

2004

Louisiana Survey 2004

LSU Reilly Center for Media & Public Affairs

The Public Policy Research Lab

A Partnership of the Manship School of Mass Communication's
Reilly Center for Media & Public Affairs and the E.J. Ourso College of Business Administration

The 2004 Louisiana Survey

Sponsored by the

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

April 6, 2004

Final REPORT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

This is the second in a series of annual Louisiana Surveys designed to establish benchmarks and assess progress and regressions in resident assessments of state government services. The survey is a telephone survey of 1,022 randomly selected Louisiana residents 18 years or older. It includes several split ballot questions in which approximately half of the respondents were asked a particular series of questions, while another half of the respondents were asked a different series of questions. The approximate margin of error for the overall survey is 3.1 percent and is 4.4 percent for split ballot questions.

As part of an effort to assure that the Louisiana Survey fulfilled its public service mission, input was solicited from a fifteen-member Advisory Committee. The Advisory Committee provided invaluable insight into the design of the questionnaire and in identifying the issues that most needed to be addressed by the survey. While we are greatly indebted to them for their time and contributions, they bear no responsibility for any mistakes in the questionnaire, analysis, or interpretation presented in this report. Questions regarding the content of this report should be directed to:

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METHOD

The Public Policy Research Lab conducted the survey between January 29 and March 3, 2004. Calls were conducted from noon until 9 p.m. Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday and noon to 8 p.m. on Sunday. Telephone numbers were selected using random digit dialing. Numbers where callers received no answer were called 10 times before being removed from the pool of eligible numbers. When possible, a message was left briefly describing the survey along with a toll free number for the Public Policy Research Lab. Three attempts at refusal conversion were made no sooner than 72 hours after the initial refusal.

The survey has a sampling error of +/- 3.1 percent at a 95 percent confidence level. This means that if we replicated the survey twenty times, only once will the answers differ by more than 3.1 percent over the answers in this report. The margin of error will be larger for subgroups, including those respondents separated out as part of the split ballot design. The approximate margin of error for each ballot is 4.4 percent. Other types of errors can

also affect survey results, including question wording, question order, and errors in the interviewing process. The response rate for the survey was 48 percent, meaning that 48 percent of calls to eligible households resulted in a completed interview.

SUMMARY OF MAJOR FINDINGS

Residents Express Cautious Optimism

Despite the fact that Louisianans gave the state mixed marks across a variety of policy and service areas, a plurality of residents believed the state was headed in the right direction. Forty-eight percent of respondents believed the state was headed in the right direction, 36 percent believed the state is headed in the wrong direction, and 16 percent said they were not sure or did not know. The overall mood of the electorate is best described as "cautiously optimistic" reflecting a combination of negative evaluations of current problems with an optimism that these problems will improve over the next several years.

Concern about the Economy and Jobs Grows

While education topped residents' concerns as the most important problem confronting the state, Louisianans have grown increasingly concerned about the economy and jobs over the past year. A plurality of respondents, 31 percent, identified education as the most important issue confronting the state. This is a nine-point drop from the 2003 survey. The percent selecting the economy and jobs increased from 20 percent in 2003 to 26.5 percent in 2004. The third most important problem - health care - remained flat with roughly 12 percent of respondents citing health care as the most important problem.

Health Care Quality & Access

Ratings of Louisiana compared to other states in the region were comparable to results from the 2003 survey with one notable exception: Respondents were considerably more negative in their evaluations of health care quality and access. The percent of respondents evaluating health care access as better than in other states in the southeast dropped 8 points, while the percent evaluating health care access as better dropped over 10 points from the 2003 survey. Nearly 27 percent of respondents reported that at least one member in the household did not have health insurance, while over 35 percent reported having gone without medical care in the past twelve months. When asked whether maintaining charity hospitals or providing insurance was a better mechanism for caring for the uninsured, 49 percent of respondents opted for charity hospitals compared to 39 percent who opted for providing insurance coverage. Notably, however, households with at least one uninsured member preferred state funded insurance coverage.

Spending Priorities and the Arts Paradox

Education and health care remained at the top of state spending priorities and as the areas of state government respondents least wanted cut. When it comes to cutting state government, respondents targeted arts and cultural institutions and state parks. The preference for cutting the arts creates an interesting paradox: When asked to rate the state relative to other states in the region, arts and cultural institutions topped the charts with

the most positive evaluations. Despite the fact that residents recognize this as a point of distinction for the state, it is one of the areas they were most willing to cut.

Perceptions of Waste

When asked what bothered them most about state taxes, respondents overwhelmingly opted for government waste of taxpayer dollars. Sixty-two percent of respondents said that the idea that government was wasting taxpayer money bothered them most about taxes. Twenty-six percent said they were most bothered by the perception that not everyone was paying their fair share, and only 6 percent were actually bothered most by the total amount they paid in taxes. When asked how much of state government spending could be reduced by eliminating wasteful spending, the average response was 22%.

Dealing with the Deficit: Tax Gambling

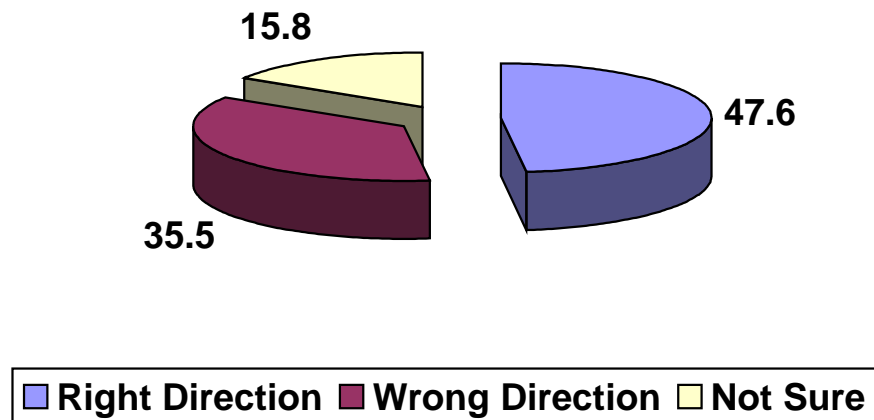
Faced with budgetary shortfalls, two-thirds of Louisiana residents would opt to increase taxes on gambling. Given a range of options from increasing sales and income taxes, raising fees on selected services, or cutting government spending, this is the only option that garnered majority support. Forty-two percent of residents said they would cut government spending and 30 percent said they would increase user fees on some government services. Only 12 percent and 13 percent respectively would increase state sales or income taxes.

Property Taxes and the Homestead Exemption

Overall, there is little evidence in the survey to suggest Louisianans would support a tax increase, but there is also little evidence of a tax revolt. A majority of respondents say that property taxes, sales taxes, and income taxes are about right. However, nearly 65 percent of respondents would support reducing the homestead exemption if additional revenues went to local public schools. This is comparable to results from the 2003 survey despite changes in question wording and order designed to assure that respondents fully understood the question. Respondents were also open to property tax reassessments. Eighty-three percent of respondents said they would be willing to have their property reassessed, and 70.4% said they would be willing to have their property reassessed even if they personally had to pay more. This finding, however, should be taken with a grain of salt given that 77 percent of respondents believe property assessments in their parish are already fair.

I. Direction of the State

Figure 1: Louisianans' Perceptions Regarding the Direction of the State



A plurality of residents believed Louisiana was heading in the right direction. Forty-eight percent of respondents believe Louisiana is heading in the right direction compared to 36 percent who believe Louisiana is heading in the wrong direction and 16 percent who said they were not sure or did not know. There were important differences across demographic groups in terms of attitudes regarding the direction of the state.

- Race: African-Americans were more negative in their assessment of the direction of the state: 37.8 percent of African-American respondents said the state was heading in the right direction compared to 50.6 percent of Caucasian respondents. The difference was made up in larger percentages of African-Americans who said the state was heading in the wrong direction - or that they were unsure whether the state was heading in the right direction.
- Age: Much ado has been made about the dissatisfaction of young people, which has presumably led to an exodus from the state. These data, however, indicate that younger respondents were more likely to say the state was heading in the right direction. Fifty-two percent of respondents 18-24 said the state was moving in the right direction compared to 42 percent of respondents 55 and over. Later in the report evidence indicating that greater negativity for younger respondents in their evaluations of the state is presented (see the State of the State).
- Income and Education: Less-educated and lower-income respondents were less satisfied with the direction of the state. Forty-two percent of respondents making less than \$30,000 said the state was heading in the right direction compared to 54 percent of respondents making between \$30,000 and \$75,000. Respondents with less than a high school education

were likewise least satisfied with the direction of the state. Thirty-six percent of respondents with less than a high school degree said the state was moving in the right direction compared to 53 percent of college graduates.

- Region:* Residents in North Louisiana were most positive in their assessments of the direction of the state, while respondents in Baton Rouge and the Florida parishes were most pessimistic. Fifty-two percent of respondents in North Louisiana believed the state was moving in the right direction compared to 42 percent in Baton Rouge and the Florida parishes.
- Party: Despite coming up short in the past two statewide elections, Republicans were more inclined to believe the state was moving in the right direction. Fifty-two percent of Republicans and 47 percent of Democrats believed the state was moving in the right direction.

Overall, Louisianans were relatively optimistic that the state was moving in the right direction. It is important note, however, that with the exception of age, pessimism was greatest among the most marginalized residents - poorer, less educated, and minority respondents.

* * Acadiana included the following parishes: Acadia, Allen, Assumption, Beauregard, Calcasieu, Cameron, Evangeline, Iberia, Jefferson Davis, Lafayette, Lafourche, St. John, St. Landry, St. Martin, St. Mary, Terrebonne, and Vermillion. Northern Louisiana included Avoyelles, Beinville, Bossier, Caddo, Caldwell, Catahoula, Claiborne, Concordia, Desoto, East Carroll, Franklin, Grant, Madison, Morehouse, Lincoln, LaSalle, Natchitoches, Jackson, Ouachita, Rapides, Red River, Richland, Sabine, Tensas, Union, Vernon, West Carroll, Webster, and Winn. Baton Rouge/Florida Parishes included Ascension, East Baton Rouge, East Feliciana, Iberville, Livingston, Point Coupee, St. James, St. Helena, Tangipahoa, Washington, West Baton Rouge, and West Feliciana. Finally, the New Orleans Metropolitan Area included Orleans, Jefferson, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, St. Charles, and St. Tammany.

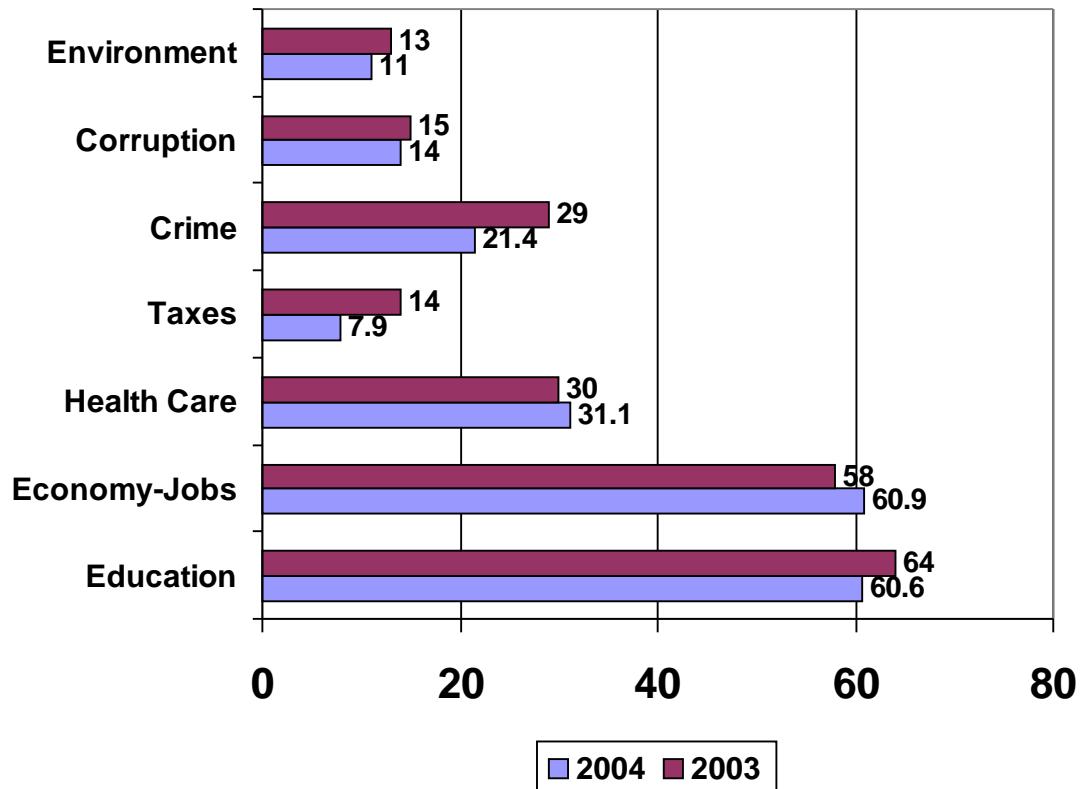
Table 1: Louisiana Residents' Perceptions Regarding the Direction of the State

	Right Direction	Wrong Direction	Not Sure/Don't Know
<i>All Respondents</i>	47.6	35.5	16.9
<i>Gender</i>			
Male	47.8	36.5	15.8
Female	47.4	34.8	17.8
<i>Race</i>			
White	50.6	34.0	15.5
Black	37.2	42.5	20.3
<i>Education</i>			
Less than H.S.	36.3	37.5	26.3
High School	46.7	38.8	14.5
Some College	47.7	33.3	18.9
College (4 year degree)	52.9	31.3	15.8
Graduate	46.7	42.2	11.1
<i>Income</i>			
Less than \$30,000	42.0	38.2	19.7
\$30,000 - \$75,000	53.7	33.6	12.7
More than \$75,000	50.3	34.3	15.4
<i>Age</i>			
18-34	52.1	29.2	18.7
35-54	49.0	35.2	15.9
55 and over	41.6	41.0	17.4
<i>Region</i>			
Acadiana	46.7	39.1	14.1
North Louisiana	52.4	29.7	17.8
Baton Rouge and Florida Parishes	41.6	40.4	18.1
Orleans Parishes	47.1	34.8	18.1
<i>Party</i>			
Democrat	45.7	39.2	15.1
Independent	47.1	35.4	17.5
Republican	52.1	31.0	16.9

Categories in bold are statistically significant at a .05 level. Income and education were significant at .06 level but miss the more traditional .05 cutoff.

II. Most Important Problems

**Figure 2: Selection of Three Most Important Problems
2003 and 2004 Comparison**



A. Top Three Most Important Problems: To gauge resident perceptions regarding the most important problem confronting the state, we asked respondents first to identify the three most important problems confronting the state. We followed this with questions asking respondents to name the single most important problem. In this section, we consider which problems were identified as one of three most important problems confronting Louisiana.

Two issues dominate all others as "most important" - education and the economy and jobs.* Sixty-one percent cite education as one of three most important problems. This is down slightly from 2003 when 64 percent cited education as one of three most important problems. Concern over the economy and jobs was up slightly from the previous year. In the 2003 survey, 58 percent of respondents cited the economy and jobs as one of three most important problems. This year, 60.9 percent cited the economy or

* Initially, the economy and jobs were listed as separate categories, but were combined for this analysis. In the appendix the responses for the separate categories are listed. Combined these add up to 69.5 percent. The percent listed in Figure 3 is only 60.9 percent because some respondents (roughly 9 percent) selected both the economy and jobs as separate issues.

jobs, slightly more than the percent identifying education. Health care finished a distant third for the second year in row with 31.1 percent of respondents citing health care as one of the three most important problems. This was also up slightly from the 30 percent who cited health care in the 2003 survey.

The most marked movement downward in terms of identifying the three most important problems were in the areas of crime and taxes. The percent of respondents citing crime as one of three most important problems dropped from 29 percent to 21 percent, and the percent citing taxes dropped from 14 percent to 8 percent.

- Gender: Women were more likely to identify education as one of three most important problems. 63.5 percent of women identified education as one of three most important problems compared to 56.5 percent of men. Men, in contrast, were more likely to identify corruption as a concern: 18.1 percent of men identified corruption as one of three most important problems compared to 11.0 percent of women.
- Race: Perhaps one of the more striking patterns in Table 2 is the degree to which black and white Louisiana residents perceived the importance of various problems. Across each of the problems considered in the table, there was a statistically significant difference in the percentage of white respondents and black respondents identifying the issue as one the three most important confronting the state.
 - 63.2 percent of whites identified education compared to 52.9 percent of blacks.
 - 56.3 percent of whites identified economy compared to 70.5 percent of blacks.
 - 28.9 percent of whites identified health care compared to 36.0 percent of blacks.
 - 19.5 percent of whites identified crime compared to 28.4 percent of blacks.
 - 15.6 percent of whites identified corruption compared to 5.8 percent of blacks.

The big picture remains the same - both black and white residents were most concerned about the economy, education, and health care, but the differences were revealing of how differently one views the state based on one's racial identification.

- Education: More educated respondents were more likely to select education as one of three most important problems, while less educated respondents were more likely to select crime. Only 40 percent of respondents with less than a high school education selected education as one of three most important problems, compared to 71.7 percent of respondents with a college degree. Twenty-nine percent of respondents selected crime compared to 16.3 percent of respondents with a college degree. Some other interesting patterns emerged in the data that were not statistically significant: Less educated respondents were less likely to select the economy as one of three most important problems and more likely to select health care.

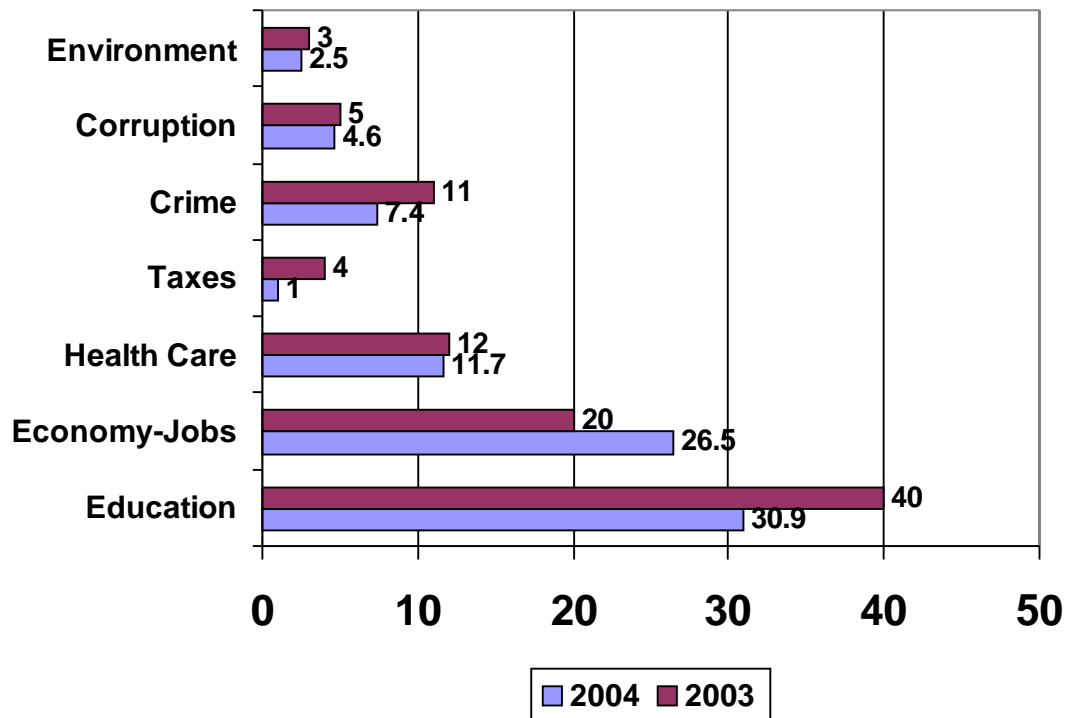
- Income: Respondents making higher incomes were more likely to cite education and corruption as one of three most important problems. Forty-eight percent of respondents making less than \$30,000 per year selected education compared to 70.3 percent of respondents making \$75,000 or more.
- Party: Democrats were more concerned about the economy, while Republicans were more concerned about corruption. Sixty-eight percent of Democrats selected the economy as one of three most important problems compared to 57.4 percent of Republicans. 19 percent of Republicans selected corruption as one of three most important problems compared to 9.6 percent of Democrats.

Table 2: Selection of Top 3 Problems

	Education	Economy/ Jobs	Health Care	Crime	Corruption
<i>All Respondents</i>	60.6	60.9	31.1	21.4	14.0
<i>Gender</i>					
Male	56.5	61.4	24.2	21.2	18.1
Female	63.5	60.5	36.0	21.6	11.0
<i>Race</i>					
White	63.5	56.3	28.9	19.5	15.6
Black	52.9	70.5	36.0	28.4	8.8
<i>Education</i>					
Less than H.S.	40.0	51.3	36.3	28.8	11.3
High School	54.5	58.5	33.2	24.9	10.5
Some College	57.7	63.1	27.9	23.1	18.3
College (4 year degree)	71.7	64.2	28.3	16.3	11.3
Graduate	80.0	62.2	38.9	12.2	17.8
<i>Income</i>					
Less than \$30,000	48.3	61.3	31.9	23.1	12.6
\$30,000 - \$75,000	66.7	65.1	30.2	21.6	11.4
More than \$75,000	70.6	56.5	25.9	18.8	20.0
<i>Age</i>					
18-34	40.3	51.2	27.5	30.2	14.3
35-54	35.7	65.0	30.8	21.0	14.9
55 and over	43.4	62.7	34.6	15.3	12.8
<i>Region</i>					
Acadiana	56.9	63.8	27.5	22.1	14.5
North Louisiana	59.6	60.6	33.1	25.4	12.9
Baton Rouge and Florida Parishes	63.9	58.4	34.3	18.1	13.3
Orleans Parishes	63.1	60.1	30.7	18.8	15.0
<i>Party</i>					
Democrat	58.0	67.6	38.1	22.1	9.6
Independent	61.4	55.6	28.7	20.6	15.7
Republican	65.8	57.4	23.9	21.1	19.0

Categories in bold are statistically significant at a .05 level.

**Figure 3: Selection of The Most Important Problem
2003 and 2004 Comparison**



B. The Most Important Problem: As in 2003, education remained the single most important issue to Louisiana residents in the 2004 survey. A plurality of respondents, 31 percent, identified education as the most important issue. Notably, however, this is a nine-point drop from the 2003 survey when 40 percent identified education as the most important issue. The percent selecting the economy and jobs increased from 20 percent in 2003 to 26.5 percent in 2004. The third most important problem - health care - remained flat with roughly 12 percent of respondents citing health care as the most important problem.

- Race: Consistent with the earlier results, black respondents were less inclined to select education as the most important problem confronting the state and were more inclined to select the economy. Thirty four percent of white respondents selected education as the most important problem compared to 22.2 percent of black respondents. Black respondents were also more likely to say that crime is the most important problem confronting the state.
- Education and Income: More educated respondents were more likely to select education as the most important problem, and were less likely to select either health care or crime. Eighteen percent of respondents with less than a high school education selected education compared to 27.6

percent of respondents with a college education. Income works in similar directions. Lower income respondents were less likely to identify education as the most important problem and were more likely to identify health care and crime.

