Are you now covered by any form of health insurance or health plan? This would include health coverage through an employer, a private plan you bought yourself, and coverage through a government program like Medicare or Medicaid?

Yes:	77.0%
No:	22.6%
Don't know:	0.4%

Q.32 Thinking now about corruption, would you say that Louisiana has become more corrupt or less corrupt over the last several years, or would you say corruption hasn't changed much?

More corrupt:	28.5%
Less corrupt:	29.9%
Hasn't changed much:	39.4%
Don't know:	2.1%

Q.33 How confident are you that it is safe to eat seafood from the areas in the Gulf that were affected by the oil spill?

Extremely:	20.6%
Very:	25.0%
Somewhat:	29.5%
Not very:	9.7%
Not at all:	11.6%
Don't know:	3.6%

Q.34 Thinking about state income taxes, would you say that state income taxes are too high and need to be reduced, too low and need to be increased, or just about right?

Too high:	27.7%
Too low:	10.9%
Just about right:	58.6%
Don't know:	2.9%

Q.35 What about the state sales tax, would you say that the state sales tax is too high and needs to be reduced, too low and needs to be increased, or just about right?

Too high:	39.2%
Too low:	7.8%
Just about right:	52.0%
Don't know:	1.1%

Q.36 What about local property taxes, would you say local property taxes are too high and need to be reduced, too low and need to be increased, or just about right?

Too high:	41.5%
Too low:	5.6%
Just about right:	44.6%

Don't know:	8.3%
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Q.37 Some people don't pay much attention to news about Louisiana state government and public affairs. How about you? Would you say you pay a great deal of attention, some attention, not very much attention, or no attention at all to news about state government?

Great deal of attention :	31.7%
Some attention:	53.0%
Not very much attention:	9.1%
No attention at all:	6.1%
Don't know:	0.1%

Q.38 Do you get most of your news about Louisiana public affairs and politics from television, newspapers, radio, or the internet?

Television:	61.3%
Newspapers:	16.3%
Radio:	5.1%
Internet:	16.4%
Don't know:	0.9%

Q.39 Thinking about recent economic news, including what's been happening on Wall Street and in Washington D.C. How well would you say you understand the economic situation and the government's economic policies? Would you say:

Very well:	17.6%
Somewhat well:	52.5%
Not very well:	19.2%
Not well at all:	10.5%
Don't know:	0.2%

Q.40 Do you happen to know which state position Buddy Caldwell currently holds?

Answers AG Correctly:	14.0%
Answers Incorrectly:	23.5%
Don't know:	62.5%

Q.41 Do you happen to know what the current unemployment rate is in the United States? Your best guess is fine.

Don't Know	31.3%
6% or less	3.5%
6% – 12%	44.3%
13%-24%	8.6%
25% or more	12.4%

Q.42 In the past week, how many days did you read a newspaper?

0 days:	31.0%
1 day:	12.4%
2 days:	9.7%
3 days:	10.9%

4 days:	4.2%
5 days:	4.2%
6 days:	2.1%
7 days:	24.7%
Don't know:	0.8%

Q.43 When you read the newspaper, do you mostly read the paper version of the newspaper or do you read the paper online?

Read paper version:	83.5%
Read online:	15.6%
Don't know:	1.0%

Q.44 In the past week, how many days did you watch a local television news program such as "Eyewitness News" or "Action News"?

0 days:	10.7%
1 day:	8.7%
2 days:	6.9%
3 days:	6.6%
4 days:	7.6%
5 days:	8.3%
6 days:	2.0%
7 days:	47.9%
Don't know:	1.3%

Q.45 In the past week, how many days did you watch a national network news program?

0 days:	24.4%
1 day:	8.7%
2 days:	12.7%
3 days:	7.9%
4 days:	6.9%
5 days:	7.9%
6 days:	1.0%
7 days:	29.0%
Don't know:	1.5%

Q.46 In the past week, how many days did you watch a news program on one of the cable news networks?

0 days:	32.6%
1 day:	6.3%
2 days:	12.3%
3 days:	7.9%
4 days:	5.6%
5 days:	7.1%
6 days:	0.5%
7 days:	26.1%
Don't know:	1.7%

Q.47 In the past week, how many days did you listen to a news program on radio?

0 days:	57.4%
1 day:	5.8%
2 days:	4.2%
3 days:	5.8%
4 days:	2.4%
5 days:	6.9%
6 days:	0.2%
7 days:	16.1%
Don't know:	1.1%

Q.48 In the past week, how many days did you go on-line to get news about public affairs and politics?

0 days:	58.0%
1 day:	5.8%
2 days:	5.4%
3 days:	9.4%
4 days:	5.8%
5 days:	3.8%
6 days:	0.4%
7 days:	11.3%
Don't know:	0.1%

Q.49 Do you ever go online to read web logs or blogs devoted specifically to politics and public affairs?

Yes:	20.6%
No:	76.0%
Don't know:	0.4%

Q.50 When you go online to get news about politics and public affairs, do you generally go to websites run by news organizations - FoxNews.com, CNN.com or NYTIMES.COM - or do you generally go to websites not associated with traditional news sources like the Drudge Report, DailyKos, or Politico?

Sites run by news orgs:	46.6%
Sites not run by news orgs:	19.7%
Don't know:	32.9%

Q.51 Have you created your own profile online that others can see, like on a social networking site like MySpace, Facebook, or LinkedIn.com?

Yes:	45.1%
No:	53.2%
Don't know:	1.2%

Q.52 Have you ever watched video clips about political candidates or elections that are available online?