Table 3: Selection of the Most Important Problem

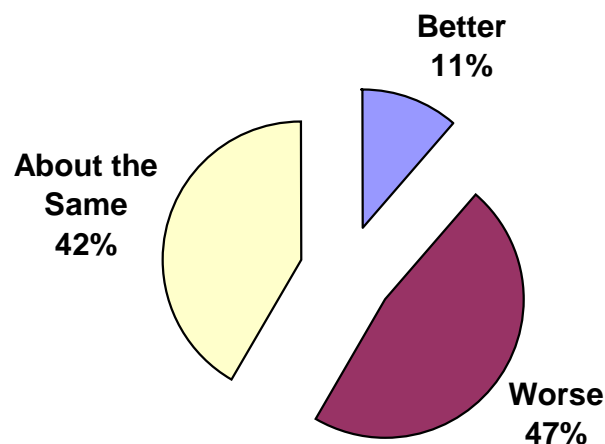
	Education	Economy/ Jobs	Health Care	Crime	Corruption
<i>All Respondents</i>	30.9	26.5	11.7	7.4	4.6
<i>Gender</i>					
Male	32.0	27.1	8.2	6.4	6.4
Female	30.1	26.1	14.2	8.2	3.3
<i>Race</i>					
White	34.3	22.5	10.7	5.3	5.1
Black	22.2	33.7	13.8	12.4	3.8
<i>Education</i>					
Less than H.S.	17.5	21.3	20.0	15.0	3.8
High School	28.5	25.6	11.6	10.5	4.0
Some College	27.6	30.0	11.4	6.3	6.0
College (4 year degree)	41.3	25.8	7.5	4.6	3.8
Graduate	35.6	23.3	16.7	3.3	3.3
<i>Income</i>					
Less than \$30,000	23.1	29.4	14.7	10.1	3.8
\$30,000 - \$75,000	34.0	26.9	8.0	8.0	4.6
More than \$75,000	40.0	21.2	9.4	3.5	5.3
<i>Age</i>					
18-34	33.3	18.6	10.5	12.8	4.3
35-54	33.6	29.4	10.0	6.8	4.0
55 and over	25.1	28.7	15.3	4.0	5.8
<i>Region</i>					
Acadiana	27.9	26.1	12.0	8.0	6.2
North Louisiana	33.8	28.2	10.1	7.7	2.4
Baton Rouge and Florida Parishes	25.3	25.3	14.5	6.6	5.4
Orleans Parishes	33.8	25.9	11.6	7.2	4.8
<i>Party</i>					
Democrat	25.2	30.0	15.8	8.6	3.6
Independent	34.5	23.8	10.8	8.5	4.0
Republican	37.7	25.4	6.3	4.6	5.6

Categories in bold are statistically significant at a .05 level. Income and education are significant at .06 level but miss more traditional .05 cutoff.

III. Evaluations of Most Important Problem and Confidence that State Officials Will Effectively Address the Problem

To gauge respondent perceptions regarding the nature of self-identified most important problems, we asked respondents whether the problem had gotten better or worse over the past year, whether they thought it would get better or worse over the next year, and how much confidence they have in state government officials to address the problem.

Figure 4: Louisiana Residents' Retrospective Evaluations of Most Important Problem



A. Retrospective Evaluation of Most Important Problem: A plurality of respondents (46.9 percent) believed the problem had gotten worse over the past year, while 41 percent reported the problem had stayed about the same, and only 11 percent reported the problem had gotten better. Evaluations regarding whether the problem is getting better or worse depend in large part on the nature of the problem. Respondents who selected education were more likely than other respondents to say the problem had gotten better over the past 12 months. Eighteen percent of respondents who selected education as the most important problem said the problem was getting better, 55 percent said it was about the same and 26 percent said it was worse.

Respondents who selected the economy were more negative in their evaluations. Eight percent of respondents who selected the economy said the problem had gotten better over the past 12 months compared to 26.4 percent who said the problem was about the same, and 55.4 percent who said the problem had gotten worse. Respondents were most negative in their evaluations of health care and crime: Only 5 percent of respondents who selected health care said the problem had gotten better over the past 12 months while nearly two-thirds (64.7 percent) said the problem had gotten worse. For respondents who selected crime, 7.9 percent said the problem had gotten better and 65.8 percent said the problem had gotten worse.

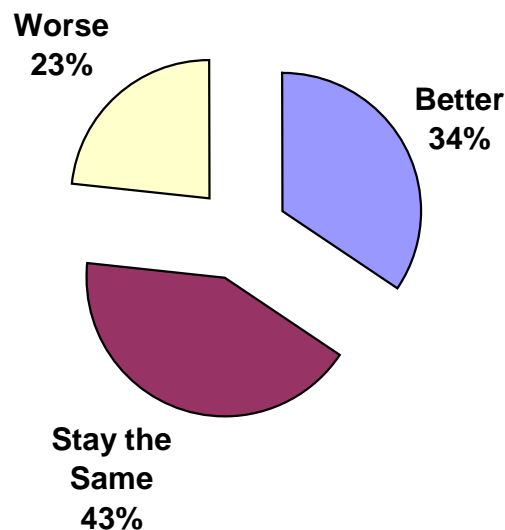
Table 4: Perceptions of the Most Important Problem by the Problem Identified

	Better	About the Same	Worse
<i>Retrospective Evaluation</i>			
All Respondents	11.4	41.7	46.9
Education	18.2	55.4	26.4
Economy- Jobs	8.3	36.6	55.1
Health Care	5.0	30.3	64.7
Crime	7.9	26.3	65.8
Corruption	8.9	48.9	42.2
<i>Prospective Evaluation</i>			
All Respondents	34.8	42.0	23.2
Education	34.7	51.5	13.7
Economy- Jobs	43.2	40.2	16.6
Health Care	32.7	33.6	33.6
Crime	26.7	37.3	36.0
Corruption	37.2	39.5	23.3

Categories in bold are statistically significant at a .05 level.

B. Prospective Evaluation of the Most Important Problem: Evaluating the problem as having gotten worse over the past year does not necessarily mean respondents weren't optimistic about the future. Overall, 34.8 percent of respondents believed the problem they selected would improve over the next 12 months, while 42 percent believed it would stay the same, and 23 percent believed it would get worse.

Figure 5: Louisiana Residents' Prospective Evaluations of Most Important Problem



Differences also emerge across the problems selected. Respondents who selected the economy as the most important problem were more optimistic than other respondents that the problem would get better over the next 12 months. Forty-three percent of respondents who selected the economy believed it would improve over the next 12 months, compared to 35 percent who selected education. Residents who selected crime as the most important problem were least optimistic: Only 26.7 percent believe the crime problem will get better over the next 12 months. On a more positive note, respondents who selected corruption were relatively optimistic the problem will improve over the next 12 months: 37 percent of these respondents believe the problem will improve, second only to the economy and jobs.

C. Confidence that State Government Officials Will Effectively Address Problem: Respondents express some confidence that state government officials will be able to resolve the problem they have identified as most important, though relatively few respondents said they were very confident. Thirteen percent of respondents said they were very confident state officials would solve their self-identified most important problem, while 42 percent said they were somewhat confident. On other the side of the coin, 29.5 percent said they were not very confident and 15.3 percent said they were not at all confident that state officials would effectively address the most important problem. There were some differences across issue area - respondents were less confident state officials will effectively address corruption and crime, but more confident that they effectively address health care and education. Interestingly, respondents believe

corruption will get better, but apparently do not believe the improvement will necessarily come because of state government efforts.

Figure 6: Louisiana Residents' Confidence that State Government Officials Will Effectively Address the Most Important Problem

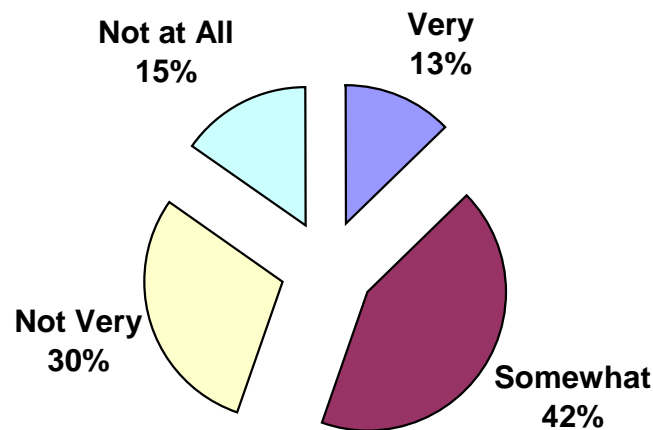


Table 5: Confidence in State Government Officials by the Problem Identified

	Very	Somewhat	Not Very	Not at All
<i>Confidence in State Officials</i>				
All Respondents	12.9	42.3	29.5	15.3
Education	13.4	48.5	26.7	11.5
Economy- Jobs	13.3	42.2	32.8	11.7
Health Care	19.3	38.7	27.7	14.3
Crime	9.3	40.0	32.0	18.7
Corruption	8.7	30.4	34.8	26.1

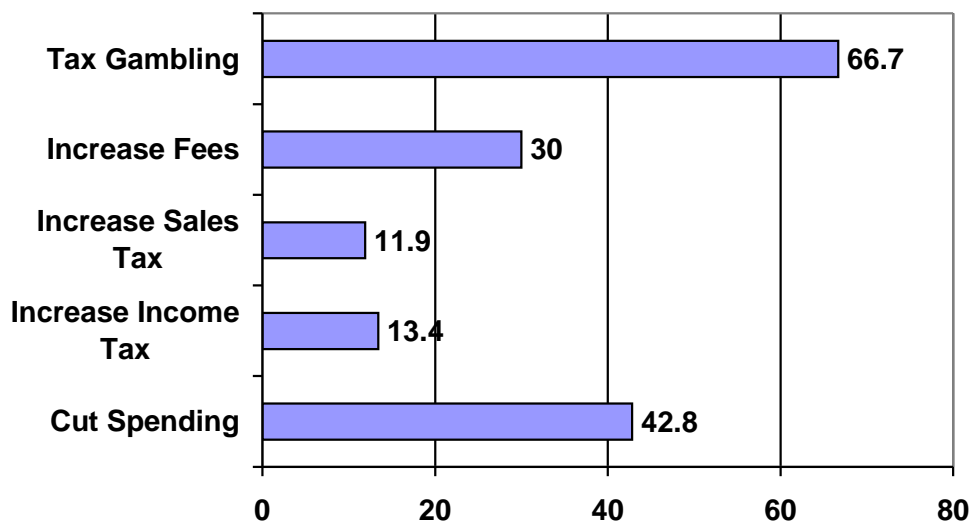
Demographic differences in confidence were fairly limited. However, males and Republicans have less confidence in state government officials. Sixteen percent of Democrats said they were very confident state government would effectively address the most important problem and 46 percent said they were somewhat confident. Only 9 percent of Republicans reported they were very confident while 37 percent said they were somewhat confident. The partisan gap in confidence measured as the percent of Democrats reporting that they were very or somewhat confident minus the percent of Republicans reporting they were very or somewhat confident is 17 points. Self-identified Independents look more like Republicans on questions of confidence: 11 percent said they were very confident and 37 percent said they were somewhat confident state officials would effectively address the most important problem. In terms of gender, 12 percent of male respondents said they were very confident and another 37 percent said they were somewhat confident state government officials would address the most

important problem. The comparable percentages for female respondents were 13 percent and 46 percent, respectively.

IV. Dealing With the Deficit

What would the average resident do to deal with projected shortfalls in the budget? Respondents were asked to select from a list of items aimed at dealing with state budget deficits. They were free to select only one item or multiple items from the list that included raising income or sales taxes, increasing fees on some government services, cutting spending, or taxing gambling. The most popular response was to increase taxes on gambling. Two-thirds of respondents (66.7 percent) said they would support increased taxes on gambling. The second most frequent response was to cut government spending and services: Almost 43 percent of respondents said they would cut government spending and services.

Figure 7: Support for Mechanisms to Reduce State Deficit



There is little support for increasing taxes. Consistent with prior research, taxes or fees that impact targeted population generated greater support. As such, Louisianans were more likely to support gambling taxes and increases in user fees than in more generally applicable sales and income taxes. Only 12 percent of respondents supported an increase in the sales taxes and only 13 percent supported an increase in income taxes. In terms of demographic differences, female, black, less educated, lower income, and Democratic respondents were less inclined to cut government spending. More educated, white, and female respondents were more likely to prefer increasing taxes on gambling. Very few respondents wanted to increase either sales or income taxes, but young, black,

less educated and lower income respondents were more inclined to increase income taxes.

Table 6: Resident Preferences for Mechanisms to Reduce State Government Deficit

	Cut Spending	Raise Income Taxes	Raise Sales Taxes	Increase Fees on Services	Increase Gambling Taxes
<i>All Respondents</i>	42.8	13.4	11.9	30.0	66.7
<i>Gender</i>					
Male	47.8	14.8	14.1	30.8	62.4
Female	39.3	12.4	10.4	29.4	69.7
<i>Race</i>					
White	46.2	10.4	11.7	32.2	69.6
Black	36.4	19.9	12.3	24.5	59.4
<i>Education</i>					
Less than H.S.	31.3	18.8	15.0	30.0	51.3
High School	35.7	14.1	11.9	26.7	65.7
Some College	45.6	13.2	10.8	28.5	69.1
College (4 year degree)	45.8	10.8	8.8	39.6	68.3
Graduate	57.8	14.4	22.2	47.8	70.0
<i>Income</i>					
Less than \$30,000	36.6	18.5	13.4	29.4	61.8
\$30,000 - \$75,000	49.7	14.2	12.0	34.0	68.2
More than \$75,000	48.8	8.2	11.8	34.7	69.4
<i>Age</i>					
18-34	32.9	19.0	11.2	31.0	69.4
35-54	45.5	13.1	13.5	33.1	67.6
55 and over	47.4	8.9	10.7	25.1	64.8
<i>Region</i>					
Acadiana	40.6	13.4	12.0	29.0	66.7
North Louisiana	44.3	12.2	11.1	30.0	67.6
Baton Rouge and Florida Parishes	42.2	11.4	13.9	31.3	67.5
Orleans Parishes	43.7	15.7	11.6	30.4	65.2
<i>Party</i>					
Democrat	38.4	14.9	12.2	26.9	65.9
Independent	42.2	16.6	12.1	36.3	65.0
Republican	55.3	10.2	12.3	31.0	70.1

Categories in bold are statistically significant at a .05 level.

V. Waste and State Government

We know from academic research that residents routinely favor cutting government services as opposed to increasing taxes, and that when residents favor tax increases it tends to be for taxes that would not impact them personally. Part of this is rooted in the perception that state government is bloated with waste and inefficiencies. To better gauge perceptions of waste, we asked respondents how much of state government spending - as percentage - could be reduced by eliminating wasteful spending. The average response for all those respondents who answered (865 out of 1023) was 22 percent. Perhaps stated differently, the average resident believes 22 percent of the state spending could be eliminated by reducing wasteful spending.

Important differences emerge when one considers differences across demographic groups. First, perceptions of waste were highest among the less educated, poor, and racial minorities. Respondents with less than a high school degree estimated state government spending could be reduced by 26 percent by eliminating waste. Respondents with a college degree estimated government spending could be reduced by 20 percent. Despite their support for small government, Republicans perceive less waste in state government spending than Democrats.

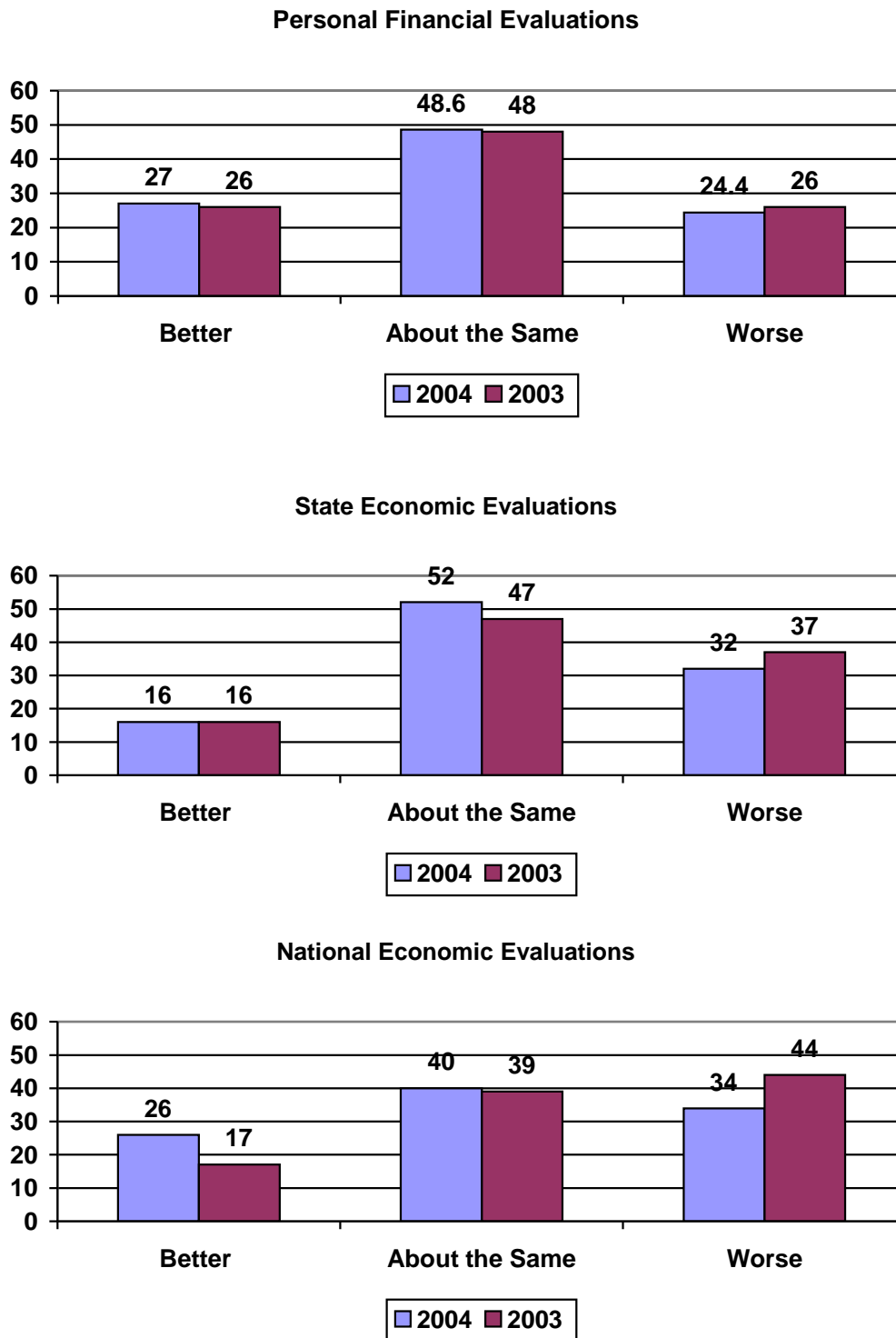
Table 7: Resident Perceptions of Waste in State Government Spending (Standard Errors in Parentheses).

	Percent Waste
<i>All Respondents</i>	22.1 (18.4)
<i>Gender</i>	
Male	20.6 (17.1)
Female	23.2 (19.2)
<i>Race</i>	
White	21.3 (17.3)
Black	25.3 (21.2)
<i>Education</i>	
Less than H.S.	25.7 (24.9)
High School	24.1 (20.4)
Some College	23.3 (18.5)
College (4 year degree)	20.2 (14.1)
Graduate	16.1 (14.6)
<i>Income</i>	
Less than \$30,000	26.2 (21.6)
\$30,000 - \$75,000	22.4 (16.6)
More than \$75,000	20.2 (16.0)
<i>Age</i>	
18-34	24.2 (20.3)
35-54	22.1 (18.3)
55 and over	20.9 (16.6)
<i>Region</i>	
Acadiana	22.8 (18.2)
North Louisiana	22.2 (19.2)
Baton Rouge and Florida Parishes	19.4 (16.8)
Orleans Parishes	22.8 (18.4)
<i>Party</i>	
Democrat	22.4 (18.1)
Independent	24.7 (17.5)
Republican	19.5 (17.6)

Categories in bold are statistically significant at a .05 level.

VI. Economic Evaluations

Figure 8: Personal, State, and National Economic Evaluations



Evaluations of personal finances changed little over the past year. In the 2003 Louisiana Survey, equal proportions (26 percent) said their personal finances had gotten better or worse over the previous year. This year, 27 percent of respondents reported that their personal financial situation has improved, while 24 percent reported that it has gotten worse. The remainder (49 percent) reported their personal financial situation stayed about the same. Wealthy, younger, male, and Republican respondents were more positive in their assessments of their personal finances.

Evaluations of state economic conditions have improved during the past year, but only in the sense that they have become less negative - not more positive. In the 2004 Louisiana Survey, 16 percent of respondents believed business conditions in the state of Louisiana had improved, 32 percent believed state business conditions had gotten worse, and 52 percent believed state economic conditions were about the same. Last year, 16 percent reported state economic conditions had improved, while 37 percent reported conditions had gotten worse and 47 percent said conditions were about the same. The only demographic difference that emerges is that younger respondents were more positive in their evaluation of the state economy: 23 percent of respondents 18-34 believe the state economy is improving compared to only 9.5 percent of respondents 55 and over.

The most marked improvement in economic perceptions has occurred at the national level. In the 2004 Louisiana Survey, 26 percent believed the national economy had gotten better, 34 percent believed it had gotten worse, and 40 percent believed it had stayed about the same. In the 2003 Louisiana Survey, only 17 percent believed the economy had gotten better, 39 percent said conditions were about the same, and 44 percent said conditions had gotten worse. Clearly, respondents see the national economy as improving, though perceptions regarding the national economy were heavily contingent upon respondent characteristics. Wealthier, male, white, younger, and Republican respondents were all more positive in their assessments of the national economy. Poorer, female, minority, and Democratic respondents were all more negative.

When it comes to buying major household items, 56 percent of respondents believe now is a good time to buy. This compares to 55 percent in last year's survey. Whites, males, and Republicans were more inclined to believe that now is a good time to purchase major household items. With respect to gender, more substantial differences exist in terms of the percent of females saying that now is a bad to buy major household items (26.8 percent) relative to males (18.1 percent).

Table 8: Louisiana Residents' Evaluations of Personal Finances Over Last Year

	Better	About the Same	Worse
<i>All Respondents</i>	27.0	48.6	24.4
<i>Gender</i>			
Male	34.0	46.2	19.8
Female	22.0	50.3	27.7
<i>Race</i>			
White	26.0	50.5	23.4
Black	28.0	47.9	24.1
<i>Education</i>			
Less than H.S.	20.0	47.5	32.5
High School	22.8	52.9	24.3
Some College	23.6	47.7	28.7
College (4 year degree)	36.7	46.7	16.7
Graduate	32.2	45.6	22.2
<i>Income</i>			
Less than \$30,000	21.4	48.7	29.8
\$30,000 - \$75,000	28.1	48.8	23.1
More than \$75,000	45.3	40.6	14.1
<i>Age</i>			
18-34	38.0	40.3	21.7
35-54	26.4	48.6	25.0
55 and over	19.1	55.1	25.8
<i>Region</i>			
Acadiana	27.6	46.5	25.8
North Louisiana	26.9	53.1	19.9
Baton Rouge and Florida Parishes	26.7	47.9	25.5
Orleans Parishes	26.6	46.4	27.0
<i>Party</i>			
Democrat	22.5	49.5	28.0
Independent	26.0	51.6	22.4
Republican	32.0	47.9	24.2

Categories in bold are statistically significant at a .05 level.

Table 9: Louisiana Residents' Evaluations of State Economic Conditions

	Better	About the Same	Worse
<i>All Respondents</i>	16	52	32
<i>Gender</i>			
Male	19.1	48.7	32.2
Female	14.3	53.5	32.2
<i>Race</i>			
White	16.5	50.2	33.3
Black	14.9	57.3	27.8
<i>Education</i>			
Less than H.S.	20.5	46.6	32.9
High School	18.0	53.4	28.6
Some College	13.7	49.8	36.5
College (4 year degree)	19.2	48.3	32.5
Graduate	9.1	63.6	27.3
<i>Income</i>			
Less than \$30,000	16.7	52.2	31.1
\$30,000 - \$75,000	16.6	51.4	31.9
More than \$75,000	17.6	47.3	35.2
<i>Age</i>			
18-34	23.0	54.5	22.5
35-54	17.3	48.6	34.1
55 and over	9.5	53.1	37.4
<i>Region</i>			
Acadiana	17.6	51.7	30.7
North Louisiana	14.4	56.0	29.6
Baton Rouge and Florida Parishes	14.7	47.4	37.8
Orleans Parishes	18.0	49.3	32.7
<i>Party</i>			
Democrat	13.4	52.2	34.3
Independent	17.8	50.9	31.3
Republican	16.2	52.9	30.9

Categories in bold are statistically significant at a .05 level.

Table 10: Louisiana Residents' Evaluations of National Economic Conditions

	Better	About the Same	Worse
<i>All Respondents</i>	26	40	34
<i>Gender</i>			
Male	30.4	36.7	32.9
Female	22.2	42.7	34.2
<i>Race</i>			
White	27.7	40.1	32.2
Black	18.4	43.0	38.5
<i>Education</i>			
Less than H.S.	20.0	31.4	48.6
High School	22.7	41.8	35.5
Some College	23.3	42.3	34.4
College (4 year degree)	31.6	40.0	28.4
Graduate	31.0	35.6	33.3
<i>Income</i>			
Less than \$30,000	22.8	42.5	34.7
\$30,000 - \$75,000	22.3	40.0	37.7
More than \$75,000	37.8	35.3	26.9
<i>Age</i>			
18-34	30.8	47.9	21.4
35-54	24.5	40.0	35.4
55 and over	23.4	33.8	42.8
<i>Region</i>			
Acadiana	25.2	45.3	29.5
North Louisiana	21.4	45.0	33.6
Baton Rouge and Florida Parishes	21.9	40.6	37.4
Orleans Parishes	32.5	30.2	37.3
<i>Party</i>			
Democrat	16.0	39.8	44.2
Independent	31.9	38.2	30.0
Republican	35.3	43.2	21.4

Categories in bold are statistically significant at a .05 level. Education is significant at the .06 level.

Table 11: Louisiana Residents' Perceptions Regarding Whether Now is a Good Time to Buy Major Household Items.

	Good Time
<i>All Respondents</i>	56.1
<i>Gender</i>	
Male	59.7
Female	53.5
<i>Race</i>	
White	61.2
Black	46.6
<i>Education</i>	
Less than H.S.	56.3
High School	57.5
Some College	53.0
College (4 year degree)	59.3
Graduate	54.1
<i>Income</i>	
Less than \$30,000	52.0
\$30,000 - \$75,000	60.4
More than \$75,000	61.1
<i>Age</i>	
18-34	61.7
35-54	54.5
55 and over	53.5
<i>Region</i>	
Acadiana	59.1
North Louisiana	51.4
Baton Rouge and Florida Parishes	53.3
Orleans Parishes	59.5
<i>Party</i>	
Democrat	49.6
Independent	53.2
Republican	71.1

Categories in bold are statistically significant at a .05 level.

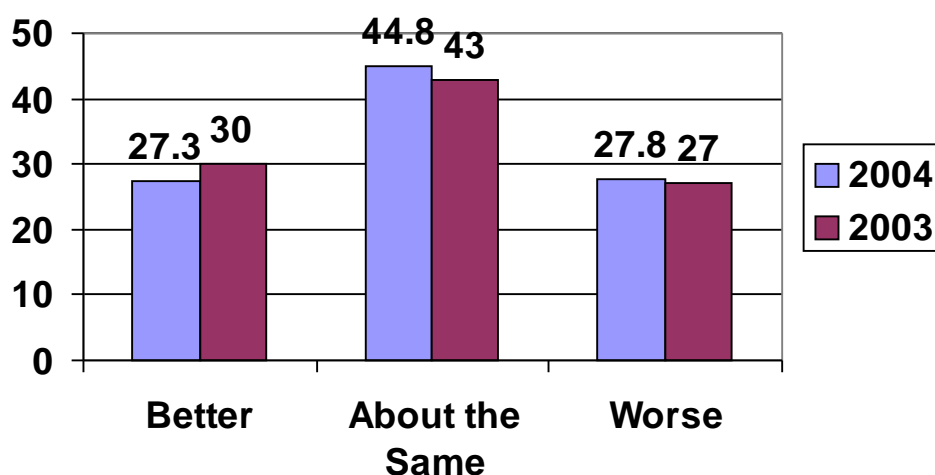
VI. The State of the State

One of the barometers of state government instituted in the 2003 Louisiana Survey was to ask respondents to compare Louisiana to other states in the southeast region on a variety of dimensions. In the 2004 Louisiana Survey, we repeated these measures and added measures asking residents to compare Louisiana's arts and culture, opportunities for minorities, and public safety to other states in the region. While there were some notable changes, we also find a great deal of consistency. Louisiana residents express the greatest pride in their arts and culture followed by colleges and universities. They express the greatest dismay in roads, public safety, and public education. Also of note, residents have become more negative over the past year in their assessments of health care quality and access.

A. Louisiana as Place to Live: In terms of rating Louisiana as place to live we find slightly fewer respondents rating Louisiana as a better place to live than most other states in the southeast region, and slightly more residents rating the state as about the same or worse. None of these changes were statistically significant. As with last year's survey we find that more educated residents rated the state more negatively as a place to live. Thirty-seven percent of respondents with less than a high school education rated the state as better than other states in the region compared to 22.6 percent of respondents with a college degree and 14.9 percent with at least some graduate education.

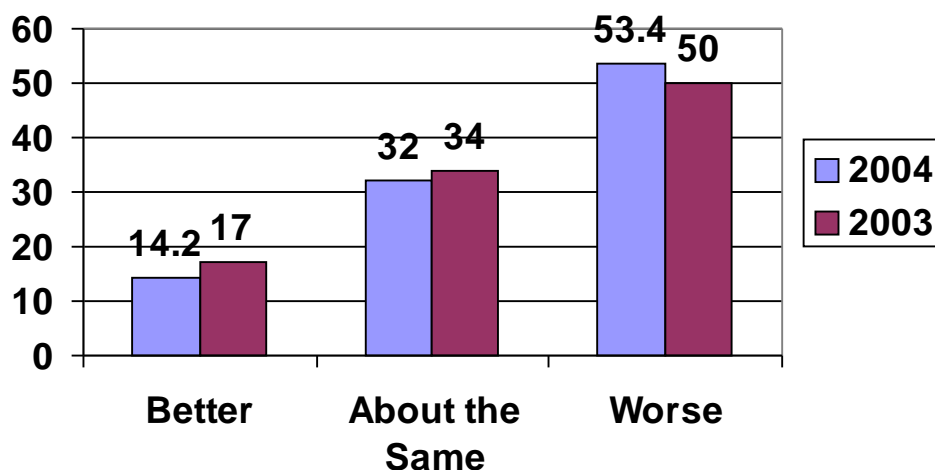
Older respondents rated the state more positively, as did Democratic identifiers. Twenty-two percent of respondents 18-34 rated the state as better than other states compared to 31.6 percent of respondents 55 and over. Thirty-three percent of self-identified Democrats rate the state as better than other states in the region compared to 21.5 percent of Independents and 23.0 percent of Republicans.

Figure 9: Respondent Evaluations of Louisiana as Place to Live



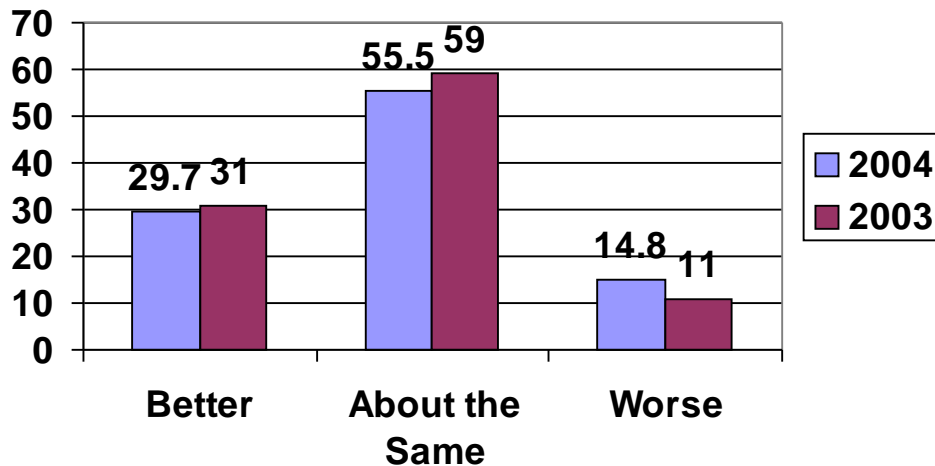
B. Louisiana's Public Schools: Louisiana residents remained negative in their evaluations of Louisiana public schools relative to schools in other states in the region. Across the board, evaluations were more negative - though as with Louisiana as a place to live the differences were generally not outside the margin of error. More educated and wealthier respondents were generally more negative in their evaluations of public schools. Twenty-nine percent of respondents with less than a high school education rated the schools as better than in other states in the region compared to 14.1 percent with a college degree. Likewise, 20.4 percent of respondents with household income less than \$30,000 rated the public schools as better than in other states compared to 12.4 percent of respondents with income greater than \$75,000.

Figure 10: Respondent Evaluations of Louisiana's Public Schools



C. Louisiana Colleges & Universities: In the 2003 survey, Louisiana's colleges and universities fared best when compared to other states in the region. Though respondents were a bit less positive in this year's survey, the results are comparable: Roughly 30 percent of respondents rated Louisiana's colleges and universities as better than other states in the southeast region, 55.5 percent rated them as the same, and 14.8 rated them as worse. More educated respondents were more negative in their evaluation of Louisiana's colleges and universities. Almost 41 percent of respondents with less than a high school education rated Louisiana's universities as better than in other states compared to 31.4 percent of respondents with a college education.

Figure 11: Respondent Evaluations of Louisiana's Colleges & Universities



D. Louisiana's Air and Water Quality: Figures 12 and 13 present the results for respondent evaluations of air and water quality relative to other states in the region. The results are largely consistent with the previous year but also continue a pattern across each of these categories in that respondents were slightly more negative on each of the items considered to this point. Most of these differences were well within the range of sampling error, but they still raise an interesting paradox: Why are respondents relatively positive on the direction of the state and slightly more negative when evaluating state performance across a range of issues? The pattern appears to reflect a "cautious optimism" in that residents recognize problems but also are optimistic that the state is moving forward.

In the 2004 survey, 23.9 percent of respondents rated Louisiana air quality as better than other states, 42.8 percent evaluate it as the same, and 33.3 rated it as worse. In the 2003 survey these percentages were 24 percent, 45 percent, and 31 percent respectively. Respondents were more negative in their assessments of water quality: 24.4 percent rated Louisiana's water as better than in other states compared to 29 percent in the 2003 survey. There were slight increases in the percent of respondents who rated the quality of drinking water the same as in other states (from 42 percent in 2003 to 44.1 percent in 2004) and worse than other states (from 29 percent to 31.5 percent).

Figure 12: Respondent Evaluations of Louisiana Air Quality

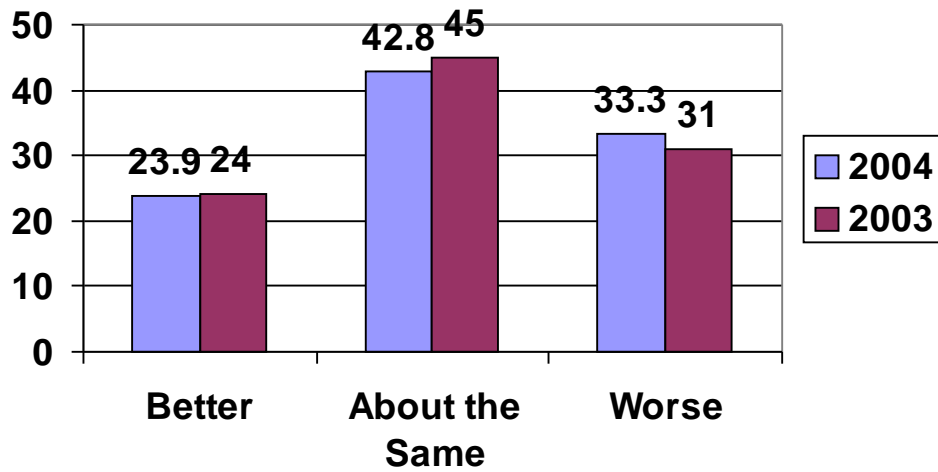
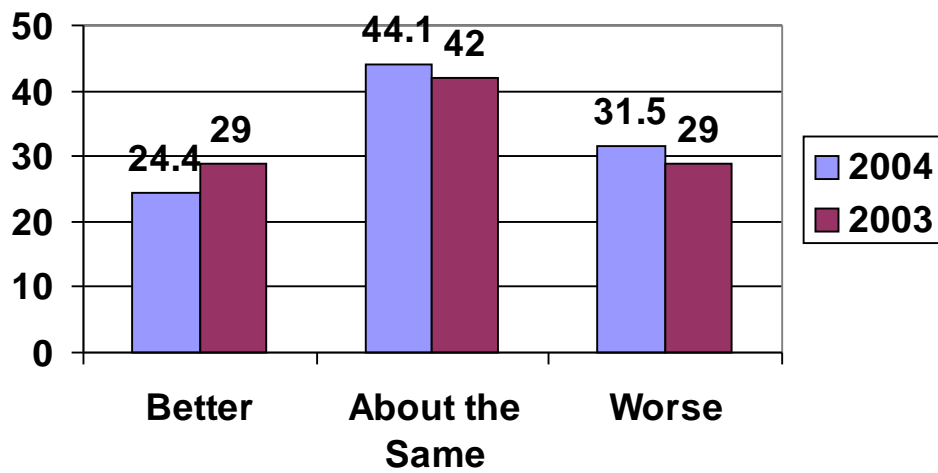


Figure 13: Respondent Evaluations of Louisiana Quality of Drinking Water



E. Evaluations of Health Care Quality and Access: By and large, respondent evaluations of Louisiana relative to other states remained remarkably stable. This was not the case with evaluations of health care quality and access. The percent of respondents rating health care quality as better than other states dropped from 23 percent in 2003 to 14.8 percent in 2004. Even more remarkably, the percent of residents rating health care quality as worse than in other states increased from 26 percent in 2003 to 44.5 percent in 2004. There was a corresponding decline in respondent evaluations of health care access. The percent of respondents rating health care access as better than in other states dropped from 24 percent to 13.2 percent, while the percent rating health care access as worse than in other states increased from 31 percent to 44.5 percent. Presumably, the change reflects the impact of gubernatorial campaign in which health care was one of the leading issues, and subsequent coverage about cuts to health care as result of a looming budget deficit.

Figure 14: Respondent Evaluations of Louisiana's Health Care Quality

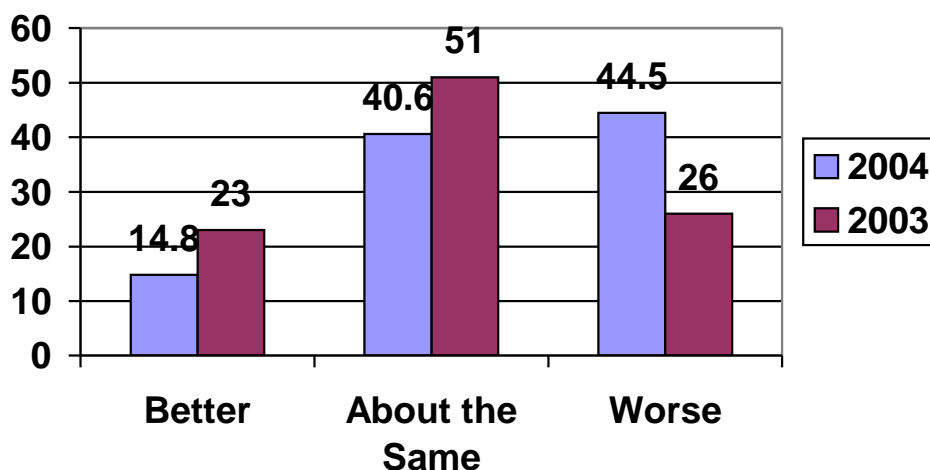
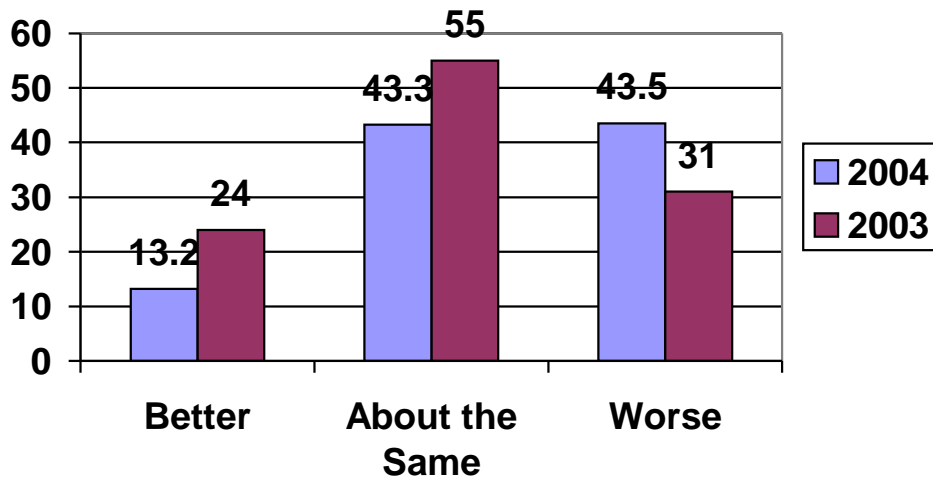
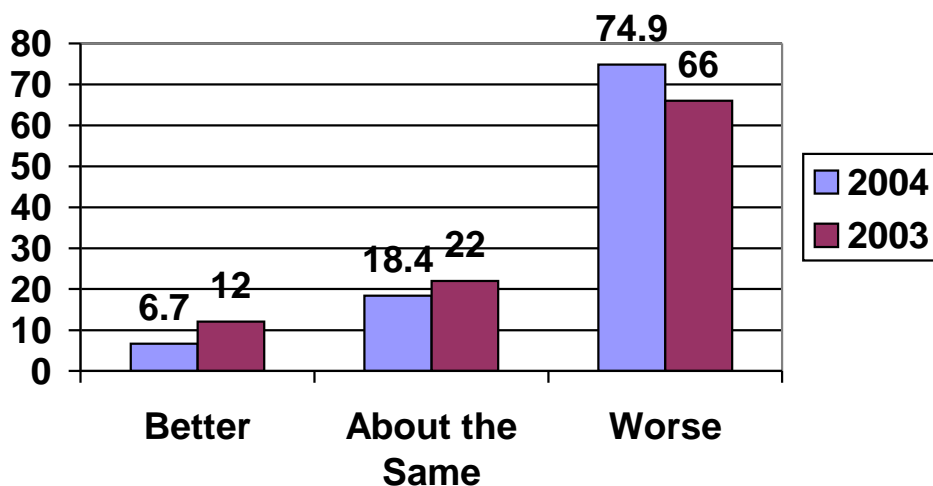


Figure 15: Respondent Evaluations of Louisiana's Health Care Access



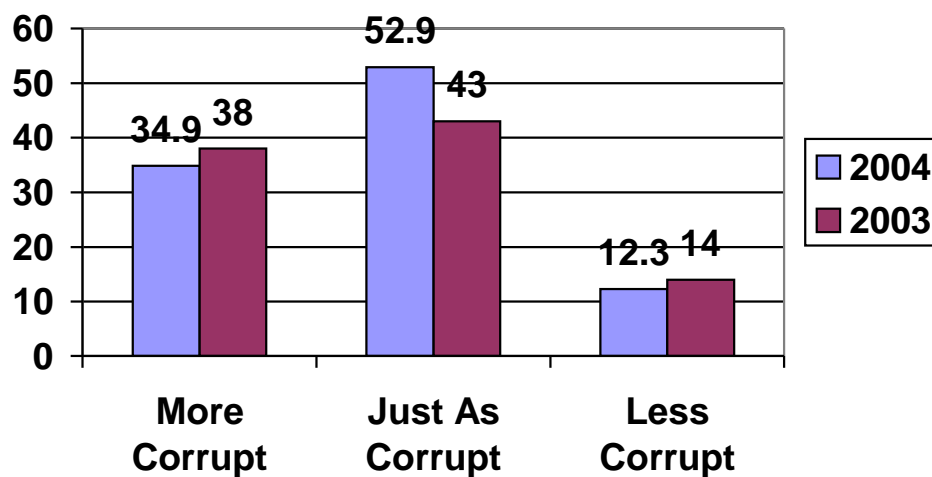
F. Roads & Highways: Louisiana residents continue to have very negative evaluations of state roads and highways, and have grown even more negative over the past year. Only 6.7 percent rate Louisiana's roads and highways as better than in other states, a drop from 12 percent in 2003. The percent of respondents rating roads as worse than in other states increased from 66 percent to 74.9 percent over the past year. More educated, older, and white respondents were more negative in their evaluations of the roads.

Figure 16: Respondent Evaluations of Louisiana's Roads & Highways



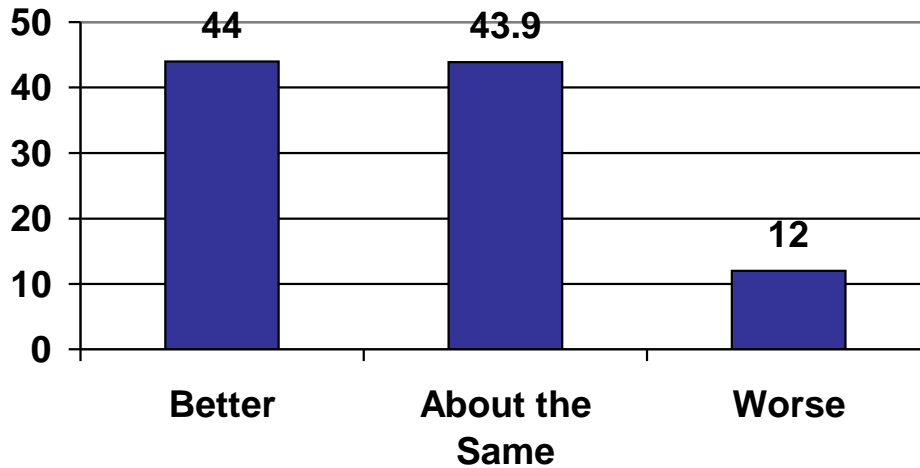
G. Louisiana's Corruption. A more positive sign involves Louisiana residents' perceptions of corruption. The percent of respondents rating Louisiana as more corrupt than other states dropped from 38 percent in the 2003 survey to 34.9 percent in 2004. As an interesting note, slightly fewer respondents rated the state as less corrupt (12.3 percent in 2004 compared to 14 percent in 2003). The difference is in a sharp increase in the percent of respondents rating Louisiana as just as corrupt as in other states. Fifty-three percent rated Louisiana as just as corrupt in the 2004 survey compared to 43 percent in 2003.