Yes:	34.6%
No:	64.5%
Don't know:	0.7%

Q.53 In the past week, how many days did you use a social networking site such as Facebook, MySpace, or LinkedIn.com?

0 days:	53.2%
1 day:	4.5%
2 days:	6.2%
3 days:	4.4%
4 days:	3.1%
5 days:	3.5%
6 days:	0.8%
7 days:	22.9%
Don't know:	1.3%

Q.54 Have you ever visited a social networking site like Facebook, MySpace, or LinkedIn to get information about a candidate, or to sign up as a friend of a candidate or group?

Yes:	14.0%
No:	82.0%
Don't know:	2.1%

Q.55 How often, if ever, do you get news or news headlines on a cell phone or other mobile device - regularly, sometimes, hardly ever, or never?

Regularly:	12.3%
Sometimes:	13.3%
Hardly ever:	7.6%
Never:	66.8%
Don't know:	0.1%

Q.56 Would you be willing to pay a small fee for news you get online or through a cell-phone or other mobile device?

Yes:	13.0%
No:	86.6%
Don't know:	0.4%

Q.57 How often do you watch television shows like the Daily Show with Jon Stewart or the Colbert Report?

Regularly:	7.4%
Sometimes:	17.6%
Hardly Ever:	20.1%
Never:	53.7%
Don't know:	1.3%

Q.58 Do you own your own home, pay rent, or something else?

Own home:	59.3%
Pay Rent:	27.5%
Something else:	12.2%

Q.59 Generally speaking do you consider yourself a Democrat, Republican, Independent, or what?

Democrat:	37.0%
Republican:	27.0%

Independent:	25.1%
Other:	8.6%
Don't know:	2.4%

Q.60 IF Q59=DEMOCRAT OR REPUBLICAN: Would you consider yourself a strong or a not so strong

Strong:	63.8%
Not so Strong:	33.4%
Don't know:	2.8%

Q.61 IF Q59=INDEPENDENT: Would you say, you lean to the Democratic Party or Republican Party, or would you say you don't lean to either party?

Democratic Party:	21.2%
Republican Party:	27.4%
Independent:	47.9%
Don't know:	3.5%

Q.62 When it comes to politics, would you say are:

Very Liberal:	3.8%
Liberal:	10.0%
Somewhat Liberal:	9.8%
Moderate:	25.4%
Somewhat Conservative:	16.5%
Conservative:	16.6%
Very Conservative:	12.6%
Don't know:	5.2%

Q.63 In what year were you born? RECODED

18-24	14.1%
25-34	17.4%
35-44	17.9%
45-54	19.4%
55-64	15.0%
65 and over	16.2%

Q.64 Which of the following categories best describes your level of education? Please stop me when I get to that category.

Less than 9th grade:	4.3%
9th through 11th grade:	11.3%
High school diploma:	36.4%
Some college/vocational school:	26.5%
A 4-year college degree:	12.6%
Some graduate work:	2.2%
Advanced degree:	6.7%

Q.65 Which of the following best describes you? Are you White, Hispanic, African-American, Asian, or something else?

White:	64.5%
Hispanic:	0.9%
African-American:	32.1%
Asian:	0.5%
Other:	1.9%

Q.66 Is your religious preference Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Agnostic, Atheists, or something else?

Christian:	83.4%
Jewish:	0.2%
Muslim:	0.2%
Agnostic:	2.5%
Atheist:	0.9%
Something Else:	12.5%
Don't know:	0.2%

Q.67 IF Q66=CHRISTIAN: Do you generally consider yourself Protestant, Catholic, nondenominational, or something else?

Protestant:	22.2%
Catholic:	34.3%
Nondenominational:	19.8%
Something else:	21.9%
Don't know:	1.8%

Q.68 Do you generally consider yourself to evangelical or born again?

Yes:	58.0%
No:	34.8%
Don't know:	7.2%

Q.69 How often do you attend services at a church, synagogue, mosque, or other place of worship?...Never, once a year, a few times a year, once a month, about twice a month, once a week or more often

Never:	13.2%
Once a year:	3.3%
A few times a year:	15.9%
Once a month:	7.3%
About twice a month:	10.9%
Once a week or more often:	49.1%
Don't Know:	0.3%

Q.70 Are you currently employed full-time, employed part-time, retired, unemployed and looking for work, or not employed and not looking for work?

Employed Full-time:	51.5%
Employed Part-time:	12.0%
Retired:	16.4%
Unemployed and looking for work:	8.3%
Not employed and not looking for work:	5.2%
On Disability [volunteered]:	6.3%

Don't know:	0.4%
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Q.71 IF Q70=EMPLOYED: How worried are you about the security of your current job or employment situation- would you say you are very, somewhat, not very, or not at all worried?

Very worried:	11.4%
Somewhat worried:	25.1%
Not very worried:	14.5%
Not at all worried:	49.0%

Q.72 We would like to know what your family income was last year before taxes. This information will remain strictly confidential and will only be used for statistical purposes. Please stop me when I get to the category that includes your family income.

Income proportions

Under \$10,000:	9.9%
\$10,000 - \$19,999:	12.4%
\$20,000 - \$29,999:	11.9%
\$30,000 - \$39,999:	15.0%
\$40,000- \$49,999:	11.3%
\$50,000 - \$74,999:	14.6%
\$75,000 - \$99,999:	13.0%
\$100,000 or more:	12.0%

Q.73 Gender

Male:	47.2%
Female:	52.8%