Figure 17: Respondent Evaluations of Louisiana's Corruption



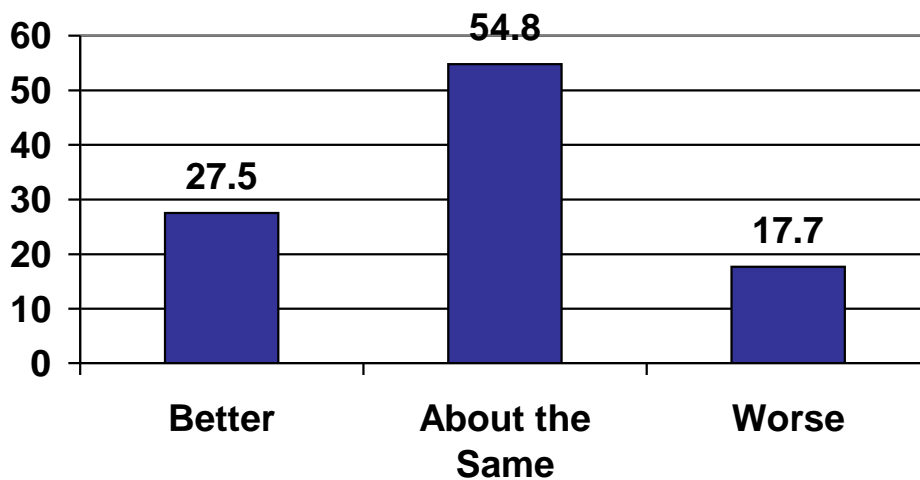
H. Arts & Culture: We added three measures to this year's survey to gauge respondent perceptions of Louisiana's arts and culture, the opportunities available to minorities, and public safety. Relatively speaking, Louisiana residents rated their arts and culture more positive than any other aspect of the state. Forty-four percent of respondents rate Louisiana's arts and culture as better than other states in the region, a comparable 43.9 percent rated it as about the same, and only 12 percent rated Louisiana's arts and culture as worse than in other states in the region. Education and age were related to evaluations of Louisiana arts and culture, though the pattern with respect to education was not particularly clear. Respondents with some college were more positive than respondents with less than a high school education and respondents with a college degree. With respect to age, 58.1 percent of respondents between 18-34 rated the arts and culture as better than in other states compared to 34.9 percent of respondents 55 and over.

Figure 18: Respondent Evaluations of Louisiana's Arts and Culture



I. Opportunities for Minorities in Louisiana: Twenty-eight percent of residents rated opportunities for minorities in Louisiana as better than other states in the region, 54.8 percent rated the opportunities as the same, and 17.7 rated opportunities as worse than in other states. Not surprisingly, there are consistent differences by gender, race, income, age, and partisan affiliation. Women, whites, less educated, Republican, and younger respondents all perceived better opportunities for minorities. For example, 32.7 percent of white respondents rated the opportunities for minorities in Louisiana as better than in other states in the region compared to 16.9 percent of black respondents.

Figure 19: Respondent Evaluations of Opportunities for Minorities in Louisiana



J. Public Safety: Louisiana residents do not perceive the state as very safe relative to other states in the region. Only 7.8 percent rated Louisiana as safer than other states, while 37.5 percent rated Louisiana as less safe and 54.7 percent rated Louisiana as just as safe as other states.

Figure 20: Respondent Evaluations of Louisiana's Safety

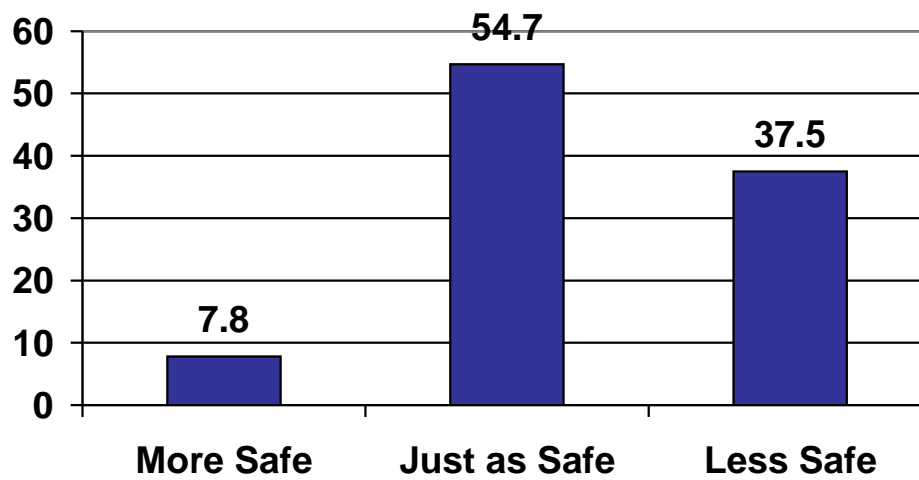


Table 12: Resident Evaluations of Louisiana Relative to Other States in the Southeast Region (Percent Reporting Louisiana is Better)

	Place to Live	Schools	College	Air Quality	Water	Health Care Quality	Health Care Access
All Respondents	26.4	14.2	27.5	11.2	11.4	7	6.1
Gender							
Male	29	15.3	32.3	26.7	30.2	15.4	11.7
Female	26.1	14.1	27.8	22.1	20.7	14.4	14.3
Race							
White	27.7	14.2	29.6	23.8	25.8	15.8	13.3
Black	26.7	16	29.8	24	21.9	12.7	12.2
Education							
Less than H.S.	37.3	29.3	40.6	41	24.4	11.1	12.1
High School	31.5	15.4	31.1	27.1	24.8	16.4	15.5
Some College	28.4	13.2	29.2	23.8	27.4	13	12.2
College (4 year degree)	22.6	14.1	31.4	17.8	23.3	18	15.9
Graduate	14.9	6.7	15.7	15.4	15.4	12.8	4.5
Income							
Less than \$30,000	29.6	20.4	28.9	26.8	27.6	20.4	14.3
\$30,000 - \$75,000	31.1	13.3	28.2	24.1	26.4	11.8	14.6
More than \$75,000	25	12.4	31.9	17.8	21.6	17.6	12.9
Age							
18-34	22.4	15.8	29.4	22.5	23.7	16.8	12.4
35-54	27.2	14	30	26.7	22.8	12.3	14.4
55 and over	31.6	14.2	29.1	20.9	27	16.9	12.2
Region							
Acadiana	27.6	13.1	33.7	24.8	23.3	13.6	11.6
North Louisiana	24	14.6	29.8	24.2	28.7	14.2	11.7
Baton Rouge & Florida Parishes	27.3	16.6	28.7	29.1	29.5	7.2	12.3
Orleans Parishes	30.5	15	26.4	19.7	18.5	20.6	16.7
Party							
Democrat	32.8	16.9	29.2	23.9	29	15	14.6
Independent	21.5	10.2	29.7	22.1	18.9	13.2	9.6
Republican	23	13	28.1	27.9	24.3	14.7	12.6

Categories in bold are statistically significant at a .05 level.

Table 12 (Continued): Resident Evaluations of Louisiana Relative to Other States in the Southeast Region

	Arts	Roads	Opportunities for Minorities	Corruption	Safety
All Respondents	41.4	6.5	26	16.4	3.8
Gender					
Male	45.2	6.9	24.2	40.3	10.5
Female	43.2	6.5	29.8	31.5	5.7
Race					
White	45.5	4.4	32.7	35.1	5.8
Black	40.8	11.1	16.9	34.2	12.2
Education					
Less than H.S.	42.9	16.9	30.1	26.8	8.6
High School	37.2	9.2	28.6	29.8	8.3
Some College	50.2	6.7	30.9	39.7	9.4
College (4 year degree)	44.3	3	22.8	35	6
Graduate	43	-----	20.9	42.5	2.2
Income					
Less than \$30,000	47.5	7.8	28.9	33	6.1
\$30,000 - \$75,000	42.7	5.3	24.4	31	7
More than \$75,000	46	6	31.1	41.1	6.7
Age					
18-34	58.1	10.2	30.7	33.3	13.5
35-54	42.4	6.1	25.1	37.2	5.7
55 and over	34.9	4.7	28.4	33.6	5.6
Region					
Acadiana	42.2	4.4	25.6	31.6	4.5
North Louisiana	46	6.7	27.8	34.4	9.1
Baton Rouge & Florida Parishes	45.5	7.5	26.9	39.3	9.9
Orleans Parishes	42.8	8.4	29.3	35.3	8.5
Party					
Democrat	40.8	8.4	25.4	29.5	9.7
Independent	47.8	5	23.7	34.3	5.4
Republican	45.4	5	32.1	43.4	6.1

VIII. Louisiana Residents Attitudes Toward Taxes and Spending

A. Spending: To gauge residents' spending priorities, respondents were asked to identify areas of state government where they would increase spending even if it meant they personally would have to pay more taxes or if substantial cuts would have to be made in other areas of state government. As part of an experiment in question wording, half of respondents received wording specifying that they would have to personally pay more in taxes and half of the respondents received wording noting that increased spending within the area would result in substantial cuts in other areas of state government. The difference in wording made little difference to the results. In two areas, spending on higher education and public safety, respondents were less willing to spend if they personally had to pay more in taxes, but even here the differences were relatively small.

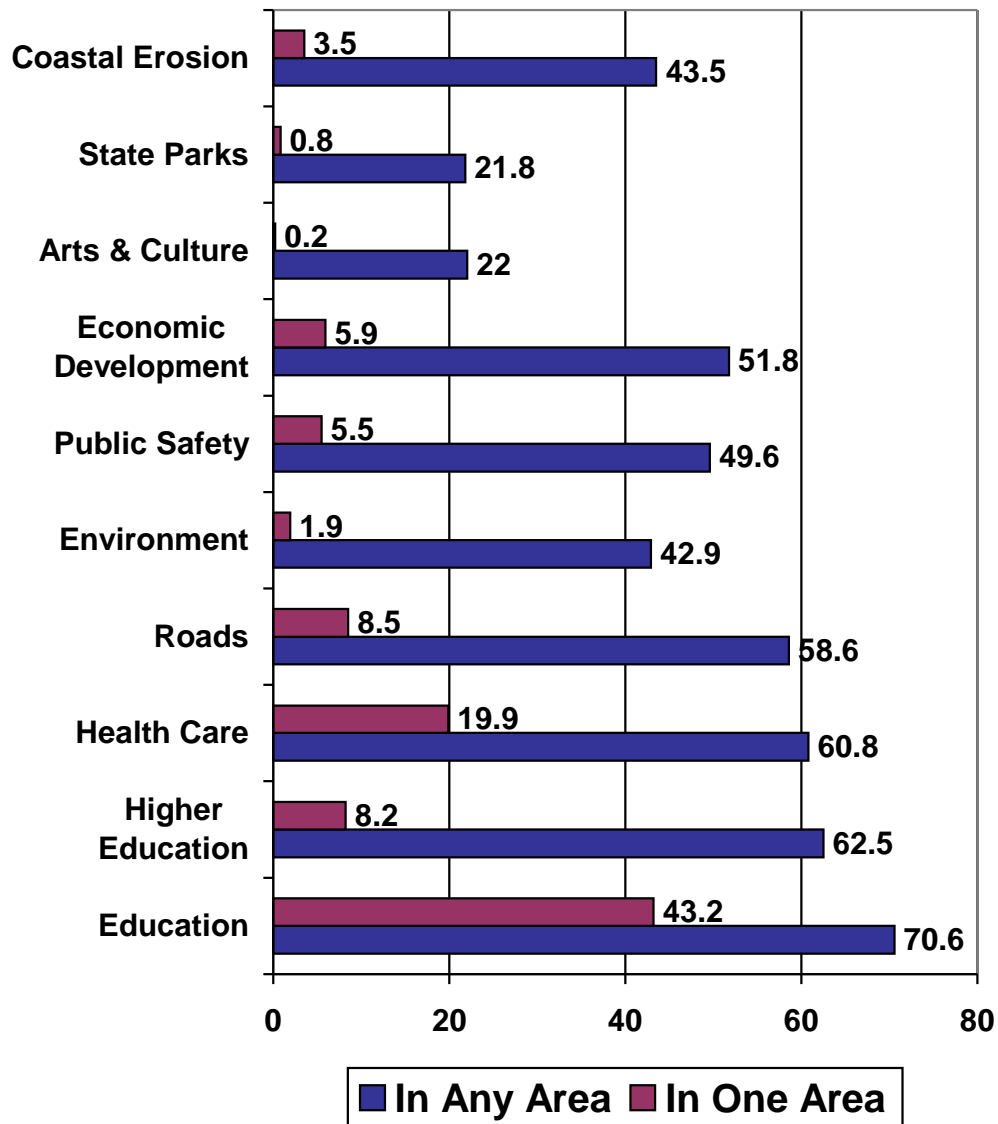
Overall, Louisiana residents showed little reluctance to increase spending across a variety of areas. The average respondents opted to increase spending in 5 of the ten categories listed here and 11.5 percent opted for an across the board spending increase. In terms of priorities, primary and secondary education clearly topped the list, followed by higher education, and health care. Seventy-one percent of respondents would increase spending on primary and secondary education, while 62.5 percent would increase spending on higher education and 60.8 percent would increase spending on health care. Fifty-nine percent opted to increase spending on roads.

These figures are comparable to the results from the 2003 Louisiana Survey, though caution should be exercised in making such comparisons. In the 2003 survey, respondents were given fewer categories to decide between (education, higher education, health care, environment, roads, and public safety). A remarkable, 35 percent of respondents, opted for an across the board spending increase. As such the percentages in each category were much smaller, but the priorities remain largely intact. Consistently when allowed to increase spending in any given area respondents are opting for more spending in this year's survey - *despite the addition of wording intended to force respondents to make tradeoffs between increased spending and tax increases or spending cuts.*

The importance of primary and secondary education is reinforced when one considers respondents' selections of their top spending priorities: 43.2 percent of respondents in the 2004 survey selected education as their top spending priority. This compares to 44 percent in the 2003 survey. Twenty percent of respondents selected health care, 8.5 percent selected roads, and 8.2 percent of respondents selected higher education. With the exception of roads most of the remaining categories declined primarily because this year's survey afforded respondents more options in terms of spending priorities. Support for spending on higher education as top priority dropped from 16 percent in the 2003 survey to 8.2 percent in 2004.

It is worth noting that when asked to rate Louisiana relative to other states in the region, arts and culture finished as the most positively rated item. Yet, as a spending priority, arts and culture rated relatively low both in terms of spending in any area and when limited to spending in only one area.

Figure 21: Spending Priorities of Louisiana Residents



Education is the top spending priority across all demographic groups, and differences in terms of support tended to be relatively small. The only statistically significant difference uncovered in these data was that older respondents were less likely than younger respondents to name education as their top spending priority. Older respondents were likewise also less likely to name higher education as a top spending priority. Individual differences in spending priorities were pronounced when it comes to health care. Female, black, less educated, lower income, older, and Democratic respondents were all more likely to select health care as priority when it comes to increasing state spending.

Table 13: Louisiana Residents' Top Spending Priorities

	Education	Higher Education	Health Care	Roads	Environment*	Public Safety
All Respondents	43.2	8.2	19.9	8.5	5.2	5.5
Gender						
Male	40.1	9.5	16.5	10.2	6.8	5.2
Female	45.3	7.5	22.2	7.3	4.0	5.7
Race						
White	44.6	7.3	17.1	10.3	5.9	5.1
Black	41.0	10.4	27.1	4.4	3.1	6.8
Education						
Less than H.S.	35.6	8.2	32.9	5.5	1.3	6.8
High School	45.5	5.6	22.6	7.1	5.8	6.4
Some College	43.1	8.5	19.5	9.7	5.4	4.4
College (4 year degree)	44.1	10.9	14.0	8.7	5.8	5.7
Graduate	42.0	8.0	17.0	10.2	4.4	5.7
Income						
Less than \$30,000	39.9	10.1	26.8	3.9	5.9	7.5
\$30,000 - \$75,000	46.0	7.7	15.0	11.2	7.1	6.1
More than \$75,000	46.3	10.6	14.4	10.0	5.3	2.5
Age						
18-34	49.2	11.2	14.9	6.4	3.1	8.0
35-54	42.8	8.7	20.3	9.7	5.6	4.8
55 and over	38.9	5.2	23.5	8.5	6.4	4.6
Region						
Acadiana	39.5	8.4	22.4	9.5	5.1	4.9
North Louisiana	41.8	10.9	19.6	9.5	3.8	5.8
Baton Rouge and Florida	50.0	5.6	17.5	7.5	3.6	5.6
Parishes						
Orleans Parishes	43.9	7.2	19.1	7.2	7.5	5.8
Party						
Democrat	41.8	7.7	26.7	7.2	4.8	4.2
Independent	46.9	7.2	16.9	9.2	4.0	7.7
Republican	44.3	9.2	12.5	11.4	6.3	4.4

Categories in bold are statistically significant at a .05 level. * includes both the environment and coastal erosion.

B. Spending Cuts: One of the shortcomings of last year's survey was that respondents were allowed an out of the difficult question of where to cut government spending. In the 2003 survey, 41 percent of respondents said they would not cut spending in any of these areas. In the 2004 survey, we forced respondents to make choices on spending cuts. On average, respondents still only cut one item from a list of ten possible selections - and no respondents opted to cut all ten areas. Seventy-six percent of respondents cut only one area of state government spending, and only 10 percent of respondents cut more than two areas.

The results indicate that respondents do not want to see cuts in education, higher education, or health care. Only 2 percent of respondents opted to cut spending on primary and secondary education and only 4 percent cut either higher education or health care. Instead, respondents targeted arts and cultural institutions and state parks as areas for cuts. Almost 46 percent of respondents opted to cut arts and culture and 40.9 percent opted for cutting state parks.

There are relatively few demographic differences in citizen preferences for spending cuts. Female and minority respondents were more willing to cut parks, and the percent of black respondents willing to cut health care was virtually indistinguishable from 0. Republicans were more willing to cut the arts and Independents were more willing to cut health care.

Overall, respondents are willing to cut what might appear as "nonessential" state government services. In terms of budgetary impact, they are unwilling to touch what constitutes the lion's share of the state budget - health care and education.

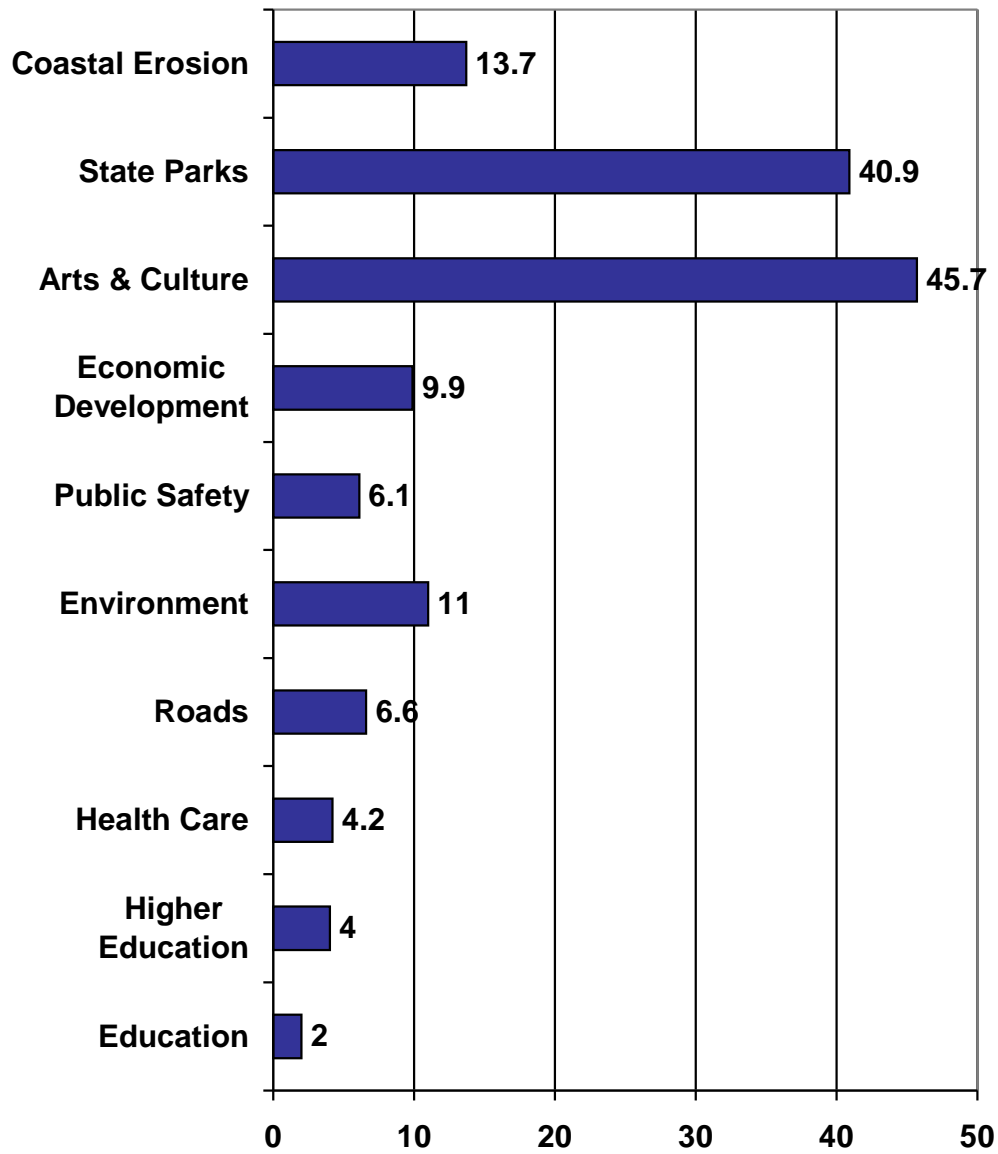
Figure 22: Preferences for Spending Cuts

Table 14: Louisiana Residents' Preferences for Spending Cuts

	Arts	Parks	Education	Higher Education	Health Care	Environment*
All Respondents	45.7	40.9	2.0	4.0	4.2	21.6
Gender						
Male	46.8	36.5	2.6	4.2	4.7	24.2
Female	45.0	44.0	1.6	3.6	3.8	19.7
Race						
White	49.4	38.2	2.3	4.3	5.5	20.1
Black	36.8	45.2	1.1	3.1	0.8	25.3
Education						
Less than H.S.	42.5	32.5	3.8	6.3	2.5	21.3
High School	43.0	42.2	1.4	3.2	2.9	22.7
Some College	48.0	42.9	2.1	4.2	4.8	18.0
College (4 year degree)	48.3	37.1	1.7	4.2	5.0	23.8
Graduate	43.3	44.4	2.2	3.3	5.6	26.7
Income						
Less than \$30,000	39.9	43.3	0.8	5.9	3.4	22.7
\$30,000 - \$75,000	47.8	40.4	1.9	3.7	3.7	22.2
More than \$75,000	45.9	37.6	2.4	1.2	7.1	23.4
Age						
18-34	41.9	45.0	2.3	4.3	3.1	23.3
35-54	46.9	40.3	1.6	4.7	4.7	20.7
55 and over	47.1	38.2	2.1	2.8	4.3	21.4
Region						
Acadiana	41.7	42.0	2.5	5.1	6.2	18.8
North Louisiana	48.4	39.4	1.0	2.8	3.8	20.6
Baton Rouge and Florida	47.6	43.4	1.2	3.0	2.4	21.1
Parishes						
Orleans Parishes	46.1	39.9	2.7	4.8	3.8	25.6
Party						
Democrat	43.2	39.1	1.7	4.6	1.7	19.4
Independent	46.6	42.2	2.7	6.3	8.1	26.9
Republican	52.1	41.5	2.1	2.5	5.6	21.8

Categories in bold are statistically significant at a .05 level. * includes both the environment and coastal erosion.

C. Taxes: While Louisiana residents showed no signs of preferring higher taxes, they were few signs of a tax revolt. A majority of respondents believed state income (55.9 percent), state sales (52.7 percent), and local property taxes (57.1 percent) were about right. Respondents were most negative in their assessments of state sales tax: 42.7 percent of respondents believe the state sales tax is too high compared to 34 percent who believe state income taxes and 31.5 percent who believe local property taxes were too high. In the 2003 Louisiana Survey, 52 percent of respondents said they believed state sales taxes were too high. This has dropped nearly 10 points during the past year. Attitudes toward state income taxes have remained relatively unchanged. During the 2003 survey, 53 percent believed state income taxes were about right and 38 percent said state income taxes were too high and needed to be reduced.

Figure 23: Louisiana Residents Attitudes Toward Taxes

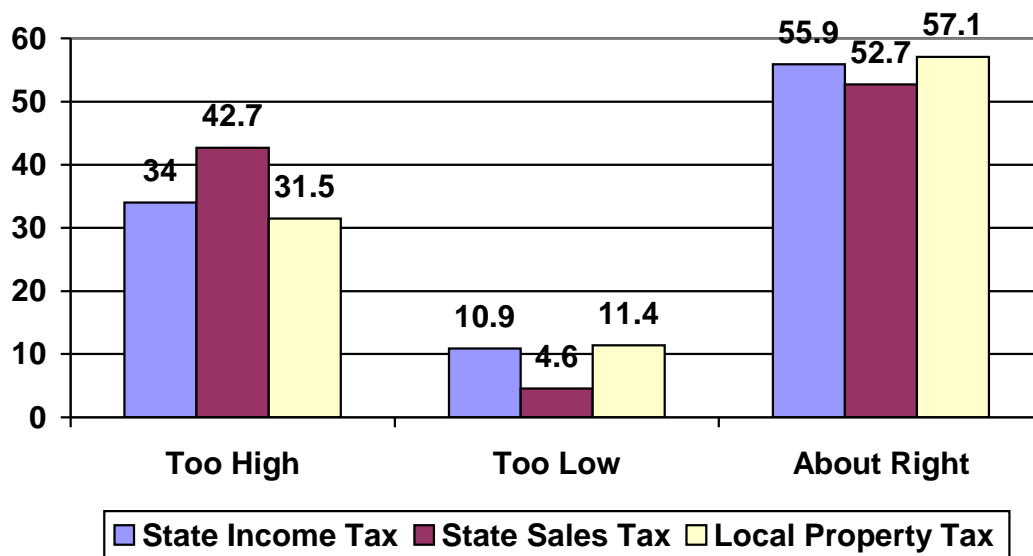


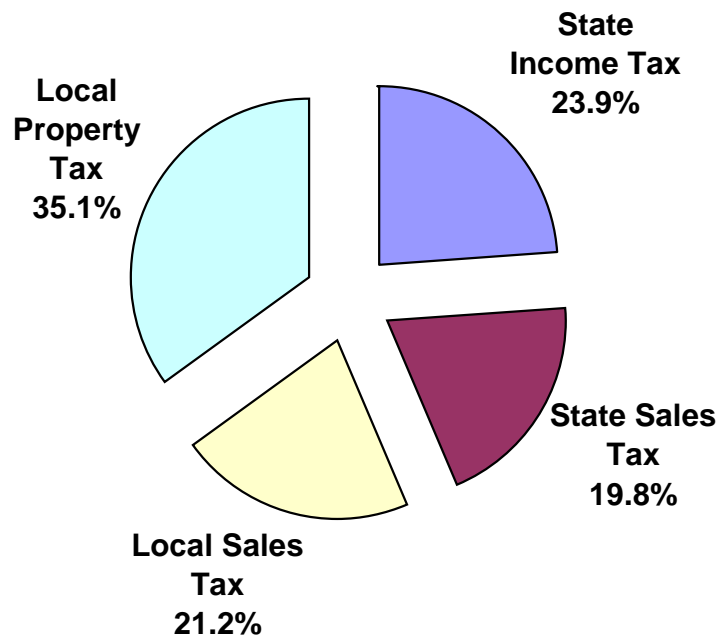
Table 15: Louisiana Residents' Perceptions that State Income, State Sales, and Local Property Taxes are Too High and Need to be Reduced

	State Income Tax	State Sales Tax	Local Property Tax
<i>All Respondents</i>	34.0	42.7	31.5
<i>Gender</i>			
Male	32.1	39.8	27.3
Female	35.2	44.6	34.3
<i>Race</i>			
White	32.6	39.1	27.5
Black	34.1	50.8	38.5
<i>Education</i>			
Less than H.S.	36.8	47.5	47.4
High School	37.0	46.1	35.1
Some College	29.6	37.0	31.0
College (4 year degree)	35.8	46.7	22.5
Graduate	32.5	37.2	31.6
<i>Income</i>			
Less than \$30,000	33.9	47.9	40.2
\$30,000 - \$75,000	34.5	36.1	24.1
More than \$75,000	31.6	37.9	28.1
<i>Age</i>			
18-34	32.3	42.5	27.5
35-54	37.1	42.8	36.9
55 and over	30.3	40.8	25.5
<i>Region</i>			
Acadiana	33.1	43.4	27.5
North Louisiana	35.2	48.1	34.5
Baton Rouge and Florida Parishes	34.1	44.1	33.7
Orleans Parishes	33.1	35.9	31.3
<i>Party</i>			
Democrat	31.4	44.3	29.8
Independent	35.2	38.5	33.3
Republican	31.5	39.9	29.7

Categories in bold are statistically significant at a .05 level.

D. Fairness of Various Taxes: When asked which tax they perceived as least fair, a plurality of respondents selected local property taxes. Thirty-five percent of respondents selected local property taxes as the least fair among Louisiana's state and local taxes, 23.9 percent selected the state income tax, 21.2 percent selected local sales taxes, and 19.8 percent selected state sales taxes. This follows in the wake of recent news reports that assessments are often based on when homes were purchased rather than the value of homes. The practice of electing assessors may also create impressions that local property taxes are the least fair of Louisiana's state and local taxes. Notably, there were no significant differences across gender, race, age, income, region, or partisan affiliation in terms of the relative fairness of these various taxes.

Figure 24: Respondent Perceptions Regarding the Fairness of Various Taxes



When asked what bothered respondents most about taxes, the overwhelming response was government waste of taxpayer money. A remarkable 62.1 percent of respondents said that the thing that bothers them most about taxes is government waste. Second on the list of complaints was the perception that some people are not paying their fair share (selected by 25.5 percent of respondents), followed by the total amount paid and the complexity of the tax system. Louisiana is commonly perceived as conservative anti-tax state and certainly the available evidence lends little support to the notion that Louisianans want taxes raised. But concern about taxes appears to be rooted in what happens to tax money after it is collected rather than an outright distaste for taxes. The

challenge for state government - regardless of tax levels - is persuading residents that money is being invested and used wisely as opposed to wasted.

Overall, partisanship was not a significant predictor of what bothers residents most about taxes. However, Republicans were more inclined to say they were most bothered by government waste. Over 69 percent of Republicans cite government waste as the most bothersome thing about taxes compared to 58.5 percent of Democrats. Democrats, in turn, were more concerned that some people were not paying their fair share. Twenty-nine percent of Democrats cited concerns that some people were not paying their fair share compared to 19 percent of Republicans. While both Democrats and Republicans cited waste as the most bothersome aspect of taxes, this suggests fundamental differences in how Republicans and Democrats view state taxes: Republicans may be more likely to view state taxes through an investment lens, while Democrats may be more inclined to view taxes in terms of fairness issues.

Education and race were also related to perceptions of tax fairness. With respect to education, more educated respondents were less likely to say they were bothered that "some people are not paying their fair share," and were more likely to cite government waste as a concern. Thirty percent of respondents with less than a high school education and 39.7 percent of respondents with a high school degree cited fairness as a concern compared to 20 percent of respondents with a college education. Fifty-five percent of respondents with less than a high school degree cited waste as the most troubling aspect of taxes compared to 68.3 percent of respondents with a college degree. When it comes to race, white respondents were more concerned about government waste, while black respondents were more concerned with the amount they pay and the perception that some people were not paying their fair share. Sixty-five percent of white respondents report that they were most bothered by the feeling that government was wasting money compared to 54.4 percent of black respondents. Finally, while not statistically significant there was an interesting difference in terms of income: Middle-income earners were more concerned about government waste than either lower or higher income earners. Specifically, 68.2 percent of respondents reportedly earning between \$30,000 and \$75,000 cited the feeling that government was wasting money as the most bothersome aspect of taxes compared to 55.3 percent among respondent making less than \$30,000 and 57.4 percent of respondents making \$75,000 or more.

Figure 25: What Bothers Louisiana Residents Most About Taxes

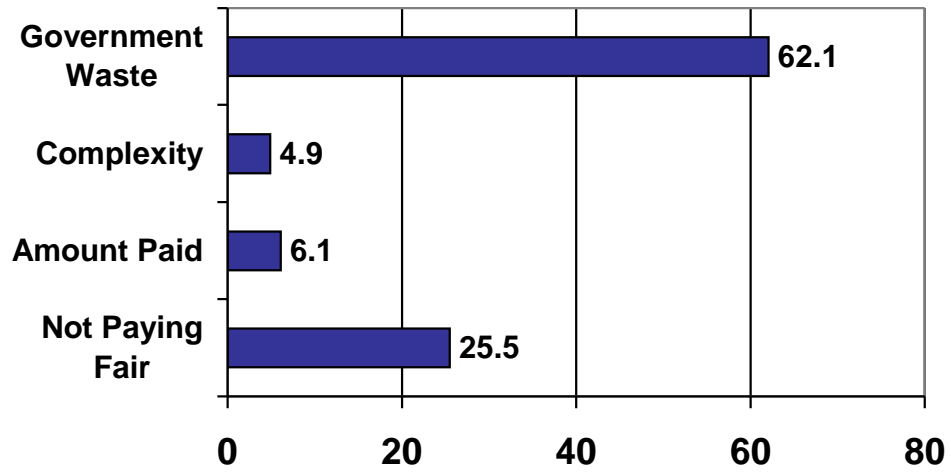


Table 16: What Bothers Louisiana Residents Most About Taxes?

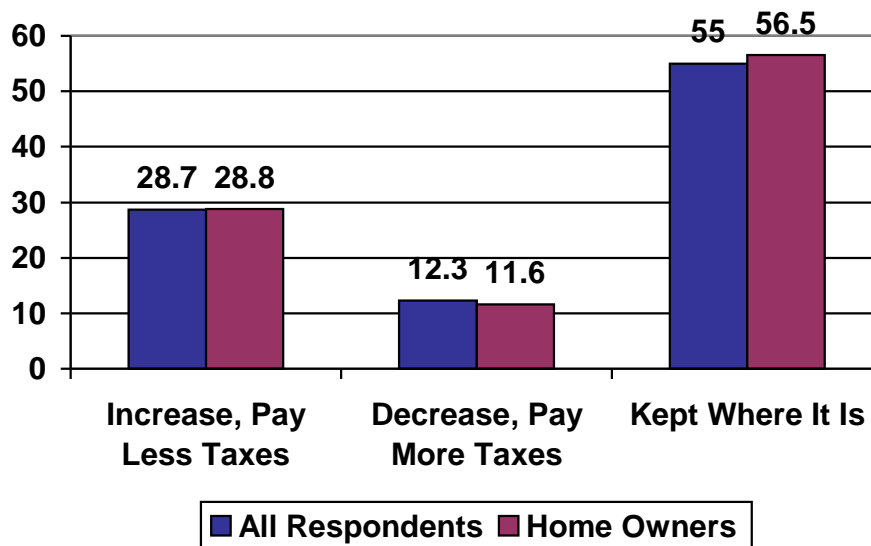
	Waste	Complexity	Amount Paid	Fairness
<i>All Respondents</i>	62.1	6.1	4.9	25.5
<i>Gender</i>				
Male	60.8	5.7	3.1	28.9
Female	63.0	4.3	8.0	23.2
<i>Race</i>				
White	64.7	4.5	4.2	24.9
Black	54.4	5.6	11.2	28.8
<i>Education</i>				
Less than H.S.	55.0	2.5	12.5	30.0
High School	47.1	4.4	8.1	39.7
Some College	70.1	6.5	3.2	18.8
College (4 year degree)	68.3	2.5	6.7	20.0
Graduate	69.8	9.3	2.3	19.3
<i>Income</i>				
Less than \$30,000	55.3	7.0	7.9	28.9
\$30,000 - \$75,000	68.2	4.1	2.7	23.0
More than \$75,000	57.4	5.3	5.3	29.8
<i>Age</i>				
18-34	65.4	1.6	8.7	22.0
35-54	59.9	7.5	6.6	25.0
55 and over				
<i>Region</i>				
Acadiana	59.7	3.7	6.0	27.6
North Louisiana	61.2	3.9	8.5	25.6
Baton Rouge and Florida Parishes	60.0	7.8	7.8	24.4
Orleans Parishes	66.4	5.0	5.0	24.3
<i>Party</i>				
Democrat	58.5	4.8	6.9	28.7
Independent	63.2	4.7	6.6	23.6
Republican	69.4	4.8	5.4	19.0

Categories in bold are statistically significant at a .05 level.

E. The Homestead Exemption and Property Taxes: Two-thirds of respondents, 67.3 percent, said they know what the homestead exemption is and a substantial majority preferred keeping it where it is (55.0 percent). Respondents who knew what the homestead exemption is were more likely (relative to respondents who do not know what the exemption is) to say the homestead exemption should be kept where it is or that it should be increased to reduce property taxes. Likewise, homeowners were more likely than renters to say the homestead exemption should be kept where it is.

Very few respondents (12.3 percent) wanted the homestead decreased to pay more taxes. Differences in this particular response category were limited across demographic categorizations, though notably the small proportion of the sample with a graduate degree preferred reducing the homestead exemption.

Figure 26: Attitudes Toward Homestead Exemption



Consistent with last year's survey, we find that roughly two-thirds of respondents (64.8 percent) were willing to consider reducing the homestead if any additional revenue went to local public schools. Homeowners and respondents who say they knew what the homestead exemption is are less supportive. However, a majority of homeowners (61.5 percent) and a majority of respondents who say they know what the homestead exemption is (59.3 percent) support a reduction in the homestead exemption if additional money went to local public schools.

**Figure 27: Support for a Reduction in the
Homestead Exemption if Additional Revenues
Went to Local Public Schools**

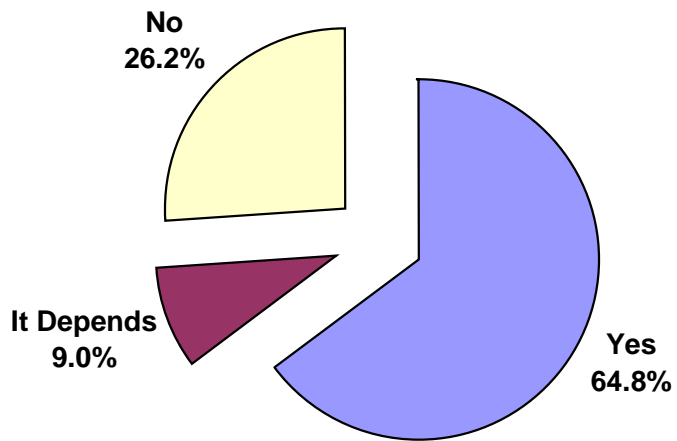


Table 17: Support for Reducing the Homestead Exemption

	Reduce Homestead Exemption, Pay Less	Increase Homestead Exemption, Pay More	Keep Homestead Exemption Where It Is	Willingness to Increase If Money Went to Local Public Schools
All Respondents	12.3	28.7	55.0	64.8
Gender				
Male	12.2	32.1	49.8	60.2
Female	12.4	26.3	58.7	68.0
Race				
White	12.8	26.4	57.8	63.7
Black	11.0	32.7	49.2	69.0
Education				
Less than H.S.	8.0	33.3	50.7	76.7
High School	8.6	26.4	60.2	64.3
Some College	11.7	31.9	53.7	62.9
College (4 year degree)	13.1	28.8	54.2	63.9
Graduate	27.8	20.0	48.9	64.8
Income				
Less than \$30,000	27.0	13.9	53.5	73.4
\$30,000 - \$75,000	28.4	10.1	58.0	66.6
More than \$75,000	24.9	20.7	52.1	65.3
Age				
18-34	12.1	29.4	51.2	77.0
35-54	12.7	30.1	55.1	65.1
55 and over	12.3	25.5	58.5	55.1
Region				
Acadiana	9.6	31.5	54.8	65.5
North Louisiana	11.1	26.1	58.2	63.3
Baton Rouge and Florida	13.9	29.7	53.9	64.4
Parishes				
Orleans Parishes	15.1	28.2	52.5	65.5
Party				
Democrat	12.0	29.6	55.0	67.0
Independent	14.8	21.8	59.3	68.2
Republican	11.2	31.7	55.0	58.4

Categories in bold are statistically significant at a .05 level.

To further explore perceptions of fairness with respect to property taxes, respondents were asked about the fairness of property taxes within their parish, whether they would be willing to have their property reassessed, and finally whether they would be willing to have their property reassessed even if it meant they personally had to pay more.

Most respondents (77.2 percent) believed property tax assessments in their parish were fair and equitable and a near consensus of respondents said (83.2 percent) they would be willing to have their property reassessed as long as all other property in the parish was reassessed as well. Perhaps most remarkably, 70.4 percent said they were in favor of equitable property tax assessments even if they personally had to pay more in taxes. There were no substantial differences when we considered only homeowners.

**Figure 28: Respondents Perceptions of Property Tax
Assessment Fairness and Willingness to Have
Property Reassessed**

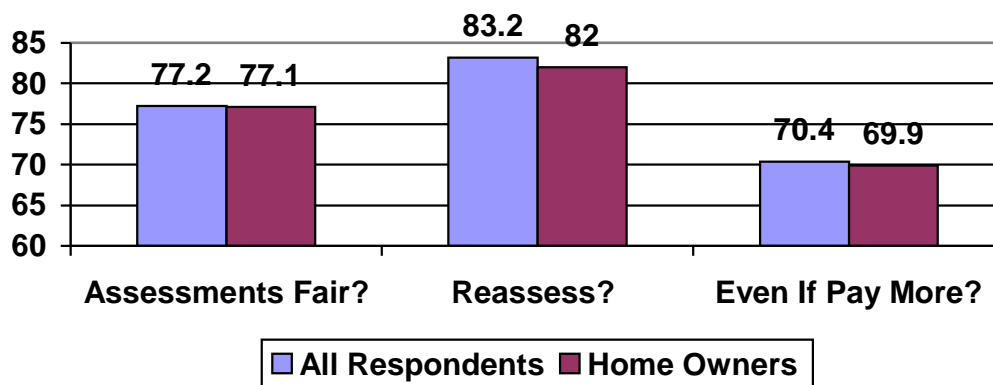


Table 18: Support for Reducing the Homestead Exemption

	Assessments Fair?	Reassess?	Even If Pay More
<i>All Respondents</i>	77.2	83.2	70.4
<i>Gender</i>			
Male	79.1	85.3	74.4
Female	76.0	81.8	67.8
<i>Race</i>			
White	80.2	85.4	78.5
Black	72.9	77.6	55.8
<i>Education</i>			
Less than H.S.	70.6	88.2	63.6
High School	83.1	84.6	66.1
Some College	81.1	86.5	70.8
College (4 year degree)	73.5	80.4	75.5
Graduate	59.5	68.6	73.0
<i>Income</i>			
Less than \$30,000	79.4	81.6	63.0
\$30,000 - \$75,000	77.3	90.4	77.5
More than \$75,000	72.2	76.1	73.9
<i>Age</i>			
18-34	82.4	87.0	67.6
35-54	76.4	83.0	71.1
55 and over	74.6	83.5	73.9
<i>Region</i>			
Acadiana	79.7	84.9	74.8
North Louisiana	76.9	81.5	63.7
Baton Rouge and Florida Parishes	80.5	84.1	73.8
Orleans Parishes	72.9	82.4	69.9
<i>Party</i>			
Democrat	81.7	82.9	69.5
Independent	75.8	82.5	74.0
Republican	75.4	85.3	73.2

Categories in bold are statistically significant at a .05 level.

IX. Support for Coastal Erosion and Willingness to Pay

In the 2003 survey, we found that 66 percent of respondents claimed to be aware of the coastal erosion issue and that 79 percent supported state government efforts to address wetlands loss. The 2004 survey finds respondents even more supportive of state government efforts at addressing wetlands loss: 83.6 percent of respondents said they support state government efforts to restore and protect Louisiana's wetlands from the effects of coastal erosion. When asked whether they would support these efforts even if it meant they would personally have to pay more in taxes, 73 percent of supporters (and 58.1 percent of all respondents) said they would continue support coastal restoration efforts.

Figure 29: Support for State Efforts to Protect Louisiana's Wetlands

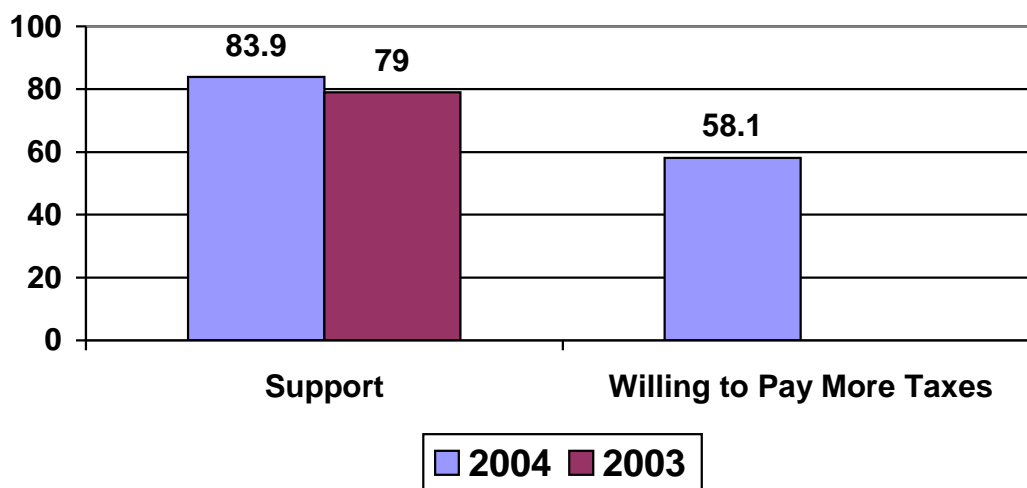


Table 19: Support for State Efforts to Protect Louisiana's Wetlands and Willingness to Personally Pay More in Taxes

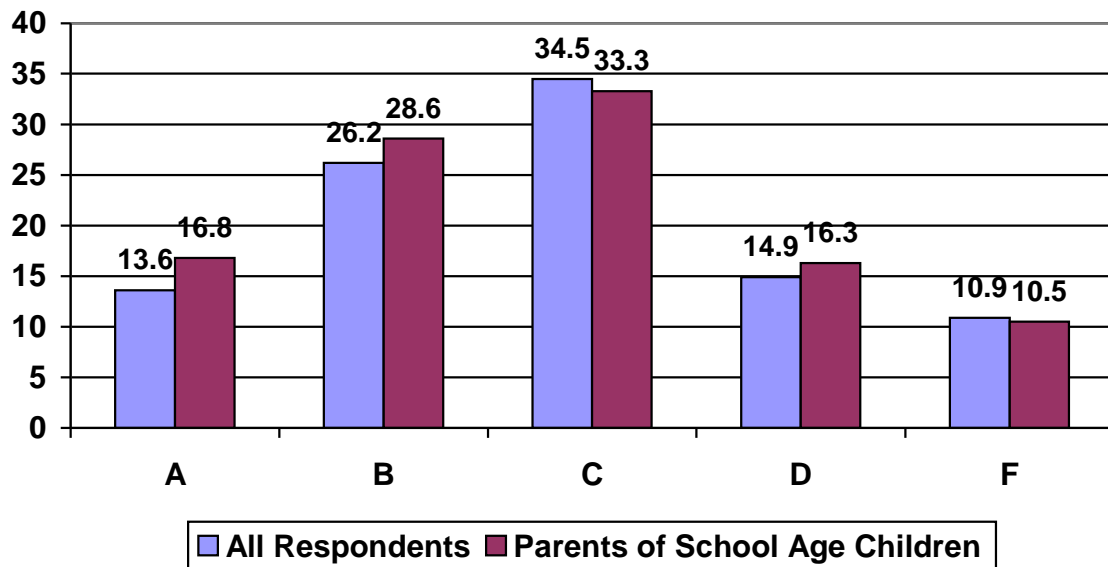
	Support State Government Efforts At Coastal Restoration	Willing to Pay More (Percent of Supporters)
All Respondents	83.6	73.0
Gender		
Male	84.7	71.7
Female	82.8	74.1
Race		
White	85.9	75.5
Black	78.3	68.3
Education		
Less than H.S.	80.3	71.9
High School	85.2	70.3
Some College	84.5	74.2
College (4 year degree)	81.4	73.8
Graduate	85.2	77.1
Income		
Less than \$30,000	84.1	75.3
\$30,000 - \$75,000	83.7	73.2
More than \$75,000	86.4	73.3
Age		
18-34	82.9	73.7
35-54	82.3	71.0
55 and over	86.1	73.3
Region		
Acadiana	82.6	71.9
North Louisiana	83.0	73.9
Baton Rouge and Florida Parishes	84.0	77.5
Orleans Parishes	84.9	70.9
Party		
Democrat	84.5	74.9
Independent	83.6	74.0
Republican	82.9	70.2

Categories in bold are statistically significant at a .05 level.

X. Evaluation of Public Schools

Louisiana residents gave the public schools a C+. Fourteen percent of respondents gave the schools in their local community an A, 26.2 percent gave the schools a B, 34.5 percent a C, 14.9 percent a D, and 10.9 percent an F. The overall grade point average for the public schools is a 2.8, indicating a C+ average. Notably, parents with school age children were slightly more positive, presumably because of experience with the schools. The results are remarkably similar to the results from the 2003 survey. In 2003, 13.7 percent of respondents gave the public schools an A, 28.5 percent a B, 31.4 percent a C, 15.4 percent a D, and 10.9 percent an F.

Figure 30: Evaluation of Public Schools in the Local Community



Despite a fairly mediocre evaluation, respondents are relatively positive about the future of the schools. Almost 50 percent of respondents believed the schools will get better over the next several years, 20.9 percent believed the schools will get worse, and 29.2 percent believed they will stay the same. Most likely, this reflects concentrated efforts to improve Louisiana's public schools, and the publicity these efforts have received. There is one element, however, that remains controversial - the relative emphasis given to testing. While one's initial impression may be that a plurality (41.6 percent) believed there is too much emphasis on testing, 58.5 percent believe there is either not enough or that the emphasis is about right. More educated respondents are more inclined to say that there is too much emphasis on testing.

Figure 31: Respondent Prospective Evaluations of the Public Schools

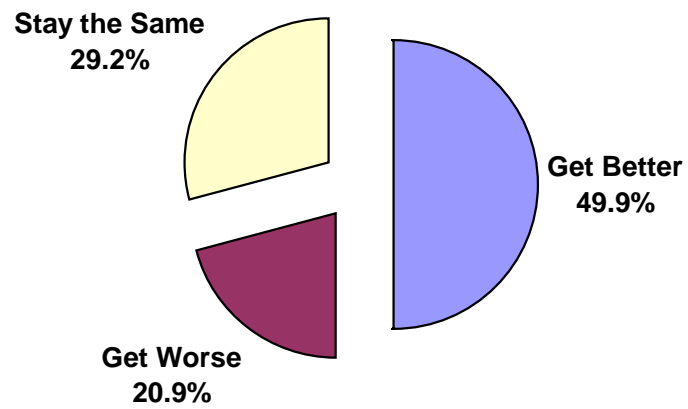


Figure 32: Respondent Attitudes Toward Testing

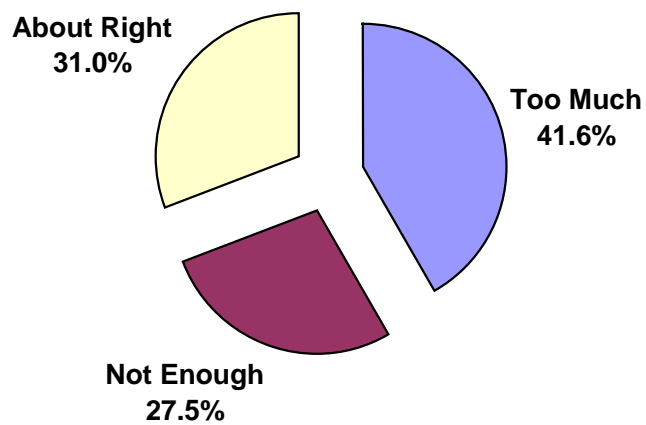


Table 20: Louisiana Residents Grading of Public Schools, Perceptions that the Schools Will Get Better, and Attitudes Toward Testing

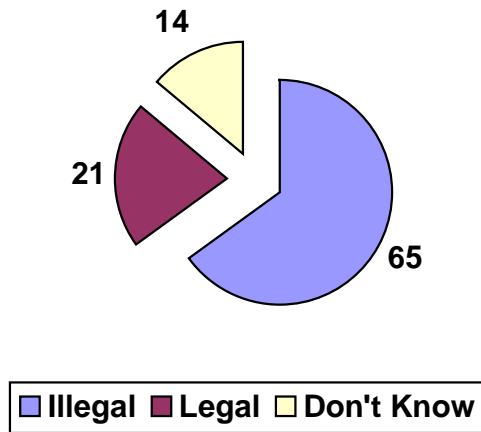
	A or B	Get Better	Too Much Testing
All Respondents	39.8	49.9	41.1
Gender			
Male	35.3	48.9	39.5
Female	42.8	50.5	42.8
Race			
White	42.2	48.5	41.8
Black	36.4	52.8	43.0
Education			
Less than H.S.	41.7	45.0	29.7
High School	41.9	51.4	33.3
Some College	36.5	55.3	39.0
College (4 year degree)	41.7	48.3	48.7
Graduate	39.0	32.5	66.7
Income			
Less than \$30,000	37.8	51.8	36.0
\$30,000 - \$75,000	36.7	50.0	48.9
More than \$75,000	42.4	44.0	40.4
Age			
18-34	41.7	46.0	33.3
35-54	37.2	50.5	46.2
55 and over	41.2	51.4	42.9
Region			
Acadiana	35.7	47.0	41.4
North Louisiana	40.8	46.8	41.3
Baton Rouge & Florida Parishes	48.8	50.6	41.4
Orleans Parishes	37.2	54.6	42.4
Party			
Democrat	37.9	53.2	44.9
Independent	41.2	40.0	36.3
Republican	42.1	50.0	45.9

Categories in bold are statistically significant at a .05 level.

XI. Same-sex Marriage, Civil Unions, and Discrimination

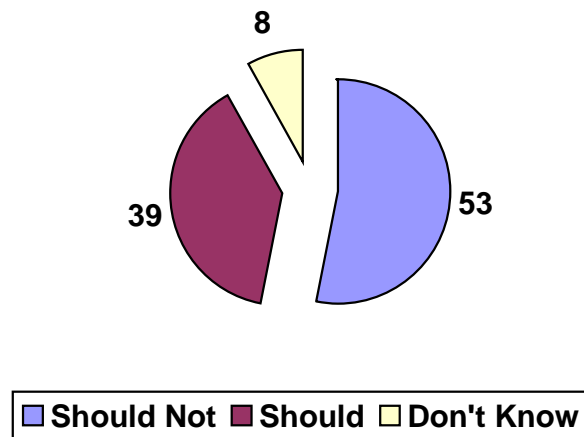
Louisiana residents opposed same-sex marriage by margins comparable to national surveys. Sixty-five percent of Louisiana residents said same-sex marriage should be illegal, 21 percent said they should be legal, and 14 percent didn't know or wouldn't give an opinion.

Figure 33: Louisiana Residents Attitudes Toward Same Sex Marriage



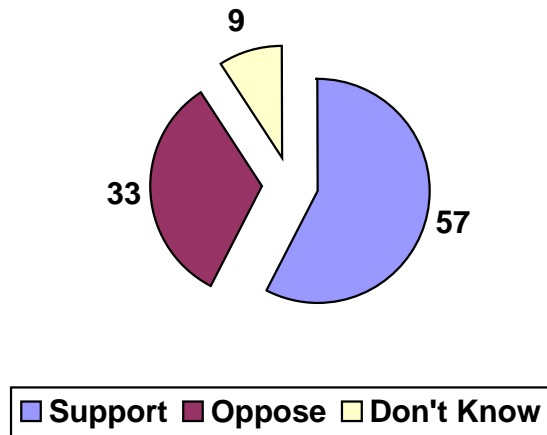
Opposition to same-sex unions dropped to 53 percent when stated in terms of civil unions. Thirty-nine percent said they supported civil unions and 8 percent said they didn't know or weren't sure.

Figure 34: Louisiana Residents Attitudes Toward Civil Unions



Such differences have been frequently reported in national surveys and reflect stronger reactions to marriage than civil unions, though even with civil unions a majority of Louisiana residents remained opposed. The difference in responses to marriage versus civil unions may reflect ambivalence in public attitudes toward gays and lesbians - at once expressing opposition while not wanting to endorse discrimination. As evidence, consider that 57 percent of respondents said they would support a state law prohibiting discrimination against gays and lesbians in the workplace.

Figure 35: Support for a Law Prohibiting Workplace Discrimination Against Gays and Lesbians



There were sharp differences in attitudes toward same-sex marriage, civil unions, and nondiscrimination based on age. Younger residents were more likely to support same-sex marriage, civil unions, and a law prohibiting discrimination against gays and lesbians in the workplace. For example, 37 percent of respondents 18-34 supported same-sex marriage compared to only 14.6 percent of respondents 55 and over. On civil unions, 52.4 percent of respondents 18-34 supported legally recognized civil unions compared to 36.4 percent of respondents 55 and over. More educated respondents were also generally more supportive of same-sex marriage, civil unions, and nondiscrimination.

Other demographic differences emerged but with less consistency. For example, 23.5 percent of women supported same-sex marriage compared to 17.2 percent of men, but differences on civil unions and nondiscrimination were smaller and not statistically significant. There were also partisan differences but these were not exactly what one might expect: 18.8 percent of Democrats supported same-sex marriage compared to 16.7 percent of Republicans. Thirty-one percent of Independents (who were also likely to be younger) supported same-sex marriage. Independents were also more supportive of civil unions and nondiscrimination laws.

One of the most important predictors of support was whether or not someone has friends, relatives, or coworkers who are gay or lesbian. Thirty percent of respondents who know someone who is gay or lesbian supported gay marriage, 50.5 percent supported civil unions, and 67.8 percent supported nondiscrimination laws.

Table 21: Support of Same-Sex Marriages, Civil Unions, and Laws Prohibiting Discrimination Against Gays and Lesbians

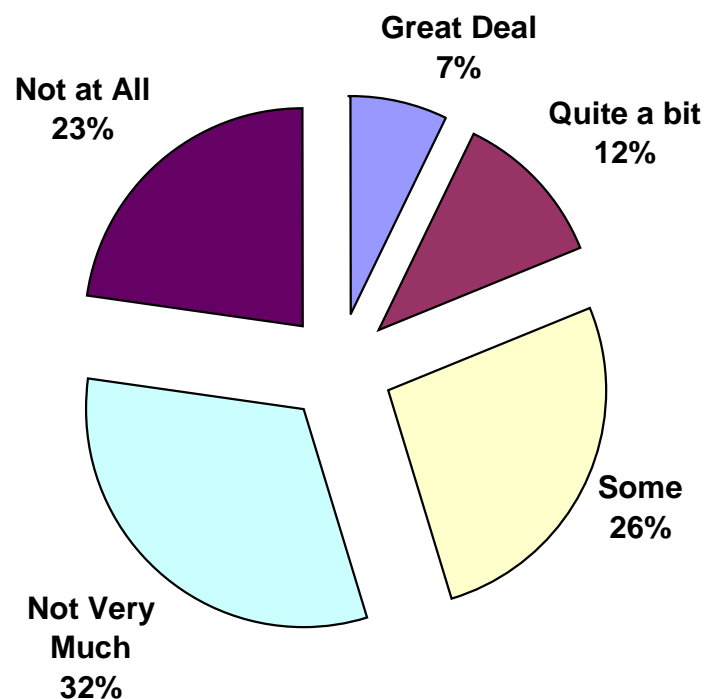
	Same-Sex Marriage	Civil Unions	Support Nondiscrimination
<i>All Respondents</i>	21.0	39.4	57.4
<i>Gender</i>			
Male	17.2	36.2	57.4
Female	23.5	41.6	57.3
<i>Race</i>			
White	20.6	39.7	58.7
Black	19.5	37.5	52.5
<i>Education</i>			
Less than H.S.	14.0	31.0	38.1
High School	17.0	33.9	55.6
Some College	21.0	42.7	59.4
College (4 year degree)	27.4	43.1	62.1
Graduate	20.9	41.5	61.0
<i>Income</i>			
Less than \$30,000	26.9	45.9	54.1
\$30,000 - \$75,000	15.5	34.0	52.4
More than \$75,000	21.5	46.7	69.6
<i>Age</i>			
18-34	37.2	52.4	66.1
35-54	15.2	33.0	53.8
55 and over	14.6	36.9	55.1
<i>Region</i>			
Acadiana	20.9	37.2	54.3
North Louisiana	20.6	40.8	58.3
Baton Rouge & Florida Parishes	21.3	40.4	49.4
Orleans Parishes	20.8	39.1	64.8
<i>Party</i>			
Democrat	18.8	40.8	52.5
Independent	31.2	48.5	63.4
Republican	16.7	32.4	61.3

Categories in bold are statistically significant at a .05 level.

XII. Free Trade

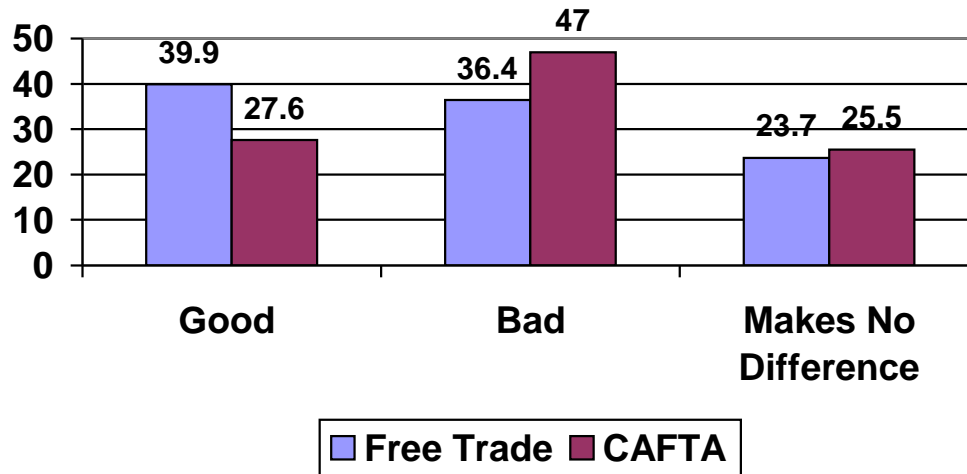
Despite the attention given to the Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) in local media, respondents said they have not paid much attention to news about the trade agreement. Only 7.2 percent of respondents said they have paid a great deal of attention, 11.6 percent paid quite a bit of attention, 26.4 percent paid some attention, 32.0 percent didn't pay much attention, and 22.8 percent didn't pay any attention.

Figure 36: Attention Paid to News About Central American Free Trade Agreement



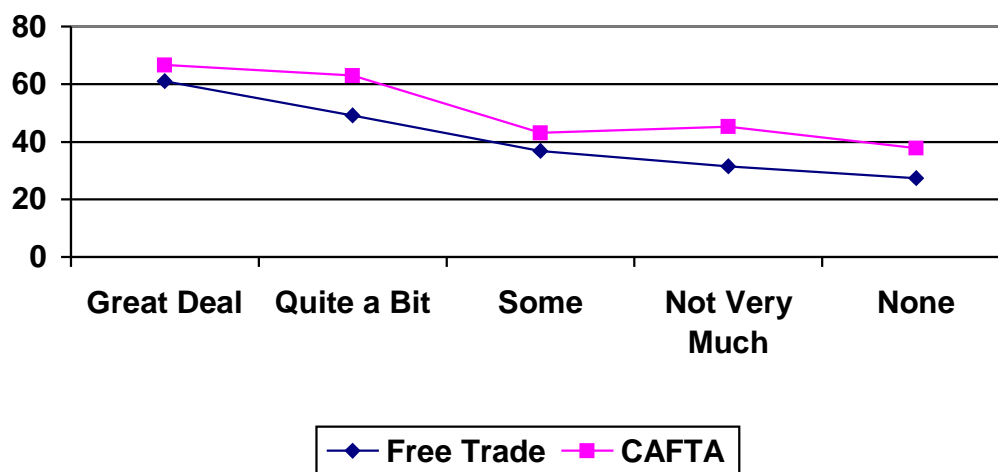
Opinion regarding the impact of free trade on the Louisiana economy was nearly evenly split. Nearly 40 percent of respondents said they believed free trade would be good for the Louisiana economy, while slightly fewer, 36.4 percent, believed free trade would be bad for the Louisiana economy. An additional 23.7 percent said that it would not make much difference. General support for free trade dropped when respondents were asked specifically about the CAFTA. Almost 28 percent of respondents believed CAFTA will be good for the Louisiana economy, while 47.0 percent believed it will be bad for the Louisiana economy, and 25.5 percent believed that it would not make much of a difference.

Figure 37: Perceptions of Effects of Free Trade on Louisiana Economy



While one might expect that attention to the free trade issue is related to greater support of free trade, this is not the case. Respondents who have paid more attention to news about the CAFTA were generally more likely to believe free trade generally and the Central American Free Trade Agreement specifically will be bad for the Louisiana economy.

Figure 37: Percent of Louisiana Residents Saying Free Trade is Bad for Louisiana Economy by Attention



Differences in how much attention respondents paid to free trade issues were largely a function of gender and education. That is, males and more educated respondents paid more attention to news about CAFTA than females and less educated respondents. Almost 26 percent of men reported that they paid either a great deal or quite a bit of attention to the issue compared to 13.2 percent of women. Likewise, only 8.7 percent of respondents without a high school education reporting paying a great deal or quite a bit of attention to news about CAFTA, while 22 percent of respondents with at least some college paid a great deal or quite a bit of attention. Interestingly, there was not much difference in attentiveness between respondents with some college, a four-year degree, or a graduate education.

Opinions regarding the likely effects of free trade generally and CAFTA specifically on the Louisiana economy were a function of race, education, and age. White and older respondents were more likely to believe that free trade (or CAFTA) will be bad for the Louisiana economy. Nearly 39 percent of white respondents believed free trade will be bad for the Louisiana economy, and 51.7 percent believed CAFTA would be bad for the Louisiana economy. For black respondents, the comparable percentages were 28.6 percent and 32.4 percent respectively. With respect to age, 27.7 percent of respondents 18-34 believed free trade will be bad for the Louisiana economy, compared to 45.7 percent of respondents 55 and over. Similar differences emerged on the question specific to CAFTA: 34.6 percent of respondents 18-34 and 55.1 percent of respondents over 55 believed CAFTA will be bad for the Louisiana economy.

Differences in education were a bit more complex. Respondents with some graduate education were less likely to see free trade as bad for the Louisiana economy. They were distinctive in this respect from all other education categories. When it comes to CAFTA, the greatest concern about its impact on the Louisiana economy was expressed in the middle categories. Respondents with some college and with a four-year degree were more likely to see CAFTA as bad for the Louisiana economy.

Table 22: Attention to News about the Central American Free Trade Agreement and Perceptions that Free Trade and the Central American Free Trade Agreement will be Bad for the Louisiana Economy

	Attention	Free Trade	CAFTA
<i>All Respondents</i>	18.8	36.4	47.0
<i>Gender</i>			
Male	25.8	36.9	46.2
Female	13.2	36.0	47.6
<i>Race</i>			
White	20.0	38.9	51.7
Black	14.6	28.6	32.4
<i>Education</i>			
Less than H.S.	8.7	37.5	27.3
High School	13.7	31.3	36.9
Some College	22.0	42.5	57.6
College (4 year degree)	21.8	37.5	48.5
Graduate	21.3	22.7	39.0
<i>Income</i>			
Less than \$30,000	17.7	29.6	35.5
\$30,000 - \$75,000	15.6	38.6	51.0
More than \$75,000	17.3	35.8	50.7
<i>Age</i>			
18-34	15.4	27.7	34.6
35-54	17.5	34.8	48.1
55 and over	23.2	45.7	55.1
<i>Region</i>			
Acadiana	20.3	42.6	48.3
North Louisiana	17.3	34.1	48.0
Baton Rouge & Florida Parishes	20.8	39.7	50.0
Orleans Parishes	18.0	31.1	43.1
<i>Party</i>			
Democrat	16.6	39.5	47.3
Independent	18.9	31.9	48.4
Republican	22.6	37.0	45.8

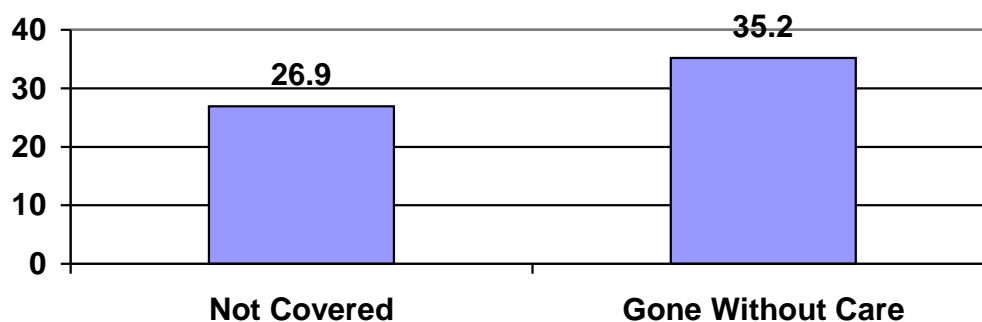
Categories in bold are statistically significant at a .05 level.

XIII: Health Care

Louisiana's is frequently cited among states with the highest percent of uninsured residents. Just under 27 percent of respondents in the 2004 Louisiana survey said that at least one member in their household was currently uninsured. Importantly, this should not be interpreted as the percent of Louisiana residents without health insurance but instead as the percent of households where at least one member of the household is uninsured.

Over a third of Louisiana residents, 35.2 percent, reported that either they or a member of their family went without medical care during the last twelve months because of costs. There were remarkable differences in responses to this question depending on whether the respondent was from a household with at least one uninsured family member. Among households with at least one uninsured family member, 68.4 percent have gone without medical care because of costs. In households covered by insurance, only 23 percent report having gone without care over the last twelve months because of the expense.

Figure 38: Percent of Households With At Least One Uninsured Member and Having Gone without Medical Care Because of Costs



Insurance coverage for a household was related to gender, age, income, education, race, region, and partisan affiliation. Specifically, female, younger, lower income, less educated, black, Democratic, and New Orleans residents were all more likely to report someone in the household was not insured. There were fewer differences across these categories when one considers whether someone in the household went without medical care because of costs. Female, lower income, and young respondents were more likely to report that someone in the household went without medical care during the past twelve months because of costs. With respect to age, the 35-54 age groups were most likely to report having gone without care, presumably because these are households with children.

When it comes to addressing Louisiana's uninsured population, a plurality of respondents preferred maintaining the charity hospital system as opposed to providing insurance coverage to the uninsured. Nearly 47 percent of respondents said they would

prefer maintaining the charity hospital system compared to 39.2 percent who preferred working to provide insurance coverage to the uninsured. An additional 11.1 percent said they hadn't thought too much about it and 3.2 percent said they preferred neither option. There were few demographic differences in terms of preferences for the charity hospital system versus providing health insurance. However, one particularly interesting finding emerges: Respondents from households with at least one uninsured member preferred providing insurance coverage as opposed to maintaining the charity hospital system. Forty-nine percent of households where all members were covered by health insurance preferred maintaining the charity hospital system compared to 34.9 percent in households with at least one member uninsured. Fifty percent of these uninsured households preferred providing health insurance coverage compared to 39.6 percent of covered households.

Figure 39: Preference for Charity Hospital System or Providing Insurance Coverage by Household Insurance Coverage

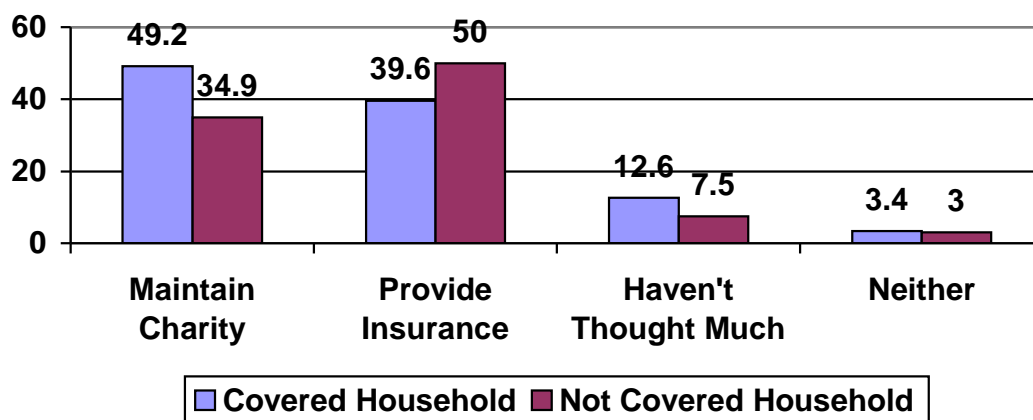


Table 23: Insurance Coverage, Medical Care, and Preferences for the Charity Hospital System to Address Louisiana's Uninsured Population

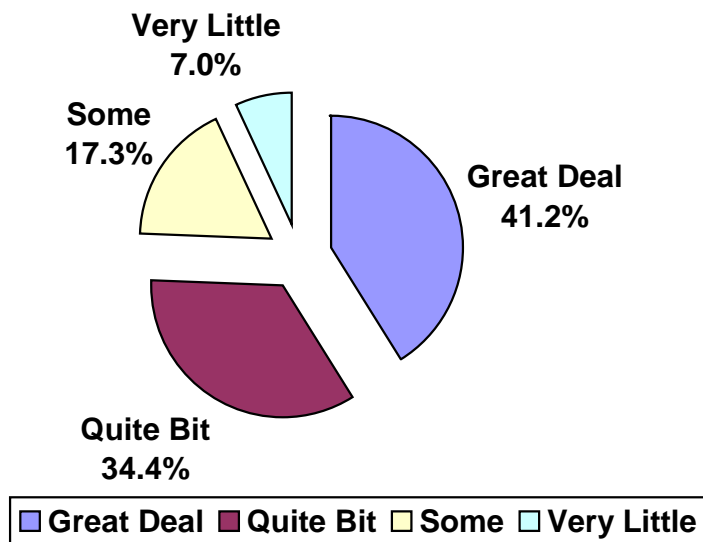
	Not Covered	Gone Without Care	Charity
<i>All Respondents</i>	26.9	35.2	46.5
<i>Gender</i>			
Male	21.0	26.5	47.1
Female	31.6	42.2	46.0
<i>Race</i>			
White	23.7	34.5	48.2
Black	35.7	34.6	41.5
<i>Education</i>			
Less than H.S.	44.1	36.4	51.4
High School	24.4	35.6	37.9
Some College	33.1	38.9	47.4
College (4 year degree)	14.7	28.4	52.2
Graduate	29.8	36.2	47.7
<i>Income</i>			
Less than \$30,000	45.4	44.9	44.8
\$30,000 - \$75,000	21.0	35.8	43.5
More than \$75,000	18.7	20.0	47.9
<i>Age</i>			
18-34	31.5	37.2	43.9
35-54	30.0	42.9	47.4
55 and over	19.9	23.5	47.8
<i>Region</i>			
Acadiana	25.9	34.3	48.9
North Louisiana	19.5	32.7	44.3
Baton Rouge & Florida Parishes	20.8	34.7	54.2
Orleans Parishes	38.5	38.9	42.7
<i>Party</i>			
Democrat	33.8	33.0	44.1
Independent	26.8	35.4	44.5
Republican	14.9	33.6	49.6

Categories in bold are statistically significant at a .05 level.

XV. Higher Education, Pre-K, and Economic Development

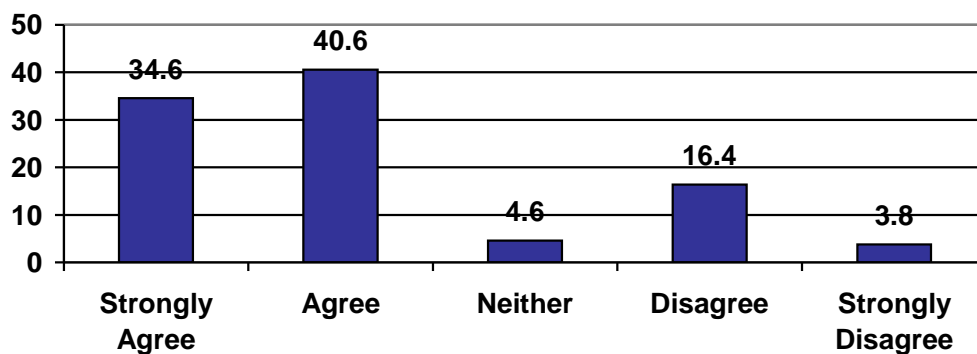
A. The Higher Education and Economic Development Connection: Increasing spending on higher education is routinely mentioned as mechanism for economic development. The results presented here seem to indicate that the public has bought into the idea. Forty-one percent of respondents believed that increasing spending on higher education would help economic development in the state a great deal and an additional 34.4 percent believe that it will help quite a bit. Just 18 percent said it would help some and 7 percent said it would help very little. Younger and lower income respondents were more likely to agree that higher education would help economic development.

Figure 40: Respondent Perceptions of the Impact of Higher Education Spending on Economic Development



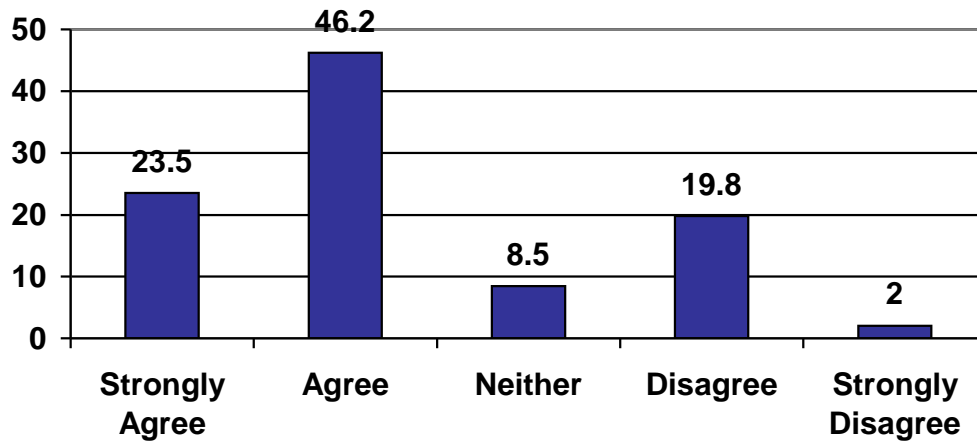
B. Pre-K Access for Louisiana Children: It is widely recognized that providing access to pre-k education is an important and effective education reform. Overall, Louisiana residents support providing pre-k access even if it means additional taxes. Nearly 35 percent of respondents strongly agreed that every child should have access to state funded pre-k even if it means an increase in taxes or cuts in other areas. An additional 40.6 percent agreed, 4.6 neither agreed nor disagreed, 16.4 percent disagreed and 3.4 percent strongly disagreed. Black respondents were more likely to support the notion of state funded access to Pre-K programs as were lower income and Democratic respondents.

Figure 41: Support for Pre-K for All Louisiana Children



C. Support for Community College System as a Top Priority: Reform of higher education generally begins with a discussion of the community college system. Community colleges not only increase access to higher education, but they also relieve pressures on four-year institutions for students looking for technical or professional experience better served with a two-year degree. By wide margins Louisiana residents agreed that a community college system should be a top priority for state government. Almost 24 percent strongly agreed and 46.2 percent agreed that the development of a community college system should be a top priority for state government. Older and Democratic respondents were more likely to agree that the development of the community college system should be a top state priority.

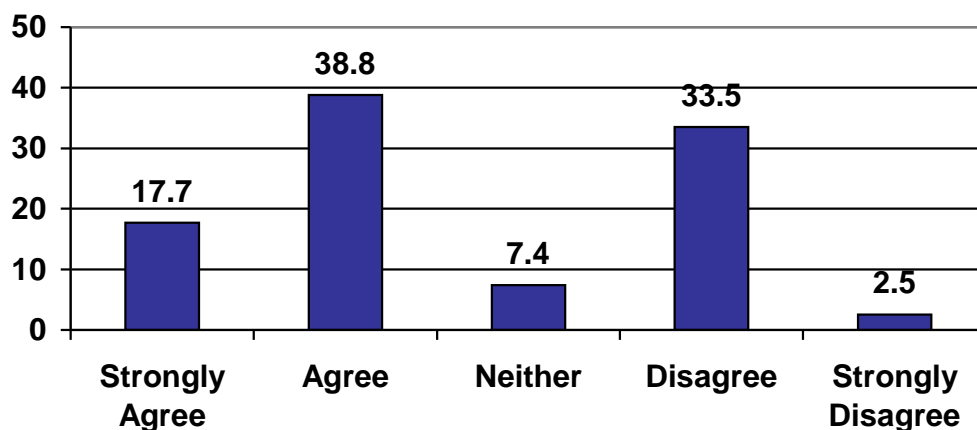
Figure 42: Support for Community College System as a Top Priority for State Government



D. Support for Reducing Taxes on Business and Providing Tax Incentives:

Respondents were generally supportive of reducing taxes on business to spur economic development. Nearly 18 percent of respondents strongly agreed and 38.8 percent agreed that reducing taxes on business would help spur economic development. North Louisiana residents were more supportive of reducing taxes on businesses than were other regions.

Figure 43: Support for Reducing Taxes on Business for Economic Development



Respondents were even more supportive of the idea that government should provide tax incentives to lure businesses to Louisiana. Almost 26 percent strongly agreed and 51.3 percent agreed that state government should provide such incentives. However, there is a qualification. Respondents also agreed that state government should not give incentives to businesses if they only bring workers in from out of state. Thirty percent of respondents strongly agreed and 39.9 percent agreed that government should not give tax incentives to businesses that bring workers from out of state to Louisiana.

Figure 44: State Government Should Give Tax Incentives to Businesses to Locate in Louisiana

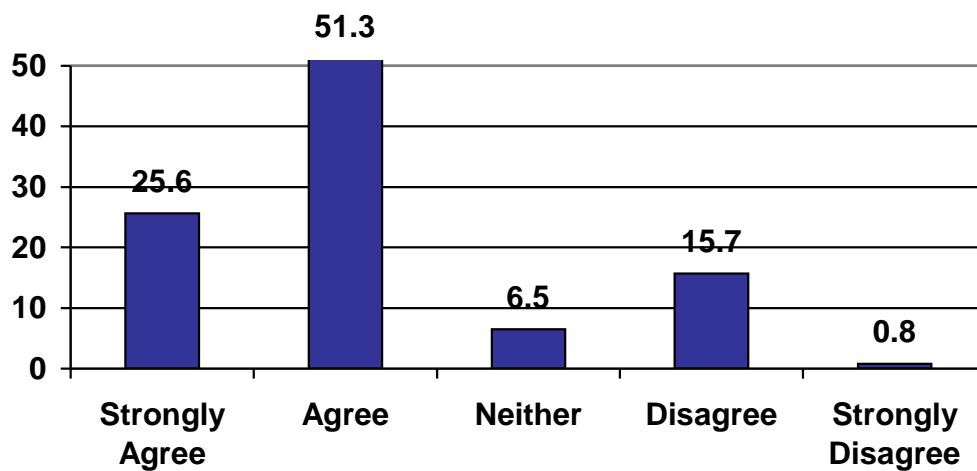


Figure 45: State Government Should Not Give Tax Incentives to Business to Locate If They Bring in Workers from Out of State

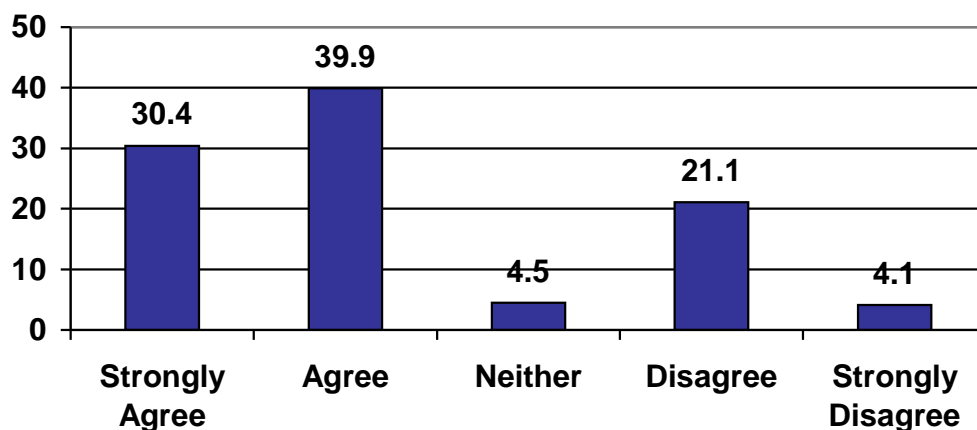


Table 24: Percent of Louisiana Residents Strongly Agreeing or Agreeing with Various Statements

	Higher Ed	Pre-K	Community College	Reduce Taxes	Tax Incentives	Out-of- State
<i>All Respondents</i>	75.7	75.2	69.6	56.5	76.9	70.2
<i>Gender</i>						
Male	72.9	71.7	69.7	62.1	78.5	64.5
Female	77.9	78.0	69.6	51.9	75.6	75.0
<i>Race</i>						
White	73.3	71.1	66.6	55.2	78.5	72.6
Black	82.1	89.6	77.0	64.4	75.6	68.0
<i>Education</i>						
Less than H.S.	78.8	74.2	73.3	48.1	72.4	79.3
High School	76.7	78.8	78.9	60.8	75.2	68.8
Some College	74.4	72.8	67.6	54.5	79.2	72.6
College (4 year degree)	72.2	73.9	60.5	63.3	78.1	71.9
Graduate	82.6	78.7	72.3	41.3	74.5	57.4
<i>Income</i>						
Less than \$30,000	82.5	83.6	76.8	62.3	79.5	68.5
\$30,000 - \$75,000	70.7	72.7	64.0	57.8	76.0	73.4
More than \$75,000	74.0	68.0	68.0	58.9	88.0	75.7
<i>Age</i>						
18-34	81.1	80.5	63.2	59.3	77.9	63.9
35-54	78.6	76.2	67.9	56.2	75.8	71.0
55 and over	67.7	69.4	77.4	54.7	77.9	73.9
<i>Region</i>						
Acadiana	71.5	73.7	63.1	53.2	72.0	63.9
North Louisiana	80.9	73.0	71.8	63.2	77.2	75.9
Baton Rouge & Florida	73.2	77.5	66.7	50.0	77.1	72.1
Parishes						
Orleans Parishes	75.0	77.8	74.7	56.0	81.2	69.6
<i>Party</i>						
Democrat	76.6	82.1	78.5	57.5	78.5	70.5
Independent	72.6	73.7	61.9	52.3	72.6	73.0
Republican	75.5	66.2	64.6	61.6	81.0	67.2

Categories in bold are statistically significant at a .05 level.

XVI. Perceived Value of a Success in Athletics and a National Championship

To gauge the impact of LSU's 2004 national championship, we asked respondents whether the championship made LSU a better academic university, improved the state economy, or made the state a better place to live. Half the sample received wording specific to the national championship, while the other half received more generic wording about success in college athletics. The more generic wording allows us to test changes in perceptions over time should the questions be repeated. The first column in the subsequent tables contains the overall percentage including both wordings, the second column includes the results based on the phrase "success in college athletics," and the third column includes the national championship wording.

We find that, overall, 58 percent of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that LSU's national championship makes for a better academic university. Question wording does make a difference as respondents were more likely to agree with the statement when asked success in college athletics. Sixty-five percent of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that success in college athletics makes for a better academic university compared to 50.4 percent who agreed when asked specifically about the national championship. These differences are statistically significant. As an important side note, there were no significant differences across region. More educated respondents, however, were less likely to perceive the link between athletic success and academics. Almost 72 percent of respondents with less than a high school education believed athletic success makes for a better academic university compared to 58.4 percent with a college degree.

Table 25: LSU's Success in college athletics/National Championship makes for a better academic university.

Table 25: /National Championship	Total Percent	Success	National Championship
Strongly Agree	21.4	23.0	19.8
Agree	36.4	41.5	31.6
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	8.8	8.9	8.7
Disagree	28.0	21.3	34.2
Strongly Disagree	5.5	5.2	5.7

Nearly a consensus of respondents believed the national championship will be good for the state economy. Eighty-five percent of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that the national championship would improve the state economy. As before, respondents were more likely to agree when asked about "success in college athletics" instead of specifically about the national championship. Eighty-eight percent of respondents asked with the phrasing "success in college athletics" agreed or strongly agreed compared to 83 percent with the national championship wording. These differences were not statistically significant, nor were there any statistically significant differences across region. More educated and wealthier respondents were more likely to

perceive a link between athletic success and the health of the state economy. Eighty-one percent of respondents with less than a high school degree believed athletic success will improve the state economy compared to 90.6 percent of respondents with a college degree. Respondents with a graduate education were least likely to agree that athletics would improve the economy.

Table 26: LSU's success in college athletics/National Championship is good for the state economy.

	Total Percent	Success	National Championship
Strongly Agree	34.1	35.4	32.9
Agree	51.0	52.2	49.9
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	5.9	5.9	5.9
Disagree	8.1	5.9	10.1
Strongly Disagree	.9	0.6	0.9

Respondents were less inclined to believe that college athletics makes the state a better place to live. Forty-eight percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that success in athletics or a national championship made the state a better place to live. Question wording was important: Fifty-nine percent of respondents asked about success in college athletics agreed or strongly agreed compared to 37 percent asked about the national championship. More educated respondents were less likely to perceive a link between athletic success and quality of life. Sixty-four percent of respondents with less than a high school education believed athletic success would improve the state as a place to live compared to 47.2 percent of respondents with a college degree.

Table 27: LSU's success in college athletics/National Championship makes the state a better place to live.

	Total Percent	Success	National Championship
Strongly Agree	17.0	19.0	15.0
Agree	30.6	39.5	22.1
Neither Agree Nor Disagree	12.0	11.4	12.6
Disagree	33.9	23.8	43.6
Strongly Disagree	6.5	6.3	6.5

The overall pattern of findings here is important: First, respondents were making distinctions in terms of impacts. Respondents see a greater economic impact than the impact on quality of life or academics. Second, question wording does matter: Respondents were much more likely to see a generic impact from success in athletics than a specific impact of a single national championship.

Table 23: Perceived Impact of LSU National Championship/Success in Athletics on LSU as an Academic University, State Economy, and Quality of Life

	Better Academic University	Stronger Economy	Better Place to Live
<i>All Respondents</i>	57.8	85.1	47.6
<i>Gender</i>			
Male	59.6	85.9	48.4
Female	56.4	84.5	46.9
<i>Race</i>			
White	57.2	88.8	48.9
Black	60.3	78.9	45.1
<i>Education</i>			
Less than H.S.	71.9	80.6	64.2
High School	65.9	82.5	51.7
Some College	53.3	87.5	44.5
College (4 year degree)	58.4	90.6	47.2
Graduate	38.6	74.2	36.0
<i>Income</i>			
Less than \$30,000	62.4	83.9	51.3
\$30,000 - \$75,000	58.1	86.7	45.4
More than \$75,000	59.8	94.5	46.6
<i>Age</i>			
18-34	62.8	88.9	47.0
35-54	55.5	84.4	46.5
55 and over	56.0	83.0	48.8
<i>Region</i>			
Acadiana	55.8	83.8	45.7
North Louisiana	62.7	86.8	50.4
Baton Rouge & Florida Parishes	52.7	84.2	48.7
Orleans Parishes	57.4	85.2	46.0
<i>Party</i>			
Democrat	57.5	83.2	47.4
Independent	54.2	87.1	42.7
Republican	60.3	89.0	52.0

Categories in bold are statistically significant at a .05 level.

Appendix: Survey Questionnaire & Frequencies

- 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?

1. Right Direction	47.6%
2. Wrong Direction	35.5%
8. Not sure/No opinion	16.9%

- What do you think are the three most important problems facing the state of Louisiana?

○ Education (Quality, funding, facilities)	60.6%
○ Unemployment/lack of jobs	48.8%
○ Health Care (insurance, availability)	31.1%
○ Taxes (Too high, too low, unfair, need reform)	7.9%
○ Crime (violence)	21.4%
○ Economic Issues	20.7%
○ Corruption/Government Waste	14.0%
○ Environment	6.0%
○ Coastal Erosion/Wetlands loss	5.0%
○ Young people leaving the state	4.4%
○ Roads and Highways	13.0%
○ Not enough to do - Quality of Life	1.2%
○ Other [SPECIFY]	22.4%
○ Don't Know	4.6%
○ Refused	0.4%

- Of these problems, which do you think is the SINGLE most important problem facing the state of Louisiana?

○ Education (Quality, funding, facilities)	30.9%
○ Unemployment/jobs	20.2%
○ Health Care (insurance, availability)	11.7%
○ Taxes (Too high, too low, unfair, need reform)	1.0%

○ Crime (violence)	7.4%
○ Economic Issues	6.3%
○ Corruption/Government Waste	4.6%
○ Environment	0.9%
○ Coastal Erosion/Wetlands loss	1.6%
○ Young people leaving the state	1.0%
○ Roads and Highways	2.5%
○ Not enough to do - Quality of Life	0.3%
○ Issues	?
○ Other [SPECIFY]	7.0%
○ Don't Know	4.0%
○ Refused	0.6%

- Thinking about the problem you just mentioned, over the last year, would you say that this problem has gotten better, gotten worse, or stayed about the same?

1. Better	11.4%
2. About the same	41.7%
3. Worse	46.9%
8. Don't Know	5.1%

- Looking ahead, by this time next year, do you think the problem will have gotten better, gotten worse, or stayed about the same?

1. Better	34.8%
2. About the same	42.0%
3. Worse	23.2%
8. Don't Know	11.9%

- 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?

1. Very Confident	12.9%
2. Somewhat Confident	42.3%
3. Not Very Confident	29.5%
4. Not at all Confident	15.3%
8. Don't Know	5.0%

- Overall, how much trust and confidence do you have in state government to do a good job in carrying out its responsibilities? Would you say you are...

1. Very Confident	12.4%
2. Somewhat Confident	51.4%
3. Not Very Confident	25.2%
4. Not at all Confident	11.0%

- Are you currently registered to vote?

1. Yes	91.0%
2. No	9.0%

- And did you vote in last year's gubernatorial election between Democrat Kathleen Blanco and Republican Bobby Jindal?

1. Yes	84.7%
2. No	14.6%

- How much attention do you pay to news about Louisiana public affairs and politics-a great deal, quite a bit, some, very little, or none?

1. A great deal	30.6%
2. Quite a bit	29.0%
3. Some	28.3%
4. Very little	9.2%
5. None	2.7%

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

1. Television	60.6%
2. Newspapers	27.7%
3. Radio	4.2%
4. Internet	4.2%

5. Other 2.8%

- [Read list, check each one if they do these things]

○ Do you currently subscribe to a daily newspaper?	56.2%
○ Did you read a newspaper yesterday?	53.9%
○ Did you watch the news or a news program on television yesterday?	73.2%
○ Did you listen to the news or a news program on the radio yesterday?	32.0%
○ Did you go on-line yesterday to get news about public affairs and politics?	16.0%
○ None of these	5.8%

- 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?

1. Better	27.0%
2. Same	48.6%
3. Worse	24.4%

- 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?

1. Better	16.3%
2. Same	51.5%
3. Worse	32.2%

- And 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?

1. Better	25.6%
2. Same	40.2%
3. Worse	34.2%
8. Don't Know	6.8%

- About the big things people buy for their homes -- such as furniture, a refrigerator, stove, television, and things like that. Generally speaking do you think now is a good time or a bad time for people to buy major household items?

1. Good	56.1%
2. Neither Good nor Bad	20.7%
3. Bad	23.2%
8. Don't Know	6.0%

- As you may be aware, the state of Louisiana may be faced with a large budget deficit next year. Here is a list of things that the state could do to reduce the deficit. Please tell me which ones are appropriate to help balance the budget?

[Check all that apply]

1. Cut Spending	42.8
2. Raise Income Taxes	13.4
3. Raise Sales Taxes	11.9
4. Raise Fees on Some User Services	30.0
5. Raise Taxes on Gambling	66.7
6. No Choice	7.8

- Approximately how much - as a percentage of the state budget- would you estimate could be cut from state government simply by eliminating wasteful government spending?

[Enter # 0 - 100: Put -8 for Don't Know or -9 for Refuse]

Mean = 22%

- Now I am going to ask you a series of questions in which you rate Louisiana relative to other states in the southeast region of the United States. [PROMPT If they ask, this means Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, Tennessee]

Overall, compared to other states in the region, how would you rate the state of Louisiana as a place to live? Would you say that it is better than, about the same, or worse than other states in the southeast region?

1. Better	26.4%
2. About the same	37.7%
3. Worse	26.9%
4. VOLUNTEERED: Better than some, worse than others	5.6%

- What about the quality of education students receive in Louisiana's primary and secondary public schools? Would you say that public education in Louisiana is better than, about the same, or worse than in other states in the southeast region?

1. Better	14.2%
2. About the same	27.5%
3. Worse	51.8%
4. VOLUNTEERED: Better than some, worse than others	3.5%

- What about public universities and colleges? Would you say that Louisiana's public universities and colleges are better than, about the same, or worse than universities and colleges in other states in the southeast region?

1. Better	27.5%
2. About the same	48.3%
3. Worse	13.7%
4. VOLUNTEERED: Better than some, worse than others	3.0%
8. Don't Know	7.5%

- How would you rate air quality in Louisiana? Would you say that air quality in Louisiana is better than, about the same, or worse than in other states in the southeast region? [Split Ballot, Margin of Error = 4.4 percent]

1. Better	22.6%
2. About the same	38.7%

3. Worse	31.4%
4. VOLUNTEERED: Better than some, worse than others	1.8%
8. Don't Know	5.5%

- And what about the safety of our drinking water? Would you say that the drinking water in Louisiana is better than, about the same, or worse than in other states in the southeast region? [Split Ballot, Margin of Error = 4.4 percent]

1. Better	23.0%
2. About the same	39.1%
3. Worse	29.7%
4. VOLUNTEERED: Better than some, worse than others	2.4%
8. Don't Know	5.9%

- Turning now to health care, how would you rate the QUALITY of health care in Louisiana? Would you say that the quality of public health care and hospitals in Louisiana is better than, about the same, or worse than in other states in the southeast region? [Split Ballot, MARGIN OF ERROR = 4.4]

1. Better	14.0%
2. About the same	35.6%
3. Worse	42.0%
4. VOLUNTEERED: Better than some, worse than others	2.7%
8. Don't Know	5.6%

- And how would you rate ACCESS to public health care in Louisiana? Would you say that access to public health care in Louisiana is better than, about the same, or worse than in other states in the southeast region? [Split Ballot, Margin of Error = 4.4 percent]

1. Better	12.1%
2. About the same	37.9%
3. Worse	39.9%
4. VOLUNTEERED: Better than some, worse	

than others	1.8%
8. Don't Know	8.4%

- What about the arts and culture in Louisiana? Would you say arts and culture in Louisiana is better than, about the same, or worse than in other states in the region?

1. Better	41.4%
2. About the same	39.4%
3. Worse	11.3%
4. VOLUNTEERED: Better than some, worse than others	2.0%
8. Don't Know	5.9%

- What about the condition of roads & highways? Would you say that roads & highways in Louisiana are better than, about the same, or worse than in other states?

1. Better	6.5%
2. About the same	16.0%
3. Worse	73.6%
4. VOLUNTEERED: Better than some, worse than others	2.1%

- What about equal opportunity for African-Americans and other minorities? Would you say that opportunities for minorities in Louisiana are better than, about the same, or worse than in other states?

1. Better	26.0%
2. About the same	50.1%
3. Worse	16.8%
4. VOLUNTEERED: Better than some, worse than others	1.9%
8. Don't Know	5.1%

- Would you say that Louisiana is more corrupt, just as corrupt, or less corrupt than other states in the region? [Split Ballot, Margin of Error = 4.4 percent]

1. More corrupt	33.0%
2. Just as corrupt	48.3%
3. Less corrupt	11.6%

- | | |
|---|------|
| 4. VOLUNTEERED: Better than some, worse than others | 1.6% |
| 8. Don't Know | 5.5% |

- And thinking about crime and public safety, would you say Louisiana is safer, just as safe, or not as safe as other states in the region? [Split Ballot, Margin of Error = 4.4 percent]

- | | |
|---|-------|
| 1. Safer | 7.6% |
| 2. Just as safe | 50.6% |
| 3. Not as safe | 36.6% |
| 4. VOLUNTEERED: Better than some, worse than others | 2.7% |
| 8. Don't Know | 2.5% |

- **Now I am going to read a list of areas where state government generally spends taxpayer dollars. As I read through the list please tell me whether you would increase state government spending in the area,**

- | | |
|--|-------|
| ○ Public Education (Primary and Secondary) | 70.6% |
| ○ Higher Education | 62.5% |
| ○ Public Health and Hospitals | 60.8% |
| ○ Roads and Transportation | 58.6% |
| ○ Environment Protection | 42.9% |
| ○ Public Safety/ Criminal justice | 49.6% |
| ○ Economic Development | 51.8% |
| ○ Arts and cultural development | 22.0% |
| ○ State parks and tourism | 21.8% |
| ○ Coastal Restoration | 43.5% |

- Now, if you could increase spending in only one of these areas, which area would you choose?

- | | |
|--|-------|
| ○ Public Education (Primary and Secondary) | 43.2% |
| ○ Higher Education | 8.3% |
| ○ Public Health and Hospitals | 19.9% |
| ○ Roads and Transportation | 8.5% |
| ○ Environment Protection | 1.9% |
| ○ Public Safety/ Criminal justice | 5.5% |
| ○ Economic Development | 5.9% |
| ○ Arts and cultural development | 0.2% |

- State parks and tourism 0.8%
- Coastal Restoration 3.5%

- **I am going to read the list of areas again. IF YOU HAD TO CUT spending in at least one or more of these areas, which areas would you cut?**

- Public Education (Primary and Secondary) 2.0%
- Higher Education 4.0%
- Public Health and Hospitals 4.2%
- Roads and Transportation 6.6%
- Environment Protection 11.0%
- Public Safety/ Criminal justice 6.1%
- Economic Development 9.9%
- Arts and cultural development 45.7%
- State parks and tourism 40.9%
- Coastal Restoration 13.7%

- Now 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? [Split Ballot, Margin of Error = 4.4 percent]

- 1. Too high and need to be reduced 34.0%
- 2. Too low and need to be increased 10.9%
- 3. Just about right 55.1%

- 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? [Split Ballot, Margin of Error = 4.4 percent]

- 1. Too high and need to be reduced 42.7%
- 2. Too low and need to be increased 4.6%
- 3. Just about right 52.7%

- And 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? [Split Ballot, Margin of Error = 4.4 percent]

- 1. Too high and need to be reduced 31.5%

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------|
| 2. Too low and need to be increased | 11.4% |
| 3. Just about right | 57.1% |

- Which tax do you think is the least fair? [Split Ballot, Margin of Error = 4.4 percent]

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------|
| 1. State income tax | 23.9% |
| 2. State sales tax | 19.8% |
| 3. Local sales tax | 21.2% |
| 4. Local property tax | 35.1% |
| 8. Don't know | 6.0% |

- Which of the following, if any, bothers you the most about taxes? [Split Ballot, Margin of Error = 4.4 percent]

- | | |
|---|-------|
| ○ The feeling that some people are not paying their fair share. | 25.5% |
| ○ The large amount that you personally pay in taxes. | 6.1% |
| ○ The complexity of the tax system. | 4.9% |
| ○ The feeling that government is wasting tax dollars. | 62.1% |

- Do you happen to know what the homestead exemption is?

- | | |
|--------|-------|
| 1. Yes | 67.3% |
| 2. No | 32.7% |

- As you may be aware, the current value of the homestead exemption is \$75,000. This means that homeowners do not have to pay parish property taxes on the first \$75,000 of their homes market value. In your opinion, should the homestead exemption be increased, meaning homeowners pay less taxes, decreased, meaning homeowners pay more taxes or kept where it is?

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------|
| 1. Increased, pay less taxes | 28.7% |
| 2. Decreased, pay more taxes | 12.3% |
| 3. Kept where it is | 55.0% |
| 4. Not sure | 4.0% |

- Would you support a reduction of the homestead exemption if any additional revenues went to local public schools?

1. Yes	64.8%
2. It depends [Volunteered]	9.0%
3. No	26.2%

- Overall, would you say that property tax assessments in your parish are fair and equitable? [Split Ballot, Margin of Error = 4.4 percent]

1. Yes	77.2 %
2. No	22.8 %
8. Don't Know	5.5%

- Would you be willing to have your property reassessed at fair market value as long as all other property in the parish was reassessed as well? [Split Ballot, Margin of Error = 4.4 percent]

1. Yes	83.2%
2. No	16.8 %
8. Don't Know	6.1%

- And would you be in favor of equitable property tax assessment even if you personally had to pay more? [Split Ballot, Margin of Error = 4.4 percent]

1. Yes	70.4%
2. No	29.6 %
8. Don't Know	7.0%

- Overall would you say that you support or oppose state government efforts to protect and restore Louisiana's wetlands from the effects of coastal erosion?

1. Support	83.6 %
2. Oppose	9.9%
3. Not Sure	6.5%

- Would you support these efforts even if it meant you personally had to pay more in state taxes?

- | | |
|--------|-------|
| 1. Yes | 73.1% |
| 2. No | 26.9% |

- As you know students are often given grades A through F. Suppose the public schools in your local community were graded in this way. What grade would you give the public schools in the school district where you live? [Split Ballot, Margin of Error = 4.4 percent]

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. A | 13.6% |
| 2. B | 26.2% |
| 3. C | 34.5% |
| 4. D | 14.9% |
| 5. F | 10.9% |

- Thinking ahead now, over the next several years, do you think Louisiana public schools will get better, get worse, or stay about the same? [Split Ballot, Margin of Error = 4.4 percent]

- | | |
|------------------------|-------|
| 1. Get Better | 49.9% |
| 2. Get Worse | 20.9% |
| 3. Stay about the same | 29.2% |

- In your opinion is there too much emphasis on standardized testing in the public schools in your community, not enough emphasis on testing, or about the right amount? [Split Ballot, Margin of Error = 4.4 percent]

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------|
| 1. Too much emphasis on testing | 41.6% |
| 2. Not enough | 27.5% |
| 3. About the right amount | 31.0% |

- Now I want to ask a question about a sensitive topic that has been in the news over the past several weeks. Remember your answers are confidential and you may decide not to answer any question.

- Do you think it should be legal or illegal for Same Sex couples to get married? [Split Ballot, Margin of Error = 4.4 percent]

- | | |
|------------|-------|
| 1. LEGAL | 24.5% |
| 2. ILLEGAL | 75.5% |

- Do you think Same Sex couples should or should not be allowed to form legally recognized civil unions, giving them legal rights in areas such as health insurance, inheritance and pension coverage? [Split Ballot, Margin of Error = 4.4 percent]

1. Should	42.9%
2. Should Not	57.1%

- Would you support or oppose a state law that made it illegal to discriminate against gays and lesbians in the workplace? [Split Ballot, Margin of Error = 4.4 percent]

1. Support	63.5%
2. Oppose	36.5%

- Do you have any friends or relatives or co-workers who have told you, personally, that they are gay or lesbian? [Split Ballot, Margin of Error = 4.4 percent]

1. Yes	46.3%
2. No	53.7%

- Now I want to ask you about an issue that has been in the news for the past several weeks.

- How much attention have you paid to news about the Central American Free Trade Agreement - a great deal, quite a bit, some, not very much, or none at all? [Split Ballot, Margin of Error = 4.4 percent]

1. A great deal	7.2%
2. Quite a bit	11.6%
3. Some	26.4%
4. Not very much	32.0%
5. None at all	22.8%

- Do you think free trade between the U.S. and other countries is generally good for the Louisiana economy, bad for the Louisiana economy, or do you think it makes no difference? [Split Ballot, Margin of Error = 4.4 percent]

1. Good for the Louisiana Economy	39.9%
2. Bad for the Louisiana Economy	36.4%
3. Makes No difference	23.7%
8. Don't Know	7.2%

- Now thinking specifically about the Central American Free Trade Agreement. Some people have argued the agreement will create jobs and spur economic growth in Louisiana. Others argue it will harm certain industries particularly Louisiana's sugar farmers. What about you? On balance, would you say the Central American Free Trade agreement will be good for the Louisiana economy, bad for the Louisiana economy, or do you think it makes no difference?
[Split Ballot, Margin of Error = 4.4 percent]

1. Good for the Louisiana Economy	27.6%
2. Bad for the Louisiana Economy	47.0%
3. Makes No difference.	25.5%
8. Don't Know	8.3%

- Now thinking about healthcare:
- Are you or anyone living in your household currently NOT covered by health insurance? [Split Ballot, Margin of Error = 4.4 percent]

1. Covered	73.1%
2. Not covered	26.9%

- Within the past twelve months have you or a member of your family put off any medical care because of the costs you would have to pay? [Split Ballot, Margin of Error = 4.4 percent]

1. Yes	35.2%
2. No	64.8%

- Some people believe that the best way to provide medical care for low income Louisiana residents is through the charity hospital system. Other people believe that state funds would be better spent providing insurance coverage

to low income residents who are currently uninsured. What about you? [Split Ballot, Margin of Error = 4.4 percent]

- Should the state focus on maintaining the charity hospital system or providing insurance coverage for the uninsured, or haven't you thought much about this? [Split Ballot, Margin of Error = 4.4 percent]

1. Maintaining the charity hospital system	46.5%
2. Working to provide insurance coverage for uninsured LA residents	39.2%
3. Haven't thought about it much	11.1%

- Some people argue that Louisiana should spend more on higher education because research in colleges and universities drives economic development. What about you? Do you think increasing spending on higher education will help economic development in the state a great deal, somewhat, not very much, or not at all? [Split Ballot, Margin of Error = 4.4 percent]

1. Help a great deal	41.2%
2. Help somewhat	34.4%
3. Not very much	17.3%
4. Not at all	7.0%

- Please tell me whether you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with each of the following statements:

- Every child in Louisiana should have access to state funded pre-k education programs, even if it means an increase in taxes or cuts in other areas of government service. [Split Ballot, Margin of Error = 4.4 percent]

1. Strongly agree	34.6%
2. Agree	40.6%
3. Neither agree nor disagree	4.6%
4. Disagree	16.4%
5. Strongly disagree	3.8%

- The development of a community college system should be a top priority for Louisiana state government. [Split Ballot, Margin of Error = 4.4 percent]

1. Strongly agree	23.5%
2. Agree	46.2%
3. Neither agree nor disagree	8.5%
4. Disagree	19.8%
5. Strongly disagree	2.0%

- The best thing Louisiana's government can do for economic development is to reduce taxes on business. [Split Ballot, Margin of Error = 4.4 percent]

1. Strongly agree	17.7%
2. Agree	38.8%
3. Neither agree nor disagree	7.4%
4. Disagree	33.5%
5. Strongly disagree	2.5%

- State government should give businesses tax incentives to locate in Louisiana. [Split Ballot, Margin of Error = 4.4 percent]

1. Strongly agree	25.6%
2. Agree	51.3%
3. Neither agree nor disagree	6.5%
4. Disagree	15.7%
5. Strongly disagree	0.8%

- State government should not give businesses tax incentives to locate in Louisiana if they bring in workers from out of state and don't hire Louisiana natives. [Split Ballot, Margin of Error = 4.4 percent]

1. Strongly agree	30.4%
2. Agree	39.9%
3. Neither agree nor disagree	4.5%
4. Disagree	21.1%
5. Strongly disagree	4.1%

- LSU's success in college athletics/national championship makes for a better academic university

1. Strongly agree	21.4%
2. Agree	36.4%
3. Neither agree nor disagree	8.8%
4. Disagree	28.0%
5. Strongly disagree	5.5%

- LSU's success in college athletics/national championship is good for the state economy.

1. Strongly agree	34.1%
2. Agree	51.0%
3. Neither agree nor disagree	5.9%
4. Disagree	8.1%
5. Strongly disagree	0.9%

- LSU's success in college athletics/national championship makes the state a better place to live.

1. Strongly agree	17.0%
2. Agree	30.6%
3. Neither agree nor disagree	12.0%
4. Disagree	33.9%
5. Strongly disagree	6.5%

Just a few more questions:

- Do you have any children between the ages of 4 and 18?

1. Yes	38.2%
2. No	61.2%

- Did any of these children attend public schools at any time?

1. Yes	81.6%
2. No	18.2%

- Did any of these children attend private schools (including home schooling) at anytime?

1. Yes	36.1%
2. No	63.7%

- Generally speaking do you consider yourself a Democrat, Republican, Independent, or what?

1. Democrat	40.8 %
2. Independent	21.8%
3. Republican	27.8%

4. Other	4.0%
5. Not Sure	3.0%

- When it comes to politics, do you consider yourself liberal, moderate, or conservative?

1. Liberal	17.0%
2. Moderate	40.8%
3. Conservative	42.3%

- In what year were you born?

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

1. Less than 9th grade	2.2%
2. 9th through 11th grade	5.7%
3. High school diploma	27.2%
4. Some college or vocational school	32.6%
5. A 4-year college degree	18.7%
6. Some graduate work	4.8%
7. Advanced degree (M.A., M.S., J.D., Ph.D., M.D., etc.)	8.8%

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

1. White	67.7%
2. Hispanic	1.6%
3. African-American	25.5%
4. Asian	0.6%
5. Other	3.1%

- Is your religious preference Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, none, or something else?

1. Protestant	22.7%
2. Catholic	32.6%
3. Jewish	0.2%
4. Other	37.5%

5. None 5.8%

- Besides weddings and funerals, how often do you attend religious services?
Would you say more than once a week, at least once a week, a few times a month, several times a year, once a year, or never?

1. More than once a week	18.4%
2. At least once a week	36.0%
3. A few times a month	18.5%
4. Several times a year	13.8%
5. Once a year	5.4%
6. Never	6.7%

- How much guidance do you get from religion in your daily life - A great deal, quite a bit, some, not very much, or none at all?

1. A great deal	52.7%
2. Quite a bit	20.9%
3. Some	15.5%
4. Not Very Much	5.7%
5. None at all	4.1%

- Would you call yourself a born-again Christian?

1. Yes	65.5%
2. No	31.5%

- Do you or does your family own your home, pay rent, or what?

1. Own home	76.4%
2. Pay rent	19.8%
3. Other	3.0%

- Do you have access to the internet at home?

1. Yes	64.1%
2. No	35.5%

- Do you have high speed internet (cable, DSL, or T1) at home?

- | | |
|--------|-------|
| 1. Yes | 54.1% |
| 2. No | 43.3% |
- How likely are you to get high speed internet at home in the next twelve months?

1. Very Likely	16.2%
2. Somewhat likely	16.9%
3. Not very likely	32.7%
4. Not at all likely	34.2%
 - Approximately how many hours a day do you spend on-line while not working?

1. None	15.7%
2. Less than 1	34.9%
3. 1-2	34.1%
4. 3-4	9.8%
5. 5-10	3.8%
6. More than 10	0.9%
 - How long have you lived in the community in which you currently reside?

1. Less than 1 year	6.0%
2. 1-5 years	18.0%
3. 6-10 years	11.9%
4. 11-20 years	16.8%
5. More than 20 years	47.0%
 - In the last twelve months, how many times have you traveled out of state?

1. None	21.4%
2. 1-5 times	51.5%
3. 6-10 times	13.4%
4. More than ten times	13.8%
 - Are you currently single, married, widowed, divorced, or separated?

1. Single	23.7%
2. Married	56.1%
3. Widowed	7.4%
4. Divorced	9.6%
5. Separated	2.2%

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

1. Employed Full-time	49.7%
2. Employed Part-time	9.0 %
3. Retired	18.4%
4. Unemployed and looking for work	8.7%
5. Not employed and not looking for work	11.5 %
6. On Disability [volunteered]	2.2%

- We would like to know what your family income was last year before taxes. I will read several income categories. Please stop me when I get to the category that includes your family income.

1. Under \$10,000	8.9%
2. \$10,000 - \$19,999	10.2%
3. \$20,000 - \$29,999	13.4%
4. \$30,000 - \$39,999	13.9%
5. \$40,000 - \$49,999	11.6%
6. \$50,000 - \$74,999	18.7%
7. \$75,000 - \$99,999	11.3%
8. \$100,000 or more	11.9%

- Record Gender [DO NOT ASK]

1. Male	41.5%
2. Female	58.5%